

A Muslim Approach to Western Studies of Islam

By Khaleel Mohammed

September 11, 2001 ranks undoubtedly as one of the most horrific manifestations of terrorism in the name of religion. That catastrophe has generated a strain of Islamophobia in the West that has affected not only the media and academe but also the personal safety of Muslims. Yet, however, it is not to be assumed that prior to 9/11, there was any semblance of tolerance for Muslims and Islam. The position of the Western world, with its Eurocentric world view, was aptly summarized by an entry in the 1910 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*: “Islam is clearly repugnant to Europeans.”^[1]

Generations later, Professor Edward Sa‘id of Columbia University noted that he was unable to discover any period in European or American history since the Middle Ages in which Islam was discussed without passion, prejudice, or political interests.^[2] In his 1997 edition of the same book, he stated: “Malicious generalizations about Islam have become the last acceptable form of denigration of foreign culture in the West; what is said about Muslim mind, or character, or religion, or culture as a whole cannot be said in mainstream discussion about Africans, Jews, other Orientals, or Asians.”^[3]

One may dismiss the hate literature of popular media on the grounds that such material is not subject to the demanding intellectual standards of the academic milieu. Yet, as two independent researchers have discovered, media coverage indeed affects what happens in academe. In 1995, Professor Khālid Blankenship observed:

Even from its founding, the area of Islamic studies, which used to be described by the gradually-discredited term “orientalism,” was established for the purpose of creating control through knowledge. Today...Muslims are almost never allowed to speak about Islam; rather, non-Muslim “experts” are called in, of Jewish, Christian, secularist or Arab nationalist backgrounds, all of whom are carefully selected from those who will not stray from the framework of acceptable opinions ...Thus, a university instructor is likely to find the students already completely convinced by what appears in the media and unreceptive to alternative views.” ^[4]

Professor Kevin Reinhardt of Dartmouth College echoes the same point, noting:

What we are confronted with instead are problems with ‘pseudo knowledge.’ All students who walk into an Islam class, though they profess ignorance, still “know” something about Islam -- if only from the news. Every Islamicist is aware that, whether it is in the New York Daily News or on National Public Radio, it is the negative, the violent, the ignorant that characterize the images and voices presented in the media as Muslim. Garbled or dated history, plotted summaries of creeds and practices -- all these are framed by distaste, dislike, or outrage. Yet, in the end, this is less a problem of fact than of affect: students arrive with a constellation of terms, mostly negative, that cluster round the notion of Islam, so that words like “terrorist” come naturally and unreflectively when they answer an exam question about, say, the Khārijīs.^[5]

Given this calamitous connection between the popular news media and the academic world, in an America that is beset by a zealous nationalism characterized by the most insidious Islamophobia, it is easy to understand the gross generalizations and simplifications about Islam. This situation is exacerbated by the claim of some who see a pro-Islam bias in the academic community. As the

Center for Islam and Public Policy (CIPP), a Maryland think tank, discovered, there is an ongoing debate with contradictory claims, with one position that the study of Islam is tainted with anti-Muslim bias, and the other view that the academic establishment of (Middle Eastern and) Islamic Studies in the United States has been pro-Islam.[6]

The proponents of the latter position would have us believe that the Middle Eastern Studies Association (MESA), America's largest membership organization of scholars whose work can be classified as relating to the Middle East, is guilty of "political correctness" and "inattention to radical Islam." Professors Bernard Lewis and Fouad Ajami have founded the Association for the Study of the Middle East and Africa (ASMEA), for, among other things, "studying those elements of Islam and the Middle East that MESA's leaders ignore or downplay." [7]

The CIPP project made several deeply insightful suggestions for solving the situation, including the funding of research and chairs of Islamic positions at American universities.[8] In examining the history of Islamic studies in America, CIPP found that the discipline was primarily set up in the form of area studies programs, to train experts who could assume positions of leadership in government, universities, and corporate sectors, and with focus on modern Islamic developments.[9] The CIPP study, for all its cogency, was somewhat flawed. While it addressed supposed differences between the European and American approaches, it overlooked the fact that the core texts and theories for such studies were largely the product of *Islamwissenschaft* -- a German formulation that *ab initio* presented Islam as an alien, backward, and anti-Western religion and ideology.

The genesis of *Islamwissenschaft* shows its incipient negativity, and Muslim scholars have contributed to the negative state of affairs by neglecting the study of Western religion theory, terminology, and the study of the other Abrahamic religions. They have therefore allowed for outsiders to make erroneous or dubious comparisons of the Qur'an with other scriptures. By not developing a foundation in religion studies and the ability to structure adequate terminology, they often fall prey to the use of non-Muslim- designed, derogatory, political coinages in a religion setting, thereby reinforcing negative images of Islam. Following are some examples of the problem as it applies to the Qur'an and the idea of its "borrowing." By focusing on narratological analyses, Muslim researchers can refute some of the wrong ideas and play a meaningful role in removing negative images of their religion.

Unlike the situation when Edward Sa'ïd made his scathing critique in 1981, Muslim professors are now part of religion departments in many universities, and one would expect that their academic training and understanding of their faith would make for a better presentation of Islam. This expectation, however, falls short for the simple reason that there is a vast disconnect between Islamic and religion studies. Islamic studies cover a large swath of topics, including politics, economics, religion, mysticism, and biographies. The end result is that many "Islamicists" who are employed in the various departments of religion are not religion specialists, and, as such, they are not generally familiar with religion theory and terminology. Even if the professor has had a background from a religion department in a Middle Eastern Islamic university, his/her approach to scripture is contrary to the norm of religion studies.[10]

Apart from the foundational issue is the added problem that some Muslim professors are not even trained in Islamic studies; they have become lecturers on the subject either because they are Arabs or claim they can teach Islam. In many instances, they do not even know Arabic, and can therefore misunderstand and misrepresent Islam.[11] One of the most pressing problems is that many Muslim professors bring either their sectarian or faith-based prejudices, and do not

objectively approach their subjects. This is a particularly thorny issue since academic protocol at secular institutions requires that a professor teach objectively. Yet, as Yushau Sodiq points out, it is hard for Muslim professors to be detached completely from religious bias.[12] This implies that Muslim professors, apart from their bias regarding their own religion (forgetting the fact that they complain about the bias against Islam from non-Muslim professors), give inadequate consideration to sects to which the majority does not belong, such as Shī‘ī, Aḥmadī, Zaydī, et cetera.

Clearly there is a great need for improvement in Islamic studies as a discipline within religion, and several studies have been conducted on the issue. Richard Martin wrote “Approaches to Islam in Religious Studies” in 1985, giving the viewpoints of several scholars, both Muslim and non-Muslim.[13] The Saudi-sponsored Institute for Islamic and Arabic Sciences in America (IIASA) held annual symposia on the subject from 1993-5.[14] Professor Brannon Wheeler of Bard College edited a volume that was the result of an MESA research with several distinguished specialists on methods of integrating Islamic studies into the general study of religion.[15]

The *Islamwissenschaft* Approach

The study of religion in post-Enlightenment Germany started as *Religionwissenschaft*, which then spawned sub-disciplines of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* and *Islamwissenschaft*. It would be wrong, however, to think that the only difference between the mentioned sub-disciplines is the religion of focus. While non-Jews did play a role in *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, it was primarily the brainchild of Jews, whereas *Islamwissenschaft* was designed by non-Muslims, with Muslims being denied any role whatsoever. As Professor Amos Funkenstein explained, *Wissenschaft des Judentums* “faithfully reflected the desires and self-image of nineteenth-century Jews craving for emancipation, the mood of the “perplexed of the times.”[16]

The most prominent names associated with early *Islamwissenschaft* are non-Muslim, among them Georg Freytag, Antoine Isaac Silvestre de Sacy, Abraham Geiger, Gustav Weil, Theodor Nöldeke, Aloys Sprenger, and Ignaz Goldziher, all of whom were non-Muslims and who applied the then-condescending Orientalist perspective in their examination of Islam. There is no record of any Muslim scholar being substantially associated with the initial formation of these western approaches; Fazlur Raḥmān in the latter part of the twentieth century was the first outstanding Muslim personality to challenge the prevailing opinions.[17]

One of the most famous early theses on Islam, completed in 1833 at the University of Marburg, was Abraham Geiger’s *Was Hat Muhammad aus dem Judenthume aufgenommen* (What Muḥammad took from Judaism). The dissertation was developed from Geiger’s presentation in a competition sponsored by one of the most noted Islamophobes of the time: Professor Georg Wilhelm Freytag, himself the protégé of the French Arabist, Antoine Isaac Silvestre de Sacy. Later research was to later find several problems in Geiger’s formulations.[18] He had operated largely on the idea of Islam’s wholesale borrowing from Judaism, not entertaining the idea of common origins and ancient bonds between Hebrews and Arabs -- a theory that was advanced by a contemporary, Heinrich Ewald. Geiger, for example, frequently posited Qur’anic borrowings from the Midrash of Pirque de Rabbi Eliezer, not realizing that the latter document was composed after the advent of Islam.[19] Geiger’s views of Islam are indeed problematic when one reflects on

some of his views, such as, ‘There is hardly a word for ‘holy’ in the Arabic language.’[20] In assessing Muḥammad, he seemed to have not fully availed himself of original sources, preferring rather to rely on Aloys Sprenger as “a thorough and competent investigator,” and therefore describing Muḥammad as having a “devotion with treachery.”[21]

Geiger, a rabbi and historian, obviously wrote primarily as a Jew to bring about reform and to counteract prevalent anti-Jewish feelings. In her masterful study of Geiger, Susannah Heschel has noted that, during the Middle Ages, it was a common anti-Semitic practice to blame Judaism for the rise of Islam. Geiger’s approach was not to deny any of this, but to skillfully show that in its dependence on Jewish tradition, Islam was totally a human concoction and absolutely unoriginal.[22] Whatever good that lay in Islam came from Judaism and the bad derived from the innate backwardness of Muḥammad and his Arabs.[23] Based on Geiger’s writings, until the ideas of Christian provenance were propounded by Richard Bell,[24] German scholars christened Islam as *schmarotzergewächs* (a parasitic growth out of Judaism). [25] By focusing on his stories of Jewish suffering at the hands of Muslims, Geiger hoped to show, that for both Christianity and Judaism, Islam was the common enemy.

Islamwissenschaft developed in this intellectual setting, where the prevalent western academic ideas of Islam were nurtured. While Geiger presented Islam in a negative light, he was as critical of many aspects of Judaism and the traditional practice. Geiger and several other Jewish scholars were able, by their scholarly approach, to redefine in many ways the approaches to the study of Judaism. To be sure, the demonization of Jews and Judaism continued for a long time afterwards, but the contribution of Geiger and his colleagues can today be credited for the state of Jewish studies in western universities.

While the field of religion studies has evolved tremendously, and the overtly critical approach to Islam has largely been abandoned, the most consulted theories and texts in Western studies of Islam are still largely based on the writings of scholars who, knowingly or unknowingly, have coined problematic terminologies. Among such terminologies are words like “fundamentalist,” “radical” and “moderate,” which are three of the most-used designations in both academic and popular books. No reliable lines of demarcation have been charted to indicate exact difference among fundamentalists, moderates, radicals, normative, and militants; nonetheless, some have postulated that approximately 10 to 15 percent of the total Muslim population is militant.[26]

Today, “fundamentalist” is an umbrella term denoting everything from the die-hard traditionalist to the militant anti-American extremist. The term is confusing, as its initial coinage arose within a Protestant Christian worldview that opposed liberal, secular viewpoints. Many Muslims, unfamiliar with the genesis of the word in its American usage and its current negativism, would willingly identify with the praiseworthy Arabic equivalent *uṣūlī* that indicates adherence to the Islamic sources, with no overtones of anti-modernity or politics. To use fundamentalism then, in religious and political discourse, and to apply the label indiscriminately equates “movements forged in radically different historical and political contexts, and obscures their doctrinal differences, including the place of violence in religious doctrine.”[27]

The terms fundamentalist, radical, and moderate are meant to polarize and establish labels that can be terribly misleading. Ever since President Bush’s declared war on terror, with “radical Islam” as the enemy, no right-thinking Muslim would use the term in self-description, but instead, direct it towards identifying an opponent. When Muslims use these divisive and denigrating labels, they close the doors to all forms of meaningful intra-faith discourse. Use of those terms identifies them to those whom they have so disparagingly labeled, albeit sometimes

erroneously, as being inimical to their own religion and co-religionists. The identified “fundamentalists” and “radicals” would be correct in stating that the appliers of such labels, while Muslims, are often the products of western orientalist thought.[28] One does not hear similar descriptions applied by Christians and Jews to their own; instead, one hears terms such as Orthodox, Reform, Reconstructionist, Conservative, and Born-again, none of which are designed to imply a negative image of the other.[29] Being introduced at conferences by non-Muslims as a “moderate” Muslim is a description that deems other Muslims who do not share the same viewpoints as immoderate fanatics.[30]

Comparative Narratology

At present, more than 1,000 undergraduate departments and programs in the study of religion exist in North America.[31] The change in immigration policies in both Canada and the United States changed religious demography, with a proportional demographic shift in universities, to the point where Muslims are a noticeable presence at most universities, both as students and faculty.[32] The presence of Muslim faculty, however, has not, for reasons mentioned earlier, led to any substantial change in the approach to Islam.

Since Islamic studies is not conducted under the aegis of religious studies, the Muslim “specialists” who conduct Qur’anic studies often do so without a knowledge of western concepts (and the attendant vocabulary) of exegesis. Even when Muslim professors approach their subject from the perspective of religion, their presentations tend to focus on the pre-modern period. One hears of the exegeses of al-Tabari, Al-Zamakhshari, and a host of classical scholars, but rarely does one hear of the modern discourse of Muḥammad al-Ghazālī or Ṭāhā al-‘Alwānī. There is not a total eschewal of modern names; unfortunately, however, such modern studies only represent those that can be researched for their fanaticism or animosity towards the United States, typical examples being Yūsuf al-Qaradāwī, more notorious for his fatwa on suicide bombing than for his groundbreaking book *Al-Ḥalāl wa’l Ḥarām*.

Muslim professors might waste time arguing about the Qur’an’s divine provenance (a concept that cannot be proven in an academic forum), but they cannot explain the differences between Biblical and Qur’anic narratives except in a way that attributes corruption to the Biblical version. This of course overlooks the idea of canonization and the fact that such canonization arbitrarily accepted and rejected books. In dealing with Qur’anic stories vis à vis Biblical versions, an Islamicist ought to have a good background in the forming of the Jewish and Christian canons in order to attempt any narratology.

If a professor were to present a particular religion using the terminology and jargon specific to religion, this would lead to better communication with students who are specialists in the field. For many, it seems still a difficult idea to grasp that Muslims can be sociologists and scholars of religion, and can present their own religion objectively. One of the doctrinal hurdles that presents itself for observant Muslims in academe is that western scholarship sees scripture as text and subject therefore to the same criteria of examination as any other written work. As such, they are often at a loss to understand the use of terminologies imported through interdisciplinary studies, or from within religion studies.

Examples of such terms are logocentrism, phallocentrism, reader response criticism, preterism, presentism the affective fallacy, the intentional fallacy, the hermeneutic circle, and the Divine Command theory, just to name a few.[33] Sadly, Muslim scholars, both classical and modern, have discussed most of these ideas, albeit under different terms.[34] When their ideas

are presented, however, if the scholar does not know the western term, s/he cannot draw parallels and make the necessary comparisons.

The late medieval Muslim opposition to Isra'iliyaat has continued throughout the centuries, and as such, many scholars chose not to explore the Jewish and Christian testaments, despite what might seem like Qur'anic exhortations.[35] This means that few are therefore adequately equipped to rebut the still prevailing theory of borrowing that gained fame with Abraham Geiger's thesis. This idea assumes that the shared narratives in Abrahamic religions make the supposedly earlier materials normative, and the later derivative. William Sandmel used the term "parallelomania" to describe this concept, defining it as "the extravagance among scholars which first overdoes the supposed similarity in passages and then proceeds to describe source and derivation as if implying literary connection flowing in an inevitable or predestined direction." [36]

States Marilyn Waldman, a good complement to the issue of influence and transmission studies is found in narratology, wherein one may identify the "biblical" material in the Qur'an to clarify not only the relationship of the Bible to the Qur'an, but also the art of the Qur'anic narrative itself.[37]

The borrowing theory is problematic because it does not account for the deviation between the elements of some Qur'anic and Biblical stories, and as such, there has been a rather hasty assumption that the Qur'an's versions were somehow the Prophet's misinterpretations. The story of Mary in the Qur'an illustrates this fallacious reasoning, as some have opined that the author of the Qur'an committed a historical error when having Mary addressed as "sister of Aaron." [38] Said Schwarzbaum, "We should never forget that Muḥammad rarely retells exactly what he has heard from his mentors and informants. Most of the scraps of information which he has got orally from his Jewish and Christian informants...have become mixed up in his mind..." [39]

The idea of Mary being brought up in the Temple is not found in the canonical gospels, but rather in the Protoevangelium, or Proto-Gospel of James, a mid-second-century work, that names Joachim and Anna as the parents of Mary.[40] While many Muslims might be happy to accept this supposed provenance, under the assumption that it therefore proves that the story is not a Qur'anic concoction, but that it was existent at an early stage, a thorough reading of the document shows several lines of departure from the Qur'anic narrative. Only knowledge of the cognate relationship between the Arabic "nadharto" [41] and the Hebraic term *nāzir* [42] gives a sense of deep meaning to the story, one that is not easily deciphered from the Protoevangelium. In the Qur'an, the mother of Mary consecrates her child to God, and her prayer is answered. Given the purity rites of the time, the mother (Anna) assumes the child will be a male, since a female would, by menstruation, defile the temple, which clarifies the Qur'anic ayah, "And the male is not like the female." [43] Without this understanding, one is forced to see the appropriateness of the ayah in context.

In addition, the ayah shows that God does not allow for gender discrimination in terms of worship, a theme adumbrated in the Qur'an.[44] The Protoevangelium does not touch on this aspect of the story, having us believe that even from conception; Anna would have welcomed a child of either gender,[45] despite no reported case of a female Nazirite in Biblical history. One sees why the Qur'an's version is significant, and why Mary's birth story would be significant, given the Arab regard for female children at the time.[46] Even then, the Protoevangelium is provably older than the Qur'an, so attributing provenance of the Qur'anic narrative to the older document is manifestly problematic.[47]

At best, one might argue for a allusive relationship wherein the Qur'an presupposes its readers are somewhat familiar with the Proto-gospel version (or versions that have, while similar in content, not reached us). Attributing provenance to a written Judeo-Christian document also presupposes that the events depicted in the Bible or non-Arab Judeo-Christian literature are the only and oldest versions from which all others must have been derived. Yet, the vocabulary and depiction within the Qur'an seems to refute such an idea: the issue of Arab narratives is clearly evidenced by the Qur'an wherein it describes how some of the Prophet's contemporaries referred to the stories as *asātīr al awwalīn* (tales of the ancients).[48] In his dealing with the matter, Fazlur Raḥmān has convincingly propounded that the Qur'anic verses evidence a fairly systematic knowledge of what is termed Biblical material. [49]

That the Qur'an should accord a Judeo-Christian figure such honor is a fact often alluded to in interfaith discussions, and certainly sets the Qur'an apart from the older Abrahamic documents in terms of its pluralism and inclusivism. Certainly, modern interfaith participants often draw attention to the fact that Mary is the only woman referred to by name in the Qur'an and that she has a chapter named after her; the more in-depth analysis just discussed however is often missed.

By failing to make themselves familiar with Biblical material and the religion theories pertaining thereto, Muslims are often unable to make the intertextual connections. The story of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah is a good example. In the Hebrew Bible, Abraham pleads for Lot's people, presenting his case to the point where in the final verses of Genesis 18, it would seem that if ten good people were present, the city would have been spared divine punishment. If a reader of the Qur'an brings the details of this narrative (not provided in the Qur'an), when contemplating (11:70-4), then Lot's question in (11:78) can be perceived for what it actually is: not simply a plea, but trying to evoke a certain action, in response to a divine promise.

In classes on comparative themes in Abrahamic religions, students have never failed to note the difference they found in studying the Qur'anic verses when taken along with the readings of the relevant Biblical material. The judgmental, strict, litigious God of Islam that has been created in the imagination of Western Orientalists (and to a certain extent in some Muslim perception) is in fact a forgiving, affectionate Lord, certainly far more peaceful than the deity that orders the slaughter of man, woman, and child in some verses of the Bible.

A study of the creation story from both texts clearly shows this: in the Biblical version, Eve is the one who is misguided and then leads Adam astray; they are both cursed and their lot is suffering. By contrast, in the Qur'an, both parties are equally blameworthy, and are forgiven. Through such studies, one can further delve into the studies of the evolution of Sharī'ah, and point out that many of the ideas of Sharī'ah are in fact the result of human reasoning, and not of divine edict. The time has come for Muslim professors to shed themselves of the inferiority complex of using texts of famous but dated Orientalist authors, and instead rely on the works of their co-religionist scholars who, trained in religion, are better suited as sources for instructional material.

While it is certainly easy to lay the blame for the sad state of Islamic studies at the feet of Orientalists, only by a new approach to Islamic studies in general, and Qur'anic studies in particular, can Muslims make any meaningful contribution to the field. Fazlur Raḥmān's identification of the two main problems in Muslim scholarship regarding Islam's scripture still applies: lack of a genuine feel for the relevance of the Qur'an today and a fear that such a presentation might deviate on some points from traditionally received opinions.[50] The

problems are interconnected; approaching them from the perspective of Western religion studies offers a solution.

Bibliography

- Richard Bell, *The Origin of Islam in its Christian Environment*. London: Cass, 1968.
- Blankenship, Khālid, "Islamic Studies at Universities in the United States," *Proceedings of the First Annual Symposium*. Fairfax: Institute of Islamic and Arabic Sciences in America, 1995.
- Center for Islam and Public Policy, "Project Executive Summary: the State of Islamic Studies in American Universities: Project Executive Summary," December 2007.
- CIPP, "Policy Recommendations" (Working Draft), July 2007.
- Eliot, Sir Charles N. E., "Asia: History," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th edition (1910), vol.2.
- Ehrman, Bart, *Lost Scriptures*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Funkenstein, Amos, *Perceptions of Jewish History*. Berkeley/ Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993.
- Geiger, Abraham, *Judaism and its History*. New York: The Bloch Publishing Company, 1911.
- Heschel, Susannah, *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998. <http://www.answeringislam.org>.
- Lewis, Bernard, "The Roots of Rage," *The Atlantic Monthly*, 1990.
<http://www.theatlanticmonthly.com/issues/90Sep/rage.htm>.
- Mālik, Iftikhār, *Crescent Between Cross and Star*. London and Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Mamdānī, Mahmoud, *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim*. New York, Pantheon Books 2004.
- Martin, Richard, *Approaches to Islam in Religious Studies*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1985.
- McAuliffe, Jane Dammen, "Disparity and Context: Teaching Quranic Studies in North America," in *Teaching Islam*, Brannon Wheeler, ed. Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Metzger, Bruce and Michael Coogan, eds. *Oxford Companion to the Bible*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Muḥammad, Khalīl, "The Art of Heeding," *Interfaith Dialogue at the Grass Roots*, Rebecca Kratz Mays, ed. Philadelphia: The Ecumenical Press, 2008.
- Murfin, Ross and Ray, Supriya, *The Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literal Terms*. Boston and New York: Bedford Books, 1997.
- Raḥmān, Fazlur, *Islam*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979.
- *Major Themes of the Qur'an*. Minneapolis: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1994.
- Reinhardt, Kevin, "On the 'Introduction to Islam,'" *Teaching Islam*, Brannon Wheeler, ed. Oxford and New York: University Press, 2003.
- Sa'īd, Edward, *Covering Islam*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1981.
- Sandmel, William, "Parallelomania," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, no.81, vol.1, March 1962.
- Schwarzbaum, Haim, *Biblical and Extra-biblical Legends in Islamic Folk-Literature* Walldorf-Hessen: Verlag für Orientkunde Dr. H. Vorndran, 1982.

- Sodiq, Yushau, "Teaching Islamic Studies in American Universities," *Proceedings of the First Annual Symposium*. IIASA Research Center: Fairfax, VA 1993-1995.
- Stillman, Norman, "The Story of Cain and Abel in the Qur'an and the Muslim Commentators: Some Observations," *Journal of Semitic Studies*, vol.19, 1974.
- Stillwell, Cinnamon, "Truth about Islam in Academia?" *FrontPage Magazine*, July 2, 2008.<http://www.campus-watch.org/article/id/5325>.
- Waldman, Marilyn, "New Approaches to "Biblical" Materials in the Qur'an," *Studies in Islamic and Judaic Traditions*, William Brinner and Stephen Ricks, eds. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1986.
- Wheeler, Brannon, "The Jewish Origins of Q 18:65-82: Reexamining Arent Jan Wensinck's Theory," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol.118, no.2, 1998.
- Wheeler, Brannon, Ed., *Teaching Islam*. New York and Oxford, 2003.

[1] See Sir Charles N. E. Eliot (former British diplomat), "Asia: History" in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th edition (1910), vol.2, pp.749-55.

[2] Edward Sa'īd, *Covering Islam* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981), p.23.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp.xi-xii.

[4] Khālid Blankenship, "Islamic Studies at Universities in the United States," *Proceedings of the First Annual Symposium* (Fairfax: Institute of Islamic and Arabic Sciences in America, 1995), pp.25-29.

[5] Kevin Reinhardt, "On the 'Introduction to Islam,'" *Teaching Islam*, ed. Brannon Wheeler (Oxford and New York: University Press, 2003), pp.22-45.

[6] Center for Islam and Public Policy, "Project Executive Summary: the State of Islamic Studies in American Universities: Project Executive Summary," December 2007.

[7] Cinnamon Stillwell, "Truth about Islam in Academia?" *FrontPage Magazine*, July 2, 2008.<http://www.campus-watch.org/article/id/5325>. The term "clash of civilizations" so frequently attributed to Samuel Huntington was actually coined by Bernard Lewis in his 1990 article in "The Roots of Rage" in *The Atlantic Monthly*. Available at <http://www.theatlanticmonthly.com/issues/90Sep/rage.htm>. In a lecture by Lewis in Philadelphia in 2003, he rejected the concept by arguing that civilizations are not governments, and do not make foreign policies. I read his Atlantic Monthly article and don't recalling him using the phrase.

[8] CIPP, "Policy Recommendations" (Working Draft), July 2007.

[9] "Project Executive Summary" in *Proceedings of the First Annual Symposium*, 1993, pp.25-29.

[10] For a particularly good analysis of this, see Jane Dammen McAuliffe, "Disparity and Context: Teaching Quranic Studies in North America," in *Teaching Islam*, ed. Brannon Wheeler (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp.94-107. In this article, the author analyzes a classroom experience in Jordan with that of western approaches.

[11] Yushau Sodiq, "Teaching Islamic Studies in American Universities," *Proceedings of the First Annual Symposium*, 1993, pp.21-24.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Richard Martin, *Approaches to Islam in Religious Studies* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1985).

[14] Published in separate volumes as “Proceedings of the First, Second and Third Annual Symposium” (IIASA Research Center: Fairfax, VA 1993-5).

[15] Brannon Wheeler, Ed. *Teaching Islam* (New York and Oxford, 2003).

[16] Amos Funkenstein, *Perceptions of Jewish History* (Berkeley/ Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993), p.19.

[17] See Fazlur Raḥmān, *Islam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979).

[18] See Norman Stillman, “The Story of Cain and Abel in the Qur’an and the Muslim Commentators: Some Observations,” *Journal of Semitic Studies*, vol.19, 1974), pp.231-239.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Abraham Geiger, *Judaism and its History* (New York: The Bloch Publishing Company, 1911), p.250. His summation is rather surprising and raises the question of his depth of Arabic training. The Hebrew Qoddesh is a cognate of the Arabic “Quddus.”

[21] Ibid., p.254.

[22] Susannah Heschel, *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), p.59.

[23] Abraham Geiger, *Judaism*, pp.253-255.

[24] Richard Bell, *The Origin of Islam in its Christian Environment* (London: Cass, 1968).

[25] Susannah Heschel, *Abraham Geiger*, p.59.

[26] Iftikhar Malik, referring to Daniel Pipes in *Crescent Between Cross and Star* (London and Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2006), p.134.

[27] Maḥmūd Mamdānī, *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim* (New York, Pantheon Books 2004), pp.34-37.

[28] For a critique of this, see Fazlur Raḥmān, *Islam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), pp.251-252.

[29] I am aware of the term fundamentalist in Christian discourse. That term, however, was designed by those wishing to identify themselves as being conservative, and opposed to secularism and liberal thought as earlier pointed out. Today, it is primarily used as a form of ‘othering.’

[30] See Khaleel Mohammed, “The Art of Heeding,” *Interfaith Dialogue at the Grass Roots*, Rebecca Kratz Mays, ed. (Philadelphia: The Ecumenical Press, 2008), pp.75-86.

[31] Brannon Wheeler, *Teaching Islam*, preface.

[32] See Jane Dammen McAuliffe, “Teaching Qur’anic Studies in North America,” *Teaching Islam*, pp.94-107.

[33] Many of these terms can be found online or in Ross Murfin and Supriya Ray, *The Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literal Terms* (Boston and New York: Bedford Books, 1997).

[35] As in (16:43); (21:7).

[36] William Sandmel, “Parallelomania,” *Journal of Biblical Literature*, no.81, vol.1, March 1962p.1-13.

[37] See Marilyn Waldman, “New Approaches to “Biblical” Materials in the Qur’an,” *Studies in Islamic and Judaic Traditions*, William Brinner and Stephen Ricks, eds. (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1986), pp.47-64.

[38] (19:28).

[39] Haim Schwarzbaum, *Biblical and Extra-biblical Legends in Islamic Folk-Literature* (Walldorf-Hessen: Verlag für Orientkunde Dr. H. Vorndran, 1982), p.99. See also <http://www.answerislam.org>.

[40] Bart Ehrman, *Lost Scriptures* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), p.63.

[41] (3:35).

[42] An individual who was dedicated to special sacred service through a vow made by the individual or by a parent. See “Nazirite” in *Oxford Companion to the Bible*, Bruce Metzger and Michael Coogan, eds. (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), p.552.

[43] (3:34).

[44] Further underlined in (3:195).

[45] In line with Numbers 25:1.

[46] (16:58); (81:8).

[47] Another excellent article for disproving parallelomania is Brannon Wheeler’s “The Jewish Origins of Q 18:65-82: Reexamining Arent Jan Wensinck’s Theory,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol.118, no.2, 1998. pp.153-171.

[48] (27:68).

[49] Fazlur Raḥmān, *Major Themes of the Qur’an* (Minneapolis: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1994), pp.150-161.

[50] *Ibid.*, p.xii.