Review Essay

An Analysis of Islamophobia and the Anti-Islam Discourse: Common Themes, Parallel Narratives, and Legitimate Apprehensions

Books Reviewed: Jonathan Lyons, *Islam through Western Eyes: From the Crusades to the War on Terrorism*, reprint ed. (New York: Columbia University Press: 2014); Nathan Lean, *The Islamophobia Industry: How the Right Manufactures Fear of Muslims* (London: Pluto Press: 2012); Deepa Kumar, *Islamophobia and the Politics of Empire* (Chicago: Haymarket Books: 2012); Stephen Sheehi, *Islamophobia: The Ideological Campaign against Muslims* (Atlanta: Clarity Press: 2011); Todd H. Green, *The Fear of Islam: An Introduction to Islamophobia in the West* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015); and Christopher Bail, *Terrified: How Anti-Muslim Fringe Organizations Became Mainstream* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015).

Introduction

In the recent past, fear, hatred, and hostility toward Islam and Muslims in the West have attracted increasing scholarly interest, a development that is certainly commendable. Some important works have delved deeply into the Western imagination and stereotyping of Islam and Muslims, among them John Victor Tolan's *Medieval Christian Perceptions of Islam* (1996) and *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination* (2002), Fredrick Quinn's *The Sum of All Heresies: The Image of Islam in Western Thought* (2008), Matthew Dimmock's *Mythologies of the Prophet Muhammad in Early Modern English Culture* (2013),[1] and Sophia Rose Arjana's *Muslims in the Western Imagination* (2015).

The 9/11 terrorist attacks brought about a significant change in the Western imagination and perception of Islam: "Muslim men are so dehu-

manized that since 9/11 they have become less than zero... stripped of all legal rights afforded under US domestic and international law, force-fed like animals."[2] Since then, the prejudice, hatred, and misconceptions that characterized the Crusades have become even worse. Carl Ernst has stated that it " is safe to say that no religion has such a negative image in Western eyes as Islam," a reality that has surprised many people, even in this age of post-modernism. Emphasizing this point, he continues,

> It still amazes me that intelligent people can believe that all Muslims are violent or that all Muslim women are oppressed, when they would never dream of uttering slurs stereotyping much smaller groups such as Jews or blacks. The strength of these negative images of Muslims is remarkable, even though they are not based on personal experience or actual study, but they receive daily reinforcement from the news media and popular culture.[3]

Anti-Muslim and anti-Islam sentiment has a venerable history in Western culture. The Runnymede Trust's first report cautiously suggested "a continuous line from the Crusades of the medieval times through the Ottoman Empire and European colonialism to the Islamophobia of the 1990s."[4] It is said that historical dynamics are reproduced in contemporary postcolonial environments. Scholars who hold similar views include John L. Esposito,[5] Vincent J. Cornell,[6] Tomaz Mastnak,[7] Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad,[8] Edward W. Said, and others.[9] Why is this so? How have the relationships between the Muslim world and Western Europe and the United States impacted perceptions of Islam in the past and the present? How was the anti-Islam discourse formed, and who and why is it produced and perpetuated? Who benefits from its survival and consistency?

Many scholars have raised these and other important questions. However, only a handful of good scholarly works have tried to answer these questions by demystifying the West's *longue durée* worldviews toward Islam and Muslims in order to present them in terms of factual and real experience. The newly minted term *Islamophobia* attempts to explain the particularistic attitude toward Muslims that scholars have often described as an aversion to or an "anxiety of Islam,"[10] "an unfounded hostility towards Muslims" or "a useful shorthand way of referring to dread or hatred of Islam – and therefore a fear of all or most Muslims." Another meaning seeks to identify "the practical consequences of such hostility in unfair discrimination against Muslim individuals and communities, and ... the exclusion of Muslims from mainstream political and social affairs."[11]

This review essay, which goes a little deeper by adding to and complementing this exploration and critical analysis of Islamophobia and the anti-Islam discourse, is based on several recent works: Jonathan Lyons, *Islam through Western Eyes: From the Crusades to the War on Terrorism*, reprint ed. (2014); Nathan Lean, *The Islamophobia Industry: How the Right Manufactures Fear of Muslims* (2012); Deepa Kumar, *Islamophobia and the Politics of Empire* (2012); Stephen Sheehi, *Islamophobia: The Ideological Campaign against Muslims* (2011); Todd H. Green, *The Fear of Islam: An Introduction to Islamophobia in the West* (2015); and Christopher Bail, *Terrified: How Anti-Muslim Fringe Organizations Became Mainstream* (2015). In addition, it attempts to review the emerging trend of scholars who have started, on a large scale, to investigate and scrutinize the anti-Islam and Islamophobia discourses, their formation, role in policymaking bodies, beneficiaries, and narratives. Even more, it seeks to present the impartial image of Islam as experienced, articulated, and believed by the Muslims themselves.

These six books all have common themes and parallel narratives that put them on the same standing. But they differ from each other in terms of methodology, presentation, target audience, and research, to name a few aspects. Therefore, the books are introduced briefly below to provide an appropriate framework for the following discussion.

A Brief Overview of the Selected Works

I begin with Lyons' *Islam through Western Eyes*, which critically scrutinizes the discursive formation of the anti-Islam discourse in the West. It investigates why it has survived for over a thousand years, how it is produced and deployed, and who benefits from it. Lyons contends that this discourse underpins several other fundamental discourses that "rarely have faced severe critical scrutiny or nuanced analysis" (p. 4). Thematically arranged, the book consists of seven chapters. Deepa Kumar's *Islamophobia and the Politics of Empire*, which focuses on the American context, seeks to demolish the mythical "Muslim enemy" conjured by the empire's need to claim that Muslims are more violent than any other religious group. She explores how such constructions have been employed to generate "fear and hatred" of Islam and Muslims (p. 2). Situating the discourse within the broader political, historical, legal, and social contexts from which it emerges, she regards it as a political, as opposed to a religious, phenomenon.

Bail's *Terrified*, the most recent of these selected works, examines how small civil society organizations compete among themselves to shape shared understandings of the collective identity of Islam and Muslims within the American public sphere after major crisis events (e.g., 9/11) (p. 4). Using new concepts and terms such as cultural "change" and "environment," he presents his innovative and evolutionary theory of how the shifting relationships between these civil society organizations and their environment (which here represents messages and narratives) shapes the emergence of broader social forms, in this case the shared understanding of Islam (p. 11). Its scope is restricted to the American context. Lean's *The Islamophobia Industry* (foreword by John L. Esposito) analyzes and identifies a ring of "pseudo-scholars" and authors supported by a verifiable annual $40 million Islamophobia industry in the United States with an increasingly global reach. Like Bail, he takes a penetrating look at this fear-mongering industry bent on shaping the public's opinion (p. 13) and, like Lyons, he asks about the persistent rise of anti-Muslim sentiment. According to various reports and surveys, this fear, mistrust, and hatred of Islam is at its highest levels ever even ten (now sixteen) years after 9/11.

Sheehi's *Islamophobia* explores "the complexities of the ideological formation of Islamophobia" (p. 30) and makes several important assertions: that Islamophobia is an ideological phenomenon that exists to promote American political and economic goals, both domestically and abroad; that it is not about the series of actions and beliefs based upon the misconceptions and misunderstandings of Islam by those who attack and target Muslims; that Islamophobia is a universal, as opposed to a monolithic, phenomenon; and that it is not political per se, but rather politically and culturally constructed (pp. 31-33). It mainly concentrates on the anti-Islam ideologues Bernard Lewis and Fareed Zakaria. Green's *The Fear of Islam*, which is aimed primarily at non-specialists, provides a good introduction to Islamophobia. However, he also "surveys both the history and the contemporary manifestations of Islamophobia in Europe and the United States" (p. 3) and navigates significant historical, political, cultural, and geographical contexts.

These works are and are not about Islam. Although they were not written to defend Islam, they certainly provide information about it. Their common concern is to explore and highlight the alarming dangers of Islamophobia, which have already brought unending violence and discrimination to Muslim minorities living across the Atlantic Ocean. Studying the negative stereotyping of Islam and Muslims will help one understand Islam's true nature as well as the Muslims' faith, values, and identity.

The Historical Foundations of Islamophobia

The spike in negative stereotyping and prejudice against Islam and Muslims did not suddenly appear after 9/11. Given that the term *Islamophobia* is a modern construction, some scholars view it as a quite modern phenomenon that has no link with the past, whereas others trace its roots back to medieval Europe. As Kumar asserts, the construction of Islam as an existential threat was developed during the eleventh century in the context of the Crusades (pp. 3, 15). Green situates it within a broader historical environment. Answering his queries of why Christian Europe depicted Muslims as the "Other" and constructed negative images of Islam (e.g., idolatry, heresy, pagan, and evil) and what purposes these depictions served, he agrees with others:

> Christians increasingly saw in Islam a formidable threat to Christianity's claims of superiority and hegemony in Europe and beyond. Faced with the Muslim world's competing theological claims, impressive military accomplishments, expanding empire, and superior intellectual and scientific advancements, medieval Christian authors responded polemically and aggressively. In the context of the Crusades and the Reconquista, theologians depicted Islam initially as idolatry and ultimately as heresy in order to justify violence and aggression against Muslims. (p. 53)

Similarly, Lyons goes to great lengths to illustrate the anti-Muslim discourse's origin and formation and traces its trajectory to the present era. He identifies the "zero point" at which the discursive formation of this anti-Islam discourse started: Pope Urban II's call on 1095 to launch the First Crusade. Before him, Lyons argues, Islam was not considered an existential threat to all of Christendom, but only for many of the Christians living in the East. He further makes it clear that Muslim expansionism, both in al-Andalus and the Byzantine Empire, was perceived as a real threat of assimilation and mass conversion that eventually provoked the clergy to attack any notion that both religions could co-exist in the same theological, social, and cultural space. To combat such notions, Lyons, like Green, states that the clergy resorted to apocalyptic traditions featuring the strong polemical rhetoric, pejorative imagery, and apologetic stereotypes around which the West's dominant discourse on Islam would later coalesce (pp. 55-59).

He further remarks that the discursive formation of the anti-Islam discourse provides a new social actor: the "Islam expert" who acts as the "trusted intermediary between the familiar world of Us and the disquieting world of Them" (p. 66). The original circle of such people, the Christian

clerical class in the earliest centuries, eventually widened over time as it spread to later humanist theoreticians of the Renaissance. The Romantic movement thrilled and fascinated the West with exotic epic literature, and folk tales painted the "Muslim world" with sarcastic and derogatory images that engaged symbols of the harem (secluded place). Nineteenth-century Orientalists also played a significant role in Europe's domination of the Muslim world, and today a network of journalists, pundits, commentators, and political leaders fulfill a similar role.

Some Western scholars have tried to present an accurate picture of Islam and Muslims. Illustrative of such people, say Green (pp. 55-65) and Kumar (pp. 20-21), are various Enlightenment-era scholars of the early eighteenth century. These two authors, along with Lyons, state that the lack of awareness about Islam during the earliest Christian-Muslim encounters contributed significantly to the formation of the anti-Islam discourse. But even though there have been shifts in the traditional Western projection of the Muslim "Other" due to changing historical circumstances, one element has always served as its central pillar: the "fear" of Muslims.[12]

Sheehi, Lean, and Bail focus primarily on modern anti-Muslim individuals, groups, organizations, and institutions. Nevertheless, the foreword to Sheehi's book also points out that Muslims were "diabolised" in the popular consciousness, a propaganda ploy pursued and deployed with great zeal by the ruling elite and the clergy at particular moments (p. 19). Similarly, Esposito's foreword to Lean's book states: "It [Islamophobia] has long and deep historical roots" (p. x). Thus the majority of the scholarly works presented here view this discourse's formation in medieval Europe; show how it has remained in place, although with major shifts in its narratives; and, as seen by many, is said to have entered a new phase after 9/11.

Islamophobia: Common Themes, Parallel Narratives

Answering the question of why medieval Europe's anti-Muslim discourse continues to be so effective requires a thorough investigation, for several factors have caused it to emerge as the dominant discourse while replacing otherwise legitimate, positive, and actual historical facts and figures. Central to this discourse is a thread of interrelated themes and narratives that distort the actual thought and practice of those against whom the discourse functions (Lyons, p. 69). Importantly, the works under review have identified a well-knitted cohort of "pseudo-scholars," authors, and civil society

groups predisposed to the "demonization of Islam" propaganda. Such authors are supported by a verifiable $40 million per year Islamophobia industry in the United States with an increasingly global reach (Green, p. 211). The far Right, both in the United Kingdom and the United States, primarily relies on large amounts of funding, support, and publicity from various parts of the conservative movement, ranging from Tea Party activists to Ultra-Zionists.

Since 9/11, in the United States a cadre of shadowy groups and individuals have spent millions of dollars to disseminate misinformation about Muslims into the mainstream media, body politic, and public consciousness in order to provide political cover for Washington's war on terror and Tel Aviv's war on the Palestinians, writes Sheehi (p. 118). An investigation conducted by the Center for American Progress revealed that nine top conservative foundations have been largely responsible for this remarkable increase in funding between 2001 and 2012 that has helped fan the flames of anti-Muslim hate in America (Bail, pp. 74-75; Lean, pp. 134-36; Kumar, p. 181; Green, pp. 206-11). Similarly, a 2013 Council on American-Islamic Relations report identified thirty-seven United States-based anti-Islam groups and estimated their combined revenue at $119 million between 2008 and 2011. Bail maintains that data collected by the Internal Revenue Service show that such groups accumulated more than $245 million in contributions during the decade after 9/11 (p. 74).

The in-depth Center for American Progress investigation reveals that the funding primarily found its way into the hands of five key people and their organizations: Frank Gaffney's Center for Security Policy, Daniel Pipes' Middle East Forum, Pamela Geller and Robert Spencer's Stop Islamization of America, Steven Emerson's Investigative Project on Terrorism, and David Yerushalmi's Society of Americans for National Existence. These anti-Muslim organizations have had a significant influence upon media, government, and public opinion, claim Bail (p. 76), Lean (p. 134), Kumar (p. 180), and Green (p. 211). All five are actively promoting the deeply flawed portrayal of Islam as an inherently violent ideology that seeks domination over the United States and all non-Muslims.

Across the board, surveys indicate that Europeans consider Islam to be incompatible with Western values. Other prejudiced perceptions are that Islam shares no common values with other cultures; is inferior to the West; is a violent political ideology rather than a religion as such; and that it is irrational, anti-modern, anti-woman, and sexually perverse. The supposed historical incompatibility of European and Islamic values is central to Islamophobia.

Islam is Violent

Perhaps the concept of violence (jihad) is the most alarming part of this over-all narrative. Lyons states that this particular discourse has fuelled the war on terrorism, framed its rhetoric, shaped its public reception, distorted the West's policy choices, and determined is outcomes (p. 113). For him, the "Islam experts" have hijacked the term *jihad* and painted those who have been resisting foreign onslaught as violent radicals. Lean writes that Islam-ophobia has decried the threat of "stealth jihad," an alleged attempt by Mus-lims to control the state's machinery in order to impose a "creeping Sharia" law through peaceful means (pp. 105, 115). Similarly, Kumar says that "Islam experts" propagate the idea that Muslims want to replace the American con-stitution with Sharia law (p. 179) and that the congregations of 80 percent of American mosques support and promote violence (p. 180).

Pointing to the claim of Bernard Lewis, the neo-Orientalist denizen of the neoconservative Right and pro-Israel, Sheehi writes in a similar tone: anti-Muslims propagate the view that "violence and subjugation are inher-ent cultural characteristics of Muslims and Arabs' worldview" (p. 73). Moreover, Bail asserts that the "stealth jihad" narrative has become even more powerful due to Spencer's website www.jihadwatch.org, which has launched a multilayer campaign to discredit Muslim civil society groups and organization in the United States (p. 94).

Women and Sexual Perversity

The status and role of women in Islam, which occupies a central place in the anti-Muslim discourse, has also received a great deal of attention and shaped perception since the Enlightenment and even today in the war on terrorism. Lyons notes that symbols such as the hijab, niqab, and harem continue to attract people and remain contentious. In the West, he explains, they continue to invoke the sense of oppression, degradation, despotism, sexualization, and backwardness of Islam and Muslims in general (pp. 163-65). Sheehi also unveils Washington's and the Islamophobes' rhetoric on Muslim women and how they have used this issue of women's oppres-sion and liberation as an effective tool to maintain and expand American political and economic dominance at the global level (p. 114), as seen most clearly in their "justifiable" military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq despite the Bush administration's own anti-women platform (pp. 73, 113, 110, and 176). Kumar (p. 188) and Lean (p. 188) also agree with this assertion.

Green makes a similar point that pre-modern stereotypes of Muslim women as sexually oppressed beings exploited by powerful Muslim men (p. 81) have made their way into the Orientalists' and "war on terror" propaganda. European literature imagined Muslim women, Green further states, as "veiled and naked, submissive and dangerous, domesticated and erotic" (p. 82). Such categories deprive Muslim women of choice and freedom and present bearded and traditionally dressed men who pray five times a day at a mosque as fundamentalists. Through such sociologically gendered traits, instead of mere biology, Muslims are reduced to a "racialized" group. Such delineation of the fundamentalist vs. moderate promotes a form of "racialized state and governance," in the words of David Tyrer, of a "biopolitical"[13] racism that the state and media use to restrict Muslims to artificial categories.

Islam is Irrational and Anti-Modern

What are the reasons for the Muslims' downfall? The Orientalist architects who continue to shape the present form of Islamophobia cite the lack of human reason or, in other words, religiosity. Lyons says that the notion of incompatibility between religion and science was strengthened by the writings of Ignaz Goldziher (d. 1921), who laid the superstructure for such later prominent Orientalists as Bernard Lewis, A. C. Crombie, David Lindberg, Toby Huff, and Edward Grant. Lyons critically remarks that the other possible and obvious explanations and causes for the decline of science among Muslims (i.e., economic malaise, geopolitical weakness, foreign invasion, and the collapse of other vital systems) "are rarely, if ever, given serious consideration" (p. 109). Kumar (p. 48) and Green (p. 80) quote Ernest Renan (d. 1892), a French philologist and scholar of religion who depicted Muslims as lacking reason and intelligence simply because of Islam. Therefore, he argues, according to Green:

> To be a Muslim is by definition to reject 'the European spirit' and all that makes this spirit superior: reason, science, and the drive for knowledge. Fanaticism and irrationality constitute the unchanging essence of Islam and the Arab race. (p. 81)

These pre-modern stereotypes and concerns, he further points out, encourage the use of militarily power to subdue the "'elements of barbarism' among colonized Muslims in light of his [Renan's] belief that science 'gives force for the service of reason'" (ibid.). Kumar refers to Pope Benedict

XVI's "Faith, Reason, and the University" (2006), in which he equated Catholicism with reason and Islam with violence and the lack of reason. Such myths and rhetoric are prevalent in the West, despite the fact that the Muslim world's scientific tradition helped Europe's technological revolution and Renaissance and that this indebtedness is widely acknowledged in almost every discipline of the physical and social sciences (Sheehi, p. 20).

The Power of the Anti-Muslim Discourse

The Western discourse of Islam and Muslims is so powerful that it has monopolized science, reason, the use of nuclear warfare, and technology. The anti-Muslim groups and organizations have successfully projected a false image of Islam and Muslims. Despite the Muslim civil society groups' condemnation of terrorism, their voices remain largely unheard, even though they enjoyed good relations with the Clinton and Bush administrations. Bail asserts that their voices remain unheard because the anti-Muslim organizations have "captivated the mass media via emotional warnings about the looming threat of Islam for the future of Western civilization" (p. 136). The power and displays of negative emotions, he writes, "enable fringe organisations to transcend their obscurity and humble resources by appealing to the media's legendary appetite for drama" (p. 51). Thus, Bail adds, in the aftermath of 9/11 this dynamic favors anti-Muslim organizations (p. 60).

Similarly, Sheehi echoes that fear has been used in the United States to "manufacture consent" (p. 211) and that the "Clash of Civilizations" thesis has remained a powerful tool that continues to shape Washington's domestic and foreign policies toward the Muslims. As mentioned earlier, the architects of anti-Muslim propaganda have projected "Islam" as the main impediment to progress, open-mindedness, reason, democracy, freedom, and human rights, as well as why Muslims are backward, violent, and so on for, as Sheehi asserts, the mainstream media was already purveying the anti-Arab and Islamophobic discourses that made the Freedom Agenda salient and urgent (p. 151). Therefore, they believe that it is their "moral responsibility" (p. 73) to interfere in Muslim-majority countries in order to liberate their people from the oppression of the so-called extremist ideology and inferior culture of the Islamic tradition. However, Sheehi argues that the political and cultural history of Muslim countries clearly shows that "modernity is entrenched in all regions of the world, Muslim and non-Muslim" (p. 225).

Moreover, such negative stereotypes are not mainly or only found among racists, conservative and evangelical Christians, and right-wing nationalists, but also among the secular and liberal intelligentsia as well as the wider non-religious public. The ideological underpinnings are alive in Trump's foreign policy as much as that of his predecessors Bush and Clinton. However, the main actors shaping the current cultural Islamophobia are the neocon stars Daniel Pipes, Robert Spencer, David Yerushalmi, Glenn Beck, Pamela Geller, Paul Wolfowitz, David Horowitz, and Frank Gaffney, as well as such native informers as Walid Shoebat, Walid Phares, Wafa Sultan, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, Ibn Warraq, Brigitte Gabriel, Tawfik Hamid, Zuhdi Jasser, Fouad Ajami, Azar Nafisi, and Kanan Makiya. Among them are self-styled experts on Islam and terrorism who are respected in Washington. However, it has been noted that they are not qualified (Sheehi, pp. 223-24) to make any such policy decisions or suggestions. Nevertheless, "native informers" reinforce anti-Muslim and anti-Arab racism due to the dismal realities that exist in their countries of origin, and because their language is more "reasonable," they are promoted by powerful political figures (Kumar, p. 186).

Although multiculturalism, pluralism, and co-existence have remained part of British and American societies, serious efforts are underway by anti-Muslim and racist groups to disrupt and destroy these democratic principles. Muslims are being deliberately targeted on the pretext of "security" and "war on terror" propaganda. Social profiling and surveillance, along with unnecessary detention and torture, have resulted in fear, violence, and human rights violations against Muslim Americans, who continue to be harassed and persecuted by the state (Kumar, p. 195). In addition, the political and economic interests of the United States and its allies in the Middle East, especially its oil (Sheehi, p. 217), have engendered loss and destruction everywhere, rather than freedom and the rule of law, on the basis of which Washington invaded the region. Similarly, Washington's unshakable support for Israel has enabled considerable human rights violations and violence against the Palestinians in the region. According to Sheehi, one explanation that is logically applicable to the current policy is that Washington is "rationally" invested in the Middle East's ongoing instability (p. 219).

Challenging Islamophobia

The works refereed in this article reveal the looming dangers of the Islamophobia industry. Such anti-Muslim actions must be challenged, for they

are detrimental to the democratic setup in the Western societies, if not less so in the East. Therefore, both the West and the Muslims have to play a major role in restricting the now-prevalent presence of Islamophobia. Lyons anticipates a major shift in the Western imaginary of Islam and the Muslims, which is most certainly not a simple task. The West's intellectuals need to take the lead in shaping a positive public discourse, and its various political administrations have to abandon their traditional egocentricity (pp. 196-97). Kumar believes that progressive activists and civil society groups, along with the victims' families, should organize rallies to raise public consciousness and awareness and also seek legal recourse. These would be essential steps against anti-Muslim bigotry (p. 108).

While calling for purposeful action in this regard, Lean, like Kumar, asserts that the anti-Muslim propaganda that fractures and pits minority groups against each other could be resisted, both correctly and forcefully, only by refusing to fall prey to the vicious and ceaseless anti-Muslim movement that now covers the globe. (p. 184). Sheehi takes a slightly divergent view: challenging Islamophobia underpins a critical understanding of political Islam "as a complicated and multifaceted social, historical, economic and political phenomenon" (p. 223). Such an approach, he contends, would help dismantle the very "epistemology of Islamophobia by revealing some of its discursive apparitions and human effects" (p. 226).

Green devotes a full chapter to interviewing nine very influential scholars, among them John L. Esposito and Tariq Ramadan, who are working to counteract Islamophobia. Positive dialogue, interpersonal relationships, and cooperation with and open-mindedness toward non-Muslims are, in their opinions, some of the best methods in this regard. Last but not least, although Bail says nothing directly about challenging the anti-Muslim rhetoric, his explanation of how cultural messages, negative emotions, social networks, and financial resources shape the West's understanding of Islam alludes to the fact that any counter-reactions and efforts are not yet powerful enough to resist the anti-Muslim groups. Therefore, it implicitly suggests that the mainstream Muslim civil society groups should come together and adopt a course that will enable their voices to be heard and thereby defeat the existing anti-Muslim propaganda.

Conclusion

We have looked for the major themes and narratives as presented in these six beneficial books. Despite the theoretical observations made by Lyons

in his *Islam through Western Eyes*, it is unlikely that his discourse can be achieved in the near future. Nevertheless, his book is of immense value to researchers, students, and other concerned parties because it both investigates and scrutinizes the current anti-Islam discourse and thereby opens wider perspectives on it. Similarly, Bail's *Terrified* offers a fascinating account of how anti-Islam fringe groups construct a cultural environment in which they can propagate negative emotions upon which the media can build. It presents an excellent survey of the activities of such groups and social media networks, such as Facebook and Twitter, to name a few.

Green's *Fear of Islamophobia* and Kumar's *Islamophobia and the Politics of Empire* provide a fascinating account of this anti-Muslim and racist movement through its historical perspective. Both books are excellent introductions to the Islamophobia phenomenon, and their presentations are simple and easy to understand. Lean's *Islamophobia Industry* unveils the anti-Muslim network's major actors, activities, and funding resources and represents a landmark critical contribution to the Islamophobia network. Sheehi's *Islamophobia: The Ideological Campaign against Muslims* offers a different but related description of the ideology – capitalism, thirst of power, hegemony – that underpins this phenomenon. However, it ignores the historical perspective on the relationship between Islamophobia and Islam. Nevertheless, his research opens new vistas toward Washington's ideology that shapes its foreign policy toward both Israel and the Muslim world.

Overall, each of these six books offers a fascinating, thrilling, and engaging description of how the Islamophobia network functions. They also offer practical, forceful, and fruitful measures to contain the now-pervasive discourse of Islamophobia. After reading these books, one will be able to fully understand the versatile nature, function, and dangers of Islamophobia.

Endnotes

1.   Abdul Rahim Kidwai, Review of "Muslims in the Western Imagination," *The Muslim World Book Review* 31, no. 1 (2015): 58.
2.   Sophia Rose Arjana, *Muslims in the Western Imagination* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 2.
3.   Carl W. Ernst, *Following Muhammad: Rethinking Islam in the Contemporary World* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), xvii, 11.
4.   Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia, *Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All* (London: Runnymede Trust 1997), 5.

5. John L. Esposito and Dalia Mogahed, *Who Speaks for Islam?: What a Billion Muslims Really Think* (New York: Gallup Press, 2007), 46.

6. Vincent J. Cornell, *Voices of Islam*, 5 vols. (London: Praeger Publishers, 2007), 1:x.

7. Tomaz Mastnak, *Crusading Peace: Christendom, the Muslim World, and Western Political Order* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

8. Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad and Nazir Nader Harb, "Post-9/11: Making Islam an American Religion," *Religions* 5 (2014): 479.

9. Edward W. Said, *Covering Islam: How the Media and the Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World*, rev. ed. (London: Vintage Books, 1997), 5.

10. Peter Gottschalk and Gabriel Greenberg, *Islamophobia: Making Muslims the Enemy* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2008), 5.

11. Commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia, *Islamophobia*, 1, 4, Retrieved on Apr. 13, 2016 from www.runnymedetrust.org/companies/17/74/Islamophobia-A-Challenge-for-Us-All.html. Also see Islamophobia Research and Documentation Project at the Center for Race and Gender (Berkeley: the University of California), retrieved on Apr. 13, 2016 from http://crg.berkeley.edu/content/islamophobia/defining-islamophobia.

12. In other words, there has been a shift from classical Orientalism to a new Orientalism (or Islamism) that projects Muslims in terms of global terrorism, Islamic jihadism, fanatic Islamism, fundamentalism, fascism, and Islamic authoritarianism. For more on this, see, for example, el-Sayed el-Aswad, "Images of Muslims in Western Scholarship and Media after 9/11," *Digest of Middle East Studies* 22, no. 1 (2013): 39-56.

13. David Tyrer, *The Politics of Islamophobia: Race, Power, and Fantasy* (London: Pluto Press, 2013), 21.

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