

**XENO-RACISM & EXTREMISM:**

# **XENO-RACISM & EXTREMISM:**

**FRAGMENTATION PATTERNS IN  
MUSLIM POPULATIONS IN NORTH  
AMERICA AND EUROPE**



**UNIVERSITY OF  
ALBERTA**

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Research Directors’ Comments  
and Special Thanks

A project of this nature cannot be successful without prior proper planning. We would like to thank our collaborators Drs. Ingrid Johnston, and Vesselin Popovski for their excellent contribution to the conceptualization of this research project and for their assistance in planning the workshop. John McCoy, a doctoral student in the Department of Political Science, contributed as a research assistant and worked closely with us to draft the main discussion paper for the workshop. We were fortunate to be able to draw on the multidisciplinary perspectives of colleagues at the University of Alberta, the University of Leeds (UK), and United Nations University (Tokyo) in making this research workshop a success. These colleagues, who took on roles as Chairs, Discussants, and paper presenters, came from Anthropology, English and Film Studies, History and Classics, Middle Eastern and African Studies, Political Science, Religion Studies, Secondary Education, and Sociology. We were also pleased to be able to get input from members of our wider community who are concerned with the perceived rise in xeno-racism across Europe and North America and with the possible links between this form of discrimination and extremism. Additional thanks are owed to Stefan Scherer (the WUN representative for the University of Alberta) for facilitating connections between participating institutions in Canada and the UK and initiating new connections between academics around the globe through the Worldwide Universities Network. And we would like to express our gratitude to Eilis Pourbaix who did an excellent job as rapporteur for the workshop. Of course, the workshop would not have occurred without the funding of WUN, and the additional financial support from the Faculties of Education and Arts (University of Alberta) and the Department of Political Science (University of Alberta) and the United Nations University (Tokyo). To our funders, a big thanks.

Dr. Andy Knight, Dr. Anna Kirova  
Co-Directors, Xeno-racism and Extremism Research  
Project, University of Alberta

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# Xeno-racism and Extremism: Workshop Overview

## Examining the Relationship between Xeno-racism and Extremism: Integration Patterns in Muslim populations in North America and Europe

Anti-immigration movements in both North America and Europe first articulated in the early 1990s have increased since the 9/11 terrorists attacks on US soil in 2001, the Madrid train bombings in 2004, the murder of Dutch film-maker Theo van Gogh in 2004, and the 7/7 bombings in London in the summer of 2005. Diaspora communities, especially Muslim immigrants in England, France and the Netherlands for example, have been subjected to what some have labeled as 'xeno-racism' - a form of institutionalized racism directed against foreigners irrespective of colour, but that bears all the hallmarks of demonization and exclusion typical of the 'old' forms of racism based on skin colour.

Although, historically, Canada has been better than most of the other industrialized states at embracing diversity, accommodating difference and integrating immigrants, Muslims have reported higher levels of discrimination based on religious beliefs than non-Muslims living in this country. Similarities among the experiences of Muslim immigrants in Europe and North America call for a comprehensive comparative study exploring the causes and forms of expression of xeno-racism and their relationship to integration patterns and possibly acts of extremism in countries of the two regions targeted in our proposed project.

### Aims and Objectives

The objective of this workshop was to develop a detailed program of study including a common research approach and comparable data sources from each country so that a comparison of results would be possible. Workshop participants from diverse disciplines collaborated to understand the relationship between xeno-racism and extremism by interrogating existing literature and empirical data sets, and describing the key themes and their interactions. Through presentation and discussion of papers, the workshop began to conceptualize xeno-racism by examining several intersecting topics: the impact of xeno-racism on Muslim communities in the UK, Islamism, extremism and religion, Diaspora identities, multiculturalism as ideology and policy, immigrant integration in Canada (the case of Muslims in particular), exclusion/ inclusion indicators and economic barriers to integration.

This was geared towards establishing a platform for a major research grant proposal to develop the subject further.

### Public Participation and Media

The workshop was held over 3 days at the University of Alberta campus, and included 50 attendees/participants throughout. In addition to presentations by leading scholars, the wider community enriched the discussion by sharing their perspectives on multiculturalism and integration in a Canadian context. Representatives from the Canadian Council of Muslim Women, Edmonton chapter, Canadian Multicultural Education Foundation, the Centre for Race and Culture, Edmonton Council of Muslim Communities., and the John Humphrey Centre for Peace and Human Rights to name a few, took part in the discussions. A number of graduate students and various media outlets also took interest in the workshop proceedings, which were featured on Alberta Prime Time (CTV), OMNI Television and the University's *Express News*.

### Participants

Abu-Laban, Baha	Kheshen, Nadine
Abu-Laban, Yasmeen	Kirova, Anna
Aiken, Rob	Knight, Andy
Anderson, Greg	Kornijenko, Jurgita
Awid, Richard	Mahdavi, Mojtaba
Bagguley, Paul	Malak, Amin
Byrne, Siobhan	McCoy, John
Calvert, Kerri	Mian, Aisha
Cambre, Caroline	Murray, Robert
Carson, Terry	Parmar, Hema
Castro-Rea Julián	Pavlovic, Srdja
Chan-Marple, Lan	Peterson, Marcus
Choldin, Earl	Popovski, Vesselin
Connelly, David	Pourbaix, Eilis
Coombs-Montrose, Donna	Preece, Dan
Dhir, Rajeev	Quinney, Art
Ghampa, Lori	Rao, Aditya
Goudar, Natasha	Richardson, George
Gow, Andrew	Scherer, Stefan
Hamdon, Evelyn	Sekandi, Miriam
Houlden, Gordon	Sesay, Mohamed
Hussain, Yasmin	Sheikh, Rabia
Ismail, Mona	Sheriff, Farha
Johnston, Ingrid	Shultz, Lynette
Jusdon, Fred	Zaki Hafez, Soraya
Keating, Tom	Zivkovic, Marko

### Media Links

Alberta Prime Time

[http://www.albertaprimetime.com/Stories.aspx?pd=1186&FlashVars=Video/PTR\\_062810.flv](http://www.albertaprimetime.com/Stories.aspx?pd=1186&FlashVars=Video/PTR_062810.flv)

OMNI News (South Asian Addition)

<http://omnitv.ca/Alberta>

Express News (Page 5)

<http://www.folio.ualberta.ca/pdfs/99059.pdf>

# Conceptualizing Xeno-racism/ Xeno-racism in Canada?

## Patterns of Inclusion and Integration in the Canadian Muslim Community

**Dave Whitson - U of A, Political Science (chair/discussant) Presenters: John McCoy & Andy Knight (U of A, Political Science)**

**Dr. W. Andy Knight** is Chair of the Department of Political Science and Professor of International Relations at the University of Alberta. He serves as Advisory Board Member of the World Economic Forum's Global Agenda Council on the Welfare of Children. Until recently, he was Director of the Peace and Post Conflict Studies Certificate Programme in the Office of Interdisciplinary Studies (OIS), University of Alberta. In March 2007, Dr. Knight was appointed by the Canadian Foreign Minister to the Board of Governors of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). He co-edited the international journal, *Global Governance*, from 2000 to 2005, was Vice Chair of the Academic Council on the United Nations System (ACUNS), and is currently a member of the Board of Directors of the John Humphrey Centre for Peace and Human Rights, the Canadian Association for Security and Intelligence Studies (CASIS), the Canadian Consortium for Peace Studies (CCPS), and the Education for Peace Academic and Research Council (EPARC). Professor Knight has written

and edited many books, book chapters and journal articles on various aspects of multilateralism, global governance and peace, and United Nations reform. Dr. Knight was recently awarded the Harry Jerome Trailblazer Award, for his global, scholarly and community contributions.

**John McCoy** is currently a Ph.D. candidate at the Department of Political Science, University of Alberta. He completed his Masters of Security Studies at the Centre for Military and Strategic Studies in 2006. His areas of research include multiculturalism, citizenship, Islamic studies and political violence. His current research is focused on the role of xeno-racism in shaping state multicultural policy towards religious minorities.

Dr. Andy Knight and John McCoy first contextualized the term xeno-racism by defining its scope and proposing a functionality within a post 9/11 framework. The term xeno-racism, as first used by Sivanandan, was employed to describe emergent forms of institutionalized racism in Europe aimed at immigrants irrespective of their skin colour (xeno meaning other, foreign or guest). Xeno-racism describes discrimination that targets all 'foreigners' deemed to be a threat to the host culture and

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To what extent does Canadian Multiculturalism policy achieve surface integration as opposed to deep integration?



Workshop Participants outside Alumni House, University of Alberta

represents a shift from racism that targets biological features to a racism that focuses on cultural traits. Conceptually, xeno-racism can be viewed as an ongoing project – one which can be seen as a response to the changing nature of racism by various scholars focused on the importance of race and class in social scientific research.

Xeno-racist sentiment towards Muslims has grown out of a securitized environment focused on concerns over 'Muslim extremism' and political Islam, potentially hindering integration of these groups in Canada. Fekete notes the role of western interventionism and the media in constructing this narrative: "western interventions in Muslim countries provide yet more opportunities for the media to demonize particular groups, even nations, serving 'to weave general public opinion into a global warfare against Muslims."

Knight and McCoy draw attention to data where 60 % of Canadian Muslim respondents reported having experienced "bias or discrimination since the 9/11 terrorist attacks" and further cite that another poll conducted in 2002 found that 41% of 253 Arab-origin respondents thought that Canadians "do not like Muslims" while 84.6 % believed that Canadians regard Muslims as violent. These negative perceptions seem to be extended to host culture attitudes on Muslim

immigration – in a Maclean's, Global TV and Ottawa Citizen sponsored nation wide survey – 44 % of Canadians and 48 % of Quebecois were in favor of curtailing immigration from Muslim countries. Citing the Ontario Sharia debate, the Maher Arar case, the debate on accommodation in rural Quebec and the recent public and political debate on the 'niqab', Knight and McCoy questioned how extremism may be framing the debate over integration of Canadian Muslims and contributing to xeno-racism. If xeno-racism can be seen as a barrier to inclusion and integration for Muslim Canadians, then there is a need to examine whether this discrimination actually represents a structural cause of extremism in Western Muslim populations.

While the cases cited point to evidence of xeno-racism in Canadian institutions, Knight and McCoy remain optimistic at the capacity for the Canadian government and civil society groups to respond effectively to and mitigate challenges to integration. They conclude by reflecting that though Canada has shown resiliency and institutional responsiveness when faced with periods of inter-cultural conflict thus far, whether these qualities would remain intact in the face of violence remains to be seen.

**Why does a small portion of young, marginalized, visible minority youth join extremist groups while most do not-- what prevents some and pushes others?**

## Emergent Questions

- *How could the presence of xeno-racism in Canada challenge Canada's status as a settler nation?*
- *To what extent does Canadian Multiculturalism policy achieve surface integration as opposed to deep integration? Are we moving more towards the melting pot model?*
- *Can those who may not believe in gender equality and a secular state be incorporated within the Canadian fabric, without threatening those principles in state institutions?*
- *Why does a small portion of young, marginalized, visible minority youth join extremist groups while most do not-- what prevents some and pushes others?*
- *Is xeno-racism anything new, or rather just a repackaging of traditional forms of racism? Could the effort better be used to look at the rational and political and policy responses to different situations?*
- *Could interculturalism (promotion of people taking part in common projects towards common goals) be promoted by public institutions and utilized to combat xeno-racism?*

**Can those who may not believe in gender equality and a secular state be incorporated within the Canadian fabric, without threatening those principles in state institutions?**



# Impact of Xeno-Racism on Muslim Communities in the UK:

## Securitized Citizens: Islamophobia, Racism and the 7/7 bombings

In part due to transnational events, interviews with British Muslims indicated that Muslim identity has displaced ethnic identity in Britain, with British Muslims identifying themselves as part of a common brotherhood through broad transnational struggle and debate.

**Terry Carson - U of A, Education (chair)**  
**Presenters: Yasmin Hussain and Paul Bagguley (Leeds, Sociology) Andrew Gow - U of A, History and Classics (discussant)**

**Dr. Paul Bagguley** teaches at the School of Sociology and Social Policy at Leeds University. His main research interests include the sociology of protest, social movements, racism and ethnicity economic sociology, urban sociology, and sociological theory. In the fields of protest and racism and ethnicity studies he recently examined the 2001 riots, South Asian women and higher education, and the impacts of the 7/7 London bombings on different ethnic and religious groups in West Yorkshire with Yasmin Hussain. Previous projects include research and publications on unemployment and social protest, anti-poll-tax protest, and new social movements.

**Dr. Yasmin Hussain** is a Research Fellow in the School of Sociology and Social Policy at Leeds University. Her research interests include identity and British South Asian women; ethnicity, disability, young people and terrorism. Her doctoral work at the University of Bradford explored the identity of British South Asian women within the realm of literature and film. She has carried out research on the urban 'riots' in 2001 and examined the role of higher education in providing opportunities for young South Asian

women with Dr Paul Bagguley, with whom she is currently working on a project analyzing the impact of the London bombings.

Dr. Paul Bagguley and Dr. Yasmin Hussain used the concept of "securitizations" to explicate the changing relationship between British Muslims and non-Muslims after the London bombings, exploring how groups or issues come to be defined as a threat and the social and political processes involved.

Nearly 2.5% of the British population are Muslim. 9/11 and 7/7 deepened the tension between Muslims and other British citizens; the perceived threat to British society increased as citizens began to fear a burgeoning "enemy within". After 9/11, the British were supportive of the *War on Terror* and there was an increase of violence against Muslims. Bagguley and Hussain observed changes in behavior towards Muslims as greater securitization took place, and understood the growing popularity of the British National Party (BNP) as a measure of the acceptability of Islamophobia (racialized against South Asians) in public debate. Of Britain's 1.5 million Muslims, 42.5% are Pakistani, 16.8 are Bangladeshi and the remainder are Caucasian or Middle Eastern.

In their research, Bagguley and Hussain conducted 138 interviews with Muslims and non-Muslims residing in the Beeston, Hyde Park and Dewsbury neighbourhoods in London, from varying ages, genders and ethnicities.

Most non-Muslims interviewed believed that 7/7 happened because of the invasion of Iraq. Complaints about Muslims having access to welfare and other resources were prevalent as was a feeling that multiculturalism had failed. Non-Muslims felt threatened by their own perceived marginalization, fearing that they would become the minority in Britain. Both Caucasians and non-Muslim South Asians had a very narrow interpretation and understanding of Islam, believing it justifies terrorist actions, is violent and provides a psychological fulfillment for the perpetrators.

In part due to transnational events, interviews with British Muslims indicated that Muslim identity has displaced ethnic identity in Britain, with British Muslims identifying themselves as



Yasmin Hussain and Paul Bagguley of the University of Leeds

part of a common brotherhood through broad transnational struggle and debate. British South Asian Muslims have a historical memory of postcolonial struggle that also feeds this, and the current generation seems to seek growing empowerment through identification as Muslim; Muslims are more likely to refer to themselves as such than any other religious groups in Britain.

Muslim respondents also expressed condemnation of extreme measures, especially of suicide bombers, as suicide is forbidden in Islam. Muslim communities felt that they were paying the price of the attacks, often citing media and their repeated misuse of terms such as *jihad*, *Islamic* and *radical*, as exacerbating the problem. Feeling that their visibility as Muslims affects how they are treated in public, British Muslims are increasingly self-policing, selectively choosing which parts of the city they will frequent while, for instance, wearing a hijab.

The construction of Muslims as a threat predated 9/11 and 7/7 in Britain. Noting that IRA/Irish violence is seen as ethno-nationalist (though the Irish perpetrators are a minority Catholic community) while Muslim acts of terrorism are considered religious, presenters highlighted the need for analytical distinctions between securitization, radicalization and Islamophobia and called particular attention to the role of policy environments and media in examining xeno-racism.



## What is the role of media in perpetuating securitization of minorities?

What role do political parties play in securitization of minorities and what are the consequences for "hate speech" within political institutions?

Media quoting of Qu'ranic texts has amplified the securitization of Muslims; what parallel forms of literalist, prima facie quoting of spiritual texts can be observed throughout history? What conclusions can be drawn by such comparisons?

### Emergent Questions

- What is the role of media in perpetuating securitization of minorities?
- What role do political parties play in securitization of minorities and what are the consequences for "hate speech" within political institutions?
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## Conceptualizing Islamism



Julián Castro-Rea

**While the west has typically characterized Islam as fundamentally anti-democratic, oppressive of women, and violent, there is in fact nothing inherently anti-democratic, oppressive, or violent in Islam.**

**Julián Castro-Rea - U of A, Political Science (chair) Presenter: Mojtaba Mahdavi, Political Science (U of A) Vesselin Popovski – UNU, Institute for Sustainability and Peace (discussant)**

**Dr. Mojtaba Mahdavi** is an assistant professor of Political Science and Middle East & African Studies at University of Alberta. He is the author of *Under the Shadow of Khomeinism: Problems and Prospects for Democracy in Post-Revolutionary Iran* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2011). His latest journal articles and book chapters include "Post-Islamist Trends in Post-revolutionary Iran" (2011); "Universalism from Below: Muslims and Democracy in Context" (2009); "Democracy from Within: Democratization in Post-Khatami Iran (2009)"; "Islam/Muslim and Political Leadership" (2009); "Rethinking Structure and Agency in Democratization: Iranian Lessons" (2008); "On the 'Dignity of Difference': Neither 'the Clash of Civilizations' nor 'the End of History'" (2008, co-authored); "The West and the Rest (2007)"; "Iranian Nuclear Ambitions and Political Reform" (2007). Mahdavi is currently working on two projects: "Post-Islamist Discourse in the Muslim World" and "Dignity of Difference and the Limits of Dialogue among Civilizations."

Dr. Mojtaba Mahdavi examines the highly politicized western conceptions of Islamism that have their origin in 19<sup>th</sup> century Orientalism and have taken on an increased importance in the present day. While the west has typically characterized Islam as fundamentally anti-democratic, oppressive of women, and violent, there is in fact nothing inherently anti-democratic, oppressive, or violent in Islam. Mahdavi argues that the exclusion, suppression, and marginalization of Islamism only lends weight to its appeal and that conversely, it is the inclusion of Islamism in the political sphere that supports the development of a post-Islamist civil society and the undermining of support for Islamism.

Mahdavi defines Islamism as an ideologized version of Islam and a modern socio-political movement. Islamism emerged among the middle class as a language and ideology of self-assertion in response to the dominant economic, political, and cultural forces exerted on Islamic countries. Islamism imagined Islam as a complete and divine system that offered superior and definitive codes for politics, law, culture, and economics. Islamism can be characterized by the statement "Islam is the Solution" – the solution to the moral, cultural, and economic bankruptcy brought on by western dominance from abroad, and aided by corrupt Muslim rulers from within.



**Who defines extremism, and how can examining goals and means help us discern between the terms radicalism and extremism?**



The central problem with western conceptions of Islam and Islamism is that Islam is not monolithic; on the contrary, it is heterogeneous in its potential interpretations and applications. To establish the flexibility of Islam, Mahdavi takes aim at the conception that Islam is anti-democratic, oppressive of women, and violent.

While there are important differences among "Islamists" they do share the opinion that human sovereignty is subject to divine law as expressed through the sharia. As such, westerners have characterized this as "Islamofascism" and a hatred of "democracy and freedom". However, there is an insistence among Islamist thinkers such as Said Qutb that ordinary Muslims must engage directly in sacred texts, and that religious knowledge depends upon commitment as opposed to official training. These concepts have a democratizing effect upon access to religious authority, not unlike Lutheranism in the west. Further, Muslims have the right and the obligation to determine when rulers are illegitimate and when power is wielded arbitrarily, and to compel them to sacrifice their authority.

In relation to gender, Islam is typically portrayed as reducing women to the chattel slaves of men: as silent and powerless symbols of obedience and of divine virginal reward. However, insofar as "feminism" is simply concerned with the welfare of women, there is nothing incompatible with feminism and Islam. Islam is not an unchanging essence beyond the reach of history and culture, and is compatible with efforts to improve the conditions and quality of women's lives.

Some Islamists promote a violent interpretation of jihad and take issue with those who try to limit the application of jihad to self-defense. What Islamists represent as jihad is a historically specific understanding derived from a highly selective use of texts and precedents, prominent among them a formerly obscure claim by the influential 14<sup>th</sup> century jurist Ibn Taymiyya that Mongol rulers who had disobeyed Islamic law could be subject to forcible removal. Mahdavi notes that there are also Islamists who reject any equation of the means or objectives of jihad with a violent struggle. For these thinkers jihad and violence are antithetical, the equation of combating evil with evil or barbarity with barbarity.

Mahdavi's conclusion is that there is nothing incompatible between Islam on the one hand, and democracy, women's rights, and peace on the other. Rather, the important question is under what conditions Muslims can make them compatible. It is people, as socio-political agents, who must determine how to interpret and apply Islam. Further, there are many different forms of Islamism in the modern world and each has its own political destiny. When Islamism is allowed to participate in the political process it tends to adopt moderate and pragmatic positions. Paradoxically, three decades of an Islamist state in Iran has led to the development of a post-Islamist civil society in the form of the Green Movement, while the exclusion of Hamas from political processes has contributed to both their popularity and their radical militant positions.

In conclusion, Mahdavi reminds us that we must celebrate our differences while supporting a bottom-up approach to our shared universal values such as freedom, tolerance, and justice. These values are neither Eastern nor Western, and we must remember that both the East and the West have a mixed track record in the promotion or rejection of these values.

**How do Western Europeans regard religion as a basis for belonging and resistance in the face of non-representative governance?**

## Emergent Questions

- *How do Western Europeans regard religion as a basis for belonging and resistance in the face of non-representative governance?*
- *How can we usefully investigate relationships between Islamism and gender politics (e.g. female suicide bombers as reactive to multiple forms of exclusion)?*
- *Who defines extremism, and how can examining goals and means help us discern between the terms radicalism and extremism?*

**How can we usefully investigate relationships between Islamism and gender politics (e.g. female suicide bombers as reactive to multiple forms of exclusion)?**

# Xeno-Racism and Multi-Identity



**Gordon Houlden - U of A, China Institute**  
**(chair) Presenter: Vesselin Popovski (UNU, Tokyo)**  
**Tom Keating - U of A, Political Science**  
**(discussant)**

**Why do religious identities become such a significant part of xeno-racist behavior—why is religion a particularly effective tool to manipulate opinion?**

**How do we address the myth of the west being a secular society in discussions of xeno-racism and its institutional expressions in the west?**

**Dr. Vesselin Popovski** undertakes research and teaching in peace and security, international law, human rights and international criminal justice. He has published numerous chapters in books and articles in peer reviewed journals and edited the books: *International Criminal Accountability and the Rights of Children with Karin Arts* (Hague Academic Press, 2006); *World Religions and Norms of War with Greg Reichberg and Nick Turner* (UNU Press, 2009); *Democracy in the South with Brendan Howe and Mark Notaras* (UNU Press 2010); *Human Rights Regimes in the Americas with Monica Serrano* (UNU Press 2010). He is completing a trilogy: *Engaging Civil Society, Building Trust in Government and Cross-Border Governance with Shabbir Cheema* (UNU Press 2010). Before coming to UNU Vesselin Popovski took part in two major international initiatives: *ICISS Report Responsibility to Protect* and *Princeton Principles of Universal Jurisdiction* and co-authored their final publications. He worked as Bulgarian diplomat, NATO Research Fellow, Lecturer and Programme Director in the Centre for European Studies, Exeter University, UK. Apart from Exeter, he taught Masters' courses in peace and security, international law, human rights at King's College, London; Centre for Study of Democracy, Westminster University, Huron University (USA), State Humanitarian University (Russia), Aoyama Gakuin (Japan). Between 2002 to 2004 he worked for the European Union project 'Legal Protection of Individual Rights in Russia', training Russian lawyers to apply international human rights mechanisms.

Dr. Popovski first differentiated xeno-racism from xenophobia, proposing multi-identity as a powerful argument against various forms of xeno-racism. He noted that xeno-racism, as institutionalized by many citizenship and immigration policies in the West, considers the "other" as inferior, which leads to isolation and segregation. Existing minorities are gradually stigmatized and newcomer immigrants and refugees become a homogenized "enemy within". This is exemplified in the types of xeno-racist attitudes towards Muslims in the post 9/11 world.

Popovski reminded the audience that values exist not only in religious communities but also across many civilizational lines that include nationality, family values, class and culture. The multiplicity of groups to which any individual belongs can facilitate finding common ground across the various reinforced (and often superficial) divides that inform xeno-racism. Popovski argues that this plurality of identity gives choice and that cultural diversity is neither given nor inherited, but rather an expression of many individuals' choices. He advises against attempts at disciplining or organizing cultures which must be permitted to grow and change, further stating that society requires political culture but not cultural order. He proposes that tendencies towards xeno-racism can be avoided by individuals and institutions through examining the differences within differences, and finding similarities within multiple identities.

## Emergent Questions

- What are the sources and the interests underlying those powers who are placing certain identifiers on the "other"? Can xeno-racism be related to a disciplining of cultures in order to limit how many identities someone can choose?
- Why do religious identities become such a significant part of xeno-racist behavior—why is religion a particularly effective tool to manipulate opinion?
- How do we address the myth of the west being a secular society in discussions of xeno-racism and its institutional expressions in the west?



# Multiculturalism as Ideology and Policy

**Greg Anderson - U of A, Alberta Institute for American Studies (chair) Presenter: Yasmeen Abu Laban (U of A, Political Science) Amin Malak – Grant MacEwan, English (discussant)**

**Dr. Yasmeen Abu-Laban** is Professor and Associate Chair (Research) in the Department of Political Science at the University of Alberta. Her research interests centre on the Canadian and comparative dimensions of gender and ethnic politics, nationalism, globalization and processes of racialization, immigration policies and politics, and citizenship theory. She has published over fifty articles, book chapters and reviews. Additionally, she is the co-author (with Christina Gabriel) of *Selling Diversity: Immigration, Multiculturalism, Employment Equity and Globalization* (2002), co-editor of *Politics in North America: Redefining Continental Relations* (2008) and editor of *Gendering the Nation-State: Canadian and Comparative Perspectives* (2008). *Surveillance and Control in Israel/Palestine* (co-edited with Elia Zureik and David Lyon) will be published by Routledge in December 2010.

Dr. Yasmeen Abu-Laban places Canadian multiculturalism policy, and ideology, within a specific geographical and historical context that separates it from other Western countries. This context can be divided into two distinct phases and a contemporary, post 9-11, transitional phase. Although the first two phases distinguished Canada from other liberal democracies, the current phase is marked by tension towards multicultural diversity and a potential convergence with the policies of other western states.

The first phase stretched from pre-confederation until the 1960s and was marked by "Anglo-conformity" in which French-Canadians, aboriginals, and other minoritized groups were exposed to explicitly assimilative and discriminatory measures that were resultant of European colonial ideology.

The second phase is the period of multiculturalism in which Canada's explicitly racist immigration policy was overthrown in 1967 and it became the first Western country to adopt a national policy of multiculturalism that culminated in the Constitution Act

of 1982 (Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms) which enshrined the rights of linguistic and ethno-cultural minorities. However, the policies of this period continued to reflect Canada's colonial and ideological heritage, even as Canada's relationship to minoritized groups was being redefined. In the first instance immigration policy was (and continues to be) based upon a point system that favours highly skilled and highly educated immigrants. While this policy is not overtly "race based" like policies it replaced, it introduced economic and gender bias into immigration policy. Further, while the Charter protects certain minority rights, it distinctly downplays religious identity while emphasizing the "individualism" of Western liberal democracy and free market economics.

The current phase is one of strain with the pro-diversity policies of the post-WWII era, and of growing contradictions. While this transition is perhaps inherent in the competition and self-sufficiency of neoliberal economics, it has accelerated in the post-911 landscape. A telling example is the case of Ontario that in 1991 established the right of faith-based tribunals to arbitrate areas of family law. By the mid-2000s, faith-based arbitration had been banned, stemming from concerns that a parallel system of Shari'a was being established that violated the Charter rights of females. Abu Laban likewise looks with suspicion on the minority Government of Steven Harper, who has consistently scaled down and eliminated funding for minoritized advocacy groups while exhibiting hostility towards Muslim-Canadians and Arab-Canadians. In the most extreme examples of the tensions of this phase we are presented with examples of racial profiling, and even the rendition and torture of Maher Arar – episodes that highlight a growing conflict between multiculturalism, individual rights, and the rule of law.

Abu Laban closes her analysis by suggesting that Canada may be in a period of convergence with the policies that other liberal democracies have developed in response to the reality of globalization and diversity. The audience is encouraged to reflect upon recent reactionary policies while contemplating the future of multiculturalism in Canada.

## Emergent Questions

- *Given the prevalence of Canadian Muslims as urban dwellers (85.2 % live in Canada's major cities) what role should municipalities play in ameliorating the integrative process in areas like social services, education and law enforcement?*
- *How might we best address the hidden prejudice in the language of women's rights and the assumption that Muslim women need rescue by the West?*
- *Given its capacity to be an identity-shaping agent, and given the effect of Canadian secular institutional leanings, how can we use Islam as a tool to work through, rather than a force to rally against, when conceptualizing policy?*
- *Is securitization driving the Muslim Diaspora closer together?*
- *When does one cease to be considered a Diaspora?*

When does one cease to be considered a Diaspora?

# Immigrant Integration in Canada: The Case of Muslims



Baha Abu-Laban at the podium and Amin Malak in the foreground.

**How might we explicate the concept of integration in order to balance observation and explore changes that occur in the host society and its institutions?**

**Earl Choldin – Canadian Multicultural Education Foundation (chair) Presenter:**  
**Anna Kirova & David Connelly (U of A, Education) Baha Abu Laban - U of A, Sociology (discussant)**

*Dr. Anna Kirova is a professor of early childhood education, Department of Elementary Education, University of Alberta. Between 2005 and 2010 she was a Domain Leader of the Education Domain and a Domain Leader for the Family, Children and Youth Domain with the Prairie Metropolis Centre for Immigration and Integration. The main focus of Dr. Kirova's work has been on understanding the culturally and linguistically diverse children's peer relationships and their experiences of loneliness and isolation at school. Most recently, her research focuses on arts-based collaborative research with vulnerable children and community-based participatory research.*

*David Connolly is a student at the University of Alberta completing his MA in Economics. He has worked as a research assistant on a multi-domain project looking at immigrant integration in Canada undertaken by the Prairie Metropolis Centre. His work focused mainly on housing and civic participation among immigrant groups in Canada as measures of integration. This work has primarily been conducted using Statistics Canada's Ethnic Diversity Survey (2002).*

Dr. Anna Kirova and David Connolly, with John McCoy, Karen Loerke and Dr. Andy Knight (Kirova et al.) take a detailed look at Statistics Canada's 2002 Ethnic Diversity Survey to assess the status of Muslim integration in Canada. They note that how Canada maintains "social cohesion" while accommodating large numbers of newcomers is central to the policy and philosophy of Canadian multiculturalism.

There is a growing realization among social scientists that social integration of immigrants is multi-dimensional and cannot be assessed based on isolated indicators of outcomes. As such, while Kirova et al.'s analysis points to a number of notable barriers to integration of Muslims, they emphasize the need for the further collection of diverse qualitative and quantitative data, including longitudinal studies and in-depth interviews.

To ground their analysis theoretically they cite the work of two scholars of integration. Zhou

(1997) noted an anomaly in that as immigrants spend a longer period of time in a host country, transitioning to second-generation immigrants, there is an increase in integrational maladjustment. Portes et al. (1995) noted that integration can take three paths: (1) upward social mobility and acculturation into middle class structures, (2) downward mobility into lower-class structures, or (3) gradual economic integration into middle class structures while maintaining strong cultural and social ties to the immigrant community.

Kirova et al. draw upon a number of trends in Statistics Canada's 2002 Ethnic Diversity Survey (EDS). One such metric is growth itself: from 1991-2001 Canada's Muslim population grew by over 128% - larger than any other religious community. Echoing the analysis of Zhou, the authors note that non-immigrant Muslims score consistently worse on integration indicators than immigrant Muslims. Some highlights of the survey include:

- 32% of immigrant Muslims, and 45% of non-immigrant Muslims report experiencing religious discrimination
- Non-immigrant Muslims have the highest incidence of reporting a mistrust of others (67%) among minority groups. 47% of immigrant Muslims reported distrust.
- Non-immigrant Muslims have the highest reported rate (4%) of intense dissatisfaction with life. Immigrant Muslims scored on par with other immigrant groups (1%)
- While immigrant Muslims had the highest sense of belonging to Canada (75%), non-immigrant Muslims had the lowest sense (37%).

In terms of economic and political integration:

- Both visible and non-visible Muslims have the highest level of low income households (27% under \$30,000/annum) and the lowest number of high income households (27% above \$80,000/annum). African born Muslims scored the worst with 40% low income.
- Both immigrant and non-immigrant Muslims have the lowest rate of voter turnout in provincial and federal elections.





Kirova et al. argue that the 2002 EDS is a rich source of data that allows an entry point for analysis of the integration of Muslims in Canada compared with other religious groups. Further, they note that the data is richer than their analysis in a short paper was able to contend with, and hence greater examination of the EDS is warranted. Also warranting additional research is the number of troubling trends by which non-immigrant Muslims scored worse on integration and satisfaction indices than immigrant

Muslims, and Muslims in general fared poorly in comparison with other religious and immigrant groups. In relation to the theoretical framework of Zhou, it seems that Canada's immigrant Muslims are falling into the second category of integration, that is, they are integrating into lower-class social and economic structures. As previously noted, in order to achieve greater understanding of these trends, it is necessary to collect richer data through longitudinal studies and in-depth interviews.

## Emergent Questions

- *How might we explicate the concept of integration in order to balance observation and explore changes that occur in the host society and its institutions?*
- *Recognizing that integration and assimilation are politically charged, government manufactured approaches that draw a false trajectory of arrival/ integration processes, can the language of segmented assimilation address how people may assimilate in certain areas and not others (for example, one might experience economic integration but not civic integration)?*
- *Could the concept of navigating and negotiating cultural boundaries usefully replace the concept of integration, and what might be the resultant policy implications of such a reframing?*
- *What can be discerned from the enrichment gained through the dynamic and hybrid identities of immigrant's children and their new assertions of identity as based in their parents' countries of origin?*

Recognizing that integration and assimilation are politically charged, government manufactured approaches that draw a false trajectory of arrival/ integration processes, can the language of segmented assimilation address how people may assimilate in certain areas and not others (for example, one might experience economic integration but not civic integration)?

## Diaspora Identities of Muslim Youth in Canada: Representations in Literature and Pop Culture.

**Siobhan Byrne U of A, Political Science**  
(chair) **Presenter: Ingrid Johnston and Farha Shariff (U of A, Education) Srdja Pavlovic - U of A, Political Science (discussant)**

**Dr. Ingrid Johnston** is a Professor in the Department of Secondary Education in the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta. She completed her first degrees in South Africa during the apartheid era. Her research and teaching interests focus on postcolonial literary theories and pedagogies, issues of immigration and citizenship, curriculum studies, English education, and questions of cultural difference and teacher education. Her book *Re-mapping Literary Worlds: Postcolonial Pedagogy in Practice* (Peter Lang, 2003) was published in Chinese translation and she is currently revising another co-authored book entitled *Literature, Reading Practices and Cultural Mediation in the Classroom*.

**Farha Shariff** is completing her final year as a doctoral student in the Department of Secondary Education after completing a master's degree at York University in Toronto. Her doctoral research focuses on the possibilities of a contemporary postcolonial novel and film to engage Second-Generation South Asian Canadian adolescents in exploring their cultural identities. She has presented and published her research internationally.

Dr. Ingrid Johnston and Farha Shariff raised *Diaspora* as a contested term that must be critically reconnected to uprooting forces such as colonialism. They noted that while some immigrants are afforded the choice of who to produce themselves as, identity is also often fixed, and "RE" presentations of ethnic and cultural groups rather than representations routinely occur. It is important to examine who produces the images of identity and identification, which groups mediate the texts we see, and why. Engaging in a critical pedagogy of representation in the context of how diaspora communities self-identify is central to a holistic understanding of the issues involved in xenoracism and integration.

In Canada, though large numbers of urban students are Muslim, school texts remain Euro-centric. Johnston explains how using texts that have potential for looking at Muslim diasporic identities might engage students in more relevant discussions. She cites *The Kite Runner* as an example that evokes questions around guilt and hybrid identities, *Confessions of a Gambler* which features a strong multi identity female Muslim protagonist and *Bifocal*, set in a Toronto high school under lockdown in fear of a terrorist attack, as texts that may provide opportunities for more meaningful involvement of students in discussions.



Srdja Pavlovic, discussant, at the podium and presenters Ingrid Johnston and Farha Shariff.

To what extent  
are individuals'  
multiple identities  
falsely polarized,  
and is this merely  
a negotiating  
strategy?



Shariff notes that by using a book centered on an immigrant family (*The Namesake*), in a class with a large percentage of visible minority students, the students felt more included and expressed a greater desire to participate in discussion. She argues that if educators felt safer introducing diverse texts (without being cultural experts) classrooms could be more inclusive and make better use of their diverse composition. Shariff blames an emphasis on political correctness for inhibiting complicated conversations that lead to valuable kinds of learning (both for minorities and non minorities).

Shariff further demonstrated how xeno-racism is a covert form of permissible racism in pop culture and media, explaining how Disney's orientalism set the tone for future stereotypes, and how television shows such as "24" perpetuate fear around "embedded Arab/Muslim security threats" within society. Suggesting that second generation immigrants are using media, pop culture and film to express new cultural identities in response to xeno-racism, Shariff illustrated how comedy is employed as a tool to diffuse racism, to protest and to speak truth about hard issues that rarely get spoken about otherwise.

## Emergent Questions

- *New immigrants arriving from Muslim countries where religion is often a cultural given are forced to redefine what belongs to the religious world and what does not. When newcomers are compelled to objectify and define the essence of their faith, how do they uncouple notions of Islam with land/territory?*
- *How does xeno-racism impact identity choosing and inform which identities individuals will display outwardly?*
- *How can the concepts of hyphenated identity and hybrid identity be useful in analyzing the "borrowing" and choosing of identities?*
- *How is shame reinforced by dominant groups as well as by diaspora groups when it comes to representation? (e.g. name changing)*
- *To what extent are individuals' multiple identities falsely polarized, and is this merely a negotiating strategy?*



**She argues that if educators felt safer introducing diverse texts (without being cultural experts) classrooms could be more inclusive and make better use of their diverse composition.**

*How does xeno-racism impact identity choosing and inform which identities individuals will display outwardly?*

**How is shame reinforced by dominant groups as well as by diaspora groups when it comes to representation? (e.g. name changing)**



## Exclusion/Inclusion Indicators and Economic Barriers to Integration

**Lynette Shultz - U of A, Educational Policy Studies (chair) Presenter: Rob Aiken (U of A, Political Science) Fred Judson - U of A, Political Science (discussant)**

**Dr. Robert Aiken** is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Alberta. His research lies at the intersection of International Political Economy, Cultural Studies and the Social Studies of Finance. His book, *Performing Capital*, was published in 2008.

Dr. Rob Aiken takes aim at “social inclusion” and the increasing influence it has had on policy decisions across local, national, and global contexts over the past 15 years. The concept of social inclusion, while ill-defined and often used without precision, captures the idea of moving beyond a straightforward economic conception of poverty to consider the obstacles and barriers that marginalized populations encounter in cultural, social, and political settings. Aiken states: “Social exclusion is not merely a description of conditions of material need, but also of the broader ways in which that deprivation prevents ‘normal’ forms of social participation.” Non-participation is a combination of both material and cultural barriers to accessing ‘normal’ levels of health care, education, and social services. This is a complex issue involving language, culture, race, social standing, and economic resources.

Aiken argues that, in order to assess the ability of social inclusion to address economic barriers to integration, we must examine the

ability of the language and practice of social inclusion to enrich our understanding of the displacements and transformations associated with neo-liberalism and globalization. Namely, does social inclusion and the policies it informs address issues of social stability, disenfranchisement, participation, and fairness? Aiken argues that the conceptual reach of social inclusion is too limited to shed light on questions of economic disenfranchisement and integration.

Aiken explains that social inclusion theory implies the existence of two clearly demarcated categories of inclusion and exclusion. Social inclusion emphasizes low-income peoples while making the wealthy invisible. As such it ignores ways in which the affluent self-exclude themselves through means such as gated communities. Although it purports a progressive approach to social disadvantage, it often utilizes specious assumptions about disadvantaged populations. One way in which this occurs is through attributing cultural characteristics to marginalized populations in an attempt to “explain” their lack of participation.

Social inclusion has been mobilized to bridge the gap between concepts of neo-liberalism and social citizenship, and not necessarily to the benefit of the marginalized. In contrast to notions of social citizenship, neo-liberalism emphasizes individualism and the privatization of risk in the form of education, health, and poverty. It is into this disconnect between collective and individual concepts of society that social inclusion is inserted to bridge the divide. Social inclusion, by bringing the individual into the social systems, seeks to reduce the collective security risk to society created by marginalization. In current discourse, social inclusion is used in a neoliberal-friendly way by shifting the emphasis away from passive welfare and a focus on outcomes, towards inclusion in the market system and equality of opportunity.

Disadvantage and disenfranchisement can be experienced by an adverse inclusion in social and economic institutions. Specifically, several forms of financial and credit practices make the movement from “exclusion” to “inclusion” by virtue of coercive conditions of the newly established forms of economic participation. “Asymmetric inclusion” can result from the adverse insertion into preexisting economic

The concept of social inclusion, while ill-defined and often used without precision, captures the idea of moving beyond a straightforward economic conception of poverty to consider the obstacles and barriers that marginalized populations encounter in cultural, social, and political settings.



Amin Malak





Project working group from left to right: Yasmeen Abu-Laban, Paul Bagguley, Yasmin Hussain, Andy Knight, Anna Kirova, Mojtaba Mahdavi, Rob Aitken, and John McCoy.

To what extent do the adverse incorporations mentioned in this example reinforce the neo liberal capitalist system (which promotes racism)?

institutions. With the “financialization” of the global economy, the generation of profit is primarily associated with financial transactions rather than with trade or commodity production. These market conditions create conditions of financial fragility for individuals and households, particularly the poor.

A specific example of adverse inclusion is the case of sub-prime mortgages. While the mortgage system expanded rapidly in the post-war era it tended to exclude racial minorities. However, when racial minorities were increasingly included in the 1990s they were subjected to higher costs with more coercive lending terms than those offered to non-minority clients. In this way “inclusion” had the impact of increasing the financial risk experienced by marginalized populations, with disastrous consequences when the housing market and then the global economy collapsed in 2007-2009. Likewise, even micro financing, which was designed by government and philanthropic lenders to reduce poverty, has increasingly become part of the for-profit banking sector. Consequently, borrowing rates are increasing sharply to raise capital for more lending, while increasing the burden for the very people they were initially designed to assist.

Aiken concludes that disadvantage does not necessarily result simply from exclusion from financial systems, but often results from the inclusion of poor and vulnerable populations

into those systems under disadvantageous conditions. This implies that the dynamics of marginalization are not neatly captured by a dichotomy in inclusion/exclusion and points to the need for a critical analysis of the different economic and political modes of inclusion.

### Emergent Questions

- *To what extent do the adverse incorporations mentioned in this example reinforce the neo liberal capitalist system (which promotes racism)?*
- *What is the relevance of financial practices in relation to immigration and integration? What is the alternative go-to word if the language of social inclusion is now “out”?*
- *Social inclusion was a seductive policy term because it put a social face on neo-liberalism. Is there a danger of further collapsing the discourse into a policy emphasis on economic measures—and thus reinforcing xeno-racism?*
- *Social capital is central to the Canadian point system of immigration, and the loss of social capital due to xeno-racism against newcomers may be observed. Is this a point to connect research to the wider project?*

What is the relevance of financial practices in relation to immigration and integration? What is the alternative go-to word if the language of social inclusion is now “out”?

## Round Table Discussions of Overarching Themes



Mojtaba Mahdavi and Rob Aitken in conversation during a coffee break.

**Anna Kirova & Andy Knight, U of A, Education and Political Science (chairs), Marko Zivkovic (Presenter) U of A, Anthropology**

**Dr. Marko Zivkovic** is a native of Belgrade where he studied clinical psychology and Japanese. After receiving his PhD in anthropology from The University of Chicago he taught at Reed College in Portland, OR before moving to Edmonton where he now teaches at the University of Alberta. He is extending his research into Serbian national imagination and the ways it gets anchored into landscape and “places of power.” His book, *Serbian Dreambook: National Imaginary in the Time of Milosevic* will be published by University of Indiana Press New Anthropologies of Europe series in May 2010.

In closing, Dr. Marko Zivkovic used an anthropological lens to guide reflection on reciprocal definitions of *self* and *other* in inter-group perceptions. Zivkovic drew attention to the tendency towards metonymic representation of the “other”, especially in the case of Western democracies importing people and then defining them in opposite terms. Erasure of similarity (ignoring that which is cognitively dissonant), iconicity and essentialization also play into this. Zivkovic reminded participants that identity morphs and is situationally negotiated. He cautions against attempts at making the idioms of race and ethnicity neatly bounded concepts, as they are deployed differently on the ground by non-scholars.

Following these reflections, responses led to several overarching themes identified for further discussion:

### **1) Debate on the utility of xeno-racism as a concept to describe and analyze behavior of individuals/institutions.**

Xeno-racism is a hyper-dimensional concept that must be placed on a broader map of religion, class, gender, race and ethnicity. Switching disciplinary lenses throughout the mapping will be necessary to decode the power dynamics between individuals/institutions. There was much discussion around alternative concepts that could be used, and xeno-racialization was proposed as a *process* that creates otherness, where movement and ambiguity are central to its expressions and can change rapidly. The term may prove useful in representing how cultural signifiers can change

and inform racism and in illustrating the type(s) of injustices that occur as a result of fear, or are perpetuated by leveraging fear of the other, capturing the fluidity of how “foreignness” is constructed in different moments. There is also space for examining the functionality of xeno-racism with other concepts such as anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and Islamoracism.

### **2) Securitization and institutional expressions of xeno-racism.**

As fear and security are dual concepts, the relationship between xeno-racism and securitization could become a more prominent theme in the project. Further, this might inform a deeper questioning of why some choose extremism/collective political violence in response to securitization.

### **3) Debate on the relationship between marginalization/xeno-racism and extremism.**

Close examination of the potential for extremism to occur in response to xeno-racism is required, and could be tied into debates on fear and securitization as dialectical processes. The terms radicalism, terrorism and extremism must be unpacked and contested.

### **4) Multiculturalism policy and nationalist narratives.**

An in depth comparison of British and Canadian experiences may prove useful in demonstrating how political parties and policies respond to and shape public opinion on multiculturalism, and how terms such as *social inclusion/cohesion* and *multiculturalism* carry different “policy baggage”.

### **5) Unpacking indicators of integration, inclusion and exclusion over generations and problematizing language(s) around racism, social inclusion and cohesion. (A deeper investigation of how countries are measuring “successful” integration is also suggested)**

### **6) Choice and agency in identity-fixing and navigating/negotiating multi-identities. (This area should also highlight the heterogeneity of Muslim communities)**

### **7) Explication of the nuances between various expressions of political Islam and Islamism**

The term xeno-racism, as first used by Sivanandan, was employed to describe emergent forms of institutionalized racism in Europe aimed at immigrants irrespective of their skin colour (xeno meaning other, foreign or guest).



From left to right: Dan Preece, Jurgita Kornijenko, and Farha Sheriff.

## Fund Development

Representatives from the University of Alberta's Research Services Office discussed opportunities for project funding through the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) as well as foundations. This project may be of interest to institutions supporting research and initiatives in conflict management, international peace and security, the advancement of racial justice and minority rights and the protection of immigrant and migrant rights.

## Next Steps

A number of recurrent themes were identified and explored in the round table discussions. In the coming months, workshop participants will reflect on these themes and outline how and where their research interests intersect. The need to approach prospective partner institutions to broaden the scope and relevance of the project was discussed, and suggestions included, but were not limited to, participating WUN institutions in Australia, China, the United States and South Africa, as well as non-WUN campuses in Russia. Going forward, project leads will develop and finalize partnerships, establish a governance structure and define the role of team members. Once a process for writing and editing of proposals is in place, securing financial and in-kind support will be key.

A follow up workshop at the University of Leeds campus was proposed as a means to solidify the research agenda, introduce new partners to the project and set a schedule for longer-term planning which could include a comprehensive literature review, articulation of research themes and methodological approaches, and strategies for community engagement and knowledge mobilization.

For project updates, visit: <http://www.wun.ac.uk/research/xeno-racism-and-extremism>



Graduate student, Mohamed Sesay.



XENO-RACISM & EXTREMISM: A SIMPLIFIED APPROACH



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