RESPONSES TO AND INTERPRETATION OF ANTI-MUSLIM RACISM IN CANADA:
A COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVE

by

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Abstract

Against the backdrop of rising levels of anti-“Muslim” racism (aka Islamophobia) in Canada, coupled with the nation-state’s targeting and surveillance of these communities, my dissertation sets out to interpret the responses to this racism by the affected communities themselves. In this study, I employ qualitative methodology within a critical race theoretical framework informed by indigenous and post-colonial theory. After inviting participation from self-identified Muslim and Arab community organizations, whether outwardly responding to racism or not, over a one year period (2011-2012), I interviewed eleven diverse organizations, all of which are working in various capabilities and focus on community capacity building – including in the sectors of professional mentorship and networking, activities such as multi/inter-faith programming, social services, and advocacy for their communities. I asked participants to share their narratives and views on a wide array of questions: their assessment of the situation of their communities and constituencies in Canada, their experiences with “community government,” and their assessment of the “good Muslim/bad Muslim” nexus. I classify data I gathered into a heuristic of three types of responses: direct, status and native informant, and argue that although most of them fall into the range of status, it is direct responses – ones that commence and attend to racial injustice – that can have the most positive impact in terms of overall responses to systemic anti-Muslim racism.
Preface

This dissertation is an original intellectual product of the author, Alnoor Gova. The fieldwork reported in Chapters 4 was covered by UBC Ethics Certificate number H11-00634.
Table of Contents

Abstract .......................................................................................................................... ii
Preface ............................................................................................................................ iii
Table of Contents .......................................................................................................... iv
List of Tables .................................................................................................................. v
Acknowledgements ....................................................................................................... vi
Dedication ....................................................................................................................... vii
1 Introduction .................................................................................................................. 1
2 Conceptual Background and Context for the Study ..................................................... 14
   2.1 Demographics of Muslims in Canada .................................................................. 14
   2.2 Race-ing the World: How We Got Here ............................................................. 21
   2.3 Race-ing Muslims: Public Perceptions about Appearing "Muslim" in Canada ...... 32
   2.4 Disciplining the Canadian Voluntary Sector .................................................... 47
   2.5 Good Muslims (native informants) / Bad Muslims ............................................ 59
   2.6 Palestine ............................................................................................................. 65
3 Methodology and Research Methods .......................................................................... 75
   3.1 We are Our Methodologies: Researcher Reflexivity and Positionality .......... 75
   3.2 Racial Insiders and Racial Matching ................................................................. 80
   3.3 Study Design Participant Organizations ............................................................ 82
   3.4 Critical Race Theory, Methodology, and Qualitative Inquiry ......................... 85
   3.5 Methods ............................................................................................................. 91
      Open-ended and Semi-structured Interviewing ................................................... 91
      Counter-Narratives: The Power and Dismissal of Stories ................................... 93
      Storytelling as Resistance: Multi-Method/Composite Stories ......................... 96
   3.6 Process of Analysis .......................................................................................... 98
4 Data Findings ............................................................................................................. 103
   4.1 What would you tell a Martian about who/what Muslims/Arabs are, along with their situation in Canada? ................................................................. 104
   4.1.1 Views On Top Down anti-Muslim / anti-Arab Racism ............................... 117
   4.2 On the Effects of Community Government .................................................... 123
   4.3 On the Good Muslim (Native Informant) / Bad Muslim Nexus .................... 136
   4.4 Organizational Responses: Analysis in Relation to Heuristic ....................... 145
      On Queer Muslims in Need of Rescue: A Multi-Method/Composite Narrative .. 151
5 Conclusion: Reading Responses within the Current Climate of Islamophobia in Canada 157
References ..................................................................................................................... 177
Appendix – Interview Protocol .................................................................................... 198
List of Tables

Table 1 Participating Organizations................................................................. 84
Table 2 Categories of Organizational Responses to anti-Muslim/Arab Racism........... 100
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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my parents, my courageous participants, friends and individuals who have made positive contributions to my life, my inspiring mentors, and to all racialized communities.
1 Introduction

The rising levels of racism towards Muslims, Arabs, and other racialized groups frequently perceived as Muslim, combined with the increasingly negative stereotyping of them in Canada and the enactment of legislation in regards to national security, has made the study of this phenomenon increasingly timely. Such racism has also been visited historically and presently upon communities of brown/ black/ yellow/ red people, who are conflated as a homogenous “Other” said to be antithetical to “the West,” “Western civilization,” and/ or “Western values.” In a post-9/11 era, this “Other” has increasingly tended to conflate a cache of diverse communities and has come to include Arabs, South Asians, and Africans into a racial construct called “Muslim-looking,” a term that collapses an array of characteristics – such as dress, accent, language, national origin, religion, and phenotype - across a differentiated group of non-Muslims (Ahmad, 2004). Now, along with self-identified Muslims, any ostensibly brown/black person, who may or may not be practicing or self-identified as Muslim (Sikhs for example, and other non-Europeans), have also become targets of profiling that operates in the name of national security. Extreme legislation in the name of national security threatens to take everyone’s civil liberties and rights; but has led to an increase in stereotyping, security profiling, and racial discrimination. Further, acts of racial hatred against Muslims, Arabs, and/or those who are deemed “Muslim-looking” have become largely normalized in the public sphere of Western countries, including Canada.1

The presence of Muslims has impacted the Canadian demographic not in any significant ways in terms of their participation in culture, economics, and politics; but for the realpolitik of

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1 Canada, throughout this dissertation refers to as a white-settler colonial formation built upon forcible theft of Indigenous land and annihilation of their societies.
playing to peoples’ fears fostering their exclusion. They are not unlike other racialized communities in Canada, who, despite high levels of education, are forced to take up low-paying and often part-time jobs in response to shifting economic and labour conditions, coupled with racism and external social marginalization. Muslim communities embody an enormous diversity of language, culture and socio-economic positions along with a diversity of interpretations and practices of Islam (Niyozov and Pluim, 2009; Helly, 2011; Canefe, 2007; Rahnema, 2006).

With the growing presence of settled Muslim communities contributing to all spheres of a Canadian society that outwardly champions multiculturalism, there has also come an alarming growth of anti-Muslim racism.²

In 2010, a CBC poll found that attitudes in the rates of discrimination against Muslims over the past decade have risen to the point of now being on par with Indigenous peoples (Hildebrandt, 2010).³ An Evironics Research Poll for the Trudeau Foundation in 2006 found rates of discrimination of Muslims at 50% (Trudeau Foundation, 2006). In fact, a number of polls have been replicated with similar results over the past few years. Results show that Muslim communities face general mistrust from approximately half the nation, evidenced by statistics such as “52% Of Canadians Distrust Muslims,” and 42% agreement with the statement that “[i]f there is discrimination against Muslims, it is mainly their fault” — in effect, blaming Muslims for the discrimination they experience (Csillag, 2012). The result of this attitude and sentiment has been that since 9/11, Muslims in Canada have faced increasing levels of surveillance,

² Anti-Muslim/anti-Arab racism is also known Islamophobia; throughout this dissertation, I have chosen to use the former term over the latter due to its clarity in emphasizing the centrality of race in the equation. Further, my use of the term “anti-Muslim” and or “anti-Muslim/anti-Arab” throughout is inclusive of all Muslims, but also includes non-Muslim Arabs and those perceived to be “Muslim-looking.” Participants in this study self-identified as Muslim or Arab.

³ It is important to note that these polls, while presenting a commonality, do not appropriately address the distinct histories of these groups or the diverse ways in which racism has operated on them, but only points to public opinion.
discrimination, fear, harassment, violence, vandalism, and subjections to torture (Razack, 2008). Their Charter rights are more and more frequently violated by practices of racial profiling and aggressive surveillance by CSIS and the RCMP, including security visitations to homes, mosques, and Islamic centers (Badhi, 2003; CCAIR, 2005; People’s Commission, 2007; Gova and Kurd, 2008; Diab and Gova, 2012; Yavar Hameed & Faisal Bhabha, personal communication, Feb 16 2015). Numerous cases can also be cited where Canadian citizenship entitlements and human rights codes have been suspended largely for Muslims/ Arabs/ Africans/ South Asians under the pretext of national security, and in the name of protecting Canadians within the context of national security and a perpetual war against terror (Diab and Gova, 2012).

In the circulation of cultural standards within the hegemonic discourse, or in what Charles Taylor calls the “metatopic space” – referring to the public sphere, with respect to the construction and development of consensus in the public mind (Taylor, 2004, p. 860) – there exists a consensus within the status quo that legitimizes discrimination against those who are, or those who “look like,” Muslims in Western societies, specifically referring to those who appear or are perceived to be “Arab” or “Muslim” and this, post 9/11, intersects with Indigenous, Black and other ethnicities and religions like Sikhism and/or Latino. In Canada, like other Western countries, it is clear that much of anti-Muslim/anti-Arab racism also relates to the wider geopolitics of nation-states and the public consensus regarding their discriminatory treatment (Helly, 2004). Muslim communities have been positioned outside the popular imaginary as the “other” against which the nation-state asserts its power, identity and disciplinary regimes. Over

4 There is a long tradition, according to Edward Said of stereotypical, discriminatory and patronizing cultural representations of Arabs and the Arab world, and extending to all Muslims, which he outlines in his seminal book *Orientalism* (1978).

the past decade since 9/11, the consensus of the government and the Canadian metatopical space has been driven in part by the corporate monopoly which owns the media, and has caused Muslims, Arabs, and those perceived as Muslim-looking to increasingly lay claim to their “right to have rights” as full members of the nation-state in question. These claims come in response to Muslims being perceived as threats to the national fabric (Razaack, 2008; Thobani, 2007), as evidenced by statements made by the current Prime Minister himself (Harper, 2011; 2015) have resulted in increasing institutional and popular racism against Muslims and Arabs, the creation of suits of anti-terror laws that further a reduction to the civil and human rights of Muslims and other racialized groups, as seen with the latest Bills C-51 (Anti-Terrorism Act, 2015), C-24 (Strengthening Canadian Citizenship Act, with new powers allowing the government to revoke Canadian citizenship from dual citizens) and Bill S-7 (the Zero Tolerance for Barbaric Cultural Practices Act, 2015) explicitly targeting Muslims. Further, these anti-terror bills from C-36 to C-51 target and impact Indigenous communities who have always been perceived as the fundamental threat to Canadian nationhood. Therefore, these anti-terror bills further settler colonialism by creating additional tools to dispossess, displace and silence resistance to the same, for example, as discussed by Patricia Monture-Angus in her book Thunder in My Soul: A Mohawk Woman Speaks (1995) and more recently by Pam Palmater in her testimony on Bill C-51 (Anti-terror Act, 2015) to the Senate Standing Committee on National Security and Defense (2015).

The opposite trend in levels of anti-Muslim racism should have been expected in a country with an official policy of multiculturalism (Canadian Multiculturalism Act, 1988) that lays claim to pluralism, equality, and diversity, the right to enjoy culture, and entitlements to

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equal protection without prejudice and discrimination (Discover Canada: The Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship, 2012). Anti-Muslim sentiment runs as high as 50% in the Canadian population, as cited in numerous polls above; further, any claims to the Canadian nation-state and society as post-racial where citizenship and human rights apply equally to everyone, and in the particular case, to Muslims and Arabs, are betrayed by both government and institutional policies and practices which adversely targets this group’s equality rights. The differential policing and discipline of these groups is justified as a response to a differential “threat” to Canadian society; as expressed by the nation-state, its institutions, and the corporate media. It is seen as emanating from Islamic radicalization and not, for example, from non-Muslim or Arab outlaw bikers, neo-Nazis, white supremacists, anti-globalization activists and other politically-motivated groups where the threat is not emphasized (former CSIS agent Michel Juneau-Katsuya, as cited in Davis 2012).

This policy of targeting Muslims and Arabs is most commonly legitimized through the recycling of old tropes that reproduce the false mythology that Islam and Muslims and Arabs are antithetical and a threat to Western civilizational norms and society (Said, 1978; Helly, 2011; Shryock, 2010; Grosfoguel, 2010; Kumar, 2012). Rather than the acknowledgement of Islamic contributions to knowledge (on which the European Renaissance is based), what has happened

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6 Helly (2011) emphasizes that despite high levels of anti-Muslim racism, the Canadian government has placed no funding towards combating anti-Muslim racism work via ministry of multiculturalism. Indeed, this racism is exacerbated by Prime Minister Harper’s comments in a nationally televised interviews in 2011 and 2015 on how “the major threat [to Canada] is still Islamicism,” and by the RCMP ultimately withdrawing their support of a handbook they spent fourteen months collaborating and producing with two national Muslim organizations in 2014 (Mitrovica, 2014). Harper’s statements themselves, along with participant comments them are discussed further in Chapter 4.

7 In a conversation with Michel Juneau-Katsuya I conducted on Vancouver Coop-Radio, he expounded on the differences within perceived threats to national security saying, some come from radical Muslim extremists, and others from non-Muslim groups who are deemed less extremist and therefore less worthy of attention. With respect to the state security regime, this logic of heightened perceived threats coming from Muslims betrays that there is a greater threat to public safety from other groups; these threats do not statistically point towards Muslims (Gova, November 3, 2014).
over the past fifty years has been persistence in placing Muslims below the “line of the human” (de Sousa Santos, 2007). De Sousa Santos calls this line “the abyssal line,” a constitutive distinction made in modern western thinking that divides humanity into Fanon’s “zones of being and non-being” (Fanon 1967). These are metaphors or structures of thought that divide up the world “between the deserving and the undeserving according to descent” (Razack, 2008, p. 8). In this zone, the humanity of the “Other” is not recognized, “institutional system of managing and administering conflicts in the zone of non-being ...are managed through violence and overt appropriation/dispossession” (Grosfoguel, 2014, p. 639). “Others” are treated as subhuman / non-human, without access to standards of rights and civility, whereas those above the abyssal line, in the zone of being, are managed through discourses of regulation and emancipation (Grosfoguel, 2012; Grosfoguel & Mielants, 2006; Quijano, 1991, 2000; Dussel, 1994; and de Sousa Santos, 2007). Within this context, contemporary tropes producing who and what Muslims, Arabs and Islam are become the ground reality upon which Western Muslim and Arab communities are racialized in Western societies.8

     Within the context of these lived realities for Muslims and Arabs in Canada, the overarching concern during the course of my research was to examine and analyze the community’s responses to the racism they have endured. Over a one year period, spanning 2011-2012, I sought to understand institutional responses to anti-Muslim/anti-Arab racism by Canadian community organizations working in the public sphere on behalf of, or in support of, Muslims and/or Arabs. By identifying as members of Muslim and/or Arab communities themselves,9 the organizations that participated in my study are already implicitly doing anti-

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8 This racialization is further theorized and discussed in Chapter 2.
9 Although all the organizations in my study self-identify and work on behalf of Muslims or Arabs, their work is not exclusively restricted to serving only these communities.
I used a qualitative approach while conducting my study, after obtaining my data through an open-ended interview process, I analyzed it primarily through the framework of critical race theory (CRT), informed by Indigenous and post-colonial theory, premised on an understanding that racism, sexism, classism and settler colonialism contribute as parts of a mutually buttressing inter-dynamic of oppressions acting systemically to maintain the present status quo of white dominance or supremacy, under which the nation-state is organized (Thobani, 2007; Razack, 2006, 2008; Bannerji, 2000; Mills, 1997; Grosfoguel, 2010; Monture-Angus, 1995; Fanon, 1963, 1967; de Sousa Santos, 2007). I chose this framework in particular because in Canada is a settler colonial state that uses white supremacy to marginalize racialized communities while dispossessing Indigenous people of their rights. Further, drawing from Indigenous and post-colonial understandings and language immediately contextualizes this CRT framework, allowing for a more fulsome analysis of anti-Muslim/Arab racism in Canada.

Over the last decade, the alarming levels of anti-Muslim/anti-Arab racism in Canada and increasingly negative stereotyping of these communities have made understanding this phenomenon and its responses to the same increasingly critical. My study is of particular importance within the context of growing hate crimes against Muslims/Arabs and their institutions, which are fueled by anti-Muslim sentiment and the creation of global

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10 This work is governed by awareness that being publicly registered as organizations representing Muslim and/or Arab demographics makes them particularly vulnerable as targets for anti-“Muslim” racism.
11 This institutionalized regime of racism, also known as “White supremacy,” has a productive value and is not a consequence of a neutral process. This disambiguation is further explored in Chapter 2.
12 Although hate crimes targeting Muslims has been a staple since September, 2001, “with the ongoing coverage of violent extremism being perpetrated in the name of Islam and Muslims, we notice a spike in reported hate crimes and incidents; this only tells part of the story, as hate crimes are typically underreported. Further, the current geopolitical climate offers a fertile breeding ground for those few who choose to act out their bigotry by attacking Canadians in their places of worship and businesses” (NCCM, 2014). See the National Council of Canadian Muslims for tracking and reporting hate crimes.
Islamophobia networks.\textsuperscript{13} Within this context, it is imperative to understand how Muslims in Canada understand and respond to the situations in which they find themselves. Affected community responses to anti-Muslim/anti-Arab racism in Canada have been understudied, and it is in response to this research gap that my dissertation offers an interpretation of community organizations’ responses.

In my study itself, I focused on interviewing individuals who founded or were/are board members of one or more Muslim and/or Arab community organizations and could thus speak to the organizations’ experiences of working as community developers within the charged environment of institutionalized racism in Canada. While casting as broad a net as possible, I did not make a distinction between Muslim and Arab community organizations, nor did I exclusively seek out any specific kinds of community groups such as those with a history of anti-racism work, or make any distinction between religious, cultural or secular community groups. Participants in my study included self-identified Muslims (from Arab, South Asian, and African communities), as well as non-Muslim Arabs volunteering in Muslim and Arab community organizations. Ultimately, eleven organizations participated; all individuals associated at a founder or director level currently, and one who volunteered their time (within the past year) with several respective organization(s). An additional criterion used before confirming

\textsuperscript{13} See “Legislating Fear Islamophobia and its impact in the United States.” Key findings which also affect Canada include the following: “Finding 2: The U.S.-based Islamophobia network’s inner core is currently comprised of at least 37 groups whose primary purpose is to promote prejudice against or hatred of Islam and Muslims. An additional 32 groups whose primary purpose does not appear to include promoting prejudice against or hatred of Islam and Muslims but whose work regularly demonstrates or supports Islamophobic themes make up the network’s outer core. Finding 3: The inner core of the U.S.-based Islamophobia network enjoyed access to at least $119,662,719 in total revenue between 2008 and 2011. Groups in the inner core are often tightly linked. Key players in the network benefited from large salaries as they encouraged the American public to fear Islam” (CAIR, 2014). See also Duss, M., et al. (2015, February 11) \textit{Fear, Inc. 2.0: The Islamophobia Network’s Efforts to Manufacture Hate in America}, on the resources and organizations that sustain this work.
participation was that they fulfill the organizational features and categories suggested by Salamon and Anheier’s framework (1998), elaborated upon in Chapter 3.

Over the course of responding to a series of semi-structured interviews questions, which ranged from one and a half to two hours each, the rich in-depth discussions that ensued opened entry points into participants’ experiences of being Muslim, Arab, and/or perceived as “Muslim looking” vis-à-vis their lives and community organizing, and also shed light on their values and attitudes about racism in Canada, and their organizational responses to it. In my research protocol, I did not ask directly how organizations responded to anti-Muslim/anti-Arab racism; rather, the approach I took was to gather data based on open-ended discussion of three core issues that would invariably lead to revelation of their responses through discussion of: (1) their perspective on being or appearing “Muslim” in Canada; (2) their experiences of the effects of “community government” (Ilcan and Basok, 2004), or the instrumentality of neo-liberal governance and its effects, upon their organization; and (3) their assessment of the figure of the “good Muslim” (Mamdani, 2005), or “native informant,” within their communities, as understood within the context of increasing national capital (Riley, 2009). Questions on these broad areas were designed to invite participants to share their world-views, values, perceptions, and analysis of the state of Muslims in Canada, as asking how, if at all, “community government” applied to their organization’s experiences, and what, if any, was their understanding of the concept of the “good Muslim/bad Muslim” as applied to and within their

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14 See Appendix 1 for the research protocol for this study, which includes a list of interview questions.
15 By “native informant,” I am describing colonial figures who, in the uncritical and unbalanced derision their own culture, wittingly or unwittingly, reify Eurocentric pre-eminence. This figure has also been variously referred to as the “native intellectual” (Fanon, in Farrington, 1963), “house Arab” (Sheehi, 2011), “house Negro” (Malcolm X, 1963), “comprador collaborator” (Parenti, 2006), and has also been described as the “native informer/ant” (Dabashi, 2011; Saljoughi, 2008; Toor, 2011). This discussion followed with participants after I quoted Riley’s framework from an article titled “How to Accumulate National Capital: The Case of the “Good” Muslim” (2009).
communities provided greater insights into participant organizational contexts and their own understanding of themselves, and their communities, illuminating their responses to their own situation as Muslims and/or Arabs in Canada and responses to racism.

General demographics of Muslims in Canada, is discussed in Chapter 2. In this chapter, I also present the background and context necessary to understand and interpret the study’s three core investigative themes in order to appreciate and comprehend the analysis of participants attitudes, values, perceptions gathered through discussion with them about how being Muslim and/or Arab affects them and their communities and organizing today. In particular, I provide context to understand the relationship between participant organizations and the Canadian government vis-à-vis the concepts of “community government,” and their assessments of the “good Muslim (native informant)/bad Muslim” nexus. Framing my questions around these core concepts generated space for participants to talk about the types of activities and responses their organizations were engaged in with respect to responding to racism.

In Chapter 3, I discuss my research methodology, study design, and self-positionality, framed within the context of critical race informed by Indigenous and post-colonial theory. Here, I also discuss the practices of qualitative inquiry that have been useful for my data analysis, namely interviewing and the incorporation of counter-stories, or multi-method/composite stories. At the end of this chapter, I propose a heuristic through which to understand the range of responses to racism by affected communities, the implications of which are discussed throughout Chapters 4 and 5. This heuristic consists of three archetypical responses found in the data set: direct, status, and native informant. These types of responses –
which overlap and intersect, rather than operate with firmly divided boundaries – can be described as the following.\textsuperscript{16}

(1) A “direct” response takes a stance that involves recognition of the centrality of racism as endemic and systemic and not as aberrational. The aim of this response is akin to a response addressing the root cause(s) of racism.

(2) A “status” response is an ancillary response perpetuating the status quo of Canada as multicultural. This response views racism as an aberration and not modal. A prime exemplar of such a response is the argument for the need for greater education. The effect of this response is to address the symptoms of racism.

(3) A “native informant” response serves to reify and legitimate the racism inflicted on one’s own community.

Through an analysis of responses to the research protocol, I found a rich diversity of programmatic activities, mandates, and organizational goals. All participating organizations were focused within their own constituencies and working in their capacity towards fulfilling their own mandates and community development. Participant discourse on the above themes, including their institutional and individual responses to racism is presented and analysed as data findings in Chapter 4.

I propose the above heuristic as a lens or framework through which to interpret and analyze affected communities’ responses to the racism they face. The implications of the heuristic within today’s climate of Islamophobia in Canada, as well as suggestions on how it can be applied to other racialized communities, are discussed in my concluding chapter (Chapter 5).

\textsuperscript{16}See Table 2 for a chart that both briefly defines and categorizes participants’ responses within this framework.
Overall, I have found that anti-Muslim/anti-Arab racism in Canada has developed as a result of many historical and cultural factors, including a concerted effort from the top of the power structure engendering anti-Muslim racism from below (Ali et al, 2011). Today, it is propagated by a corresponding development of the terrorism industrial complex, including “terrorism experts,” and quasi academics, leading to what Paul Sedra calls a “persecution expertise” industry (2012). Much of contemporary Western metatopical discourse regarding Muslims (i.e. in the political, media, public, and academic spheres) is entrenched in the praxis of a historical polemic in which a tradition of racism is manufactured as a flourishing incompatibility of civilizations motivated by a threat to national security. This reinforces the notion that Islam replaces the existential threat that once was communism and generates a broad base of consensus on the necessity of the war on terror (Mamdani, 2005; Thobani, 2011). This message is invigorated by slogans such as “With Us or Against Us” (U.S. President Bush II, 2001) and “We are not afraid to call out Jihadis” (Canadian PM Stephen Harper, 2015) and produces “good Muslims and bad Muslims” in response (Mamdani, 2005). The discourse of race that has resulted is along the human/non-human abyssal line, separating the deserving from non-desserving, and runs largely unchallenged; such a view includes an oppressing and narrow definition of Islam as a pre-modern, fanatical, irrational, radical, and extremist monolith, and is constantly perpetuated in metatopical spaces where Muslims and Arabs are at a struggle to

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17 See Edward Said’s 2002 article, “Impossible Histories: Why the Many Islams Cannot be Simplified,” where he states the following: “The history of trying to come to terms with this somewhat fictionalized (or at least constructed) Islam in Europe and later in the United States has always been marked by crisis and conflict, rather than by calm, mutual exchange. There is the added factor now of commercial publishing, ever on the lookout for a quick bestseller by some adept expert that will tell us all we need to know about Islam, its problems, dangers, and prospects. In my book Orientalism, I argued that the original reason for European attempts to deal with Islam as if it were one giant entity was polemical—that is, Islam was considered a threat to Christian Europe and had to be fixed ideologically, the way Dante fixes Muhammad in one of the lower circles of hell. Later, as the European empires developed over time, knowledge of Islam was associated with control, with power, with the need to understand the “mind” and ultimate nature of a rebellious and somehow resistant culture as a way of dealing administratively with an alien being at the heart of the expanding empires, especially those of Britain and France.”
constantly defend themselves from this image. How Muslim communities respond to these fears, threats, and violence upon their humanity is an urgent concern to which we should all attend. Ultimately, how Muslims respond is critical not only for self-empowerment, but also for the nation as a whole, as such racism takes place and is perpetuated at the expense of the rights of every Canadian.
2 Conceptual Background and Context for the Study

This chapter provides context and conceptual background for the core themes of the research protocol. After discussing the demographics of Muslims and Arabs in Canada, I provide a brief history of what has led to discrimination against them. I then provide context for the effects of “community government” as it relates to their experiences, their assessment of the “good Muslim” (Mamdani, 2005; Riley, 2009), and their comments made regarding Palestine.

2.1 Demographics of Muslims in Canada

Although the history of Muslims in the territories known as Turtle Island (or by its colonized name, North America) is a long and storied one, preceding Columbus and colonization by at least five centuries (Audry, 1998; Mroueh, 1996), it is only with the recent so-called “liberalization of immigration policies” of the 1960s and 1970s in Canada that there has a large influx of immigrants to the continent from the global south and Muslim majority countries. Sunera Thobani notes,

Increasing immigration from the third world had to be accepted as an unavoidable necessity in the interest of economic expansion. The liberalization of immigration policy and the adoption of official multiculturalism facilitated both a material inclusion of immigrants within the population and their simultaneous exclusion from the nation, primarily through their reification as cultural outsiders. (2007, p. 147 emphasis in original)

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18 There is mounting evidence that Muslims and Arabs had relations with Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island; as expected, these counter-narratives are marginalized in order to uphold the master narratives of Western conquests and superiority.
It is important to note that the 1960s was also a decade in which racial minorities were struggling for their own civil rights, and the U.S. struggle was played out in the geopolitical context of the time in which racial rights were being “liberalized” in Canada (Thobani, 2007).

That Canada opened its borders to brown and black bodies, in large part for economic gain and geo-political public relations, is a prime example of what critical race scholar Derrick Bell has termed “interest convergence” (1980), where the state or dominant groups power’s interest (in the case above, government and corporate economic interests) converged with that of Muslim and Arab immigrants from Muslim majority countries. This resulted in the growing population of those communities in Canada, albeit carrying with them the stigma of “outsiders” rather than collaborators and/or comrades. This path – which began with European contact and led to colonization, then the necessity of non-European labour/immigration, and finally the liberalization of citizenship – is a process of who gets to belong, who is exalted as national subjects, and whose identity is deemed legitimate (Thobani, 2007).

In *The Dark Side of the Nation* (2000), Himani Bannerji also draws from post-colonial and Indigenous language and studies in describing Canada as a white settler society. She argues Canada is posturing as a kind of liberal democracy that is morphing into a fascist state, spiralling in a global vortex of capital that perpetuates racist labour and citizenship politics. Bannerji goes on to discuss that Canada is an Anglo-white male inspiration envisaged by colonial settlers, perceived to be threatened by the forces of nature among which the Aboriginal peoples were situated. In later years, the existence of Canada was thought to be under threat of incorporation within the United States, and today is being seen as overrun by non-white immigrants and Muslims perceived to be eroding Canadian values. Such feelings of threat from both within and without camouflage Canada’s own colonial and imperial projects. Ultimately, Bannerji draws
attention to official Canadian multiculturalism as a flawed ideological proposition upon which successive federal governments, over the past 40 years, have attempted a transition from an overt settler psychology of “keeping Canada White” to a covert organizing of “diversity management of the socio-cultural, legal-economic space of Canada” along the same power differential (p. 27).

She further notes that

[t]here is in this process an element of racialized ethnicization, which whitens North Americans of European origins and blackens or darkens their “others” by the same stroke. This is integral to Canadian class and cultural formation and distribution of political entitlement. The old and established colonial/racist discourses of tradition and modernity, civilization and savagery, are at the conceptual devices of the construction and ascription of these racialized ethnicities. (p. 6)

This shows how multiculturalism, while on the surface appearing as a gain for racialized persons, reifies and even amplifies that very difference in an inequitable and compromising power relation between the so-called “old-stock” (white settlers) with rights, “new-Canadians” (immigrants), clamoring for rights as Indigenous peoples and their rights have been erased from the landscape. The gains that Muslims and Arabs and other racialized minorities have made in their own personal lives have come with the expense of furthering the dispossession of Indigenous peoples.

According to Statistics Canada, Muslims and Arabs are the fastest growing populations in Canada today: these communities grew by 82% from the years 2001-2011. As of 2011, there were more than one million Muslims in Canada, making up approximately 3.2% of the
population.\textsuperscript{19} It is projected that these communities will triple in the next two decades. With Canadian Muslim population expected to rise to 6.6% of the population by 2030, where one in two persons identifying as having religious affiliation could be Muslim (Minister of Industry, 2010), there is an uneasy tension and growing “moral panic” about the presence of Muslims in Canada (Razack, 2008, p. 149). The Canadian State has built a global reputation of Canada as being a place where racial minorities are treated equally; however, for Muslims, and Arabs, as with many non-Europeans in Canada, the reality of routine covert and overt discrimination has not reflected this image (Khouri, 2003).

Muslim and Arab communities in Canada embody an enormous diversity of linguistic, nationalities, cultures, and socio-economic positions. They are represented by an extremely wide diversity of interpretations and practices of Islam (Niyozov and Pluim, G., 2009), and hail “not just from the Arab world (Lebanon, Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria), but also from Iran, Pakistan, India, Afghanistan, Turkey, Africa, Eastern Europe, the Caribbean, and, South and Central America” (Canefe, 2007). Statistics and public surveys and polls tell us that Muslims tend to be “more highly educated than the general population: 45% of Muslims have university degrees, as compared to a national average of 33%” (Environics Focus Canada, 2006-4, p. 64). However, despite having attained nearly double the national education rate for post-secondary education, Muslims have equally double rates of unemployment: 14.4%, compared to the national average of 7.4%. Further,

\textsuperscript{19} Currently, Muslims represent the second largest religious minority in Canada – though it should be noted that Muslims and Arabs, like anyone else of other faiths and heritages, self-identify as believing, cultural, and/or agnostic etc. According to 2001 statistics, “44% of Canadians of Arab origin reported they were Muslim, while another 44% belonged to a Christian faith group. That year, 28% said they were Catholic, 11% belonged to a Christian Orthodox sect, and 5% belonged to a mainline Protestant denomination. Relatively few Canadians of Arab origin have no religious affiliation, 6% said they had no religious affiliation, compared with 17% of the overall population” (Statistics Canada: The Arab Community in Canada. 2007).
Despite high levels of education, Canadian Muslims receive very low incomes when compared to the rest of the population. About 54% have an income below $20,000. The mean income of the Muslim community, according to the latest census data, is $21,859, compared to $29,769 for the Canadian population in general. The Muslim median income (a better indicator) is $13,963, about 37 per cent lower than the Canadian median income of $22,120. (Rahnema, in Moghissi, 2009, p.27)

Additionally, only “68% of Muslims in Canada are estimated to have Canadian citizenship. This leaves a hefty portion of the population as immigrants without Canadian passports and concomitantly, without the enjoyment of full-fledged rights of formal citizenship” (Canefe, 2007, p.62).

In many ways, Muslim and Arab communities in Canada are not unlike other racialized communities in Canada, who, despite high levels of education, are forced to take up low-paying, often part time jobs in response to shifting economic and labor conditions coupled with state policies of racism and social marginalization. For example, with the recent Quebec Charter of Values (2013/4), Canada is overtly legislating racism by targeting Muslims and other highly qualified religious minorities and potentially keeping them from holding jobs. This is now being further reinforced through nationalist anti-terror legislation and rhetoric of jihadist terror. In an article titled *Pauline Marois Issues Fatwa on Quebec Secularism*, Haroon Siddiqui points to similar strategies and methods used by Quebec’s Premier Pauline Marois in 2013 to those of “the Harper government [which] is no stranger to double standards on free speech. Jason Kenney [also known as Mufti Kenney] has barred foreigners whose views he did not like but has routinely let in anti-Muslim hate-mongers. He has also banned veiled women from becoming citizens. Earlier, his cabinet colleagues joined Quebec separatists in flirting with banning *niqabis*
from casting ballots” (2013). More recently in 2015, Prime Minister Harper’s comments introducing new anti-terror legislation included the following statement that links both mosques and the basements of Muslims with training grounds for terror: “It doesn't matter what the age of the person is, or whether they're in a basement, or whether they're in a mosque or somewhere else” (Laura, 2015). Appearing “Muslim-looking” in Canada today is what makes them particularly vulnerable groups, targets of suspicion and fear in the public sphere in Canada, and renders the distinction between those with and without citizenship rights almost moot. Further with the newly proposed changes to C-24 (the Strengthening Canadian Citizenship Act) – targeted we are told at curbing terrorism – in essence divides the population into two groups with a differential sets of laws effectively creating a subset of second-class citizens with reduced access and rights.

Overall, negative perceptions of Muslims and Islam – a prevailing constant in European and North American societies (Said, 1978) that has risen with global events since the fall of Communism in 1988 – has spiked greatly since the events of 9/11. With few actual or real (political or religious) events committed in the name of Islam, save a few high-profile secret cases, negative perceptions of Muslims and Arabs have been largely driven by the Canadian state using a national security logic for the legitimization of suspicion towards these communities (Diab & Gova 2012). These perceptions have been narrated by the Canadian Corporate Media (Jiwani, 2006; Karim, 2003), along with their counterparts in the U.S. and Europe, in their roles as “stenographers to power” (Barsamian, 1992). Well past a decade after 9/11, rising anti-Muslim sentiment runs unabated.

This has resulted in exacerbating a distorted and dangerous attitude towards Muslims and Arabs. According to a 2006 Trudeau Foundation poll, 51% of Canadians report a negative
impression of Islam and Muslims as a result of their perception of Islamic culture and values (2006). A 2010 Leger Marketing poll found 55% of Canadians disagreed with the statement “Muslims share our values” (Thompson, 2010). A 2012 poll by Leger Marketing, for the Association for Canadian Studies and Canadian Race Relations Foundation, “[a]sked if Muslims can be trusted. A countrywide total of 52% of respondents said either ‘not at all’ or only ‘a little’” (Boswell, 2012). The poll also found that “42% of Canadians said discrimination against Muslims is “mainly their [own] fault” (Csillag, 2012). With half of the Canadian population holding the perception that Muslims are not trustworthy, do not want to integrate into the mainstream, and come with cultural values that are incompatible and seen to threaten Canadian cultural, economic and political norms, it is no wonder their own “Othering” is increasingly felt by Muslim and Arab communities. For this reason, their responses to racism are increasingly going to be important in how they understand racism and their self-reflections on how they respond in addressing racism.

In 2010, a CBC poll found that rates of discrimination against Muslims over the past decade have risen to the point of being on par with rates of discrimination against Indigenous peoples. It is important to note that this poll does not do much more than present an interesting juxtaposition that has arisen out of different histories and contexts; such polls may not be totally accurate. However, they are not totally inaccurate: that same poll found discrimination against Muslims to be at 34%, Aboriginals at 33%, Pakistanis or East Indians at 28%, Blacks at 20 %, Jews at 13%, and the Chinese at 11% (Hildebrandt, 2010).

The statistics above show a definite rise in negativity towards Muslims rather than a decrease. This constant churning of systemic racialization and Othering of Muslims in the public discourse is not what one would have expected in a pluralist society, or in a nation that
champions and indeed has institutionalized multiculturalism as its official policy for over a
generation. Indeed, the opposite has happened, for the systemic is further fueled by independent
think-tanks who are funding a number of key individuals and organizations producing an anti-
Islam/Muslim/Arab diatribe of vitriol in public and media spaces. A report which uncovers their
work concludes by saying “[w]hat was once considered fringe, extremist rhetoric” is now
“mainstreamed” (Ali et al., 2011). Haroon Siddiqui, editor emeritus at one of Canada’s leading
papers, the Toronto Star, comes to the same conclusion, stating that “there’s little doubt that anti-
Muslim demagoguery has moved from the margins to the mainstream” (Siddiqui, 2011).

2.2 Race-ing the World: How We Got Here

Critical race theorists generally explore questions of how we got to this place today,
where entire communities do not have access to rights and codes of law in societies, by placing
race at the center of their analysis. They challenge the prevailing narratives of the status quo by
discussing, for example, “the historical centrality and the complicity of law in upholding white
supremacy” (West, as cited in Crenshaw et al., 1995, p. xi). In addition to the constitutional
representation of people of colour, critical race theorists also examine conventional historical
representations of people of colour in scholarship and culture and the hierarchies that underpin
them that need to be changed. Critical race scholars attempt to combine political struggles of
people of colour for racial justice by rendering the structures and constructs of white supremacy
within the wider struggles for social transformation. In this section, I use CRT as a framework,
drawing from Indigenous and post-colonial language, so as to explain how we ended up in a
racial system of white power and privilege that structures an imbalance in the law that leads to
Muslims and Arabs being ejected from a system of access to rights and privileges of nationhood
and citizenship.
One of the key markers of critical race theory is that it presents a counter narrative to liberal mainstream discourses and histories that have constructed racism over the past fifty years, into an erroneous belief that we have now moved into a post-racial era where racialized outcomes are seen as random consequences of an otherwise aracial, neutral, and apolitical legal processes, that is, CRT challenges the manner in which race and racial power are constructed and represented by striving to, first,

understand how a regime of white supremacy, white hegemony and its subordination of people of colour have been created and maintained in light of a social structure and state policies which continue to perpetuate “post-racial” ideals of “colour blindness,” “equal protection” and “equal opportunity;” and second, not merely to understand the vexed bond between law and racial power but to change it. (Crenshaw et al, 1995, p. xiii)

Charles Mills notes that most critical race scholars take race as “socio-political rather than biological, but nonetheless real” (1997, p. 126, his emphasis). Mills further notes of race that a “social ontology is therefore created, a universe divided between persons and racial subpersons… destined never to penetrate the normative rights ceiling established for them below white persons” (p. 16-17).

In this context, race is understood as a marker along “the abyssal line” that de Sousa Santos calls (2006) the arbitrary line drawn between who counts as a human being and who does not, bifurcating humanity into Fanon’s “zone of being” and “not being” (1963; 1967). This produces “race thinking” dividing “up the world between the deserving and the undeserving according to descent” (Razack, 2008, p.8) and has been employed as “as a cartography of power
of the ‘world-system’ for the past 518 years” (Grosfoguel, 2012). As Mills describes it, when we are asking what “race” someone is, we are referring to race as a phenotypic and cultural location within the spectrum of humanity within the socio-political system and with attendant consequences and not as any natural determinant outcome of the human species (Mills, 1997). Within this system, racism becomes the basis for competition of resources (Parenti, 2007), and thus serves a “floating signifier” (Hall, 1997) that can be marked in many ways – for instance, through ethnicity, culture, language, colour, religion, and/or ideology.

As a discursive “floating signifier,” racism refers to the systems, concepts, and divisions between cultures and societies that mark superiority and inferiority between humans; however, such an attempt “to locate differences between the races, on what one might call scientific, biological, or genetic grounds, have been largely shown to be untenable” (Hall, 1997). Grosfoguel argues that it is very provincial and arrogant to think that Western men from mostly five countries – namely, France, Germany, Italy, the U.K., and the U.S. – can determine for the rest of the world what “knowledge” is via omissions and/or appropriations of the epistemologies of others, elevate their own subjectivities, intellectual and practical contributions both within

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20 “World-system” refers to the “modern/colonial Westernized Christian-centric capitalist/patriarchal world-system” (Grosfoguel, 2012, p.10). This system is also referred to as the corporate, neo-liberal, and neo-con corporate globalization of the commons. Esteva & Prakash (1998) call it the “Global Project”, which they describe as the current collection of policies and programs promoted all over the world principally by the governments of industrial countries with the help of their “friends,” who are the international institutions and corporations equally committed to the economic integration of the world and the market credo (based on the modern doctrine of the self-regulating market, as described by Karl Polanyi in The Great Transformation, 1925). Other “friends” include most heads of state as well as the elites of “underdeveloped” states, inspiring to “catch-up” with the “social minorities” of the “developed” nations, in the global race for “progress” and “development” (pp.16). With respect to “market credo” and the so-called “self-regulating market,” I refer the reader to Thomas Friedman’s succinct and accurate description of the project of corporate globalization in his book The Lexus and the Olive Tree, where he states “the hidden hand of the market will never work without a hidden fist. McDonald’s cannot flourish without McDonnell Douglas. And the hidden fist that keeps the world safe for Silicon Valley’s technologies to flourish is called the United States Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps” (1999, p. 373).
their own societies and at a global level. He argues that this “racist-sexist/epistemic privilege” that underpins the structures of systemic racism present today,

is so powerful and so normalized--through the discourse of “objectivity” and “neutrality” of the Cartesian “ego-politics of knowledge” in the social sciences--that it hides who speaks and from which power location they speak from, such that when we think of “identity politics” we immediately assume, as if by “common sense,” that we are talking about racialized minorities. In fact, without denying the existence of essentialist “identity politics” among racialized minorities, the hegemonic “identity politics”--that of Eurocentric male discourse--uses this identitarian, racist, sexist discourse to discard all critical interventions rooted in epistemologies and cosmologies coming from oppressed groups and “non-Western” traditions of thought. (Maldonado-Torres, 2008, as cited in Grosfoguel, 2012)

Racism, then, is not a series of ignorant acts or random outcomes and consequences of idiosyncratic and individual actions, nor is it the result of a few bad apples in an otherwise inherently aracial, neutral, apolitical, legal bureaucratic process in a so-called post-racial era (Crenshaw, 1995); rather, it is modal (Mills, 1997). In other words, it is useful to think of racialization as a system of social classification that is “not an irrational output from a basically rational society but the converse: the “rational” (to be expected) output of a fundamentally irrational system” (Parenti, 2007). This irrational system, constitutive of structural inequalities born of the line bifurcating the human, is given “legal sanction… [in that] the Canadian legal system is a regime of racial power” (Thobani, 2007, p.13, p. 54), and originates from a fiat of European legal regimes and state structures rooted in European colonial genocide and “epistemicide” of indigenous peoples and traditional knowledges of the majority of human
cultures across the globe (Grosfoguel, 2012). Race, as a floating signifier, has been used rhizomatically to mark superiority and inferiority between humans in western metopic-spaces; what is left is white supremacy, which remains hegemonic across the globe and continues to interpolate nearly every aspect of life with which it subordinates non-Europeans, and ejects them from humane treatment everywhere.21

Like other critical theories that seek emancipation and liberation, critical race theory’s specific and practical purposes are determined by its’ epistemological and ontological positions and commonly held premises. By placing race at the centre of its analysis of Western societies, CRT theorizes and analyses sites and struggles through hierarchies of power which animate the world system, white supremacy, hetero-patriarchal gender and sexual disparity, and class-based inequalities born of predatory corporate capitalism, as a trinity operating through intersections with other hierarchies of power. The following research and critical race theory analysis of racialized Muslim and Arab communities, is understood to be built on the oppression and repression of Indigenous Nations and therefore it utilizes indigenous and post-colonial understandings and language in order to contextualize CRT in the real and continuing operation of race and racism in the settler nation state known as “Canada”.

Grosfoguel traces the birth of modern racism to trans-historical moments of Western epistemologies which laid ground for epistemicides and genocides: within the period of European colonial expansion, beginning with the so-called discovery of the new-world in 1492, the boomerang effect of classifying “Indigenous Peoples” as “Indians” and then heathens without souls serves as a watermark moment for human classification. In the imaginary of the early 15th-

21 The positioning of race at a fulcrum of the world system, a socio-political order as Mills notes is also an, “unnamed political system that has made the modern world what it is today. You will not find this term [white supremacy] in introductory, or even advanced, texts in political theory” (1997, p.1). As racism is modal, so is white supremacy, according to Mills.
century Christendom of Spain, the debate on how and whom to classify as human had congruencies with religion: in short, those with religion had souls, and those without did not. Human beings could be of the wrong religion but they were assumed to have souls. Because the peoples of the Americas were categorized as beings without souls, they therefore were not human and were to be treated like animals. This was the first time Europeans began to bifurcate humanity – previously, the humanity of the “Other” had not been called into question (Grosfoguel, 2006; 2012).

This position, held by the Catholic monarchy in Spain, forced a debate held at Valladolid in 1550–1551 between Bartolomé de las Casas and Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda, to determine the order of being of the Other. The debate signalled the beginning and shaped discourses of the entanglement of race with Christendom and also the modern/nation-state. Grosfoguel traces arguments of race over the past 500 years as constructed and constricted along the two perspectives: Casas’ and de Sepúlveda’s. Ultimately, the Valladolid debates argued for the necessity of European colonial expansion within a Western male anthropocentric philosophical tradition, which by the 17th-century transformed the attributes of a Christian God into a “God-eye-view” of the Cartesian “ego-politics of knowledge” 22 (Grosfoguel, 2012).

Today, we can see the development and evolution of the 16th-century debate in Valladolid: the focus on religion has gradually shifted to colour as societies have moved from religious to secular. The theory of de Sepúlveda – that non-Europeans have “no soul” and are therefore “non-human” (i.e. “people without God”) and can be treated like animals, leading to

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22 “The myth about the Western male’s capacity to produce a knowledge that is universal beyond time and space was fundamental to imperial/global designs. The Cartesian ego-politics of knowledge inaugurated what Colombian philosopher Santiago Castro-Gomez calls the “point zero” perspective, which is the Western myth of “a point of view that assumes itself to be beyond a point of view. This myth allowed Western men to claim its knowledge to be universal, neutral, and objective” (Grosfoguel, 2012).
biological determinist racism – and that of las Casas – that non-Europeans have a childlike soul, and are therefore sub-human “barbarians who need to be Christianised,” leading to forms of cultural racism – inform and illuminate our modern constructs and debates regarding racism. The debate becomes trans-historical, influencing the transformation to European secularization and the formation of nation states and their shifting claims of regional and global sovereignty.

Medieval European debates abounded about humans who previously believed the “wrong God” or an “inferior God” (such as the Moriscos and Marrano, converted Muslims and Jews respectively) in the conquered Iberian Peninsula. From the 16th-century onwards, such people then became viewed as heathens without souls, and therefore as inferior beings, leading to a transformation of pre-modern discourse from religion to modern discourse about biological and cultural forms of race. As,

Enrique Dussel (1994), reminds us, Descartes’ ego-cogito (“I think therefore I am”) was preceded by, 150 years ago, the ego-conquirus (“I conquer, therefore I am”). The God-eye view defended by Descartes transferred the attributes of the Christian gauntlet to Western men (the gender here is not accidental). But this was only possible from an Imperial Being, that is, from the panoptic gaze of someone who is at the centre of the world because he has conquered it. (Grosfoguel, 2006, p. 8)

Grosfoguel subverts this further by asserting it is not only that one “conquered” but also “I exterminate, therefore I am” that serves as the geo-political and epistemological condition which has led male Europeans to claim their epistemology as being superior (2013, p. 77). This is extermination made possible by the epistemiside and mass murders and ethnic cleansing of five groups of peoples – namely, the Indigenous of the Americas, Africans, Muslims, Jews, and European women in the witch hunts – during the formation of modern European nation-states.
and their colonial expansion and imperial projects that have since become normalized across the
globe, and where the majority of the population of the world becomes subjugated below the line
of human.

As the base of European power and knowledge shifted from religion to science and began
to secularize the theological foundation in the late 15th-century, “‘people with the wrong
religion’ (imperial difference) became the inferior ‘savages and primitives’ of ‘people without
civilization’ (colonial difference) in the 19th century” (Grosfoguel, 2012, p. 13). That is, through
the rise of 19th-century Western biological sciences, the debate is transformed from de
Sepúlveda’s “no soul therefore not human” into non-human beings with inferior genome, and
from las Casas’ sub-humans “barbarians who need to be Christianised” into the discourse of
“primitives who need to be civilized.” As Grosfoguel explains,

> During the last 510 years of the European/Euro-American capitalist/patriarchal
> modern/colonial world-system, we progressed from the 16th Century ‘Christianize or we’ll
> shoot you,’ to the 19th Century ‘civilize or we’ll shoot you,’ to the 20th Century ‘develop
> or we’ll shoot you,’ to the late 20th Century ‘neoliberalize or we’ll shoot you,’ to the early
> 21st century ‘democratize or we’ll shoot you.’ (Grosfoguel, 2009)

With the presumption of Western epistemic superiority, and in the absence of any serious
engagement with inter-epistemic dialogue, contemporary discussions about democracy and
human rights invariably end up being Western prescriptives – with an attitude of imposition
implied therein. As Shohat and Stam put it, it is this “double movement of aggression and
narcissism” that constitutes racism (in Thobani, 2007, p. 235). Thus, the answer to the question
of who determines the world-system/global project, and who determines democracy, rights and
development, is presupposed by whiteness, with its presumption of a superior epistemology. Grosfoguel describes the process in a lecture in the following way:

If I know what is better for you than whatever you say about your needs and questions and how you go about answering them are irrelevant because I know what is better for you, I know what democracy is, you don’t know what democracy is, my epistemology is superior to yours, yours is inferior, so I try to persuade you, if you’re not convinced by persuasion then I will have to use the weapons, so I can teach you democracy by force, I need to save you from yourself, because you are in a backward stage and your etymology is not at the level to be able for you to define for yourself what is good for you I know what is better for you – so we went from 16th century Christianize or I kill you, because if I know what is better for you and you’re not understanding what I’m telling you then I need to kill you to save your soul I’ll kill you to save your soul, because I have to save you from yourself, you see it becomes tautological, there you have the seeds of genocide and epistemicide going together. (2012)

Overall then, we have a history of race and racism in the Western world that goes back for centuries, bifurcating humanity into superior and inferior. It is important to trace these origins and transformations of the root discourses of modern racism so that we may understand the racialization of Muslim and Arab communities and see it as differences emerging from forms of religious, cultural, colour, or epistemology – as original forms of racism (Meer and Madood, 2012). Looking back to the conquest of al-Andalus and through the expansion and colonization of the Americas, we can see the formation, on a global scale, of a new division of labor between central countries and peripheral regions as a line along which a new system of social classification of the population of the world become instituted. We have understood the
bifurcation of the human into subhuman and nonhuman classifications, and we have understood the evolution of race as a non-static signifier that – as critical race theorists posit – has its foundation in a system of socio-political hierarchy that is ordered by white supremacy.

Racism and racialization are requirements of the present Western neo-imperial order in order to regulate settler colonies and to buttress their geopolitical and economic interests (Grosfoguel, 2008, 2011). Anti-Muslim and Arab racism, then, becomes one part of a series of racist formations which inflict a multitude of systemic forms of oppression upon billions of people. This type of racism becomes productive for Western countries when it takes a rich ethnocultural and national diversity of people and compresses them into a singular, scapegoated category of “Muslim” / “Muslim looking” as a suitable global enemy classified as a different order of humanity against which to measure the constituency of the nation-state (Thobani, 2007; Razack, 2008; Grosfoguel, 2007). This conflation, of many groups into one, is used in much the same way it was with the “race-ing” of Jews and Judaism in the Europe of the early 20th-century (Ali, 2011; Sayyid and Vakil, 2010; Meer and Madood, 2012). Furthermore,

if we define racism as the routinized outcome of practices that create or reproduce hierarchical social structures based on essentialized racial categories, then we can see better how it extends from the transnational to the national to the experiential and personal, from the global debt burden to racial profiling, from Negrophobia to Islamophobia. (Winant, as cited in Rana, 2007).

Therefore, anti-Muslim and Arab racism is reflexive, and rooted in “mutually constituted histories of imperial conquest … and systematic forms of oppression” (Rana, p. 149). That is, what has been termed “Islamophobia” is not simply a “fear” of Muslims and Islam (as the presence of the word “phobia” implies), but a centuries-long tradition of anti-Muslim, anti-Arab,
anti-brown, and anti-black racisms that have at times collapsed numerous groups into a singular category of “Muslim-looking” with respect to “terrorism” and “national security” – constructed as a threat to the “values” of the Canadian nation-state. Contemporary anti-Muslim/anti-Arab racist discourses have led to the re-emergence of signifiers of the West as civilized, and Muslims and Arabs as barbaric and pre-modern (Thobani, 2007; Razack 2008). In the end, the productive value of this position is for the maintenance of the world-system in which we currently live. Through the denial of any autonomy and agency, capable of determining the “good life” from within Muslim and other epistemologies, the Eurocentric world-system avoids any challenge to itself as both Western and universal at the same time and exclusively: in fact, the terms “universal” and “Western” have become interchangeable, and can be seen a synonyms (Sayyid, 2003), and Muslims and Arabs have come to be seen as particularistic, not universal, and as dangerous “un/safe, and un/acceptable” (Shryock, 2010. p. 10). How this operates in practice within Muslim, Arab, and Muslim-looking communities to become a moral panic is the discussion of the following section.

23 On the one hand, Muslims are said to hate the west for its freedoms, and on the other hand, the freedoms of Canadians and Americans are being taken away. In announcing the new Anti-Terror legislation, Stephen Harper remarked as follows: “Every time we talk about security, they suggest that somehow our freedoms are threatened. I think what Canadians understand is that their freedoms and security more often than not go hand in hand.” More and more, freedoms can be taken away if there is an eternal enemy against which it is deemed necessary. Every time there has been a horrific incident claiming lives by Muslims there has been a response in tighter anti-terror laws; Canada has responded in 2015 with such severe anti-terror legislation that the entire mainstream media has called an extreme overreaction (McParland, 2015).

24 See for example the Canadian Citizenship Guide Book, Discover Canada (2009), which quotes “barbaric practices” and juxtaposes photos of Muslims on p 9. Also of note is the Harper government’s recent passing of the Zero Tolerance for Barbaric Cultural Practices Act (2015), ostensibly targeted at Muslims, with little need for new laws, as existing laws are already on the books to handle such cases. It is evident that if such laws already exist, Muslims were already seen a problem in society; thus, the creation of new laws targeting a specific community is a red herring.
2.3 Race-ing Muslims: Public Perceptions about Appearing “Muslim” in Canada

Much of politics is the rational manipulation of irrational symbols … distracting the populous from their legitimate grievances and directing their frustrations at various scapegoats.


Modern anti-Muslim racism has been a staple of the European socio-political landscape since inaugurated as far back as the Crusades. Being Muslim has long been conflated with being Arab as a cultural production in Western master narratives and social imaginations; in fact, this has been a fairly consistent historical and literary feature over the past millennia. Early literary examples of this conflation include Dante Alighieri in the 11th-century (called “the chief imagination of Christendom” by W. B. Yeats 25), who placed the Prophet Muhammad in the eighth circle of hell as “sewers of discord” in his Divine Comedy, and Geoffrey Chaucer in the 14th-century, whose Man of Law’s Tale in his Canterbury Tales is full of contemporary prejudices against and misconceptions about Islam (Schildgen, 2001). A present continuation of this feature is demonstrated by the “erroneous” (Edward Said & Oleg Grabar, 1992) but influential Bernard Lewis in a seminal article called “Roots of Muslim Rage” (1990), where he coined the term “clash of civilizations,” which was developed further by Samuel Huntington in 1993 and has since become culturally contagious throughout the Western world. The popularity of this term has only propagated the view that Islam and Muslims and Arabs are antithetical to the “progress and modernity” – a belief that can be attributed exclusively to the West.

Lewis’ suggestion that the root cause of Muslim rage is their own civilization’s cultural inferiority is a culturally driven response to modernity and not a political one. With the fall of

25 “The chief imagination of Christendom / Dante Alighieri, so utterly found himself / That he has made that hollow face of his / More plain to the mind's eye than any face / But that of Christ” – from William Butler Yeats’ “Ego Dominus Tuus” (lines 20ff).
Communism and the triumph of neo-liberal capital over its chief rival, the Lewis/Huntington thesis dovetailed with Fukuyama’s Last Man Standing (1992), igniting the contemporary West’s intellectual fodder even further, allowing them to create convenient pretexts for unbridled access to global resources (Ahmed, 2010), as Islamic polemic is used for political and economic gain (Daniel, 1960; Poole, 2002). With his next two books since 2001, titled What Went Wrong? The Clash Between Islam and Modernity in the Middle East (2003) and The Crisis of Islam: Holy War and Unholy Terror (2004), Lewis’ ideas continue inspire and habituate a cultural spin rather than geo-political or economic reasons for Muslim and Arab angst towards the West.

Anti-Muslim sentiment has further continued its upward trajectory with the rise of the Taliban; since the events of September 11, 2001 in particular, the view that Muslims and Arabs are “evil” has been significantly precipitous and has grown at an alarming rate. In Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: America, the Cold War, and the Roots of Terror, a seminal critical analysis expanding on the historical contexts leading up to 9/11, Mahmood Mamdani articulates how a false bifurcation of Muslims is created by the West’s bifurcating Muslims into good and bad. He explains how “culture talk” is the primary mode used to justify external intervention (philanthropic or militaristic – often both) to salvage the “good” Muslim from the “bad” (Mamdani, 2005; 2007). “Bad” Muslims are classified as non-human, having been labeled by a millennia of stereotypes and myths as discussed above, are said to be committed to terrorism, are pre-modern, fundamentalists, and extremists who hate women and freedom. In contrast, the “good” Muslims, or “moderate” Muslims, are modernized, secular, and supportive of Western foreign policy in the social reality then the good Muslims need to be identified from the bad (2005).

Shryock notes that Bernard Lewis “has had virtually unparalleled access to the corridors of power in the Bush era” (2010, p. 80).
Muslims and Arabs are increasingly positioned as an existential civilizational threat, irreconcilable and irredeemable, an obstacle to Western progress. By shifting the framework into the realm of a clash of culture between the West and Muslims – where Muslims are incapable from their own epistemic and cultural resources to deal with modernity – Lewis has nonetheless carved out a co-opted but redeeming role for the “good” Muslims, who must be identified and then catalyzed to effect the transformation of “bad” Muslims into “good,” to the end of producing “good” Muslims for the West (2005) and identifying the “bad.” Mamdani’s “culture talk” employs the means that Lewis suggests: shifting the issue away from politics into the realm of cultural inadequacies.

Muslims are increasingly positioned as an existential civilizational threat irreconcilable and irredeemable, an obstacle to Western progress. Lewis, by shifting the framework into the realm of a clash of culture between the West and Muslims – where Muslims are incapable from their own epistemic and cultural resources to deal with modernity – nonetheless carved out a co-opted but redeeming role for the “good” Muslims, who must be identified and then catalyzed to effect the transformation of “bad” Muslims into “good,” to the end of producing “good” Muslims for the West (2005) and identifying the “bad.” Muslim mercenaries who had been galvanized and organized by the United States and were allies in the “war against communism” in the 1980; after 2001, the banner of Islam transforms from being allies of the West to their chief contemporary threat in the present “war on terror” waged for Western democracy and freedoms.

The Canadian government’s regressive policies, practices, and behaviours are aiding to drastically diminish public opinion about the “fitness” of Muslims to participate positively within Western civilization. 9/11 not only served as a catalyst towards allowing targeted fear and scapegoating of black and brown bodies – including those perceived as “Muslim;” it also gave
American neoconservative leaders the excuse they had been seeking to expand their military presence in areas such as the Middle East. In continuation of the unipolar American-Anglo Imperial world-system, the Gulf Wars of Bush I and Bush II, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan post-9/11, and Obama’s expansion of drone attacks in countries such as Yemen, Pakistan, Syria, Lebanon, and Libya, war drums beating for Iran, and the ongoing Palestine conflict all demonstrate that Islam and Muslims, particularly Arab ones, are asymmetric geo-political threats.

Overall, Western societies have positioned themselves as “innocent” and “vulnerable” (Thobani, 2007) when looking into the mirror of the world, they only see reflections of barbarism, anti-democracy, illiberalism, and anti-Western thought as emanating from a “pre-modern” Islamic civilization (Razack, 2008). Such perceptions, historically and contemporarily held in metatopical spaces, continue to negatively impact the direct lived experiences of nearly 2.5% of Muslims who live in Canada. They also negatively impact the rest of the 97.5%, who are taught from the top to racialize Muslims and Arabs due to the dominance of “prevailing background assumptions” that become normalized as common sense ideas (Parenti, 2007). These background assumptions constitute negative stereotypes that have developed in Western societies for thousands of years. When the events of September 11, 2001 were overlaid on these assumptions and stereotypes, this allowed for a full-blown manifestation of an all-out attack on everything and anything Muslim or Arab. Now, an entire industry manufactures anti-Muslim/anti-Arab racism (Ali, et al, 2011). Canadians have been driven to accept that the war

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27 In a 1996 document called the "Project for a New American Century" (PNAC), Sheehi (2011) discusses PNAC as a strategy paper used to drive anti-Muslim/Arab racism (see also Dabashi, 2011, p. 14). Sut Jally concludes from the PNAC paper that if “bin Laden didn’t exist – they would have made him up and they probably did” (2003).
28 There is an entire industry supporting Islamophobic discourse: organizations and think-tanks have been funded $40 million was revealed in a study by Fear Inc.; the Roots Of the Islamophobia Network In America demonstrates that Islamophobia is a hatred of Muslims engendered from the top; an educational academic journal had a DVD/CD-
on terror is necessary, and hold a consensus on who is the enemy (Thobani, 2011). This reproduction of historic “moral panics over Muslims” is a kind of retrospective of a very old transhistoric theatrical debate in the metatopical space, pitting “the ‘dangerous’ Muslim man [and] the imperiled Muslim woman… [against] the civilized European” (Razack, 2008, p. 149). By doing so, they become perpetually entangled in Huntington/Fukuyama paradigm of a civilizational conflict about the place of Muslims and Arabs in a contemporary Eurocentric Canadian imaginary.

The classification of and fear surrounding a large homogenized group of people into a category of “Muslim” is historically connected to the extermination, colonization and exclusions of non-White “Others” and the appropriation of their knowledges, resources, and lands. Canada’s existence as a settler colonial state is only possible through “race thinking” (Razack, 2008). This kind of thinking – a categorization of people along the line of the human/non-human (Grosfoguel, 2008), or the deserving/non-deserving (Razack, 2008, p. 8) – is, a “scavenger ideology” [which]… picks up political projects here and there and annexes itself to ideas [such as] (the clash of a modern and pre-modern civilization) [which then] is annexed to a political project (control of oil, capitalist accumulation, power) and erupts into a full-blown racism when united with ideas about universal values, individualism, and the market. (p. 9)

ROM of Islamophobic material inserted into the journal and mailed to its subscribers; the U.S. FBI has admitted to using training video containing Islamophobic material, and to sending informers and spying in Mosques; and the NYPD admitted to wholesale spying of Muslims students in New York State. (Ali, et al., 2011). Further, Harper disclosed that up to 80% of Canada’s security apparatus was devoted to combating “Islamism.”

29 Razack discusses the town of L’Herouxville, Quebec and the Sharia debates in Canada as examples of a moral crisis or panic about Muslims: this occurs when events are orchestrated by media as stand-ins “for a crisis of grand proportions, one on to which was projected social anxieties about Muslim bodies” (p. 149).
Thobani argues there is a new public sanction for “growing anti-Muslim racism” and the demonization of Muslims is a way to assert public attention towards a Canadian master narrative; such “assertive claims of western civilizational superiority” by “western subjects” against a barbaric Muslim “terrorist threat” deflects serious debate about war and Canadian imperialism (2007, p. 250). Both Thobani (2007) and Sayyid (2003) argue that this has basis in a crisis in the West, rather than in any reality or imaginary of Islam and Muslims. Thobani (2011), Shryock (2010), and Meer and Madood (2012) have also argued that this antipathy towards Muslims is felt in both conservative and progressive politics due to privileging their religious identity, which is more often than not perceived as itself the source of oppression.

In _Casting Out: The Eviction of Muslims from Western Law and Politics_, Razack argues that the tropes used to produce moral panic revolve around the categories of “the ‘dangerous’ Muslim man, the imperiled Muslim woman, and the civilized European” (2008, p. 149) in such a way that the word “terrorism” enters metatopical spaces, which in turn reinforces the notion that violence in the Arab World is ahistorical and therefore senseless. Arabs, in turn, become a people without narratives who belong to a culture incapable of rationality. These perceptions skew Americans’ understanding of both the United States and the Arab World. (Salaita, 2008, p. 8)

Such skewed perceptions are reflected in Helly’s list of four main negative stereotypes Canadians hold in regards to Muslims:

1. Islam is intolerant and dangerous, 2. Democracy and modernity is impossible in Islamic societies, 3. Women’s oppression is inevitable in Islam, 4. Immigrant Muslims are archaically religious and beset by the conflicts of their societies of origin. (2011, p. 170)
Similarly, Shryock (2010) also lists a battery of negative stereotypes used about Muslims; he discusses the profile of negative stereotypes in contemporary anti-Muslim rhetoric as the perception that Muslims are (openly or in the secrecy of their own mosques and languages) violent extremists, anti-Semitic and anti-Christian, averse to democracy, oppressive of women, culturally backward, and dedicated to establishing Islamic law around the world. To the extent that such beliefs shape government policy in the U.S. and Europe, they pose a significant threat to the civil liberties of the tens of millions of Muslims who now live in Western countries. They also threaten the national security of Muslim-majority states, who must share global space with a suspicious and frequently hostile superpower.

(2010, p. 2)

Kumar (2012) also articulates these stereotypes as persistent myths about Muslims and Islam:

“Myth One: Islam is a monolithic religion, Myth Two: Islam is a uniquely sexist religion, Myth Three: the Muslim mind is incapable of reason and rationality, Myth Four: Islam is an inherently violent religion, Myth Five: Muslims are incapable of democracy and self-rule” (2012).

Anti-Muslim racism is generated by the persistence of these myths, which perpetuate the ideas that Muslims are dangerous and worthy of distrust – or, at the very least, unworthy of trust – and that Islam is sinister and worthy of suspicion. These public sentiments cause social stress, and are successful overall in the creation of fear and distrust of Muslims/Arabs within society. In some cases, these sentiments have led to greater discrimination, fear, harassment, violence and vandalism against Muslim, Arab, and Muslim-looking communities.

The so-called “War on Terror” is an example of the manifestation and productive use of the moral panic surrounding Muslims and Arabs in the West today. Domestically, the war on
terror has been a linguistic sleight of hand. Neither Prime Minister Chrétien, nor Martin, or Harper has ever elaborated upon the specifics of why “they hate us,” aside from loose generalizations that it is because “we” have “freedom,” even while living amongst Canadian Muslims as their neighbours. Further, vague generalities are made about “Canadian values” and we are not told why certain groups have grievances against us for upholding “our values.”

On the whole, from our metatopical spaces, we are led to believe that the groups we have a civilizational clash with are Muslims and Arabs, despite any substantive evidence to the contrary. The corporate media offers to sustain the “moral panic” by also giving no details, while the state offers its protection of life for the exalted national, and of the continued existence and maintenance of our so called “Canadian lifestyle and values” – a code for Eurocentric hegemony, or a universality without particularity that is able to produce free and open democracy, contrasted against the constructed figure of “Muslim” who would destroy it (Grosfoguel, 2012, 2010; Sayyid, 2003).

The West’s “war on terror” has spawned a series of further wars where Muslims and Arabs, along with other black and brown bodies, are routinely and indiscriminately killed across the globe in collateral damage. Muslims and Arabs face extreme levels discrimination and detention in Canada, have restricted access to citizenship and human rights, and as a group face high levels of state surveillance. In the Province of Quebec, for example, the government has attempted to legislate restricting “religious” symbols in the public domain (Siddiqui, 2013); this measure ostensibly is targeted at Muslim women, but affects wider groups and is meant to send a message about what the public space should look like (as is the case in France). The Minister of citizenship Jason Kenney’s ministerial directive in 2011 ruling that the niqab can-not be worn

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30 For an example of such statements, see Securing an Open Society: Canada’s National Security Policy, 2004.
while participating in citizenship oath ceremonies and/or while voting and while testifying in court has challenged the Canadian Justice System to find an appropriate middle ground.\textsuperscript{31} The Canadian Citizenship guidebook, “Discover Canada The Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship,” infers Muslims have “barbaric cultural practices” (Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada 2009; 9)\textsuperscript{32}. Since then, the government has passed the Zero Tolerance for Barbaric Cultural Practices Act (2015) – again, its purpose clearly targets Muslim communities and projects, labeling/libelling them as aberrations to an otherwise “progressive” or “modern” society. The colonial language reminiscent of what was/is used for Indigenous peoples marking them counter-point to civilized Europeans is invoked when describing Muslims and Arabs in Canada.

Helly notes that given the levels of anti-Muslim racism, the “federal authorities have not intervened as much as they could have to increase Canadians’ literacy in religious matters and reduce hostility towards Muslims” (2011, p. 168); on the contrary, the Harper government has been engendering anti-Muslim racism since 9/11. For example, in his address to the Canadian nation on the tenth anniversary of the events of September 11, 2001, Harper describes Islam (i.e. Muslims and Arabs) as the number one worry in the context of security and domestic terrorism in Canada: “The major threat is still Islamicism. There are other threats out there, but that is the one that I can tell you occupies the security apparatus most regularly in terms of actual terrorist threats” (Harper, as cited in Mansbridge, 2011). He further said that the Conservatives plan to bring back and strengthen anti-terrorism laws in response to this perceived threat. Today, Prime

\textsuperscript{31} The courts have thus far ruled against the government restriction permitting niqab to be worn while taking the Canadian citizenship oath.

\textsuperscript{32} “In Canada, men and women are equal under the law. Canada’s openness and generosity do not extend to barbaric cultural practices that tolerate spousal abuse, ‘honour killings,’ female genital mutilation or other gender-based violence,” (Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada 2009; 9)
Minister Harper has, in fact, reified his statements of 2011 by distinguishing mosques as places of concern in order to justify even tougher anti-terror legislation with Bill C-51 (Barber, 2015); in an inversion of that reality, mosques and Muslim centers have become the targets of terror themselves, wrought by bigots and vandals.

This dangerous game of producing Muslims/Arabs against all that is Canadian impacts the ground negatively. The national in/security argument in particular invokes the currency of fear, with the intended outcome to close any debate regarding the slew of new measures and practices or their efficacy. The catch phrase “national security” has been used by the state to justify extra constitutional Kafkasque measures, such as new laws and practices that expand racial profiling, warrant-less wiretaps, a culture of aggressive surveillance, entrapment and coercion of Muslim communities, leading in several cases of detention and torture. For example, at least five security certificates have been issued to non-citizens in Canada deemed to be terrorist threats (effectively making them political prisoners), secret evidence and trials exist for Muslims and Arabs (such as Security-Certificate 5 and Toronto-18), and extraordinary renditions of Canadian citizens (such as Maher Arar, Abousfian Abdelrazik, Abdullah Almalki, Muayyed Nureddin, and Ahmad El Maati). All of these measures and practices are exemplified in the case of Omar Khadr, one of many Muslims who have been denied rights where the government has done all in its power to deny universally accepted norms of conduct. Overall, the national in/security argument makes possible a climate for the enactment of rights-restricting legislation, such as Anti-Terror Acts, Public Safety Act, The Immigration & Refugee Protection Act, and other aforementioned Acts makes possible new draconian interpretations of the Charter – all with the public's acquiescence and on the backs of Muslims. Further, the “national in/security state”

33 More recently, this has included the Canadian government being the lead spy agency in the so called Five Eyes (FVEY) tracking internet traffic on behalf of the NSA, comprising of Australia, New Zealand, the U.K. and U.S.
is a joint public-private enterprise. There is a lot of business at stake in keeping the security state apparatus on permanent state of high alert and ever tightening its grip to match the elusive and ongoing war on terror.

Today, we can see this fear and distrust of Islam, Muslims, Arabs, and those who are Muslim-looking operating on a number of social fronts and in a number of legislative fronts in Canada and in the U.S. However, a prominent think-tank called the RAND Corporation reports that of “83 terrorist attacks in the United States between 9/11 [2001] and the end of 2009, only three… were clearly connected with the jihadist cause” (Jenkins, 2010), representing a total of 3.6%. Further, Loonwatch.com, a blog-zine that exposes anti-Muslim hate, writes that [on] the FBI’s official website, there exists a chronological list of all terrorist attacks committed on U.S. soil from the year 1980 all the way to 2005… According to this data, there were more Jewish acts of terrorism within the United States than Islamic (7% vs 6%). These radical Jews committed acts of terrorism in the name of their religion. These were not terrorists who happened to be Jews; rather, they were extremist Jews who committed acts of terrorism based on their religious passions, just like Al-Qaeda and company. (Danios, 2010)

Similar to the U.S., of the 249 terrorist attacks in the European Union in 2010, a total of only three were attributed to “Islamist Extremists” (Europol, 2011). In 2009, of the 294 failed, foiled or successful attacks in the EU, with an additional 124 attacks in Northern Ireland, a total of only 34 Canadian legislation ostensibly targeting Muslims has already been discussed, such as the anti-terror laws and the Quebec Charter of Values. “In 2011 and 2012, 78 bills or amendments designed to vilify Islamic religious practices were introduced in the legislatures of 29 states and the U.S. Congress. While the bias behind the bills is clear, the presence of an actual problem that needed solved was not, even to the legislators introducing the measures. In at least 11 states, mainstream Republican leaders introduced or supported anti-Muslim legislation. Update: So far this year, thirty-seven anti-Islam bills were introduced in sixteen states and became law in North Carolina and in Oklahoma. A bill was placed on the ballot for Alabama’s 2014 election-cycle. A federal court deemed Oklahoma’s 2010 law un-Constitutional. Between 2011-2013, anti-Islam bills have been introduced in 32 states and the U.S. Congress. Seven states currently have anti-Islam laws on the books” (CAIR, 2014).
one was attributed to “Islamist Extremists” (2010). These figures translate to 1.2% in 2010 and 0.02% in 2009, and European trends are similar in preceding years. Canadian trends are comparable to the U.S. and Europe: there is a noticeable lack of any real/actual terror incidents committed by Muslims in Canada in contrast to actual incidents attributed to non-Muslim/Arabs. Former CSIS agent Michel Juneau-Katsuya reports that since 9/11,

Islamic terrorists have not succeeded in detonating a single bomb in Canada. Canadian born-citizens, meanwhile, have successfully staged 30 bombings, he said. While ten of these were perpetrated by outlaw bikers, the rest came from a motley assortment of neo-Nazis, white supremacists, anti-globalization activists and other politically-motivated groups. (Davis, 2012)

In fact, Davis insists,

while Canadians normally equate terrorism with extreme Islam, …white terrorism is a bigger threat to Canada. … [T]here has been a sharp rise in membership and activity among white supremacists in Canada and the United States… [and] Canadian and American white supremacists and neo-Nazis are keeping close tabs on each other, supporting each other, and providing weapons to each other. (2012)

White Supremacists and neo-Nazi groups, however, are not mentioned in Canada’s Anti-Terror Act, nor do we hear about them in the media and government communications when compared to the volumes written about apparent Muslim violence or threats thereof.35

The use of rhetoric that differentiates Muslims from society as special cases includes terms like “honour killings,” child and polygamous marriages, “culturally barbaric practices” and

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35 Word counts of articles regarding pipe bombs detonated by neo-Nazi, white supremacists and biker-gangs are much smaller when compared to words counts about suspected/alleged Muslims in Canada. Furthermore, it is not only White supremacists and neo-Nazi violence that is not covered as exhaustingly; there is very little outcry from politicians or the media when violence is committed against Muslims.
“national security,” alongside words like “terrorism,” “radicalized,” “extreme,” and “jihadi.” This rhetoric is sensationalized by the media and discussed by the Canadian nation-state’s legislative bodies as new legislative categories under which to add to the special trials already underway for Muslims. Such moves further serve to reify the moral panic about Muslims/Arabs to divert attention, for example, from the steady rise of women murdered by husbands and boyfriends in the U.S. and in Canada at a rate of one every six days (SACHA, 2011),36 or the fact that as of 2014, an RCMP report states that in Canada, there are 1017 known cases of murdered Aboriginal women and girls and 164 missing victims (RCMP, 2014) – a matter into which Harper has refused to launch an inquiry. Salman Sayyid points out the “worst misogynist today can claim to still be better than a Muslim” (Ramadan, 2011). Overall, there is no sensationalized moral panic except when this type of violence is attributed to the category of Muslims; as evidenced by the lack of moral panic about the number of bombings executed by non-Muslim/ in Canada post- 9/11.

While mass-acts of violence committed against civilians by whites are examined through individual psychosis, similar acts by Muslims/Arabs are analysed through religio-cultural lens. While laws and privileges protect humans above the line of being, those appearing “Muslim” are placed below the line of being, with a differentially applied law. While for white Canadians their “terrorism” is reviewed through the vestiges of a Western legal system, Muslim and Arab Canadians are increasingly being placed outside of a system justice by being represented as an extreme form of the same kind of violence. Whereas Anglo and Franco (later, “white”, and “old-stock”) Canadians are included into the national imaginary, and have access to codes of justice, Muslims and Arabs are routinely excluded. Frost, in “Islamophobia Examining Causal Links,”

36 According to FBI statistics, in 1995, 26% of total murders in that year were of women by husbands and boyfriends; the following is a series of years and percentages 1996: 30%, 2009: 34.6%, 2011: 36.5% (FBI, 2011).
points out that such “government policy towards Muslims... is contributing towards increased 'race hate’ and Islamophobic tendencies among working class white communities” (Frost 2008).

According to Shryock,

[t]o the extent that such beliefs, fears and distrust shape government policy in the U.S. and Europe, they pose a significant threat to the civil liberties of the tens of millions of Muslims who now live in Western countries. They also threaten the national security of Muslim-majority states, who must share global space with a suspicious and frequently hostile superpower. (2010, p. 2)

Placing this much attention on a small threat by a small community deflects placing an emphasis on the vast number of actual perpetrators of domestic terror attacks, such as Canada’s “motley assortment of neo-Nazis, white supremacists, anti-globalization activists and other politically-motivated groups” (Davis, 2012). Overall, violent acts of terror by non-Muslims are already so normalized in society, they are not even news worthy to discuss in a metatopical space, as evidenced by the few amount of words used to report on them. Instead, what should be miniscule events effecting a very small segment of the population (as in the case of the town of L’ Herouxville, where the city passed ordinances against Sharia stoning in the absence of any Muslims living there or requesting such, or the proposed legislation in Quebec regarding the denial of government services to women who have a face-veiling) are overblown and given larger amounts of media coverage. Something as small as the issue of veiled Muslim women at a citizenship oath taking ceremony in Canada is taken up as a national issue, whereas many more women and their families potentially affected for example, the case of the Christian polygamous

37 But this is not the whole story; numerous cases have been reported which do not discuss the pathology of the violence, as they do when involving Muslims or Arabs. A few examples of this, of which there are many more, include three teenage girls who were arrested in Langley (BC) for making up to twelve explosive devices that injured two teens (CBC, 2008); teenagers experimenting with the same type explosives used in the London bombings, again in Langley; and the numerous pipe bombs left in Petitcodiac (NB) (CBC, 2005).
community of Bountiful – a Mormon settlement in south-eastern British Columbia with a population of approximately one thousand – where the government waited for 23 years before charging any members of the community, or in the examples of non-action regarding more than one-thousand-two-hundred murdered and missing Indigenous women in Canada. Such cases are not included in the political discussions about the need for a barbaric cultural practices law38 nor any moral outrage or action by the government that “every six days a woman is killed by an intimate. Accusing a perpetrator or rape is so stigmatizing that fewer than 10 per cent of women go to the police” (Goar, 2014). In Canada that 460,000 women are sexually assaulted each year (Canadian Women’s Foundation, 2015). Rather the “focus on barbaric cultural practices as somehow a distinct form of violence that operates outside of patriarchal logic and that is used to reinforce anti-immigrant, Islamophobic and war-mongering agendas” (Walia and Olwan, 2015).

The events of September 11th 2001 then, are over-determined by negative assumptions and stereotypes that allowed for a full-blown manifestation of an all-out attack on everything and anything Muslim (Ali, 2011; Lean, 2012). Today, an entire industry manufactures anti-Muslim/Arab racism, also known as Islamophobia. That Canadians have been driven to an acceptance of the war on terror as necessary and have consensus on who the enemy is (Thobani, 2011) and re-produces a historical “moral panics over Muslims” (Razack, 2008, p. 149).39 This is, in fact, a kind of retrospective manifestation of a very old trans-historic theatrical debate pitting “the ‘dangerous’ Muslim man, the imperiled Muslim woman, and the civilized European”

38 Rather in the naming the Barbaric Cultural Practices Act, “[t]he culturally specific connotation of the phrase serves to mark gendered violence as crimes that are inherent to particular cultures, ones that ostensibly do not share Canada’s touted values of gender equality. Rather than tackling widespread patriarchal violence, this logic exceptionalizes and essentializes violence against women as a foreign phenomenon, imported to Canada by migrants whose belonging is configured as threatening” (Walia and Owen 2015).
39 Razack discusses the town of L’ Herouxville, Quebec and the Sharia debates as examples of a moral crisis about Muslims which occurs when events come to pass or orchestrated by media “to stand in for a crisis of grand proportions… on to which… [are] projected social anxieties about Muslim bodies” (2008 p. 149).
against each other (p. 149), perpetually entangled in the Huntington/Fukuyama paradigm of a civilizational conflict about the place of Muslims within a contemporary Eurocentric imaginary. Overall, Islam in the West is “racialized” across social-cultural, color, ethnic and religious categories because it is integral to imperialism and a counterpoint in defining and defending Eurocentrism; this line of argumentation is consistent with a growing literature that links race, gender, class, Western colonialism imperialism and ideology.

2.4 Disciplining the Canadian Voluntary Sector

We have understood conceptually the background of race and its relation to the moral panic about Muslims and Arabs in Canada. But what kind of structures are in place to counter such anti-Muslim sentiment/racism in Canada? The following section will provide background and context for understanding the concept of “community government” (Ilcan and Basok, 2004), one of the core themes of my research protocol, and explain how funding is used as a form of discipline in the Canadian voluntary sector and has a negative impact on the freedom of organizing and planning within Muslim and Arab community organizations.

Canada’s voluntary sector is “the second largest in the world (after the Netherlands)” Elson (2006). A 1997 National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating found 7.5 million Canadians volunteer a total of 1.1 billion hours annually. Further, 78,000 organizations are registered as charities with more than 570,000 people employed by voluntary organizations, and their “voluntary hours contributed translate into the equivalent of more than half a million full-time jobs” (Phillips, 2001, p. 241). As of 2003, these organizations reported annual revenues of $112 billion and employment increased to over 2 million people.\footnote{The National Survey of Nonprofit and Voluntary Organizations (NSNVO) was conducted by a consortium of organizations consisting of Imagine Canada National Survey of non-profit and volunteer organizations.} The government’s
newest citizenship guidebook notes volunteering is a Canadian value and encourages Canadians to “freely donate their time to help others without pay” (Discover Canada, 2009, p. 9).

Ilcan and Basok’s concept of “community government” (2004) is especially prescient to this study. They conceive community government as a form of governmentality used within the context of advanced liberalism, where it is used as a political project by the state to identify and target organizations in the non-profit sector in order to re-orient them through specialized means to achieve particular ends. They define the concept as follows:

[as a concept, community government refers to the ways in which the contemporary politics of government has come to define, shape, and orient communities (for example, volunteer communities) such that they engage in activities that attempt to responsibilize certain groups of citizens for particular purposes and ends. (p. 130)]

With the waning of the Keynesian-designed welfare state, and an acknowledgement that “market fundamentalism” has resulted in intensifying poverty, inequality, discrimination and conflict, and as the welfare state started to lose its legitimacy, Western nation-states adopted new rationalities of a so-called “third way” approach characteristic of “advanced liberalism,” and as a course of action to develop new social democratic agendas. This “third way” approach ostensibly places the responsibility on disadvantaged groups in various sectors of society to safeguard their own self-interests; and by doing so, states have encouraged private individuals, enterprises, and communities to re-create institutions of social support through the voluntary sector (Ilcan and Basok, 2004).

With their support of the voluntary non-profit sector, governments offload direct responsibility of social welfare by providing funding to and training community organizations.
“to act in ways that are aligned with the principles and expectations imposed on them by advanced liberal governmental agendas” designed to re-shape responsible citizenry (Basok and Ilcan, 2006). Under the logic of “advanced liberalism,” community as a means of government defers the numerous tasks of maintaining social safety nets to a variety of seemingly “naturally occurring” community citizen sites (organizations, associations and agencies) coordinated towards new ends (Rose, 1999; Dean, 1999; Isin, 2000). Governing through community, or what Ilcan and Basok call “community government,” entails state’s exercising political power through fiscal policies that seek to control, shape and direct the programmatic endeavours and conduct of community organizations, while remaining at arm’s length and being seemingly neutral to the process (Rose, 1999; Dean, 1999; Isin, 2000; Li, 2002; Phillips and Ilcan, 2003). Ilcan and Basok argue,

[i]n this regard, a wide range of programmes and rationalities [and technologies] have been designed to manage the conduct of diverse human capacities, groups, and populations. … [through] social regulation that can transform the way citizens [are] conceptualised by Western states. … to take responsibility for social programs in their communities, and formulate appropriate orientations and rationalities for their actions. (2004, pp. 131-32)

This new technology of governance in advanced liberal states serves to undercut social justice advocacy and activism in community struggles as government funding regimes, management, and training re-cast “responsible citizenry” as a strategy of co-optation advanced through uneven power relations by withholding funds and access by “shifting its attention away from generalised oppositional activities towards offering concrete programmes which are in reality often little more than appendages to the existing social service delivery system” (Loney,
1977, p. 468, quoted in Ilcan and Basok, 2004, p. 136). In other words, “one’s power resides implicitly in another’s dependency” (Tsasis, 2008, p. 282), such that power can be deployed to control through the expansion or constriction of activities and mandate of community groups due to their dependency on external resources, which they may not be able to acquire elsewhere. The more radical organizations experienced the most significant reductions in state funding, while those groups that spent the least effort on advocacy and more on service provision continue to receive federal support (Jenson and Phillips, 2001, quoted in Ilcan and Basok, 2004, p. 136).

The result of this technology of governance in these societies is to increasingly orient organizations through “community government” toward service provision and substantively away from social justice-oriented advocacy (i.e. funding accountability and performance models tied to specific project-funding formulas) (Ng, 1988; Grahame, 1998). Additionally, some funders (such as Ontario’s Trillium Foundation) explicitly prohibit social justice advocacy work as well, stipulating that “[i]n Canada, non-profit and/or charitable status limits the percentage of funds an organization can direct towards advocacy and lobbying” (Nichols, 2008, p. 74). This implies that community government, as an instrument of governmentality, targets organizations in the non-profit sector in order to re-orient their programmatic activities through specialized means to achieve particular ends (Ilcan and Basok, 2004). This core concept of community government is true of any funding source an organization may receive, whether it is public or private. The comparative literature on community government in non-profit organizations demonstrates a focus of attention on secular non-profit organizations at the expense of adequately addressing the role of community government in religious non-profit organizations (Hiemstra, 2002; Wuthnow, 1991).
Among the opportunity costs of community government are the difficulties faced by and relative lack of flexibility of non-profits in responding to a changing environment of social needs, undermining their credibility to respond appropriately to the communities they serve; an erosion of the autonomy of non-profits due to government influence in their operation; and difficulties they face in maintaining social responsibility, self-directness, voluntary spirit, a culture of participation and a collectivist ethos, with a resulting slide into a rigid managerial bureaucratic ideology as a modus of operations (Baines, 2010). In a comparative study of four countries, Kramer [1979, 1994] suggests that increased reliance on government funding does not necessarily lead to the diminished autonomy of non-profit agencies…. suggesting that the dichotomy between government accountability and agency autonomy may in fact be false. [These findings are further supported by Salamon [1995] and Ostrander [1985]]. Estelle James challenges these findings and suggests that these studies focus on the…outputs rather than the inputs, (e.g. who an agency can and cannot hire). The real loss of the autonomy occurs on the input side (Hiemstra, 2002, p. 22-23).

With respect to the tension of non-profits maintaining and/or misrepresenting their original mandates due to funding influence, MacFarlane and Roach (1999) point out there exists two schools of thought: those who claim there “is a distortion of the original mission … loss of autonomy and distinctiveness” and those who insist “the process is characterized by mutual dependence. …[where] accepting government funding is a trade-off between obtaining the funds they need to carry out their missions and limitations on their freedom of action” (p. 4-5). With respect to funding and government influence within the religious non-profit sector, Netting’s (1982) study of three Protestant social services agencies indicates a number of apprehensions
related to government funding such as a potential loss of identity and absorption into
government; fears of their increasing responsibility to the public sector; fears of loss of identity,
autonomy and secularization; and feelings of insecurity due to dependency of funding. As with
the secular non-profit sector, a constant balance between dependency and “ambiguity [is] a way
of life for many church-related organizations as they balance their commitments to the state,
point above regarding the two schools of thought, Monsma’s (2000) study of 760 American non-
profits suggests that the analogy of the glass half full and/or half empty exists simultaneously:
with regards to the freedom of perusing religious-based practices openly and freely the glass is
half full, but with respect to compromising their autonomy in practices of service delivery
(hiring, religious practices, required behaviour standards) it can be seen as half empty (p. 98-99).
Overall, as far as funding goes, this is the reality of the sector within which Muslim and Arab
community organizations find themselves: between a rock and a hard place.

Phillips (2001) points to a rise of government interest in the Canadian voluntary sector
with the Chrétien Liberal government, declaring the voluntary sector a third pillar of Canadian
society and committing to building capacity and strengthening relationships with the sector. The
Chrétien government’s policy initiatives viewed the voluntary sector as strengthening a source of
social capital needed in the knowledge economy, a vehicle for citizen engagement as well as for
service delivery. By their second term in 1997, the government developed a policy framework
known as the Voluntary Sector Initiative (VSI) a,

multifaceted strategy that includes support for an “accord” that will clarify and guide the
establishment of a stronger relationship between government and the sector; research and
information gathering on the sector; capacity building through skills and technology
development; regulatory reform; and promotion of volunteerism during the International Year of Volunteers in 2001 and beyond (pp. 240-241), with a $95 million commitment over the subsequent five years. Government commitment to the voluntary sector has remained a constant feature of Canadian governments, as noted in the Throne Speech of the 37th Parliament: “Government will help to create the conditions for their success, including the business environment within which they work” (Clarkson, 2004).

The Harper Conservative government moved the VSI process forward by legislating favourable taxable and stock options as donations to charitable organizations. Through a review process called the Blue Ribbon Panel on Grants and Contributions (BRP), the federal government streamlined the administration of and management of grants, which were seen as an important policy window in supporting non-profit and voluntary organizations (Lindquist, 2008). And in 2014, the Harper Government issued new audit guidelines along with over $13 million for the Canadian Revenue Agency (CRA) in order to carry out ongoing audits of charities through to 2017. There is mounting evidence that these audits are not seemingly non-partisan; the CRA is not transparent about its’ criteria lists and protocols. Fifty two political activity audits are currently reported underway some spanning over two years; what they “have in common is that virtually all (that we know of) have been critical of certain Harper government policies and all are being audited by the CRA, often in a highly intrusive, time-consuming way” (Caplan, 2014).

Voices-Voix, a coalition of Canadian organizations that documents attacks on the Canadian Voluntary sector with respect to the contracting space for dissent and the limits on free speech, has compiled a list of nearly a hundred cases of systematic silencing and muzzling, charitable status attacked or revoked, defunding, harassment and surveillance, information
withholding and interference of people and organizations and charities focused on poverty reduction, environmental concern and resource development, animal welfare, religion, and human rights. Of these cases, up to 8 Muslim and Arab organizations have been targets of CRA audits; each had in common criticism for the policies of the Israeli government and support for the human rights of Palestinians (2015).

The Canadian Arab Federation (CFA) is an example of one such case, which demonstrates how funding is used as a form of discipline in the Canadian voluntary sector. It was established as a response to one-sided media coverage of the “Israeli-Arab” conflict in 1967, when Canadian newspapers depicted cartoons that mocked Arabs. Represented by a Board of Directors (consisting of member organizations) and an elected Executive Committee, the CAF carries out its work through staff and volunteers; their work includes raising awareness of domestic issues and international issues that affect Arabs and other racialized communities. As an advocacy group, the CAF’s aims are very clear in supporting Palestine human rights and on working to improve relationships between Canada and the Arab world.

The CAF eventually grew into an umbrella organization with membership from other Arab Canadian community groups and associations across the country, representing up to 40 Canadian Arabs organizations and associations collaborating support on issues relating to public policy, anti-racism, civil rights education (publishing books and reports), government and media relations, immigrant integration services, ESL, job search programs, and access to government services. It also became a member of the Canadian Ethnocultural Council [CEC], consisting of more than 20 organizations. As it grew, CAF received government grants from Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) under the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program to provide English as a second language training and immigrant integration services.
While serving their own communities, the CFA also delivered these immigration integration services to any new Canadian: there were cohorts of roughly 85% non-Arab new Canadians for eleven years.

During the time the CAF established itself as a reputable Canadian NGO, it was regularly invited to national and international conferences to present and discuss issues of human rights and justice both in Canada and Palestine. At these conferences, it called the Canadian and Israeli governments to account on their respective records; in particular, the CAF called out the targeting of Muslims and Arabs for racial profiling and surveillance of these communities in post-September 11, 2001. The then president of CAF, Raja Khouri, made statements pointing to the Canada government’s indifference to this profiling, asking questions such as the following:

Why did the Justice department, after agreeing to work with us on 11 specific concerns, then walk away? Why did the solicitor-general, after expressing empathy with our plight, then refuse to help us monitor abuses of the Anti-Terrorism Act by law enforcement agencies? Why did the minister of foreign affairs lift the travel advisory to the U.S. when Arab and Muslim Canadians traveling there continue to face humiliation and are subjected to treatment normally reserved for charged criminals? Why did the Ontario public safety minister condone the racial profiling taking place at the U.S. border against his own citizens? Why is it that the mayor of Canada's largest city, whose logo is “Diversity is Our Strength,” never spoke out against the victimization of Arabs and Muslims post-Sept. 11? (Khouri, at the Conference “Policing In A Multicultural Society”, Ottawa, 2003; in Helly, 2004).

Up to 2009, CAF continued to advocate strongly on behalf of Arabs and Palestinians and Muslims in Canada and internationally while receiving government funding to also provide
language instruction to immigrants from a range of countries. In 2009-2010, however, the CAF learned that their funding proposal to CIC for that year was approved and was awaiting the formalization. The delay was due to a rally that the CAF, along with a number of organizations (including Jewish ones), had organized in Toronto to protest Israel’s bombing of Gaza, which was then taking place in 2009. The Canadian Arab Federation learned after the rally that it was subsequently defunded due to statements made by CAF members that were deemed anti-Semitic and in support of banned terrorist organizations such as Hamas and Hezbollah. Under the supposed banner of the Canadian government’s “New anti-Semitism” label/liable, which took a zero tolerance approach to any criticism of Israeli government policy, the funding relationship with the Canadian Arab Federation was terminated (Kenney, 2009).

The language of zero tolerance approach, in this case, is explicitly formed to stifle any discussion let alone any debate; it serves to ostracize domestic and international voices critical of Israeli policies. Haroon Siddiqui noted Finkelstein’s observation in a speech in Toronto: that “people like Peter Kent and Jason Kenney and Michael Ignatieff ... who said that Israel has a right to defend itself by killing women and children’ and those politicians ‘who have lost their tongues’ and been silent about Gaza” (Siddiqui. 2009).

On the international stage, the Canadian government targeted the CAF; it undermined the organization by discouraging foreign governments and the European anti-racism organisations from inviting CAF to conferences and events. This prevented the CAF to speak about issues of aboriginal justice, Islamophobia, and civil rights abuses in Canada (Hasan, 2009). For example, the African Canadian Legal Clinic was directly contacted by Minister Kenney’s office to remove a former CAF executive director Mohammad Boudjenane from the speakers list of a conference organized by a coalition of groups, “while making gestures to the contingency of governmental
funding for the conference” (p. 6). Further, when the Canadian government pulled out of the Durban II World Conference against Racism in 2009, a number of national community organizations requested a meeting with Minister Kenney, who responded by stating that he would meet with them only if “‘CAF was not invited to the meeting’ because it ‘promote[s] anti-Semitism’” (p. 7). When “pressed for the ‘specifics on which this claim of anti-Semitism is based,’ …according to [past executive director] Mouammar, the minister did not reply” (p. 7). The Canadian Arab Federation has subsequently taken the government to Federal Court over its defunding.

While this is happening, the PMO, or the current executive of the Canadian government, has zealously taken upon itself to “teach” Canadians and champion on the world stage by example is a radically pro-Israel ethic (Ditchburn, 2010). Corporate support for Israel is linked to the “national security” argument, coupled with the view that Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East and our ally in the region. This has consolidated a growing base of corporate sponsorship from Canadian and U.S. Zionist organizations (Engler, 2010; Freeman-Malloy, 2007). The Israeli military industrial complex is also interlinked with the Canadian military and new training and methods for domestic urban surveillance and warfare deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan; it is also connected with components and bio-chemicals for arms, which a large part of the industrial-military complex of America and Canada depend on for outsourcing to Israel and Saudi Arabia, to provide the means and materials which may not be constitutionally supported in the U.S. or Canada (Tarachansky, 2011; Chase, 2009).

The Harper government relies on anti-Muslim/anti-Arab racism as a constituent element of its vote base and foreign policy (McDonald, 2011; Engler, 2010; Freeman-Malloy, 2007). As noted above, it has targeted NGOs critiquing the policies of the State of Israel, calling them out
as an example of a “new-Anti-Semitism.” At the same time, egregious and insulting speech about Muslims is rampant in Canadian society; and all the while, hate speech law is no longer in the Canadian Human Rights Act (Woods, 2013). The Harper government and its institutions have audited Canadian Muslim NGOs and charities working in support of Palestinian human rights and civil society and relief, while NGOs like the Association for the Wellbeing of Israel's Soldiers (AWIS),41 which operate programs like the Lone Soldier (recruiting human resources for the Israeli army), freely operate as charities unquestioned42. Pro-Israeli-state organizations seamlessly fit into Canada’s voluntary and non-profit sector/industry.

This preferential treatment and the policy of favouritism extends to Muslim/Arab organizations who act as “native informants.” Karima Laachir notes a similar implementation of policy in France, where the state gives, “preferential treatment towards some Muslim organisations and interlocutors who hold little credibility among French Muslims. The policy ‘creates a double discourse of “good Muslims” (state interlocutors) and “bad Muslims”, those who can-not be co-opted or domesticated!’” (2008, p. 25). This bifurcation and its implications are further discussed in the next section.

41 “The Association for the Soldiers of Israel (ASI) Canada, established in 1971, is the Canadian partner of AWIS. We are the only non-profit organization in Canada supporting the wellbeing of Israeli soldiers on active duty.” See more at http://asicanada.org/.

42 This is not to say that these organizations have not been challenged in Canadian civil society, but that the interest convergence is clearly in favour of Israel over the human rights of Palestinians, Arabs and Muslims.
2.5 Good Muslims (native informants) / Bad Muslims

When the master would be sick, the house Negro identified himself so much with his master he’d say, ‘What’s the matter boss, we sick?’
His master’s pain was his pain.
~ Malcolm X (1963)

Much of the world has been divided by the (Anglo-American) Eurocentric project of modernity with its concomitant project of colonialism through “race thinking among the deserving and undeserving” (Razack, 2008). The nation state has used this kind of divide and rule/conquer as one of its fundamental strategies (Parenti, 2007). This division repeats along the abyssal line (Santos 2006), further bifurcating humans in the zone of non-being (Fanon, 1963; 1967) and ‘sub-humans and non-humans’ (Grosfoguel, 2008). This bifurcation, which Mamdani (2005) posits, is along the good-Muslim, bad-Muslim line. Of course these are false dichotomies, but have currency post-9/11 as Western governments and media are want to differentiate non-human/bad-Muslims from sub-human/good-Muslims. This division of Muslims and the world – between good and bad as it is43 – may indeed be grounded in reality, but is more powerful as a function of political expediency: as foreign and domestic policy changes, the definition of “good” and “bad” Muslims changes accordingly.

How Muslims are framed, located, and contextualized in the West does not always align with the ways Muslims locate and contextualize themselves – whether in the West or in Muslim majority countries, or elsewhere for that matter. The markers for the “bad” Muslim are known: these are discussed above as dangerous Muslim men imperiling Muslim women pitched against civilized Europeans (Razack, 2008), which serves as a backdrop to stereotypes and myths about 43 In the vernacular lexicon of the present ‘moderate’ Muslim adds another flavor to Muslims who are deemed radical and fanatical as the ‘bad’ variety; passive cooperative Muslims are ‘good’ and ‘moderate’. Although this can be true people can present in these categories, it is no more true than with any other religious or secular group. See Tariq Ramadan’s *Good Muslim Bad Muslim* and the category of moderate, where he discusses these shifting categories as applied to his own life (2010).
Muslims (Helly, 2004, 2011; Kumar, 2012; Shryock, 2012). In this kind of “culture talk” of the West, it is possible to read some people’s politics through their culture; unlike Modern people’s culture, which has to do with issues and politics, “pre-modern” peoples culture is at a state where they lack the resources to deal with politics (Mamdani, 2007). This has obligated Muslims and Arabs in the post-9/11 West, as Mamdani suggests, “to prove their credentials by joining in a war against ‘bad Muslims’” (2005, p. 15). This proof is at its most potent when provided in and through the concept of the “native informant,” that colonial figure who reifies Eurocentric pre-eminence by deriding their own culture. As Hage argues, such “people can accumulate certain forms of Whiteness, and in so doing claim more governmental belonging over less capital-endowed others” (Hage, as cited in Riley, 2009, p. 61). Unlike the native informer of the 20th-century, who was living in Muslim majority countries, the fact that today they “are themselves Western Muslims in some sense collapses the Orientalist distance between East and West” (Shryock, 2010, p. 80).

The use of “Western/White” tropes that deride Islam and Muslims is not new, but as Shryock (2010) and Rana (2007) point out, it has evolved from Muslim native informants who spoke of the “power of the gospel” and “discovery of Christ” in the 20th-century to today’s “Muslim commentators speak[ing] from their authority as Muslims to talk not about the glories of Christianity but about the failings of Islam” (Shryock, 2010, p. 82). Such native informants include Fouad Ajami (Shatz, 2003; Sheehi, 2011), Hirsi Ali, Irshad Manji, and Reza Aslan (Shryock, 2010); according to Adam Shatz, their “unique role in American political life has been to unpack the unfathomable mysteries of the Arab and Muslim world and to help sell America’s wars in the region” (quoting Adam Shatz, in Shryock, 2010, p. 82). Shryock argues,
other native informers like Hirsi Ali, Manji, and Aslan all point to a clearly articulated set of problems that can be summarized as follows: “Islam” is or has become a totalizing system that lags behind the wheel of progress, defies individuality, and blindly oppresses its followers. Where they differ is in their views of how this happened, when it happened, and if there is any opportunity to emancipate Islam from itself (2010, pp. 82).

Dabashi’s claim is that native informants such as,

Kanan Malik Rushdie, Nafisi, Warraq, Manji, Hirsi Ali, and Ajami all serve to remind Americans and convince non-Americans alike of the sublimity of Western literature, art, and music.... The native informers have digested and internalized this language and now speak it with the authority of natives. There is no longer any need for "expert knowledge" when you can hear the facts from the horse's mouth. (Dabashi, 2011, p. 18)

“Good Muslims” act as expert insiders reifying anti-Muslim racism, in the mainstream through an “inversion of facts by fantasy, [an inversion] of truth by politics” (Dabashi, 2011, p. 6). These figures are the archetypical conflations of Fanon’s “native intellectual” (1963) and Malcolm X’s “house Negro” (1963). In describing native informants, Sheehi (2011) adds the term “White House Arabs,” and Dabashi also uses the term “house Muslim” (2011, p. 18). Both Shryock and Sheehi’s analysis and description of the productive role of these figures echo Dabashi’s observation that the native informer serves the ideological slant of imperialism by making it appear legitimate through an “inversion of facts by fantasy, [an inversion] of truth by politics” (Dabashi, p. 6).

In fact, it is argued, native informers are seen to be more convincing as they are perceived as insiders,
manufacturing the public illusions that empires need to sustain themselves than in truly informing the public about the cultures they denigrate and dismiss.... Most important, they can feign authority while telling their conquerors not what they need to know but what they want to hear (in return, American and European liberals call them "voices of dissent"). ...[Native informers such as] Irshad Manji are paraded before their North American and Western European audiences as "voices of dissent" against the innate and enduring barbarity of Islam. The pathology they nurture grows with every atrocity by or against Muslims, and it is bound to continue to be exacerbated as the U.S./Israeli war against Muslims deepens (Dabashi, 2011, p. 13, 16-17).

By the virtue of their insider position, and due to the widespread popular reach of their opinions, native informers are even more effective than the Oriental expert. As Dabashi says,

In classical European Orientalism, a whole language, discourse, and ideology were crafted by the imperialists themselves to maintain their domination as natural and inevitable. … The native informers have digested and internalized this language and now speak it with the authority of natives. … The native informer plays a key role in making the inversion of fact by fantasy appear logical (pp. 18-19).

Dabashi further makes a distinction between the figures of the native informer and that of the collaborator,

The latter tells the conquering power what it needs to know in order to better dominate, while the former tells it what it wants to hear in order to better sell its wars, particularly to its domestic audience. The collaborator provides factual and strategic knowledge, the native informer provides emotive vistas and ideological slants with which to criminalize any mode of resistance to domination (pp. 23-24).
Native informers and collaborators are a kind of “secular intelligentsia” (Shryock, 2010, p. 6), spreading negative and stereotyped images of Muslims in their societies; they have a generalized disaffection for Islam and Muslims and issues around their integration into Western society are weaved into negative public discourses using it as a political tool while reaping economic benefits. Scholars have pointed to another important and distinguishing characteristic of this figure, namely their unconditional non-critique of policies of the state of Israel (Dabashi, 2011). Omid Safi puts it as a kind of test one has to pass, “you have to, as part of that litmus test, remain silent with respect to the atrocities of an Israeli regime and then you claim further more that any and all criticism of the Israeli state are motivated purely by anti-Semitism” (Safi – personal communication, March 11, 2012).

On the whole, the native informant’s role is one of confirmation, so we see “native informers preaching that imperial adventurism is good for the world, and above all for the people targeted for invasion and salvation” (Dabashi, p. 26). Dabashi asks rhetorically,

Why bother with this self-loathing “Oriental”? Because what is at stake is the categorical dehumanization of a people marked as the enemy, a designation that native informers like Ibn Warraq are actively encouraged to personify, becoming both the accented voice of a subhuman enemy and the voice loathing it. If the matter were limited to a single person doing and receiving the loathing it would of course merit no serious attention. But that is not the case (2011, p. 100).

Irshad Manji wrote “The Trouble with Islam,” in 2003. Saadia Toor remarks that, critics have pointed out the deep and consistent inaccuracies – conceptual, historical, cultural, geographic – that characterize Manji’s discourse … in essence a reflection of the various aspects of neocon discourse: Zionism (characterized by unqualified support of
Israel, the coding of Palestinians as ‘terrorists,’ and the vilification of Edward Said as someone who stifled reasoned debate on the Israel-Palestine issue), as well as unqualified support for U.S. imperialism based on the humanitarian imperative to ‘save’ Muslim women from the violence of their religion and their men. (2011)

In describing Canadian Irshad Manji’s framework and representation of Islam/Muslims, Shryock writes that for her, “Islam” can enter modernity; it just has to become Jewish (2010, p. 88). And suggests that although “[s]cholars may have little use for the autobiographical musings of Hirsi Ali or the puerile polemics of Manji. Nevertheless, the fact remains that Manji, Hirsi Ali, and Aslan have become some of today’s most prominent explainers of “Islam”, (Shryock, 2010, pp. 81) who also happen to be critics of the liberal discourse of tolerance and multiculturalism,

[w]ords like “tolerance” and “mutual respect,” fundamental values of Western democracies, are represented in Manji’s text as being weak, “watery,” and “slippery,” and therefore lacking in consistency and rigor. In the name of protecting the homeland — the Western democracy — she lays the ground for the containment of the other and the potential erasure of his or her cultural difference… According to Manji, Muslims, be they immigrants or not, are barbaric and intolerant; they only understand the language of force. In order to “free them,” a complete and unwavering onslaught that will dismantle the cultural and religious model with which they identify is required (El-Ariss, 2007).

Shryock (2010), Shatz (2003), Sheehi (2011), Debashi (2011) and Toor (2011) lump a diverse set of people who were or are Muslim as representative of some portion of an archetypical colonial figure in the service of assuaging empire and imperialism as native informants who knowing or unknowingly reify the western political positioning of Muslims and Islam below the
abyssal line. However, this is not to say that in some cases native informants’ discourses isn’t necessary or require attention. But that these figures occupy key positions within communities and in the media and are to invited government hearings, are often supportive of repressive measures and negative stereotyping of their own communities; this suggest that Muslim communities should respond to the positions of native informant in honest integral ways. Some of the critiques of the native informant are equally valid and need addressing, for the danger is that native informants easily slide into the “colonial collaborator” which (further) targets their own communities. The large influence of native informants in the Canadian metatopical spaces is already an invitation for Muslim and Arab community organizations to counter their representations.

2.6 Palestine

In this chapter, the sections above have provided necessary conceptual background to understand participants’ attitudes views and standpoints on the three core themes of the study: the situation of Muslims in Canada, funding and community government, and the good Muslim (native informant)/bad Muslim nexus. A fourth also emerged from the study: Palestine.

The issue of Palestine is among the central concerns of the project of Western colonialism and imperialism and offers for Muslims and Arabs a kind of constitutive fault line upon which their existence is literally shown daily to be at stake, and where they are reminded of the historical bias of Europe the U.S., Canada and a handful of countries that support the illegal Israeli occupation. Some kind of collective consciousness coalesces among most Muslims upon the injustices inflicted upon Palestinians. Palestine is often a litmus test amongst Muslims (Sayyid, 2011) and it is not surprising then that Palestine was raised as an issue by 40% of
participants in this study. This section provides a critical race conceptualization of the issue of Palestine in order to provide context to the analysis of participants’ views/data in Chapter 4.

Over the past decade, Elmer (2003-2015), Engler (2009, 2010) and Freeman-Maloy (2007) have argued that Canada is not an honest peace broker and is currently at its zenith of support for the state of Israel and complicit in its attendant outcomes; this is due to the kinds of foreign policy and initiatives the Canadian Government has supported. They have documented the recent Canadian Government’s economic, military and security interests in furthering and strengthening their relationship, which has had the intended outcome of Canada being one of a handful of states impassioned by its hostility towards the Palestinian people. This hostility is also fed to and imbibed by the Canadian public. According to one report,

Canadian see tensions between Jews and Arabs – tensions which many trace in part to the ongoing conflict between Israel and the Palestinians – as palpable even among Jews and Arabs living in Canada, far from the contested territories. Overall, Canadians are very positive in their assessment of relations between Christians and Jews in Canada. There is somewhat greater concern about relations between Christians and Muslims in Canada, while relations between Jews and Arabs in Canada are seen by most as at least somewhat negative (Environics, 2006-4, p. 73).

Community organizations and charities in Canada that support Palestinian human rights have had their funding, and in some cases charity status, revoked (Voices-Voix; Engler, 2010, 2012); meanwhile, charities which actively support the military operations in the Israeli occupied

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44 “Historically, Canadian foreign policy regarding Middle East conflict has striven toward neutrality and an emphasis on human rights. In early July of 2006, as conflict erupted between Israel and Hezbollah, with Lebanon as the primary battleground, the Harper government ended a period of relative silence on Middle East policy and emphatically defended Israel’s bombing of Lebanon as a measured and appropriate response to Hezbollah rocket attacks and the kidnapping of Israeli soldiers. Some critics decried the Harper government’s position, indicating that it marked a departure from Canada’s traditional neutrality in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict” (Environics, 2006-4, p. 121).
territories function in Canada with effective ease, as do corporations constructing settlements and the separation wall.

This skewed relationship is an outcome of “Canada’s racial contract with Israel” (Abu Laban & Bakan, 2008). This racial contract is not a contract between everybody (“we the people”), but between just the people who count, the people who are really people (“we the white people”)” (Mills, 1997, p. 3) regimenting of race as one of the major constitutive elements of the modern socio-political order, “expressly created… as a racially hierarchical polity, globally dominated by Europeans” (p. 27 italics in original). Abu Laban and Bakan position Canada’s unconditional support of the state of Israel (a settler colonial state), “even if it hurts Canada” as Prime Minister Harper had said (Ditchburn, 2010), as reifying “its non-neutrality, regarding both racism within Canadian society and its own racial contract, and in regard to Israel’s racial contract” (2008, p. 651).

Canada and Israel, it would seem, are in an “interest convergence” (Bell, 1980) with the view of Israel as a strategic colonial outpost, a bastion of a Judean-Christian Euro-centric civilization in a desert of Arab barbarism (Engler, 2010; Freeman-Maloy, 2007). To keep the Israeli outpost as viable as possible, especially in a world which is increasingly becoming pro-Palestinian and especially in Canada, the buoying relationship has been bankrolled by a bullish domestic arms and security industry underwritten by an economic base of pro-Zionist Canadian capitalists who have managed to polarize the Canadian Jewish community and influence

45 In 2009, when the U.N. condemned the Israeli attack on Gaza, Canada was the only country that supported Israel. When Venezuela expelled the Israeli ambassador to the country over the Gaza attack, Canada extended its embassy there to cover for Israeli representation in the country. Canada’s position on the ‘new-anti-Semitism’ is designed to restrict critics of the policies of state of Israel (Al-Jazeera 2012).
Canadian foreign policy towards a pro-Israel stance (Freeman-Maloy, 2007). Corporate support for Israel has been linked to the “our national security” argument, coupled with the view that Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East and our ally in the region. This has consolidated a growing base of corporate sponsorship to Canadian and U.S. Zionist organizations, which in turn inflect their attitudes and values on foreign policy. As mentioned earlier, the Israeli military industrial complex is interlinked with the Canadian military, sharing new training and methods for both domestic surveillance and policing; and, warfare deployed across the globe, including development and trade of components and bio-chemicals and armaments that form a large part of the industrial-military complex that the U.S. and Canada depend on, is outsourced and developed in Israel, as they are not constitutionally supported in the U.S. or Canada (Freeman-Malloy, 2007).

The effect of a Canadian pro-Zionist government has resulted in politicizing policy further with the Harper government, which ensures Israel carte blanche immunity from criticism under the charge of “new-anti-Semitism.” The Parliamentary Committee to Combat Anti-Semitism, has been set up in Canada, and in Minister Jason Kenney’s words, “can offer some useful reference points and best practices to share with the rest of the world and parliamentarians who share our concern about the new anti-Semitism” (Kenney, 2009). “New anti-Semitism” targets those individuals and groups who point to Israeli state crimes against the humanity of Palestinians. It associates the criticism of the actions and policies of the Israeli government with racial hatred: “‘The existential threat faced by Israel on a daily basis is ultimately a threat to the broader Western civilization,’ said Jason Kenney, explaining the staunchly pro-Israel positions

47 This has resulted in an organized consolidation from within the Canadian Jewish community to resist this polarization that Freeman-Maloy outlines. In other words, there are organizations from within the Jewish community who work towards a different alignment with the state of Israel and are not cart blanch supporters of the state; however, they are not a powerbase who has the ear of the Canadian government. Also see Fault Lines - Canada-Israel: The Other Special Relationship (Al-Jazeera, 2010).
of his government, led by Conservative Prime Minister Stephen Harper” (Ahren, 2009). That the government would have Canadians believe this existential threat comes from Muslims and Arabs can be seen in the Harper government’s own record of targeting and abusing the rights of Muslims and Arabs abroad and in Canada and their attempts to link them to the situation in Palestine and the war on terror (examples include Omar Khadr, Mahar Arar, Abdullah Almalki, Ahmad Abou-Elmaati, Muyed Nureddin and Abousfian Abdelrazik) and the domestic detentions of the Security-Five (Hassan Almrei, Adil Charkaoui, Mohamed Harkat, Mahmoud Jaballah, Mohammad Mahjoub), and “Project Thread,” where approximately 23 Pakistani and one Indian were arrested in Toronto in 2003 over national security, jailed, and ultimately released without charges, causing lasting personal and community injury – none of whom have posed any credible danger to Canadians.

What conclusions are racialized communities to draw about this kind of treatment of this community when juxtaposed with the government’s emphasis on “New anti-Semitism,” especially in light of several reports over decades pointing to structural racism that exists upon several groups in Canada? In a report on Canada for the U.N. titled “Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and all Forms of Discrimination,” Doudou Diène in his conclusions recommended that,

48 For more on Project Thread see https://localwiki.org/toronto/Project_Threadbare. Felix Odartey-Wellington describes the Project Thread “as a case of racial profiling situated in a moral panic over “Islamic terrorism” that was created by a section of the Canadian news media and the state security apparatus.” In Racial profiling and moral panic: Operation thread and the Al-Qaeda sleeper cell that never was. Global Media Journal -- Canadian Edition, 2 (2), 25-40. Available at: http://www.gmj.uottawa.ca/0902/v2i2_odartey-wellington.pdf

(a) The Canadian Government should add credibility, trust and recognition to its undoubted political commitment to combating racism, discrimination and xenophobia, by recognizing, at the highest level, that such evils still persist, despite the efforts accomplished; [and] (b) It is particularly recommended that a national programme against racism be launched, in order to place the effort within a coordinated, coherent general framework (2004).

The Canadian government has implemented none of this. But why privilege emphasis on new protections for only this one group? Yves Engler points out that by and large, there is, very little structural racism against Jews (which is not to say there isn’t significant cultural stereotyping, which must be challenged). But in an inversion of reality, the more anti-Semitism declines as a social force the more it concerns the political elite…[by] attacking a largely historic form of oppression [the political elites] advance a present day pro-imperial foreign-policy and anti-immigrant/anti-aboriginal domestic agenda. ... At the level of international diplomacy the Harper government’s cries of anti-Semitism are a transparent attempt to silence critics of Israeli crimes. But there is more to it. The accusations of anti-Semitism are a way to advance a broader right-wing foreign-policy agenda (2009).

Freeman-Maloy points out additionally that the Conservative Party’s pro-Israel stance also courts Liberal Party funders in a kind of quid pro quo (2010).

Following this trajectory of a flagrant pro-Israel stance of Canada projecting itself internationally and domestically as Israel’s best champion and ally, such an extreme love coupled with no censure policy of Israel has necessitated an anti-Palestinian stand, and bias towards any politicization or organization sympathetic to the human rights of Palestinians, be they “Arabs” and “Muslims” or “Christians” and “Jews,” or whatever else that would criticize Israel. Why is being critical of the nation-state of Israel a problem and considered racist, but
being critical of the people of China, India or Myanmar not equally so? The government does not explain this, but the position is disciplined with zeal.

The case of the defunding of KAIROS, a “Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiative [which] unites eleven churches and religious organizations in faithful action for ecological justice and human rights” (KAIROS Canada) in 2009 is an instructive example of this zeal. KAIROS is an organization with a 35-year history of positive evaluations, due to having cost effective programming with excellent cooperation and collaboration with the Canadian government, and policies in achieving successful results on human rights work. The reason given by Minister Bev Oda, responsible for CIDA [Canadian International Development Agency], for de-funding KAIROS was that it no longer “fit” new priorities of CIDA. However, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, Jason Kenney, explained the following in a speech in Jerusalem at the Global Forum for Combating anti-Semitism:

We have articulated and implemented a zero tolerance approach to anti-Semitism. What does this mean? It means that we eliminated the government funding relationship with organizations like for example, the Canadian Arab Federation... We have ended government contact with like-minded organizations like the Canadian Islamic Congress... We have defunded organizations, most recently like KAIROS, who are taking a leadership role in the boycott [against Israel] (2009).

Was KAIROS no longer a good “fit” for CIDA’s new priorities, or was it defunded because KAIROS allegedly called for boycott, divestment, and sanctions against Israel? The organization responded that in 2005, it had developed a policy which stated that “KAIROS does not recommend a general boycott of Israeli goods for a number of reasons, and that KAIROS not
support any use of sanctions against Israel” (CIDA-KAIROS-FAQ). In a 2009 press release, KAIROS stated,

Minister Kenney’s charge against KAIROS is false … Minister Kenney’s statement, in a highly charged environment, raises very disturbing questions about the integrity of Canadian development aid decisions. If aid decisions are based on political rumor rather than on due diligence, development criteria and CIDA’s own evaluation process then this is a matter of grave concern for the entire international development sector — and for the Canadian people who pay for this aid … Two points need to be made: criticism of the nation-state of Israel does not constitute anti-Semitism; and CIDA was developed to fund international aid and not to serve political agendas. … There has been widespread speculation that the real reason for the CIDA funding cut was to sanction KAIROS for its views on the environment and other issues on the government’s agenda (KAIROS, 2009).

In 2011, another organization was defunded for its perceived anti-Semitism: based in Mississauga, Ontario, Palestine House – a cultural and educational center established in 1994 providing immigrant settlement services, English language training, skills development and daycare services to about 1,100 new Canadians every year – had nearly $1 million defunded by Minister Jason Kenney for its settlement and language services. According to Haroon Siddiqui, the Minister gave three reasons for this: [a] a map on their website showing a Palestinian state encompassing all of Israel [b] an October 8th event marking prisoner exchange, the release of about 1,000 Palestinian prisoners in exchange for Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit, [alleging one of the released had murdered two Canadians] and [c] hosting London based journalist Abdul Bari Atwan, who makes frequent contributions to BBC and conferences, alleging he made a statement in 2007 that he would celebrate Iranian missiles striking Israel (Siddiqui, 2012).
The above examples clearly illustrate who is allowed to set the parameters of, participate in, and be excluded from the debate; those who are allowed ‘global’ citizenship, and those who are not; those who are allowed to provide newcomer services and those who are not – as in each case, defunding was not a result of any irregularly in finances or quality of service provided. Funding was cut due to political views of the Minister in charge and the Executive in general. When marginalized groups speak out, as in the cases above, they are silenced and criminalized as anti-Semitic. Yet government officials ally themselves “rhetorically, ideologically and politically [with pro-imperial foreign-policy, unabashedly promote Anglo hegemony and Christian Zionism]… without being perceived as biased or unpatriotic” (Hasan, 2009, p. 18). This irony is present in Jason Kenney’s comments from 2003 at St. Paul University’s conference, sponsored by Christians for Israel, where he described himself as a “Catholic Zionist” in saying “[t]he best way to appeal to Catholics to be more supportive of the plight of Israel is to ‘re-shape the debate’ …Israel exists, not because Jewish people came in as new immigrants and stole land from their ancestors, but rather because it is the ancestral homeland of the Jewish people” (Babych 2003, quoted in Hasan, 2009).

The effect domestically on Arab, Muslim, Christian, Jewish and others who voice a defense of the human rights of Palestinians and criticize policies and practices of the state called Israel is that they are systematically silenced. Many community organizations in Canada who have shown support for the human rights of Palestinians have had their government funding eviscerated or face state audits. The record of the Harper government on which side of this issue their loyalties lay and how they practice their politics is self-evident. Canada was the first country to withdraw their humanitarian funding to a democratically elected government of people of Palestine immediately after open and fair elections in Gaza that Canada had itself
monitored in its capacity within the U.N.; Canada then began to fund, not the legitimate
government in Palestine, but those entities who were actively opposing them. The Harper
government began a campaign of sabotaging the work of Canadian pro-Palestinian human rights
groups; and, it has politicized organizations to ensure they serve Israel (Corrigan, 2011). Such a
position of the government necessitates them being anti-Palestinian, thereby further demonizing
Muslim and Arabs.
3 Methodology and Research Methods

3.1 We are Our Methodologies: Researcher Reflexivity and Positionality

We are our stories. We live them as they live us.

I believe that our narratives consist of combinations of methodologies (the tools and techniques of research), ontologies (our assumptions and experiences about the nature of the world) and epistemologies (our understandings, beliefs and knowledges about the world) that inform our research in as much as we are idiosyncratic researchers using a variety of methods and frameworks/paradigms when undertaking qualitative inquiry. Researcher reflexivity on one’s own location, context, and standpoints articulates the reasons for choosing the topic of research, the sample, the site, and the relational position of the researcher to the researched (authority, power, control etc.). Reflexivity is thinking back on one self, a process of self-reference and the recognition of multiple subjectivities (i.e. between researcher(s) and participant(s) at each step is an integral part of the research process. The awareness, which results from reflexivity, is an acknowledgment that the researcher is not passively “outside” the research; rather, researcher identity and standpoint actively contribute to the construction of results and their meanings. Positionality is also referred to as a form of reflexivity and is an important and integral part of qualitative inquiry, since it has been established that researcher identity and standpoint shape the research and analysis. All of these factors affect the rationale and design of the study, observations, collection and analysis of data, and the presentation of findings in as far as ‘there is an upfront recognition [that researchers] “create” their data at least
as much as they “discover” it” (Alim, 2007). When researcher identity and standpoint are adequately attended, expressed and analyzed this aids to the qualitative research’s credibility.

Parin Dossa, recommends “[o]ur first point of entry must be that of location of our positions as researchers. Who we are and what motivates us to undertake research at particular sites are issues that must be contextualized” (2004, p. 15). By foregrounding my own positionality, I allow for an opportunity to glean any biases, attitudes, and values in influencing my deductions, inductions, and my overall interpretation and analysis of the data. Reflexivity is both a straightforward (i.e. when disclosing my self-identity categories) and an elusive process of self-examination (i.e. to make my unconscious attitudes, convictions, and choices conscious and examinable). In terms of why I wanted to conduct the study, my research goals, and my process, as well as my attitudes, relationships and reactions to the participants and the data cannot all be noted with justice; all I can do is attend to what I think is relevant with respect to clarifying my own epistemological, methodological, ontological, axiological, and rhetorical assumptions underwriting the research and heuristic presented.

In many ways, this study evolved out of and by means of my own experiences and narratives. First, I bring to my research my own context and situated knowledge and experience of being a self-identified cisgendered Muslim male in Canada, with my own history and experiences of personal and institutional racism. In other words, my passion for this study is rooted in many of my own lived experiences and from my own reflections/analyses based on my location as an uninvited guest/settler on the unceded Indigenous land belonging to the Coast Salish peoples, my own standpoints and context as a community developer (Hartsock, 1998; Harding, 2004). In terms of my goals for the study, I wanted to know how Muslim and Arab
community organizations – i.e. people like me volunteering in community development, situated their own contexts were responding to racism in Canada.

Second, my passion for this study is also rooted in the social justice advocacy that I have engaged, with in my capacity in solidarity with and in support of the rightful protectors and stewards of these territories. I have been a community organizer/developer for over a decade involved in different capacities with organizations and collectives as a board member and volunteer/staff, working in the areas of social justice with a number of community organizations, Muslim and non-Muslim. As a public affairs broadcaster (producer/host on CFRO, Vancouver Coop-Radio’s the Rational and Bulland Awaaz, and content/line producer with ACCESS a weekly community television program on Shaw Cable), I highlight issues of injustices in marginalized communities and their resistance and resilience, dignity and honour. Overall, I bring my knowledge and experiences as a scholar and researcher I have been reflecting and working on issues affecting Muslim communities in Canada. For example, in response to 9/11, I formed a loosely held collective called Siraat that worked with other organizations and individuals to respond to the “hate environment” and the torture and spying of Muslim and Arab Canadians both at home and abroad and its effects upon all of us, by working together. We organize public events such as book launches, film screenings, panels and discussions on racisms faced by a number of communities, Muslim and non-Muslim; we also continue to routinely hold public discussions and forums on topics such as the interlinks between Indigenous, Muslim and other racialized communities.

As noted above, my standpoints are a result of my experiences and have informed this research. As a racialized subject, I find that the positions that CRT claims (some articulated above and others discussed further below) are consistent with my own lived experiences and
sharing with others like me. As one researcher has succinctly summarized, “her experience and understanding of her everyday world led her to use CRT when she said: ‘It is the understanding of lived oppression – the struggle to make a way out of no way – which propels us to problematize dominant ideologies in which knowledge is constructed’” (Tyson, 2003, p. 20; as cited in Hylton, 2012). As I organized and developed community events, I wanted to know how others involved in the same struggle were making their “way out of no way”. From this context, I asked the participants in this study, to share their community organizing experiences from their locations, contexts, and standpoints, and through these allow myself to better interpret their responses and analyses in relation to my own. By “standpoint,” I am referring to the positions from which we view the world: these include our contexts and circumstances that form the setting for the events we are viewing, as well as our locations in actual geographic spaces. Contexts, locations, and standpoints are clear to me as constitutive to how we express our attitudes and values, our choices and actions, and our world-views and philosophies. As such, the data I gathered and present in my analysis is also naturally filtered through the lens of my own standpoint.

Discussion on these aspects of participants views were facilitated through open-ended interviews and generated far richer discussion and enabled a richer data set than if I had just simply asked what if any response participants’ community organizations had to anti-Muslim/anti-Arab racism they face. This approach allowed for instances where I could ask for clarification of views and attitudes and their organizations own contexts and locations, whereby providing a greater understanding of their discussion. Open-ended questions where participants were able to direct discussion themselves resulted in an easy flowing manner, which provided many insights into the richness of the community that may not have occurred within a more
linear interview format. Further, as a community organizer researching my own community, I also felt that my own participation in community development helped make participants feel more comfortable; certainly, I believe that the fact that I self-identified as Muslim made them so. This confluence of being from the same religious and sometimes cultural group (excluding gender) and having shared experiences may have precipitated more trust with participants, making it easier for them to share their experiences and challenge the status quo more openly and forthrightly than if I were not Muslim or a community organizer (and therefore more of an outsider). I believe this may have helped to mitigate the power dynamic between researcher and participant and may have led to more fair and accurate data collection.

By and large, I did not have difficulty in gaining access to organizations in conducting my research. I was hopeful that organizations such as the Canadian Arab Federation (CAF), the Muslim Canadian Congress (MCC), the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR-CAN)/National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM), the Muslim Association of Canada (MAC), and the Canadian Council of Muslim Women (CCWA) would participate due to their activities and reputation in the Canadian voluntary sector, but ultimately they did not take up my requests and invitations. I believe at least one reason is the very real and precarious nature of funding of NGOs presently in Canada, and the fear that their words or views may come to harm their organizations, or their positions within the organizations. Regardless, the participating organizations that did choose to engage in my study represent a good cross-section reflecting the depth and breadth of the kinds of Muslim and/or Arab community organizations that currently exist in Canada. From the start to the end of my interview/discussions, I met incredible people committed to both serving their communities and upholding the highest values of human dignity.
3.2 Racial Insiders and Racial Matching

In reviewing the literature of “racial insider/matching” in qualitative research, Parker and Lynn identify the importance of the positionality of the researcher as well as the researched in regard to barriers versus access to participants views by discussing the importance of insider-researcher reflexivity on one’s own privilege, authority, and standpoints (Parker and Lynn, 2009; Parenti, 2007). “Racial insider/matching” does not necessarily lead to a coordinated or central racial standpoint between/among intra-racial community members; therefore, this relationship should not be taken for granted.

It has long been understood that the race of the interviewer may affect the respondents. After the post civil rights era, a conventional wisdom developed that racial matching was believed to produce more effective results and better communication between the “matched” interlocutors due to the effects of intangible nuances of shared experiences and epistemologies between the researcher and participant. This was believed to lead to a common experience and understanding between those who are asking the questions and those being asked. However, it was then realized that although racial matching can lead to a more effective interview, race is not the only relevant social signifier of “insider-ness.” It was soon discovered, for example, that some middle-class black sociologists have experiences closer to white middle-class sociologists, and other factors such as age, class, education, religion, sexual orientation, and gender also have an impact on the interview process and data collected. Ethnically matched interviewers may and often do, hold different performance expectations, and vice versa, yet, insiders were expected to conform to cultural norms and restrict the interview outcomes. A further negative outcome of racial matching is that it could lead to ghettoizing research by expecting researchers to only
study their own communities. Due to these experiences and outcomes, in the 1970s, 80s and 90s, sociologists began to encounter arguments for the advantages of being a racial outsider.

The conventional wisdom today is that neither insider nor outsider is more or less advantageous than the other, but simply that they may produce different results. Due to the unpredictable positive or negative dynamic between the interlocutors, it is probably best to vary the racial positions (Twine, 2000, p. 6-14). In other words, racial insider/matching does not lead to an automatically sympathetic or critical understanding of racism and racial discourses “anymore than colonialism created anti-colonial subjectivities” (p.15). In her book, *Racing Research and Researching Race*, Twine advances both theoretical debate and dilemmas about delimiting and deconstructing the social construct of race, racial ideologies, and racial panoramas. Sometimes, racial insiders can be marked as traitors to their “people” and “community”; sometimes, racial insiders can project upon their communities the same “whiteness” as the dominant group; and sometimes, racial insiders can help articulate the voice of the marginalized and bring it to the centre.

Analyses of internalized racism and native informancy were particularly sensitive for me to negotiate, and I gave my utmost attention and appreciation to the inherit measure of internalized racism, born of the actual and symbolic violence that all racialized persons living in fundamentally Euro/Anglo-centric societies face. In my overall reflections with engaging participants to share their narratives and standpoints, it felt as though our racial insider matching coupled in similar shared experiences; I believe it was of positive benefit to the study that I could relate to participants’ contexts and standpoints by virtue of shared experiences in the field.
3.3 Study Design Participant Organizations

In light of my epistemological and ontological concerns (around community responses to their racialization, inequality, exclusion, discrimination, etc.), I adopted CRT and narrative inquiry as a primary methodology (a theory or analysis on how research should proceed) for data gathering and analysis. Specifically, I used long-format, in-depth, semi-structured interviews with volunteers, including Board members, who are in leadership positions within self-identified Muslim and/or Arab community organizations.

My research protocol was developed and piloted in the fall of 2011, with three diverse community organizations, two organizing locally and one nationally. The pilot sessions, which lasted from 40 minutes to 1.5 hours each, were a good opportunity to test an appropriately modified research protocol for these communities. I was able to gauge well how questions were received, and determine ways in which to steer discussion so it flowed towards eliciting responses to racism faced by these communities. These pilot experiences were useful towards shaping my final research protocol.

By September 2011, I had conducted an internet search to identify Muslim and Arab community organizations in the Canadian voluntary non-profit sector on the basis of five common features and four categories as defined by Salamon and Anheier’s (1998) framework. The five common features are as follows: that they be (1) organizations, i.e., institutionalized to some meaningful extent; (2) private, i.e., institutionally separate from government; (3) non-profit-making, i.e., not returning profits generated to their owners or directors; (4) self-governing, i.e., equipped to control their own activities; and (5) voluntary, i.e., involving some meaningful degree of voluntary participation (p. 216). The four categories of the voluntary
sector in Salamon and Anheier’s model are: (1) education and research, (2) health, (3) social services, and (4) culture and recreation (p. 213-59). These common features and categories served as baseline criteria for inclusion in my study. The only other criteria were that organizations self-identified as Muslim/Arab organizations. My final shortlist was determined on the basis of their community profile and media presence.

In the months of October-December 2011, I emailed approximately 70 Canadian self-identified Muslim and Arab organizations, asking to speak with their founders, current board members, and/or staff and/or coordinators to participate in my study. I actively followed up with telephone and email conversations with past founders, current board members and individuals volunteering with Arab or Muslim organizations and related more information about the study. I asked them to speak with me on a variety of issues including relationship synergies between funding bodies and Muslim/Arab community organizations, the nature of their on-the-ground work, and their efficacy. I also asked to hear their stories of community workers/volunteers, particularly regarding their work, and hopes for the organizations, their constituents, and what they thought the present situations of their communities is. The next step was for representatives to take my invitation to their boards and seek approval, and appoint someone to speak with me; all of this took several months to organize. I followed up with organizations on a first come first serve basis. Confidentiality was promised.

By September 2012, I had collected a sufficient sample of participant organizations who had ultimately self-selected their interest and had been approved to represent their organizations by their respective boards and signed a participatory and confidentiality agreement. I then assigned all organizations pseudonyms as per their agreement to participate in this study, and promised anonymity to protect their confidentiality. Each organization was issued a code-name.
while their real name never appeared on any documents or notes. So as not to compromise the organizations’ efforts within the communities in which they work, I chose to not share much organizational demographic information or specifics about their programmatic activities as steps to protect confidentiality. Confidentiality was a crucial element to maintain and not compromise especially due to the charged environment these organizations operate in. The following table outlines the final participating organizations (11) and their scales of impact.

Table 1 Participating Organizations

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<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Scale of Impact</th>
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<tr>
<td>RO1</td>
<td>Regional</td>
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<tr>
<td>NG1</td>
<td>National/International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NG2</td>
<td>National/International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RO2</td>
<td>Regional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RO3</td>
<td>Regional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RO4</td>
<td>Regional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MO</td>
<td>Multiple National and Regional Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RO5</td>
<td>Regional/National</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NG4</td>
<td>National/International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RO6</td>
<td>Regional</td>
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The organizational representatives themselves were of diverse personal and professional backgrounds, ages, and ethnicities. All were highly educated specialists gainfully employed in their respective fields or recently retired from professional service in Canada. Some were born in Canada, while others arrived at various ages; all are Canadian citizens.
Participant organizations range from relatively new to decades old, well-established grassroots organizations, and from those serving local and regional constituents (both Muslim and non-Muslim) to established non-profits and NGOs and charities working on national and international scales. The organizations are equally diverse in their mandates and programmatic activities, with an emphasis on delivering social services to their communities. Many of these organizations routinely collaborate with other Muslim and non-Muslim community organizations in their delivery of their programming and community development, and some also participate in interfaith dialogues.

Organizations included those who have received and lost/expired their government funding, those that are continuing to receive funding from their congregation/constituency and those who have not/do not apply for funding. Participants’ organizational budgets ranged as well: some are low/cost-no/cost, some are revenue neutral, and others are self-funded models.

The participants themselves all balance their family and career lives with the volunteer work they do in their respective organizations. Their contributions to civil society reaches well beyond Muslim communities by having a positive impact on and in wider society. Overall, the participants were dynamic, thoughtful, and articulate. All demonstrated deep commitment to social justice through their desire to engage positively within society while at the same time expressing their lives as fully Muslim and/or Arab while also being Canadian.

3.4 Critical Race Theory, Methodology, and Qualitative Inquiry

According to Sandra Harding (1987), methodology is a theory or analysis of how research should proceed. Methodology is connected to a theory of knowledge (epistemology) and technique (method) for gathering evidence; as such, the trinity of epistemology,
methodology and method are integral to any research. Qualitative research itself is based on observations, group and or individual interviews with a focus on life experiences and social processes, and examining historical records (p. 2-3).

The relationship between critical race theory (CRT) and qualitative research has been used to address particular historical, legal, and existing social contexts where people of colour are marginalized. CRT is used to define and articulate the influence and criticisms of whiteness and white privilege in an era in which “racism has been declared virtually eradicated while racially subordinated peoples have been chastised for relying too much on racial ‘victimology’” (McWhorter, 2000; quoted in Parker and Lynn, 2009, p. 150). Critical race scholars have countered discourses about victim mentality by moving the discourse of race and racism from individual acts and individual prejudices to an understanding of race/racialization as “an endemic part of American life, deeply ingrained through historical consciousness and ideological choices about race, which in turn has directly shaped the U.S. legal system and the ways people think about the law, racial categories, and privilege” (C. Harris, 1993; quoted in Parker and Lynn, 2009, p. 149). Mills (1997) and Grosfoguel (2011) also discuss the hegemony of whiteness in ordering the global racial order of human categories, and scholars such as Thobani (2007, 2010), Razack (2006, 2008, 2010), Tanovich (2006), and Tator and Henry (2006) have discussed this institutionalization within the Canadian context.

With respect to the study of racial oppression, CRT advances that race is a socially constructed category used to perpetuate superiority and dominance of one group over another through the use of a justifying ideology of white/Western supremacy. In *The Racial Contract*, Charles W. Mills names this ideology as the unmade political system that has made the modern world (1997). This ideology holds a “belief in the inherent superiority of one race over all others
and thereby the right to dominance” (Lord, 1992, p. 496); this has led to a system of increasing marginalization and exploitation of people of colour. In response and in resistance critical race theory has “three main goals: (a) to present storytelling and narrative as valid approaches through which to examine race and racism, (b) to argue for the eradication of racial subjugation while simultaneously recognizing that race is a social construct; and (c) to draw important relationships between race and other axis of domination” (Parker and Lynn, 2009, p. 150). As a discourse of liberation then, CRT is used as a methodological instrument in qualitative research because it carries a profound ontological and epistemological understanding of the impact of race and racism in the lives of racially disenfranchised people.

Critical race theory challenges the way race and racial power are constructed and represented, as articulated by its two common interests: “the first is to understand how a regime of white supremacy, white hegemony and its subordination of people of colour have been created and maintained” in light of a social structure supported by state policies and its institutions which continue to perpetuate ‘post-racial’ ideals of ‘colour blindness’, ‘equal protection’ and ‘equal opportunity’; “[t]he second is a desire not merely to understand the vexed bond between law and racial power but to change it” (Crenshaw et. al, 1995, p. xiii). Challenging and ultimately changing “majoritarian stories of racial privilege” (Solorzano and Yosso, 2009, p.138) takes place through telling of experience and perspectives as narratives from the margins (Parker and Lynn 2009), which make power/privilege visible. In telling these narratives, critical race theorists are not afraid to “take sides” for marginalized groups while aiming “to reduce practices that exacerbate inequality and racial hierarchies” (Hylton, 2012). The analysis I present in this thesis accounts for both these interests: participant responses to study questions not only expose the law and paradigms of whiteness that the Canadian nation-state embodies, but also reveal the
various ways in which Muslim and Arab community organizations respond to their own subordination in an effort to produce a change in their own racialization.

Joyce Ladner asks “to what extent should any scientist – White or Black – consider it his [or her] duty to be a dispassionate observer and not to intervene, when possible, to ameliorate many of the destructive conditions he studies” (1987, p. 79). Both CRT and qualitative inquiry expects the researcher to place themselves into the “frame” of their research context. By foregrounding his or her own identity, assumptions, beliefs, and standpoints, “the researcher appears to us not as an invisible, anonymous voice of authority, but as a real, historical individual with concrete, specific desires and interests” (Harding, 1987, p. 9). By acknowledging subjectivity in the analysis, researcher self-reflection can mitigate unexamined assumptions and beliefs buried in a false objectivity. Harding calls this a “strong form of reflexivity” and suggests that “[i]ntroducing this ‘subjective’ element into the analysis increases the objectivity of the research and decreases the ‘objectivism’ which hides this kind of evidence from the public” (p. 9). With an admission that there is very limited objectivity in qualitative research (Chomsky & Hoodbhoy, 2001), which generally “tend[s] to adopt an elitist position” (Chomsky, 1968-1987; Parenti, 2006, 2007), a problem arises of how to interpret what is seemingly a multitude of subjectivities in both researchers and participants.

Critical race scholars contribute to qualitative research by highlighting the ways in which the status quo research itself (i.e. research conducted under and accumulated by the dominant group) replicates a colonial relationship. Researchers from a dominated social group, for example, may find themselves in a state of “cognitive dissonance” that can arise from the incongruity of an insider researcher experiencing their own community; academic literature tends to portray such minority groups in terms of “deviancy.” According to Ladner, “deviance is
the invention of a group that uses its own standards as the ideal by which others are to be judged” (1987, p. 75). Will Kymlicka’s views are one example of this elitist position; he performs this, for example, when he discusses the development of Western individual freedom of conscience: he labels Muslims as an illiberal group based upon the example that they oppose this kind of individual freedom of conscience (1995). The preoccupation with Muslims and their attribution with deviancy maintains the power differential of the majority who are in a position to name, characterize, and define the Other, and minority groups usually lack the power to counter within the same spaces of influence. While similar claims can be made about the individual freedom of conscience of Europeans, these lack in institutional force; as such, regulatory and liable labels about minorities continue to further disadvantage and often silence and expel them below the “abyssal line” (de Sousa Santos, 2007) into Fanon’s “zone of non-being” (1963, 1967). As a function of the system in Western countries, deviance labelling has attributed a pathology of negative attitudes and behaviours as inherent within a minority group, rather than the same “deviance” being represented across the board within the wider social system (Ladner, 1987). Labelling Muslims and Arabs as the ones most likely to be radicalized and Islamcised as the nation-states number one threat (Harper, 2011; 2015) are examples of deviance labelling that continue to perpetuate in Canada today.

Qualitative methodologies that drive critical race research and analysis have an overall aim at privileging marginalized voices in solidarity towards the ends of social justice. CRT scholars research the lives of people of colour in order to propose alternative theories of knowledge, with the goal of articulating explanations for the problems of social and economic phenomena that affect their lives; all of this is done ultimately to change the dominant status quo organization of society. Rather than reproduce research that arises from the desires of the
dominant classes to appease, control, persuade or manipulate the oppressed (Hylton 2012), CRT researchers aim to uncover a liberating knowledge through examining the dominating sources of power. Overall, critical race scholars work towards shattering and invalidating what Ladner calls the “deviant perspective” by producing research that speaks to the colonial’s systemic advantage of perpetuating such a perspective as a way of maintaining hegemony.

In this dissertation, I employ critical race theory (a theory of knowledge) as my primary methodology. I draw from Indigenous and post-colonial and theory to better contextualize and situate my primary methodology as well in analyzing the data from long format, semi-structured, open-ended interviews/discussions. Overall, the aim in my analysis is to inductively theorize responses to my central research question (framed around the broader theme of anti-Muslim and anti-Arab racism in its present situational context) in a manner that reveals participants organizations varied understandings of their own standpoints as Muslims and/or Arabs (i.e. how they perceive themselves and are perceived) within Canadian society as well as their own responses to the racism they endure. The data itself consists primarily of participants’ descriptions, attitudes, and standpoints in response to general questions about what it is to be Muslim and/or Arab in Canadian society today, as well as their views on community government and the good Muslim (native informant)/bad Muslim nexus. Discussions with the participants led to the telling of their organizational narratives and counter-stories, and in one instance, a type of multi-method/composite story (Solorzano and Yosso, 2009); these methods, presented below, are triangulated and analyzed in Chapter 4.
3.5 Methods

As argued in the previous section, in discussions about race, sexuality, gender, class, and cultural/religious difference, sometimes the voices from the margins are excluded and/or can be constrained through an imposition of a dominant hegemonic discourse that seeks to reframe and rearticulate their experiences. In response, critical race theorists argue that counter-storytelling can serve to stake a space that disrupts the popular hegemonic discourses of the status quo. In the social sciences, it has been suggested that presenting views that contest otherwise normalized Euro-centric discourses may be a useful method to facilitate transformative change (Delgado, 1989; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002; Tate, 1997; Hylton, 2012). Narrative inquiry as a method allows for stories as evidence/data to be collected, categorized, connected, and grouped for analysis (Chase 2003; Clandinin, Pushor, & Orr, 2007). For these reasons, methods used to generate a narrative inquiry for this study include open-ended and semi-structured interviews, but also take into account counter-narratives, and multi-method narratives.

Open-ended and Semi-structured Interviewing

Interviews are methods used in qualitative research where researchers are interested in the knowledge participants have about particular phenomena or experiences. There are many types of qualitative interviews based on different theoretical paradigms, study design, and purpose that are used to draw out the kind of knowledge researchers are after. The intent of interviews is always to discover the participants’ point of view in order to ascertain not only facts and opinions, but also their beliefs, feelings, perspectives, and experiences regarding specific events. Conducted through a number of topical discussions, the open-ended nature and extended length of the interview protocol allowed me maximum opportunity to discover participants’ points of view regarding my research questions.
Although the primary aim of an interview is to ascertain the perspectives of the participant, interviews are actually a process of the “co-construction of meaning within a particular type of social relationship” (Mishler, cited in deMarrais, 2004, p.54). My data set, therefore, contains participant’s understandings that have been co-generated in a social process of negotiated set of “insider/outsider” roles of participant and the researcher (Mirza, 1998), in as far as directing the discourse of discussion/interview in this study.

I used a semi-structured interview protocol with an open-ended approach in order to encourage participants to fully explore avenues/themes they were interested in, as much or as little as these related to the overall topics of discussion. The interview protocol itself (see Appendix)\(^5\) contained numerous archetypical questions in four key areas of interest, intended to elicit wide range of participant standpoints: (1) organization and participant demographics; (2) the organization’s relationship to funding; (3) their perception, attitudes and views on the situations of Muslims/Arabs in Canada today, and (4) their views on community government. While the first two sections of the interview consisted of direct questions, the third and fourth sections were more free-flowing discussions on their experiences and perceptions of being Muslim or Arab in Canada and their understanding of the good Muslim (native informant)/bad Muslim nexus, and their experiences with the effects of community government. The number of questions asked in any given interview, along with the order in which questions were asked, was tailored to the flow of discussion and who the organizations were. Throughout the process, participants often pre-empted questions; therefore, not all questions were used or required in every case.

\(^5\) See Appendix for the full set of areas and questions.
Overall, the research protocol was used as a discussion guide to generate open conversations about being Muslim/Arab in Canada, and the work of their organizations as emerging from or representing those positions. These conversations led to the telling of participants’ own narratives (including personal stories) along with those of their organizations (including history, mandates and practices, management and strategies with respect to education, research, funding, access to policy process and outreach). I asked participants what they would tell a Martian about the situation of Muslims/Arabs in Canada today, what their current understanding is/experiences are of “community government” (Basok & Ilcan, 2006) as it applies to segments of the voluntary sector in Canada today and what their views on “good Muslims and national capital” (Riely, 2009).

The research questions were deliberately designed so as to not approach topics or questions directly, but instead engage in meaningful conversation. Having a free discussion meant that core themes and topics were introduced as explorations where there is no right or wrong answer. Such a format did not put the participant or organization on the spot; rather, responses emerged organically without having participants overthink, prepare their response, and/or feel as though a response is even required from them by the interviewer. On the whole, I feel that this approach elicited a more reliable understanding of their contexts and standpoints than if I had asked directly what their response is to the anti-Muslim or anti-Arab racism they face; demanding answers in any more direct a manner would have put participants on the defensive and possibly skewed the ensuing discussion.

Counter-Narratives: The Power and Dismissal of Stories

Critical race theorists frequently use narrative stories from the margins in order to enrich the discourse from the perspective of the marginalized themselves, as these voices are most often
silenced within “master narratives” that code messages of racialization through assumptions of character, intelligence, and values they project onto the Other. The message in these master narratives are meant to be internalized by all and are hard to escape, as they are further reinforced by central public institutions such as education, the media, government bureaucracy and public policy become replete dominant ideology demarcating the deserving and non-deserving. The re-creation, reinforcement and perpetuation of the official state master narrative, as evidenced in the Canadian government's citizenship guidebook, *Discover Canada: The Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship* (2009), circumscribes a particular history that is entrenched within a predominantly Anglo world-view. It has among its many functions to assuage: the appropriation, distortion, occlusion, subversion, silencing, and marginalization of the experiences of racialized non-white Others.

On the other hand, narratives from the margins, called counter-narratives, provide a platform to give voice to the marginalized experience and raise awareness of isolated grassroots struggles; the “dismissal and distrust of experience-oriented narratives risks a dismissal of such texts that is just as epistemologically limiting and politically dangerous as the earlier positivism” (Mediatore, 2003, p. 1). For many who are marginalized, the experience-oriented narrative is one of the most straightforward tools used to communicate their struggles against dominant institutions. When the dominant discourse is lacking and the “received theoretical discourses inadequate,” experience-based writing becomes a worthwhile alternative (p. 1). Scholars who reject the validity of experience-oriented narratives risk alienating themselves and dismissing critical marginalized and grassroots voices of experience. Further, by this dismissal, “we reinforce the disempowerment of people who have been excluded from official knowledge production, for we deny epistemic value from a central means by which such people can take
control of their own representation” (p. 2). Dismissal allows those in dominant positions, who are unlikely to empathize with marginalized groups or readily share in those experiences, to refuse to “examine [their] own complicity in oppressing others” (Razack, 2006, p. 40-41). As Monture-Angus states, “[t]he uni-cultural (White/Canadian) truth is never described as cultural or racially biased. When another view of the world is introduced it is written off as emotional and not objective (irrational) rather than having to confront and understand that the White/Canadian world view (legal view) is not universal (or objective)” (1995, p. 62).

Whereas the typical reaction to stories from oppressed groups is one of alarm and redress, the typical reaction to those stories from the dominant groups is denial and dismissal. Therefore, how we hear different stories is also dependent on our own moral code and subject position (Razack, 2006). Although storytelling has weaknesses, as stories are “socially constructed and can represent limited versions of reality for subjugated people and their everyday experiences,” by minimizing the authority of marginalized voices we risk dismissing “the importance of experience to critical social theory. As Harding ...Hartstock ...Mohanty ...and Smith have argued: people's daily experiences can inform and empower critical theory because such experiences are only partly determined by ideological processes” (Mediatore, 2003, p. 2). Therefore, experience should not be dismissed as a source of critical insight, but rather viewed as a registry of contradictory experience “that [can] confound the logic of the ruling discourses” (p. 2), while adding voice to the marginalized and inform critical knowledge. The strength of voicing from the margins to counter dominant discourses “are popular tools in the expression of a CRT standpoint” (Hylton, 2012, p. 27).

Experience-based narratives from the margin are valuable as they can provide alternative perspectives to both the master narrative and the supportive natives of the native informer,
thereby acting as a form of resistance to the official ideology. However, when such narratives are employed to challenge traditional paradigms, they are often seen by the dominant as particular stories of individuals and therefore as insignificant, rather than as the result of a common and shared truth. Claims that experiences of marginality often lack “validity” can be overcome through rigorous qualitative inquiry that draws institutional backing and challenges the “operational language that represses the critical content that people express” (Mediatore, 2003, p. 196). Community and human rights groups have often filled this gap and have offered a more insightful and factual account of the lived experiences of marginality. Critical race scholars, to name only a minimal sample who provide an alternative consciousness to the status quo, have used narratives from the margin as credible “evidence” to uncover the underlying structural systems which perpetuate inequalities in law, education, culture, and by the state.

**Storytelling as Resistance: Multi-Method/Composite Stories**

The counter-story or counter-narrative is a method that is used “for exposing, analysing, and challenging the majoritarian stories of racial privilege” (Solorzano and Yosso, 2009, p.138) by those from the margins of society exposing the surface reading which often covers up structural inequities and systemic inequalities faced by minorities. Counter-stories, which are used to analyse social reality is through narratives that relate to experiences of people of colour, can be useful in challenging dominant narratives and categories of privilege as they often point to different understandings and outcomes of the “good” implied in the dominant narratives. Richard Delgado argues that counter-stories can most usefully challenge dominant narratives when seen through a critical race framework. This method of storytelling is “both a method of telling the story of those experiences that have not been told (i.e. of those on the margins of society) and a tool for analysing and challenging the stories of those in power, [where] story is a
natural part of the dominant discourse -the majoritarian story” (Delgado, quoted in Yosso and Solorzano, 2005, p. 124). Razack argues that such stories naturally lead to ambiguity and paradox and “remind us that there is more than one truth and [that] these truths must be allowed” (Razack, 2006, p. 49).

Solorzano and Yasso categorize counter-narratives into three basic types: personal or autobiographical stories or narratives, biographical or other people’s stories or narratives, and multi-method composite narratives (2009, p. 139). In addition to the pedagogical functions mentioned above, counter-narratives can also help “[build] community amongst those at the margins; challenge the perceived wisdom at the centre; open new windows into the reality of those at the margin(s) by showing possibilities beyond what they have recognized and confirm to them that they are not alone in their position; construct a richer world by combining elements from both the story and current reality; and provide a context to understand and transform established belief systems” (Lawson, 1995, quoted in Yosso and Solorzano, 2005, p. 124; Delgado, 1989).

In the interviews I conducted for my study, autobiographical and organizational counter-narratives emerged as methods that allowed me to better understand participants’ experiences and responses to anti-Muslim/Arab racism. With regards to multi-method/composite stories, Yosso and Solorzano suggest the employment of both “theoretical sensitivity” and “cultural intuition” to create counter stories from the following sources: (1) data gathered from the research process, (2) the existing literature on the topic, (3) our own professional experiences, (4) our own personal experiences, and (5) our collective experiences and community memory (2009, p. 140). In Chapter 4, a section of my interviews are presented as a collection of organizational
narratives gathered on the three core areas of the research protocol and one in the form of a multi-method/composite narrative is included in the analysis.

3.6 Process of Analysis

In encouraging participants to tell/share their stories gives voice to the narrators’ own concerns, views, and analysis, my method of narrative inquiry followed Bakhtin’s position that dialogical interactions between individuals begins with actively listening (1981). This involved being attentive to my own self selectivity during the interviews/discussions, putting my assumptions aside, paying attention to Participants tone and pauses and directions in their discourse, and recording notes indicating time stamps (live during the interview) to be reviewed upon transcription.

As a way of making sense of the data, with the research question in mind, my process of analysis began by listening to audio recordings of discussions several times over, noting participants’ responses to the questions as well as discussion points of interest to them. Through this process of becoming familiar with participants’ “voices” and how they compare with each other revealed participant attitudes, perceptions and organizational positions about being Muslim and/or Arab in Canada. Without having to ask directly “What is your response to racism?” participants’ own discourse revealed their standpoints. I checked and crosschecked my own interview field notes of initial impressions I scribed while listening to my recorded audio. Field notes were rhizomic, and consisted of flags to myself to ruminate further upon, such as their views on the presence of Muslims and Arabs in Canadian society, the Prime Minister’s statements about Islamism, the stresses on their organizations and how they understand them, and what they understand of the production of racism from within.
I then transcribed participants’ interviews/discussions, and ultimately coded these transcripts while organizing and triangulating various perspectives on the three core themes of the research protocol. These initial groupings and impressions were rechecked against the audio and draft transcription and was corrected, finalized and anonymized. The transcripts were read for their differences and similarities to responses to the protocol and overall tone of discussion. Along with the core areas of the research protocol (on the situation of Muslims in Canada, and perspectives on community government and the good Muslim (native informant)/bad Muslim nexus), additional themes emerged from the data (such as Palestine) that provided rich context for participants’ perspectives on racism.

Next, I imported the transcripts into an application called MAXQDA, a qualitative analysis software. I generated codes into the application after consolidating my field notes and transcripts, which consisted of key words and answers to the themes of research protocol; I then highlighted these in each of the transcripts and then cross-checked them through the multiple word and code searchers that exist in the application (for example, words such as “discrimination,” or strings of words like “we have done/ we did,” “organized,” “participated,” “developed,” and “programme”). Codes were developed and run in several combinations with other code words and the data. The results of these searches facilitated reading and rereading respondents’ transcripts in a variety of groups and juxtapositions, ultimately strengthening the reliability and validity of the study.

In interpreting responses to anti-Muslim and/or Arab racism, given from the participant organizations own unique contexts and standpoints, I noticed similarities in their attitudes. I grouped similar and overlapping attitudes in responses to the core research themes and by way of following their own points of entry/departure in response to the research protocol. I also found
that similar contexts and standpoints could be ultimately categorized into three main types of responses to racism: direct, status and native informant. As a result, my overall analysis (which follows in Chapter 4) of participant responses corresponds to the heuristic proposed and outlined in the following table:

Table 2 Categories of Organizational Responses to anti-Muslim/Arab Racism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>A response from a feeling of a racial injustice and fairness as the problem and seeks to address the unequal treatment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status</td>
<td>A response that understands Canada as post-racial, and calls for more education from that perspective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Informant</td>
<td>A response that reifies Muslims as below the abyssal line, this type of response reinforces the status quo regarding Muslims within the metatopic space.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Despite what seem to be rigid categories implied by the above table, in actuality the heuristic proposed in this thesis has a fluid, iterative and open-ended dynamic tied to particular situations and context. As are observers and observed, there are many ways to read responses to racism; I found responses to racism corresponded to at least one of these categories, and sometimes two or three at once. Subjectivities and objectivities are multiple, fragmented, and fleeting; as such, this heuristic remains open to the shifting realities of context. We all move into and out of types of responses based on our experiences and situational contexts. It is the accumulation of a pattern of a particular standpoint sustained over a timeline that tells the tale of what kinds of response one has to the racism they face.
In ascribing these responses, it was important that these ascriptions be understood as situational and context-based – they serve here only as analytic instances to describe a heuristic, and are not intended to prescribe or label any organization as fitting a certain type or range of response. My categories or “labels” are not a (punitive) judgment of the overall pattern of responses individuals or organizations have. In my study, I did not track organizational responses over time, but took a high-definition snapshot of participants and their organizations’ attitudes, values, contexts, and standpoints across three themes at a particular moment of time. Organizational praxis involved a spectrum of pendulums moving back and forth between the worlds of responses described in the heuristic – status, native informant, and direct. The heuristic presented, therefore, is to be understood in this spirit: since there are many entry and retreating points along a spectrum of responses the heuristic serves as a tool for critically examining one’s own praxis in terms of types of responses to racism.

The findings presented in Chapter 4 are arranged thematically: three are from the research protocol (i.e. the situation of Muslims and Arabs in Canada, perspectives on community government, and the good Muslim (native informant)/bad Muslim nexus), but several additional themes emerged from the data as well, such as the issue of Palestine, the Sharia debates, and queer Muslims against Apartheid. In addition, throughout the chapter/analysis, organizational standpoints are correlated to the three categories presented in the heuristic above (see Table 2).

The findings are all discussed in one chapter because (as suggested above) interpreting responses to anti-Muslim and/or Arab racism given by these communities are a conglomerate of intersecting situational and contextual responses, each underpinned by an equally shifting interdynamic of participant and organizational standpoints. Presenting the findings in one chapter betrays this complexity; by discussing them in a collective manner that highlights emerging
themes reveals overlaps and inter-relations between these themes, as well as the varied standpoints taken. In each case, I was careful not to impose my own category of response, but instead allow the speaker to naturally lead themselves into one or more.
4 Data Findings

The overarching concern of this study / the research question is how to interpret responses from Muslim and/or Arab community organizations to the rising concern of anti-Muslim/anti-Arab racism (a.k.a. Islamophobia) in Canada in 2011/12. In this chapter, I present my findings on the three core themes of the research protocol as I went about understanding the responses.

My research protocol focused on three core areas: assessment of the present situation of Muslims and Arab communities in Canada; experiences of community government (Ilcan, and Basok, 2004); and views regarding the good Muslim/bad Muslim nexus (Mamdani, 2005), that latter of whom Riley (2009) has interpolated within the Canadian context to represent the (post) colonial figure described as the “native informant” (Dabashi, 2011; Shatz, 2003; Shryock, 2010; Toor, 2011). Since not all organizations participating in the study had a specific directive or compulsion to respond to racism, these core themes provided sufficient discussion of their many contexts and standpoints about the racism faced in and by their communities. However, participants were directly asked to discuss their own experiences of volunteerism and community development in carrying out their organizations’ mandates and current work; this was important to know in order to understand their own analysis of their organizational capacity and operational approach. Further, their perceptions and positionality on the figure of the “good Muslim” provided a barometer for their understandings of the production sites of anti-Muslim/anti-Arab racism. Participants’ discussions, assessments, and views on these core themes provided entry points into their understandings and analysis within the context of their organizational realities. Additional themes also organically emerged through discussion: for example, Palestine emerged
as a theme in the data appearing in the discourse of 45% of participants, the Sharia debates and queers against Israeli apartheid emerged as informative examples of types of responses discussed below.

This chapter is organized into four subsections; together these provide a very small overview of participants’ values and attitudes, experiences, perceptions and analysis on each core theme of the research protocol. In the fourth section, I synthesize the responses to my research question through a discussion of emerging themes from the data, which situated in the model or heuristic that this thesis proposes as how to interpret responses to anti-Muslim/anti-Arab racism (see Table 2 in Chapter 3). The subsections of this chapter are as follows:

4.1 What would you tell a Martian / What is the situation of Muslims/Arabs in Canada?
4.1.1 Views On top down anti-Muslim/Arab racism
4.2 On the effects of community government
4.3 On the good Muslim (native informant) / bad Muslim nexus
4.4 Reading responses to anti-Muslim/anti-Arab racism in Canada

Each theme is implicated in each of the others, and all are interpolated by the geopolitical order of the day and its prevalent myths about Islam, Muslims and Arabs – one that is reified by an institutionalized regime of racism in Canadian society which sustains them, as will be further discussed in my conclusion.

4.1 What would you tell a Martian about who/what Muslims/Arabs are, along with their situation in Canada?

The question I asked here is the following: “what would you tell a Martian about the situation of Muslims and/or Arabs in Canada today?” This was an important invitation for participants to lay out a base line of their own understandings within their organization’s context.
The broad and open-ended nature of the question allowed the participants to begin their narrative at any starting point and draw attention to what was important to them and their organizations. By offering insights and standpoints in regards to their organizations and their communities, responses were thus situated within their own contexts.

RO1 conveyed who Muslims are to a Martian exclusively through the percept of Islam. They did this by briefly discussing the tenets and genealogy of Islam, and by explaining that it is a way of way of life that has codes of justice, law and legal rights, including procedures and actions for things such as divorce, property rights, and inheritance rights. These were revealed by Prophet Mohammad to a, collective group of people who now number one billion in a world population of -- I guess now 7 billion. I like to think we consider ourselves a part of the Canadian culture, and integrate ourselves in as much as our moral and ethical values allow, and pride ourselves in our contribution not only as Muslims in Canada but to Canadians in general. When I asked specifically, “What is the situation of Muslims in Canada?” RO1’s response was, I think in general the Western governments, for a variety of reasons - some of them political in the Middle East, some of it may be a strong misunderstanding of what Islam stands for – have tended to generalize where Muslims come from and what they believe in, and I think that a lot of it comes from a lack of education and an inability on our part as Muslims to educate the general population over the last 20-30 years that we have been here as to what our beliefs are. So, I think the problem is our inability to communicate effectively with non-Muslim Canadians about who we are. And [if] we have done that, we've done a poor job of it.
RO1’s emphasis on the community’s inability to communicate who they are in the face of strong misunderstandings about them and a seemingly unproblematic Canada into which to integrate were points that RO3 also emphasised. The community’s lack of internal resources in dealing with their own state when discussing the situation of Muslims and Arabs was highlighted:

From a global perspective, personally I would say that Muslims are in a state of confusion. I don't think we know what we're doing in general. There is a lack of education and a lack of empowerment especially for women – the state that Islam has given women – they are not living up to that. I know that there are a lot of external factors like socioeconomic [ones] but I think it’s a little bit different in Canada cause Muslims have a lot of freedom to practice their faith. And I think Muslims in the U.S. have paid more attention and gone back to the basic principles of Islam, but for me and the people I have talked with in Canada, we sometimes come into conflict with that because we find that the cultural practices that our parents have been doing are very much not in line with basic Islamic principles.

In further discussion with another organization, RO3, about the state of Muslims in Canada, the idea of integration and connecting to wider Canadian society was raised:

We’ve integrated pretty well. There were some problems closer to 9/11, and a lot of people had to figure out where we fit into Canadian society as Muslims, and I think it's taken a good 10 years to grapple with those issues, so I think the integration has happened. I honestly think that Canadian Muslims have been integrating better than Muslims in the United States.

When asked about their views on government policies towards Muslims, RO3’s response was as follows:
Personally, I don't feel affected by the Conservative policies. I know other people out there are more affected by them, but in general the group of friends and people I am a part of and people I hang around with feel very comfortable with the policy and don’t feel ousted, but that might be just a function of being first-generation Canadians. We have a different group around us and we are more comfortable with being Canadian and being Muslim.

After discussing that the community has done “a poor job” of communicating “effectively with non-Muslim Canadians” (quoted above), RO1 said the following on the same theme:

But specifically going back with the government and other people are coming from, I think there is absolutely a significant amount of racial profiling and ethnic profiling, especially after 9/11, particularly after 9/11, whether it be at borders, airports – I don't know too much about it, so I won’t speculate, so I will say borders and the airports.

RO1 reminds us of 9/11 as a contemporary watershed for legitimizing public angst, scrutiny and security of Muslims and/or Arabs, whereas the view RO3 describes is one in which the past decade has brought about a fairly healthy integration (from their own and their friends circles perspective) into Canadian society, demonstrated in the level of comfort with government policy expressed, and by feelings of integration rather than ones of being singled out as Muslim and Canadian. RO3’s analysis is interesting in light of a description given of an incident when RCMP/CSIS agents interviewed a number of their board members (for about an hour) in relation to a terrorism investigation. For RO3, there is an overall view of first generation Muslims and Arabs as a largely unproblematic integrated/ing community. RO1’s observations are similar to that of RO3, albeit with the addition that a significant amount of racial and ethnic profiling occurs, which indicates an understanding of some of the community’s stresses. Both
organizations view the situation of Muslims as a struggle for integration into a largely unproblematic Canadian society, one in which the Muslim community should work to fit themselves into. This view reflects a status response in that it implies an unproblematic, post-racial Canadian society wherein Muslims themselves are held responsible for not integrating sufficiently enough.

In discussions of this theme i.e. describing the situation of Muslims and Arabs in Canada today, RO2’s responses were more nuanced, but trended towards the views of RO1 and RO3. RO2 began their discourse by saying the following:

I think the situation is a complicated one. At the surface level, there is a tendency to read the community as maligned. However, I think if one looks a little bit beyond the surface, there’s actually a tremendous wealth and strength in the community. In terms of the one community that is maintaining its values against a larger mono-culture, it’s Muslims. Globally, you look at airports today, and the sign you see for the prayer area is a person doing Sajdah – not only a cross – so, I think what this [shows] is a larger symbol of a community that is still intact. I think Muslims in Canada probably have it better than Muslims in almost any part of the world. I think we are at the cusp of a shift to trans-dialogue.

Though RO2 alludes to a community discriminated against, albeit a resilient and resourceful one, “maintaining its values against a larger mono-culture,” when asked specifically to discuss the situation of Muslims and/or Arabs in Canada, an anecdote was offered about observations at a large inter-faith event, with thousands of students and several organizations:

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51 It would be beneficial to ask them the same question now, several years after the completion of the study, in light of recent developments highlighting the escalating tensions developing around Muslims and terrorism, particularly the proposal of Bill C-51.
There wasn’t a tendency for Muslim organizations to network outside of the community itself with the South-Asians who were already there [or] within the other more well-developed groups. [But] in the younger demographic of Muslims who have been brought up here… I did see a lot of networking going on.

The statements above, while not untrue, are generally common sentiments that I have also heard from others in society. A theme running through the discussions with RO1, RO2 and RO3 is an impression of a community that does not have the internal resources to deal with their predicament. Muslim and Arab communities are further described as having an “inability to communicate effectively with non-Muslim Canadians,” as RO2 said, with no “tendency to network outside of the community itself,” as RO1 observed, and are “in a state of confusion,” as RO3 related.

This disposition is one of internalizing inadequacy and inferiority attributed to one’s community, rather than, for example, proposing alternative or balanced explanations for their assessment on the present situations of Muslims and/or Arabs. The display of internalized inadequacy – which one might also call internalized racism – that is seen here is something that has been imbibed by minorities by virtue of the dominant negative reified discourses about their communities in wider society (Fanon, 1963, 1967; Hall, 1986). The internalized racism noted above is not an exclusive disposition to Muslims; indeed, many minorities move between internalized racism and their own racialization in society. In the interpretation of these responses to racism, what is of interest here is that the disposition of internalized racism leads to a position where the onus is on marginalized communities to “be better,” rather than on the nation-state and society to own up to its responsibilities of equality under the law and in spirit. Additionally, in the discourse of RO1, RO2 and RO3, there was no balancing the want of Muslim and/or Arab
communities with the same which can be said of most all communities of people; in other words, the “state of confusion” and intergenerational misunderstandings that RO3 describes resulting from the community’s “inability to communicate effectively,” as RO1 suggested, or a lack of “tendency …to network outside the community itself,” as pointed to by RO2, could be said to hold true of any number of other religious, secular and/or cultural communities – one would expect to find such shortcomings across a spectrum of communities and groups.

NG1 and NG3’s responses were largely similar to responses of RO1, RO2 and RO3 in describing to a Martian who Muslims are – a largely immigrant and religious minority community in Canada. For example, NG3, like RO2, emphasized social justice and a sustained trans-national dialogue as important when describing who Muslims are as a community:

In terms of Mars, the question is a very interesting one at this point in time because the notion of what is a Muslim is going through a revolutionary evolution, as it were, and it is in the face of that definition that it depends who you ask, and what part of the Muslim identity they are – whether they are a Muslim feminists, queer Muslims or social justice activists, or are otherwise conservative Muslims, you will get a different answer – but generally one might say… our Prophet Muhammad… [is like] Malcolm X in some ways, and they were revolutionaries in their own time, social justice people. Prophet Muhammad was supposed to have been divinely inspired by revelation from Allah, and for emancipation of his people, brought certain codes of justice and law to his people and so on, but that work has evolved through a dialogue called *ijtihad* where there was dialogue and discussion about theology and law and justice issues and so on. And so, we are in that space where a political spiritual community with a belief in one God [also has
a]… belief [in] social justice for humanity, and for improving the quality of our life as human beings – that’s who we are.

Where NG1 and NG3 responded differently is when they say that Islam, Muslims and Arabs are also a socio-political entity that is negatively perceived in society. Both emphasized this explicitly by pointing out the discrimination Muslims and Arabs face. For example, NG3 states, You know you've got the no-fly list, and you get stopped at the border and the RCMP are infiltrating our mosques and our organizations. Basically, the state apparatus is out to get us. And the security regime and so on is out to get us… Just last week, a friend was detained he was held at the border for eight hours. No right to call his family who might be worried. No right to call his lawyer even. Now allowed to move go anywhere for eight hours.

NG1 stated there has “been a lot of negative connotation, especially after 9/11. Muslims now in general are looked upon as individuals who seek violence as a way to express their feelings.”

Both NG1 and NG3 situate their communities as existentially facing external pressures, whereas RO1 and RO3 emphasized internal issues of inadequacy due to their own communities’ shortcomings.

NG1 and NG3 also discussed how Muslim communities and individuals are used as a tool for political gain in Canada (a view that is discussed later in this chapter), something that is now being reinforced by mass media and Conservative mainstream in response to Harper’s currently proposed anti-terror legislation (Bill C-51). This is a sentiment RO2 also expressed when discussing government and security strategy of focusing on Muslims, summing up the point by articulating the situation of Muslims as,
a bogeyman in the place of Communism. I think there is an ideological bent to it [with respect to the] corporate military industrial complex. And I think Muslims are just another element in a war for resources and a desire for government to, I would say, increase their control and [in their] ability to manipulate.

[pause]

Gova: Their own citizens?

RO2: I would say so, right.

NG4 and MO, in answering the question of who Muslims are and what their situation is in Canada, did not start by noting that Muslims are a religious group; instead, each directly spoke to the kinds of changes of perception and laws and treatment of targeting Muslims in Canadian society, and the impact this has on the community. I took this as an indication of the attention or importance given to the socio-political context of the community. Like RO2 and NG3, NG4 and MO also brought into their discussion an understanding that anti-Muslim/Arab racism is manufactured from the top (as was discussed in the chapters above). NG4, for example, noted the following situation:

Well, I would say things changed after 9/11 from the side of the government. The safety and law enforcing departments of the government turned their focus entirely on people who were visibly practicing their faith. So, men with facial hair and women who were covered, and the Imams who were teaching in their congregations… I think things changed and we became the focus of the law and authorities, [who] kind of honed in on [especially] these young men. … I have repeatedly heard and read about men being targeted for interrogation with very little cause.
On the impact of surveillance and suspicion on their own community, NG4 goes on to state the following:

These kinds of things make people feel very helpless and outraged at the same time. And so the activist community that has always operated at grass roots level are now having to deal with these kinds of things, and our time and effort is going into these directions so to become active [as] a lobbying advocate on behalf of these men. It seems that there is a certain amount of danger in doing that. Danger to your own security: are you going to be targeted? This question is always asked: if I sign this petition on behalf of [Abdullah] Almalki, the guy who is unfairly targeted and is asking for compensation from the government, if I sign, am I going to be a target, you know, as a Muslim woman or an activist? These questions are up there at the back of everyone's mind, so there is – I would say to somebody who doesn't know [about the situation of Muslims in Canada that] – there is a sense, and it waxes and wanes. If an issue [relating to Muslims] comes very prominently in the news, I feel anxiety almost a hopelessness as to what the future is going to hold for Muslims in Canada, and how far is the government is going to go to crack down on certain Muslims in this kind of random fashion.

When I asked NG4 if there is “anything you want to add in the section before we move to the next one,” the response was as follows:

Well, you know that sense of foreboding is balanced with the sense of being Canadian, and with a sense of hope that we are in a society – [that] we do live in a country that has the fundamental basic principles…those rights that every individual is guaranteed. And to a large extent, Canada is held up as a paragon of justice and democracy. Getting involved in the justice system, you can be assured of a fair trial in most cases, so there is
that optimism, yes, with work organizations like ours. And with the help of the policies of the government to be more open and receptive to constructive ideas from communities like ours, [there is optimism] that things will not be allowed to get to the point where they become quite dark and foreboding. I can't see it getting better in the near future, but I have to remain hopeful, based on what is being done on the ground.

MO also discussed recent changes in law and increased focus of law enforcement on the targeting and unequal treatment of Muslim Canadians as citizens. The cases of Abusufian Abdelrazik and Suhad Haji Muhammad, were specifically mentioned, both Muslim Canadian citizens denied help abroad, and in fact were hindered by the Canadian state. MO also pointed to the Omar Khadr case when expressing the following sentiment:

You know, all other Western countries including the UK insisted that any of their citizens be treated according to standards and norms, and got all of them back to their home countries – except Canada. … So it's only when one starts studying these things, and also when one starts looking at the statements like “they need our help; they can't help themselves” [that] you know it falls right into the stereotype … or let’s say the sort of events that government ministers go to, and the ones they avoid.

Both MO and NG4 brought into discussion the point that anti-Muslim/Arab racism is in large part manufactured from the top by the PMO, Ministers, and Canadian security institutions who have the privilege of targeting and breaking the law by racially profiling/not respecting Canadian

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52 As a more recent example Canadian journalist Mohamed Fahmy, claims that while Harper abandoned him at the time his intervention was needed the most - phone calls were made by the Australian PM directly to the Egyptian President which secured the release of a white journalist a year earlier held under the same charge in the same incident. Eventually Fahmy’s release would come through the Egyptian Presidents pardon – Fahmy has been critical of Harper not intervening strongly on his behalf. (CBC, October, 7, 2015) For more on this differential treatment of citizenship, see (Diab & Gova, 2012), which juxtaposes how white non-Muslim/Arab Canadians in trouble abroad have been assisted significantly by the PMO to secure their release.
citizenship rights of Muslims, Arabs, and frequently also those groups perceived to be Muslim-looking.

When asked what they would say to a Martian about who/what Muslims/Arabs are and their situation in Canada, RO6 commented:

I think that if someone came from Mars, I would invite them over to my house for dinner so they could see what Muslims did, and I would just explain to them [that] this is how we are, but everyone is different. Whether you are Muslim or Christian or Jewish or Hindu or Buddhist or Wikkan, or whatever you are, there are a lot of similarities between us regardless of our faith ... I think there are Muslims who have more in common with Christians and Jews and Buddhists and Hindus, you know, when it comes to some things, and when it comes to other things as well ... There's probably some Muslims out there who are more similar to Evangelical Christians and Zionist Jews, and some Muslims out there who are more similar to United Christians and Agnostics and Humanists and Reform Jews and ... so [on]... so I would say don't believe everything you hear on the NEWS and go out and meet people with an open mind (their emphasis).

RO6 highlighted the diversity and varieties present within all communities, as well as the personalities and political commitments that all faiths engender, going on to say that it would be important to tell the Martians that they needed to rely on more than just the “NEWS,” but rather “go out and meet people with an open mind.” What RO6 brings to our attention is that Muslims are like any other faith group in Canada, and we should remember the similarities between these groups and their values; even though we are from diverse cultural backgrounds. Barriers of pre-conceived attitudes are not helpful, and people ought to meet in order to know one another.
NG2 discussed their perception of the situation of Muslims and Arabs in Canada by saying, “racism is so endemic in Canada … they will only accept the Muslim or an Arab who is created to their image, who fits their image.” NG2 went on to say that the term racialized minority is preferable to the term visible minority:

The first generation racialized minorities like ourselves have problems, but they say the second generation born in Canada identifies less with Canada… [and is] facing more racism. Racism in Canada revived and increased in the last 10 years or so – I think since 2000 – I suspect since 1991 – because since [then there has been a] change in the immigration demographic. People are saying that the faces of the cities are changing, I don't see white people any more… unfortunately, immigrants themselves tell me “you know, who you are now accepting? Somalis and Pakistanis too.” Some of these people have also internalized racism – that is another problem we are facing.

NG2 also pointed to the statistic that 50% of Canadians think badly of Muslims, and internalized racism is not helping the problem; this discussion connects with the phenomena of internalized racism I have noted earlier in this chapter. Notable also is NG2’s claim that white Canadians (i.e. the majority) will only accept “the Muslim or an Arab who is created to their image who fits their image,” as this point also connects to a discussion of the good Muslim (native informant)/bad Muslim nexus that is taken up later in this chapter (see section 4.3, and also 2.5 above).

Overall, there was a wide range of participant views and analysis of how they would describe who/what Muslims/Arabs are, and their situation in Canada to a Martian. In generating these responses, it was important to leave the field open for them to take the discourse into any
direction they wished, from the standpoints of where they were. Their discussions ranged in topics as a result, and included the internalized sense of inferiority within their communities and perspectives on how the nation-state racially targets their communities – through no fault of their own. When the above data is further compared, it is noteworthy that unlike RO1, RO2, and RO3, NG1, NG2, NG3, and RO6 used the words “discrimination,” “race,” and “Islamophobia” in their descriptions of the situation of Muslims and/or Arabs in Canada, connecting this to their racialization. NG1, NG2, NG3, NG4, and MO also related the nation-state’s culpability in the high rates of discrimination Canadian Muslims face, unlike RO1 and RO3 who blamed internal community deficiencies in understanding their own situation.

4.1.1 Views On Top Down anti-Muslim / anti-Arab Racism

Much of politics is the rational manipulation of irrational symbols … distracting the populous from their legitimate grievances and directing their frustrations at various scapegoats.


In the course of asking participant organizations to comment on their situation(s) as Muslims/Arabs in Canada, a recurring topic of discussion was Prime Minister Harper’s 2011 statement regarding “the threat to Canada,” in which he claimed that “the major threat is still Islamism.”53 Seven organizations (63% in total) discussed this statement. Four brought up the statement themselves, and in discussion, I asked three of them directly if they had heard the statement and what their comments were on it. This section discusses participant organizations’ views on Harper’s statement within its wider context, taking into account its implications for and on Muslim communities.

53 Such statements have been repeated in 2015; see Chapter 5 (Conclusion) for more detail on Harper’s statements around the Anti-Terrorism Bill (C-51).
Overall, participant organizations were dismayed, disappointed, and disheartened that Harper would single out their communities as the greatest threat to the Canadian nation. For example, RO6 said,

I actually gave a speech in front of the Court House building; we were demonstrating against Bill C-10, which is the omnibus bill, and I talked about that. I think that considering that less than 1% of terrorist acts are committed by Muslims, it’s a really harsh statement for our Prime Minister to make, and I think it actually puts into question what his motives are in terms of making that statement. So we have to ask ourselves, why does our PM want Canadians to worry about this, when in fact it is not true – it is not the greatest threat to Canada?

RO6 was one of a number of community organizations in the city that had organized at that time to demonstrate against Bill C-10: legislation targeting immigrants and immigration of people of color to Canada. During the aforementioned speech, Harper’s motives in connecting terrorism to Muslims when the facts do not warrant such a connection was questioned; as was discussed above in Chapter 2 the percentage of actual terrorist attacks by Muslims is not nearly as high as attacks by non-Muslims, yet attacks by Muslims are used as the basis more often than not for a call to enhance security.54

NG4 corroborated what RO6 had noted about the discrepancy in facts and acts of terrorism committed by Muslims in Canada. Our attention is drawn to how Harper’s comments act to further misunderstanding and promote negative perceptions that already exist of Muslims:

Personally, I wrote a letter to the Prime Minister saying that this was wrong and that he should – you know – correct his perception of Islam. Because when he uses words like

54 See Chapter two and five.
that, most people do not know the difference between Islam and Islamism, so they are going to take his word as Islam being the greatest threat. Most Muslims want peace in society, they want people to participate fully in the Canadian society, but this is a large brush stroke that is being applied to many Muslims.

Like the speech at the courthouse, NG4’s response can also be categorized as a direct one. Both of these examples clearly demonstrate the belief in a bias against Muslims in Canada, and it is notable that both organizations were unafraid to call out Harper’s statement with the use of direct action. In RO6’s case, the action was on behalf of and as a representative of the organization, while NG4’s act of writing a letter was self-compelled.

RO2 positioned the government policies of targeting Muslims as strategic planning of maximizing gain from a vulnerable community:

If you look at Harper’s other policies, like abandoning the long-form census, and – you know – taking out the media scrum from Parliament, these are largely about controlling information, [or] feeding the populace convenient narratives. [This is] a very reductionist, divisive form of politics – a very American style of politics. Muslims as a bogeyman are an opportunistic scapegoat for what the Conservatives would like to achieve – I think if there were repercussions to him saying that, in terms of loss of votes, loss of funding, knowing there would be an organized response of significance, he wouldn’t be able to get away [with] doing that. Or if he was connected with Muslims, or Muslims were his friends, he would feel some responsibility to the community in some way.

RO2 further points out that politicians can make such statements because the “repercussions to him[/them]” are low, and most times it can be argued that there is political gain in saying such things, upon which the government feeds and then throws back at us as Orwellian political
discourse. The point RO2 raises is a compelling and urgent concern for Muslim communities as a whole in Canada, particularly with respect to building sustainable and effective lobby on its own behalf to counter or stem reproductions of negative stereotypes in the media and within the political arena.

NG1 echoed RO2’s remarks that for Harper, anti-Muslim sentiment is an ideological construct to be used for political gain. This connection is made with reference to what NG1 claims is the government’s pro-Zionist stance:

I always say it’s not that I don't like the Conservative party; I just don't like Stephen Harper and Jason Kenny because they are both very pro-Zionist. It's almost inevitable to be anti-Muslim, as opposed to just being pro-Islam and pro-Judaism, and they are [both] very pro-Zionism and anti-Muslim. I think there is a bill with regards to racial profiling, and an anti-terrorist bill which was approved a long time ago in 2001, after 9/11, and it was supposed to be a temporary measure. And it wasn't too long ago they had a debate on it, to see if it should be dissolved, and that wasn't the case. This thoroughly shows that the government is still wanting to hold on to certain bills that will give it power over the Muslim community, to actually isolate it if they need to, or investigate further and violate our Charter rights. It’s not to say that the Liberals are that much better, but they are not so blunt about it, I think; they are more diplomatic about it … [but] the Conservative party led by Stephen Harper has definitely repeatedly shown that they are opposed to the religion.

Like NG1, MO also drew attention to the non-partisan nature of the ideological anti-Islam and anti-Muslim attitude, claiming that the Liberal Party of Canada offers a softer (or “lite”) diplomatic version than the full-on in-your-face Muslim hate of the Harper Conservatives. More
notable is the fact that both Organizations NG1 and MO are also critical of what they perceive as the PMO’s and unabashedly one-sided alignment with Israeli government policies, which adversely affect Palestinians – many of who are Muslim and Christian. For example, MO said the following:

I believe two years ago, on the initiative of [Liberal Member of Parliament] Irwin Cotler and closely supported by [Conservative Minister] Jason Kenny – I think they were the two main people involved in it – they started what they called the Canadian Parliamentary Commission to Combat Anti-Semitism, and in its initial terms of reference, it was quite clear that they already knew what conclusions they wanted to justify, and one of them was that they wanted to focus on was what they call the ‘new’ anti-Semitism - which they say is criticism of Israeli policies.

NG1 and MO both acknowledged and connected the current implications of a one-sided support from Canada to Israel upon their communities as de facto negative, and the flaunting of it on the global stage as a sign of the further de-humanizing of Palestinians.

NG2 discussed the productive value of the nation-state in targeting Muslim as the “problem group” within Canadian society, in saying the following:

This government has a more interventionist approach internationally – more militarization – and what is happening is they are going into more and more Muslim countries because of the issue of oil, because of the issue of natural resources in the case of Afghanistan – natural resources and the issue of pipelines. Iran has oil and gas, so you have to then generate this fear and hatred of these Muslims, saying that security is paramount. They are scaring people. A government uses fear for two reasons: the first reason is to mobilize people against an outside or inside threat, [and the] second reason is
to make people willing to curtail their civil rights. And that is what is happening. The Conservative government is using this fear to curtail the civil rights of people. Not only on the issue of Palestine, but also with regards to people who demonstrate against the G8 the G20, people who demonstrate against the treatment of immigrants and refugees. They are making Canadians afraid of these people, and then Canadians will say, yeah okay, let us have these rights restricted – but in the end it is going to affect all Canadians.

NG2’s observations are prescient about the results the State achieves vis-à-vis “make[ing] people willing to curtail their civil rights.” Manufacturing a state of fear in society gives credence to the slew of new legislative measures and policing/security measures/practices that have been/continue to be applied across the board post-9/11. We have seen these new laws disproportionately target Muslims, but the results the State achieves is a mechanism for cracking down on dissent through the use of the Muslim as a straw man within the framework of a national in/security argument.

On the whole, Prime Minister Harper’s statements that the greatest threat to Canada is coming from “Islamism” was timely for this study, as it offered an opportunity for participant organizations to share their views on the situation of Muslims on a number of issues. Organizations discussed government policies in a manner consistent with understanding the manufacturing of anti-Muslim racism from the top down; that is, as something that is grounded in a larger global struggle within which the Canadian nation-state positions Muslims as ideologically separate from the mainstream (as discussed in Chapters 2 and 3) and the ways in which this ideological Othering affects Canadian society. RO2 discussed the “ideological bent” in Harper’s statements and connected it to a culture of impunity, in which the “repercussions to

55 Since the completion of the study, recent developments under the Harper regime reinforce this argument even more, where civil liberties are being taken away on the backs of Muslims. See Chapter 5 (Conclusion) for more on how this is taking place, highlighting even more the need and importance of direct responses.
him saying that” are low, along with there being political cache in targeting Muslims. Organization NG4 admonished the “Prime Minister [in a letter to him] saying that this was wrong and that he should, you know correct his perception of Islam.” To NG4, not doing so would legitimize negative sentiments in Canadian society – indeed, many forms of discrimination against Muslims, including Arab-bashing, have become normalized in Canadian society. RO6 drew attention to the false premises of Harper’s statement, born out by the facts. RO2 pointed out the role of today’s “Muslims as a bogeyman [is] an opportunistic scapegoat for what the conservatives would like to achieve,” and NG2 discussed the productivity in targeting Muslims/Arabs through fear mongering, leading to limiting civil liberties of all Canadians. Organizations NG1 and NG2, NG3 and NG4 echoed the point that anti-Muslim racism is used as an ideological construct; MO, NG2, and NG3 added the issue of Palestinian; and NG1 points out that Canadian governments have historically been pro-Israel, by virtue of being anti-Palestinian, within this larger frame of being anti-Muslim.

4.2 On the Effects of Community Government

To open this discussion, I told participants I would be reading a passage to them on the voluntary sector in Canada, and in particular about a conceptual term called “community government,” and asked them to situate their own organization within it. As discussed in Chapter 2 56, one of the ways neo-liberal states have controlled their citizenry is through an instrument of governmentality that Ilcan and Basok call “community government” (2004). Simply put, community government is a series of purse-strings pulled by modern neo-liberal nation states such as Canada in order to affect community organizations. This form of governmentality is used within the context of advanced liberalism, where it is used as a political

56 See section 2.4.
project by the state to identify and target organizations in the non-profit sector and then re-orient them through specialized means to achieve particular ends. The term has been aggressively applied by the Harper government in a much more robust and intentional manner than previous PMO’s (LaForest, 2009, Voices-Voix, 2015); its effect is to control, influence, police, entice, and encourage community organizations to shift their emphasis and programming to suit the government’s ends and purposes, and not necessarily those of the communities themselves. Discovering participants understanding and experiences with community government led to a greater appreciation of the kinds of parameters around the responses of Muslim/Arab community organizations. The discussion brought to the surface lived realities and contexts around censure and discipline, as well as around community development/organizing. Appreciating the reality of such narratives helps in understanding the kinds of constraints communities face in responding to their constituencies.

Overall, participant organizations corroborated Ilcan and Basok’s framework. All participants understood and voiced concerns over the tensions and lack of autonomy that come with taking government funding, due to the manner in which it enacts policies via and within the volunteer sector. Organizations were abundantly aware of the e/affects of community government practice, with RO1 summing it up as follows:

It is in the back of everyone's mind, I think. Regardless, I have heard of a lot of organizations jockeying for position and effect by lobbying for funding. I agree with that statement I think it’s a large part of it, although we are not at that stage that we need the funding, so I haven't experienced it [directly], but I have heard or seen it at small and large levels.

RO2 discussed the subtle ways in which government funding aims to influence their
organizational mandates and activities as the following:

Today, they [government] have other methods where they can alter the funding to organizations, and because it’s one or two degrees removed, it doesn’t attract the same media attention, although the impact may be exactly the same.

RO2 then discussed two separate experiences they had had with their funder’s post-programming objections regarding speakers that were perceived threatening. One speaker was an artist and the other a psychologist; both were Canadian, and both very well known:

By the standards of our community, it just doesn’t fly – that person is not an extremist – and if they are going to brand someone like them extremists, where does that leave us as a community? How are we going to be relevant to our community if we can’t engage someone like that? But for this funder, it was something they objected to - so again, when I look at our relationship with funders, it should be one where we are in more control and where we are not dependent on them. That’s where we have to shift. And I think we are more than capable in doing that.

Another concern RO2 had was the issues around incongruence of measurements and outcomes, with funders focused more on numbers served versus the quality of service. RO2 and RO4 described navigating the funding regimes in similar ways, supporting the Canadian voluntary sector as striving for the win-win. As RO2 states,

So when we talk to the city, we talk about how our organization has a unique skill set in understanding the youth immigrant experience. And being well positioned to deliver services and connect immigrant to services, we’re able to access communities funding from the province because of our culturally relevant messaging and services to a group who otherwise would not be accessing those services …[for programming that can’t be
navigated through external funding sources], we have to pursue alternative avenues of funding if we want to achieve things in the way we want to achieve them.

Both RO2 and RO4 described situations of tensions in dealing with funders, and the need and desire for their organizations to build for themselves internal revenue sources from their constituents so that they are no longer solely reliant on government funding. Both also discussed a strategy of acquiring funding by actively matching aligning their own community/organizational goals to the goals of the funders social programming budgets – for youth in particular around immigrant integration, and women in particular around domestic violence. Though they had not applied for funding for seniors’ programs, this it was another area both had in common and are considering developing programs around. RO4 commented on the lack of access through the corridors of power, giving an example of when they had received what they had thought was a large grant in the hundreds of thousands of dollars, but then learned another faith denomination had received twenty times the monies:

this is not to say anything negative about these faith denominations or what they do, which is navigate the system very well, but the disparity is apparent. And again, I underscore this has nothing to do with the faith of that community itself or any other community. I think they should be commended because of their ability to organize in terms of navigating the corridors of power.

RO4 echoed the point made above, that there is a lack of organized presence of Muslim communities in the Canadian corridors of power (save by taking the position of the “native informant,” as discussed in the following section) and efforts to change negative perceptions held of their communities in Canadian society makes their work more difficult. Both discussed the difficulties in receiving funding because they also identify as a religious organization fitting into
pre-set funding criteria. Both also pointed out in the same breath that Christian and Jewish community organizations, though facing the same criteria, are better positioned to receive public grants. Both RO2 and RO4 apply widely for grants (private and public) both expressed a desire to create and sustain their programming by raising money within their own constituencies.

RO3 had received a small grant in the past and had been programming on a successful revenue neutral user cost model for over ten years, situating itself vis-à-vis the community government framework, and discussed how service transference and government miss-funding directly affects them. RO3 goes on to further explain how within the organization, community government fills the “gaps” that the “national government hasn’t been able to address” as the following:

So in terms of our organization in relation to community governance, we definitely fit into that framework because we are on the ground, we’re building leadership, we’re enhancing leadership and filling gaps, and we are acting as ‘mini’ government in trying to fill those gaps. However, the problem is that it’s pretty much based on volunteerism and extra time, so we’re not getting paid for however many hours – a billion hours – that’s a lot of hours – and time spent for something that the government should actually be doing. That is exactly what community government is doing: filling those gaps that national government hasn't been able to address, and [they] are downloading it onto community organizations who, first, don't have the resources. Like us – we operate on a shoe-string yearly budget and we are based completely on user fees, and yet there is still a need for us to exist, so on top of that none of us are paid. We’ve been around since 2002, and have put in who knows how many hours, and none of us have been paid for that amount of time. And so I guess there is upside and downside.
RO3 also explains how the amount of national government funding received depends on the size of the organization, and how the money is not filtering down to those smaller organizations that can do the most effective work:

I am going to back up a little bit though – the national government does provide a lot of resources for volunteers and community based organizations, yet the small organizations don't really see that many. I think there was money given to an organization I know of - like $1-2 million over five years – to fund research in the Muslim community, perhaps nationally on Muslims in the media – and the research they did was absolutely horrible. They were given this money, but they had no Muslims on their Board – they had people who weren’t part of the community trying to [do this work], and didn’t know how to access the community. When you're not part of the community, it is very difficult to extract the information and have the research benefit the people that you’re researching, so I think that is a huge problem – the money is not filtering down.

RO3 describes a case for further research and comparison in the trend where organizations that have capacity and reach in affected communities are not funded to the extent that organizations external to these communities are.

RO6 had not applied for funding specifically because their organization was looking at the situation in terms of how they wanted to be structured as an entity saying,

And we will likely not choose a non-profit status, because there are rules now that are very strict in terms of how you can lobby, and we do not want to tie our hands in terms of lobbying. We would rather take whatever the financial hit would be in terms of not being non-profit and have the ability to lobby, so the rules have really changed in the last 10 years in terms of what you can and cannot say and advocate for if you are a non-profit.
And I have seen Muslim groups here actually say “okay, we want to do a letter to the Editor, but we can’t sign our name as such and such a group,” and it's because they have non-profit status that they can't do that.

Another concern shared by RO6 was about government silencing and discipline:

I am thinking of the defunding of KAIROS – right, so this government is not like previous Canadian governments; it has an agenda and it follows through with that agenda regardless of appearances, you know. I have a very strong opinion about what the federal government did to KAIROS ... KAIROS is doing a lot of really good work and providing a service that was very important, and when it started speaking out against policies of the Israeli Government through CIDA, it's funding got cut – so I think that is wrong.

The concern is that strings are attached to funding, and RO6 is cognizant of this in understanding their own organization’s sustenance. Further, the example of KAIROS shows an understanding that the perception of being pro-Palestine is problematic in the current climate of anti-Muslim sentiments being propagated by the pro-Israeli PMO in Canada, resulting in possible and immediate cuts to funding.

NG2 presciently discussed RO6’s concern and conundrum as well: while describing a meeting at which the organization was present, RO6 spoke of comments made by a member from the Sikh community saying,

I think he was the wisest because I attended once the convention of the Sikh Federation, and what struck me at that conference was the president there, who said “we don't take any money from any government because we want to be able to speak our minds freely and reflect the concerns of our community.” And it's true that the moment you start receiving funding from the government, especially if you are an advocacy organization,
you start censoring yourself in a sense like a self-censorship – like a reporter for a newspaper who knows that the owner will not tolerate their views, so he starts censoring himself. So advocacy organizations should not seek funding from any government agency to be able to remain free and represent our communities. The sad part is that now we have many organizations who are watching, to see how much they can criticize the government… these are organizations which are not advocacy politically, they advocate on behalf of refugees, people having health problems or things of that nature – that they are watching because they know that this government will not tolerate criticism. They have a thin skin.

NG2’s comment gets to the heart of the funding conundrum, at the intersection of funding advocacy and/or dissent: it is best to follow the adage “beware the hand that feeds you” – or you may not have enough room to advocate. NG3 similarly summed up the utility of community government succinctly by saying that,

the nature of funding in Canada is that social justice or activist organisations don't get funded. This tells me if you as an organization are critical – if you are a critical of government – then you're funding might get yanked.

Both NG2 and NG3’s views are a common experience of community organizations across the spectrum of Canadian volunteer sector: there is a clear narrowing of space for social justice advocacy and dissent in Canada (Voices-Voix, 2014). For Muslim and Arab community organizations, the focus of censure and discipline is often on the issue of Palestinian human rights; in fact, Voices-Voix, a non-partisan coalition of Canadians and Canadian organizations, tracked 12 organizations advocating the view that Palestine solidarity work is being targeted.

MO shared a very detailed and poignant analysis of community government, beginning
the discussion with Irwin Cotler (Liberal Party MP) and Jason Kenney (Conservative Party Minister) on setting up the Canadian Parliamentary Commission to Combat Anti-Semitism (CPCCAS). It was explained that many organizations, including Muslims and Jewish ones, working on these issues “were excluded from testifying in those hearings because the commission had already made up its mind as to what the ‘new Anti-Semitism’ is” (discussed in Chapter 2). MO went on to say,

I am really quite shocked to see the number of organizations which support Israel even in its militancy [who] have charitable status – but that is not a problem for the government – they want that. So certainly I think, and I don’t know to what extent – to some extent – it may be a problem with immigrant integration. You know, with something like that I don’t know how much the government can do. I don’t know if some organization is saying too much and being critical of the government to stop their funding – that sort of thing they have done – but I think this issue of charitable status is really a serious one.

Are you familiar with JNF?

Gova: No.

MO: Okay, the Jewish National Fund (JNF) is an organization that started off maybe even before the State of Israel was formed, to buy up lands in what was Palestine for settlement of Jews … now that is presented as an organization which is pretty much focused on [a] sort of “green the desert” sort of thing – that is the way they present themselves – but they are very discriminatory. You know, the lands are just given to Jews – not to Arabs or Palestinians, for instance. And that has charitable status…. Now the Independent Jewish Voices is launching a campaign to try and get that charitable status removed from JNF … because charitable status is not available to those who do
advocacy for [Palestinians]. For example, Justice and Peace in the Middle East: obviously they are not entitled to charitable status…. But so many others who are on the other side may have had charitable status for a long time. For instance, quite shockingly, one of the organizations that had charitable status is the one started by Heather Reisman [founder and CEO of Indigo Books & Music Inc., Canada's largest book retailer] and her husband… and that is called the “Lone Soldier” – it is to support soldiers in the IDF who join up from western countries and don’t have families…. And for the life of me, I don’t understand how an organization, which supports war, can in fact have charitable status – which, in fact, encourages war and has support from western countries in effect showing allegiance to Israel because they don’t have families. So, I think clearly this issue of charitable status is something that can be manipulated by the government, and certainly has been by this one – I don’t know to what extent earlier ones.

MO’s detailed narrative, including an analysis of community government and its interest convergence through a pro-Israel stance, reflects the views of Organizations NG1 and NG2 above. Further, MO’s views reflected a deepening worry of political partisanship in influencing organizational directions with respect to community mandates, while narrowing spaces for government policy critiques and dissent, with the organizations themselves representing civil society.

Overall, all participants understood the concept of “community government” as a tool of control, even if they had not experienced it directly – such as with Organizations RO1, RO6 and NG3; they nevertheless understood its implications for their organizations. NG3 and RO6 suggested that it would be difficult for them to receive funding due to their politics and advocacy, though neither had applied for funding up to the point of participating in the study.
Organizations NG1, NG2, NG4, and MO experienced and understood “community government” as pressure for them to accept the downloading of government services – i.e. putting the onus on their community organization to provide for Canadians; RO2 and RO4 discussed similar pressure on the programs for which they received funding.

RO6 is notable in their discussion of the case of the defunding of KAIROS, a result of the federal government’s targeting of the work of advocacy that favours an “Israeli no matter what policy” (Engler, 2010), and Organizations NG1 and NG2 discussed political pressure their organizations faced and the case of the Canadian Arab Federation, an organization under whose umbrella they had functioned. NG2, also agreed with these sentiments:

I think they put us on the radar, you know, because this is a government which has shifted Canadian foreign policy drastically – it's not like before – the Liberals were neutral. And we are very critical and still receive grants, you know, but the Conservatives came out strongly in support of everything that Israel does. They are not willing to criticize or allow any criticism of Israel.

While muzzling criticism, through funding regimes the Canadian government has, at the same time, hamstrung community organizations into providing services to the neglect of their own advocacy. NG1 echoes NG2’s comment above, regarding funding and self-censorship: recalling an occasion where a Board member was questioning:

Why are we getting into these activities, which take away our time and energy? Because … at board meetings we had to discuss this. You know how the settlement services are running … and the person who is in charge of that would come and report on the progress and what we are doing … and he said “you know, we are an advocacy group, and we
shouldn’t be dependent on the government – we should be able to finance ourselves from our community.”

As discussed above, with respect to this trade off, the current logic of the nation-state – which does not tolerate any dissent along with a program of weakening the community volunteer sector (LaForest, 2009). Recently, the Canada Revenue Agency has been disciplining the voluntary sector, particularly those who are against Harper’s policies; these include environmental and indigenous organizations, as well as organizations working on Palestine. The nation-state centers race and clearly demonstrates its instrumentality in demarcating inferiority and superiority between Arab Muslim and Christian communities that support Palestine against the interests of some pro-Zionist and Evangelical communities. When examined against the nation-state’s rhetoric, irony turns into hypocrisy: Muslim/Arab community organizations working on Palestine in particular are tantamount to being positioned as political enemies. The federal government’s message to the voluntary sector is clearly one of de-legitimizing and disciplining groups by revoking charitable status if they are advocating for the human rights of Palestinians and/or raising aid for the same; this is expressed by branding organizations like CAF, KAIROS, and Palestine House as manifesting “the new anti-Semitism”.

One recent example of this is when the Canadian Arab Federation (CAF) argued in its case to Justice Zinn of the Federal Court: they argued that the Minister’s decision to terminate a Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) programming funding was based on the his personal views, which had biased the decision, and that “type of abuse causes a ‘chilling effect’ on similar forms of expression” (Voices-Voix, 2013). Though Zinn agreed, in the case of the CAF, [quoting Zinn] “any reasonable person…could conclude that the Minister had made up

57 In constitutional law, the “chilling effect doctrine” is any practice or law that has the effect of seriously dissuading the exercise of a constitutional right, such as freedom of speech (Legal-dictionary.com).
his mind about the issue of future funding for CAF; [the Minister’s] only interest was in pursuing the means to terminate the relationship CIC had with CAF.” However, the Court went on to find that CIC’s decision was reasonable because the “appearance” of anti-Semitism was sufficient to ground a reasonable decision in law. In this regard, he reasoned that it was not necessary for the court to resolve the question of what constitutes anti-Semitism. According to Justice Zinn, the Minister does not have to prove that CAF was anti-Semitic, merely that CAF appeared to be anti-Semitic. (Voices-Voix, 2013)

In the example of CAF, the government and justice department conflates any advocacy critical of Israel as new anti-Semitism – even the mere “appearance” of anti-Semitism is enough to terminate funding. At least eleven community organizations in Canada have had their status revoked and/or are under threat due to their support of Palestinian human rights.

Overall, Organizations RO2 and RO4 provide services to their constituents and are, for the most part, apolitical. They have an ongoing and regular relationship with their funders, both public and private, but are not reliant on external funding for their programming, though they sometimes face censure they are able to self-fund the majority of their programming. In particular, RO2 draws on them knowing their constituents well, and based on this, they are able to bridge funding from mainstream sources and tailor it to the specific needs of their community.

RO6 and NG3 self-identified their organizations as advocacy-based, and therefore were thinking through their future relationship with potential funders very carefully. They realize clearly consequences upon them of their political activities if they go the public/private funding route.

Organizations RO1, RO3, NG3 and RO6 did not feel any direct impact of community government per se as they were not participating in any external funding regime. In contrast, Organizations NG1, NG2, MO, and NG4 were significantly impacted by loss of expected
funding. MO, NG1, and NG2’s concerns were around the “chill” felt by the “anything for Israel” stance that in turn produces anti-Muslim/anti-Arab/anti-Palestinian racism and impacts their bottom lines in terms of service and advocacy. All of these participants agreed that good advice to communities doing advocacy would be to use a self-sustaining funding model.

4.3 On the Good Muslim (Native Informant) / Bad Muslim Nexus

Discussion with participants on their understanding of the good Muslim/bad Muslim nexus was important to revealing the discussant’s awareness and standpoints on the colonial figure of the native informant, and the role of such figures in their communities in driving public perceptions of Muslims. The “native informant,” or good Muslim, is a controversial category precisely because such figures frequently take the status quo position when responding to racism in Canada, and thereby are in danger of reifying mainstreams misconceptions about Muslims. Overall, all participant organizations had very clear and strong opinions on the negative effects of the figure of the native informants, and cited multiple examples of who they think these figures are on the Canadian scene. None of the participant organizations in my study revealed any consistent orientation towards native informing themselves.

To open this discussion, I read participants an excerpt from Riley’s 2009 article titled “Good Muslim and the Accumulation of National Capital.”58 Riley’s use of the term “good Muslim” corresponds to the figure of the native informant described by Dabashi (2011). The native informant describes a colonial figure who, in the uncritical and unbalanced derision of their own culture, wittingly or unwittingly reify Eurocentric pre-eminence. In his article, Riley makes an implicit link between the figure of “good Muslim” (Mamdani, 2005) and gaining societal acceptance or “national capital.” I asked participants whether the framework presented

58 See Appendix 1 for the actual excerpts from Riley that I read.
by Riley and others made sense to them, and if they would discuss their own experiences or understanding of it, within the context of Canadian Muslims.

RO1 commented on native informants as having lost personal and religious integrity for public and personal gains:

There are personal interests and reasons for them to want to be portrayed in the media in a certain light. ... I think people who appear in the public tend to be those whose opinions are valued by the people interviewing them, or the organisations interviewing them… I think they are very polarizing… and most Muslims, I think, just disregard their opinions because they feel it not really representative of how they feel, and think it is more of a media ploy to get some attention and further their own personal organization probably.

RO1’s assessment captures, in essence, all of the participants’ general views on these figures and their standings in the community. If it is true that most Muslims disregard their opinions, then the challenge of responding to anti-Muslim racism and Islamophobia becomes even more challenging because these opinions actually have a significant impact on mainstream society and in the metatopical space in terms of reifying misconceptions. So, for Muslims to not take seriously and respond to good Muslims is a lost opportunity, however not for the majority of my participants.

Over 60% of the participants identified Tarek Fatah and Irshad Manji as the dominant examples of well-known personalities as representing the “good Muslims” in the way Riely (2009) describes. Organizations MO, NG2, RO2, and NG3 named Fatah and Manji in their

See section 2.5 for discussion on Irshad Manji.
discussions, and RO3 added Ayaan Hirsi Ali as third example of this figure. RO3 says the following of them:

I think he [Fatah] is completely out to lunch. I personally don't think he speaks for the community since he has a very Orientalist view of Muslims and Islam in general. I think he's completely misinformed. He definitely doesn't speak for the majority of Muslims and how they feel about Islam and being Muslim. I think some people who have had extreme trauma – I am thinking of Ayaan Hirsi Ali – I can understand somebody like that having gone through the trauma, so maybe Tarek Fatah is coming from that same space. And perhaps the same kind of thing with Irshad Manji – I don’t think it’s Islam that is the problem, it’s people that are the problem. It’s Muslims who distort ideology for their own good.

RO2 gave two alternative reasons as to why, in its opinion, Fatah and Manji express negative views of Muslims. Of both, respectively,

I think he [Fatah] is very opportunistic; he uses laziness of the media to advance a political agenda and himself. He is proactive [and] he sets out an agenda: he gives convenient narratives that give the media something to latch on to. If we had reporters who were diligent about pursuing the story – pursuing the Muslim voice – they would not be talking to him, cause he is not representative of the community by any means. The same with Manji, very much the progeny of a lazy media, [who] is looking for convenient flashy news stories. She manages to put together quick convenient narratives that don’t challenge people, and just reinforce the status quo.
When I asked MO whether it would place Manji and Fatah in the same category as “good Muslims,” MO replied,

I don’t know – you know, I would put Irshad Manji to some extent in that context, but…
gays from Muslim countries who belong to the Muslim religion have obviously been persecuted, as they have been in Western countries, but to a much lesser extent now.
And they [people like Manji] build up a sort of animosity towards the religion where they were born, and where they were so afraid. I have much more understanding for that than I have for someone like Tarek Fatah or his associates.

In speaking about one of their experiences with the media, NG2 said,

For example, they [a media outlet] contacted me once and asked would you appear on TV with Tarek Fatah (because he was going to say something bad about Islam)? I said yes, I’ll appear. And then he [Fatah] probably said no, I don’t want to appear with [Participant names themselves]. Because I would appear there and I would say that you [Fatah] are spreading hatred against Muslims. So, they said, we have changed our producer and decided to change the format or something. And then he [Fatah] ended up appearing with a representative from CAIR-CAN [Council of American Islamic Relations – Canada]. The reason he was willing to appear with CAIR-CAN is because he uses this attack thing – which he constantly uses – that CAIR in the United States is being investigated by the government and to have put that representative of CAIR-CAN on the defensive by throwing that accusation.
Organizations NG2, RO2, and RO3, all pointed out how such figures sprinkle critical interjections of negativity into metatopic spaces such as the media, thereby adding to some of the ways that media is also complicit.

Organization NG4 and RO6’s comments are particularly noteworthy because they reflect the flexibility and overlap inherent in the categories of responses presented in my heuristic; specifically, their responses reveal the fluidity between the direct and native informant positions undertaken by them over the course of discussion.60 Both participants understood the negative implications of the native informants discourse on Canadian society, and both named Tarek Fatah and Irshad Manji when asked to clarify who the “good Muslim” is in the Canadian context. For example, when NG4 was asked to clarify who she means by there being certain voices the media “gloms on to,” their response was,

I am particularly thinking of Tarek Fatah and Irshad Manji, to some extent. I have a problem with her pronouncements sometimes, but she is not really the media go-to; the person, it seems, is Tarek Fatah and his organization, MCC [Muslim Canadian Congress]. And the spokespersons from that organization – like Reheel Reza – becomes the voice that government and some agencies are listening to. The unfortunate thing is he [Tarek Fatah] seems to have lost touch with the constituency. With most Muslims who are doing great work, for example, he calls a lot of people who are doing extremely good work as Islamist. You know, that is wrong: that leaves no room for debate, it leaves no room for discussion even, and of course these are huge issues.

60 Both Organizations NG4 and RO6, though their overall responses cannot be categorized as native informant, did make some statements that aligned with such position within the context of discussing the Sharia debates, discussed in the next section (4.4) of this chapter.
NG4 also reflected upon their own double-consciousness with respect to the terms “good” and “bad” Muslim:

Clearly there is an agenda at work portraying other Muslims as bad. But I feel that for most Muslims – myself included – I find that it's a double-edged sword. I am opposed to this kind of portrayal of other Muslims as bad, but then I know that there are some Muslims that may be portrayed as bad, but I also know there are some Imams who are a very insular and very bookish in interpretation of the faith. I think many Muslims who are calling themselves moderate – I see a handful, maybe two or three names, and they have been very comfortable and [lead] very privileged lives… and now they have time on their hands, and unfortunately they have a large audience, and people and media glomming onto these type of voices. And our current government has its ear to these types of people because it fits their agenda of finding the Muslim bad guys and putting them behind bars, or targeting them or surveying them as being a threat to Canada. And why they [Canadian public] believe this is because of what our Prime Minister articulated not long ago, by saying that Islamism was the greatest threat to Canada.

In terms of the e/affect of native informants upon their communities, NG4 brought up five important points: (a) they are a contributor to a kind of double consciousness within racialized groups, (b) the socio-economic class privilege and advantage that native informants accumulate as a result of their stance, (c) the access and distribution of their rhetoric directly reaches governments ear and via media the public, (d) this serves as a feedback loop and amplification for negative messages about Islam and Muslims, and (e) the irony that native informants themselves shut down debate and have lost touch with their Muslim constituency in the pursuit resonance with the state, i.e. speaking what power would like to hear.
Like NG4, RO6 also understands the figure of the native informant intimately – or closely and accurately – from a general perspective, or bird’s eye view of the effects of native informant. When asked for a response to the quote by Riely (2009), RO6 said,

Yeah, I have a take on it, and I think that what's happened is that the so-called “good Muslim” is not always standing up for human rights in the Muslim community, and the so-called good Muslim is not always acknowledging that there is this vast majority of good Muslims like him or her in Canada. And in that respect, the so-called good Muslim is taking advantage and exploiting the limelight, really – and not – it’s almost like those so called good Muslims don’t want everybody to know that there so many more of us out there who care about the same thing, because then the limelight might be stolen from them, and I think that is a real problem. [They should be projecting that they are one of many in the community], I am not just the only one, it's not just me alone –and they don’t do that, and they don’t acknowledge that there is all this great diversity of thought in our community, that even in the most conservative community there are extremely peace loving people – they don’t do that – so that is a huge problem. And so I think in terms of national capital … on the one hand, as Muslims who have the opportunity to speak out because people are listening to us for whatever reason, we have a responsibility to do what we can to advance human rights in our community. And human rights in our society shouldn't be at the expense of other people, who may come from a more conservative ideology. I don’t think it needs to be - I don’t think that needs to happen.

When asked what the effects are of “good Muslims,” RO6 said,
I think that is a problem that perpetuates the stereotype of what is a good Muslim and what is not a good Muslim, and it perpetuates that the vast majority of us are not good Muslims – and I think that is a problem.

RO6 also referred to Fatah and Manji as examples in its response:

Tariq Fatah – I don't like what he's doing when he is speaking out, because it seems to me that he is only speaking out for himself, and he is not speaking out for the greater good of society, and I think he could do a lot more if he took that into account. Irshad Manji – she seems – I mean, I have spoken to Tariq Fatah and Irshad Manji as well – they are not the same. Irshad Manji seems like a really loving person, and I do respect her. She seems to have an issue in terms of – she gets really emotional when she is confronted by conservative Muslims sometimes, that is justified other times – I am not so sure. She has started to do something very interesting where she now she talks about Islam, and the Islam she believes in, and she separates that from the bigotry and the oppression committed by certain Muslim groups. And I think that is a good thing, that she is beginning to separate her audience, [but] I don't know if they necessarily separate that themselves.

Like NG4, RO6’s comments show that they also understand the grasp and influence of the good Muslim (native informant)/bad Muslim nexus on producing and reifying the status quo of the Muslim communities’ public image.

NG3 suggested a psychology of survival as what may underpin the native informant’s response to anti-Muslim racism using Malcolm X’s concepts and language:

The state apparatus is out to get us with its security regime and so on, there is still a fire post 9/11. There are those who want to get out of the fire and are saying not us, “not us”,

143
“them.” They try to save themselves by doing that. We are the good “house Negros” [and] those “field Negros” are bad. Creating this constant fear mongering about these so-called bad Muslims, the so-called Islamists. It's really problematic because the problem is that anybody who is critical of the government is considered a bad Muslim, and the problem is that you have people like Tarek Fatah on the CBC all the time; and they are causing more problems than they are solving. And it polarizes the issue even more than trying to create solutions.

NG3 places the impetus for native informing in a disassociation of themselves from their group, while reifying the normative status of the group as a problem. MO corroborated what NG3 said about surviving the fire, as it were:

I would also relate it to the colonial experience. I mean there is no way colonizers would have managed to colonize the countries they were in for so long unless they had local collaboration and they managed to get by, you know, by finding a local thug or warlord who if they kept on their own side, could control the other people. So I think this sort of thing has been done in different ways, at different times, and on many occasions. Even during the Holocaust.

Organizations MO, NG2, and NG3 compared Fatah and Manji with the nexus of the “house Negro/field Negro” (Malcolm X, 1963) and the “good Muslim” (Mamdani, 2005; Riely, 2009) as having attitudes and qualities of “native informants” as described by Debashi (2011), Sheehi (2011), Shryock (2010), Toor (2011), and El-Ariss (2007) in Section 2.5. Native informers, in addition to being uncritical of profiling, colonization, imperialism, empire, and war, are trotted as voices of dissent that reify and “demonize their own culture, bearing terrible tales about Islam” (Dabashi, 2011, p. 17). Overall, organizations were aware of the key personalities
representing this nexus in Canada today as problematic figures productive in maintaining the negative public status quo impressions of their communities. While reifying Muslims as problematic in Western society, they acquire for themselves access to the corridors of power (Sheehi, 2011; Debsahi, 2011; Toor, 2011). Native informants posing as experts exist in every colonized community, and they are integral to the process of colonization. These are large and crude categories; also found in Indigenous communities, Chinese and other communities; each presenting with different histories and traditions but refer to the same type of colonial figure having common attitudes and responses. Knowing participants’ views on these figures helped to understand the kinds of responses they are likely to have to anti-Muslim/anti-Arab racism.

4.4 Organizational Responses: Analysis in Relation to Heuristic

We have understood from the sections above the context and background of this study and the diversity of participants’ values and attitudes, grounded within their own organizational experiences, contexts and standpoints, on a number of issues along the core themes of the research protocol. These included being Muslim/Arab in Canada; the top-down racism of the nation-state; tensions of “community government” and its constraints on advocacy, particularly on the issue of Palestinian human rights; and views of the overall negative a/effects of the good Muslim (native informant)/bad Muslim nexus. These discussions reveal an understanding of how participants view their own social and organizational locations, their communities, the Canadian landscape, and the limits and restrictions placed upon them in terms of advocacy and programming.

Along with the responses given to the interview questions, it is also apparent from the work of these community organizations that they all respond/ have responded in a variety of
diverse ways to anti-Muslim/anti-Arab racism at an organizational level. The organizations participating in this study were diverse in their mandates and programmatic activities, and they all contributed to presenting positive messages about Muslims and/or Arabs to their own communities, and to Canadian society as a whole.

In the course of comparing organization’s responses, a pattern consisting of a range of three mutually interconnected types of responses emerged, which I categorize as direct, status, and native informant.61 “Native informant” responses effect a standpoint that serves to reify and legitimate racism inflicted upon one’s community. A “status” response is an ancillary response and perpetuates the status quo of “Canada the multicultural.” This response views racism as an aberration, or as not modal in society. A prime exemplar of this type of response calls for the need for greater education, while assuming a “post-racial” Canada: this places the onus on Muslims to teach Canadians about themselves, which taxes energies and resources. Rather than see racism as systemic, status responses are ostensibly based on the belief that racism is a result of society’s misunderstandings, or a few bad apples arising from a lack of education and ignorance. Sometimes this type of response is coupled with views of inferiority, inability, and/or incapacity of members to educate their fellow Canadians about who they are. Respondents in this range may or may not be aware of their own internalized racism, which is inherent in this position to a greater degree than with a direct response. Status responses to racism may or may not see racism as systemic within Canadian society, but the effect of this response is to address the symptoms of racism. “Direct” responses take a stance that involves recognition of the centrality of racism as endemic and systemic and not as an aberration; the aim of this response is

61 See Table 2.
to address the root cause of racism first by pointing to its existence and then taking an action against it.

In the majority of cases, the organizations that participated in this study responded to racism in status and direct ways; no organization gave consistent native informant responses. Direct responses to racism were undertaken, for example as mentioned earlier (see section 4.1b), RO6 and NG4 in particular responded in direct ways: by speaking at a public protest and by writing a letter to Harper respectively. Additional examples of organizations that took direct responses were NG1, NG2, NG3, MO and RO5. These organizations also tended to situate their communities as existentially facing external threats be they racism or hyper-vigilant security measures as ideologically constructed by the state and used against their communities – they tended to use words like “race”, “discrimination” and “colonialism” in their descriptions of the situation and did not view Canada as post-racial, or race-neutral space. It is important to remember that the three types of responses occur in a fluid range and are not fixed in time; rather than fall into silos, they operate in an idiosyncratic inter-dynamic, where each are influenced and informed by the respondents’ perceptions of the situation and the context itself.

The liminality and fluidity of the heuristic is most easily apparent when applied to specific cases. As examples, below I discuss responses given by three organizations to two recent moral panics about Muslims/Arabs in Canada: the Sharia debates of Ontario (consisting of native informant responses) and the presence of Queers Against Israeli Apartheid (QuAIA) in Toronto and Vancouver’s Pride Parades (consisting of direct responses) as contrasting examples.

The Canadian Sharia and QuAIA debate arises from the data in that three organizations were directly involved in those public debates; it is therefore instructive in understanding how to
meaningfully interpret responses from Muslim and Arab community organizations to racism. For example, in the course of discussion, Organizations NG3, RO6, and NG4 indicated that their organizational positions were anti-Sharia during the times of that debate (2004/5), and NG3 and RO5 specified that their organizations were supportive of the objectives of QuAIA. What follows is a discussion of these moral panics and responses to them.

Several coalitions of Muslim women’s organizations with (non-Muslim) allies and supporters responded to the Ontario Sharia debates of 2004/5 and successfully quashed religious arbitration in the Ontario legal regime. In speaking about this, NG3 said that they had “actively worked against the imposition of Sharia law in Ontario.” NG4 talked about a public forum in which they presented, saying “so I talked about not all legislation is good and I referred to the arbitration act in Ontario 2004.” RO6 said that they were “involved with at the time to lobby the Ontario provincial government to delete the provisions of the Ontario arbitration act that permitted faith-based family Law arbitration.”

The Sharia debate is discussed here by drawing on a portion of the theories of two Canadian critical race feminists, Sunera Thobani (2007, 2008, 2010, 2011) and Sherene Razack (1998, 2002, 2008, 2010), who have presciently shown how race in its intersections with feminism has been used in contemporary domestic and global politics to further and legitimize the status quo perceptions of Muslims and Islam. Razack tracks the reification of this trope as the specific narrative that played out in the Canadian Sharia debates: to her, it only served to reify the trope of the “dangerous Muslim, the imperilled Muslim woman, and the civilized European” as saviour (2008). The anti-Sharia standpoints taken by Organizations NG3, RO6 and NG4 in this debate ends up reifying the structures of thought that frame superiority and inferiority which
they were otherwise struggling to dismantle; this is why, according to my proposed heuristic, these responses fall into the native informant range.

In Ontario, the debate over Sharia law erupted in 2004-5 onto the national political landscape when a newly formed organization called the Islamic Institute of Civil Justice announced that it planned to apply Islamic principles [Sharia law] in family matters through provisions already in place in the Ontario Arbitration Act. Nothing new was to be implemented; these practices were already in place by Muslim and Judeo-Christian communities and sanctioned in Ontario’s legal regime. The announcement, however,

created the impression that something had changed in the law, now making it easier to apply Sharia. The panic that ensued, from the fear that Sharia law (with its associated images of women being stoned to death) had now come to Canadian shores, was of such a magnitude that the federal government, pressed to set up an inquiry into the Arbitration Act, was ultimately obliged to clarify that it had not changed the law and that it had not collaborated with the newly formed Islamic Institute. (Razack, 2008, p. 150)

Ultimately, the Ontario government struck down the use of any religious arbitration in their family court system, despite the recommendation of MP Marion Boyd, who is “well respected by feminists in the mainstream anti-violence movement” and was appointed to survey this issue amongst affected individuals and organizations, “that the Arbitration Act remain unchanged” (p. 151). Had they not struck down Sharia, there would have been a modicum of check through the legal system, whereas now, religious family arbitration practices have gone underground.

The consequence of this on coalitions of Muslim women’s organizations is that they successfully advocated for maintaining the state’s hegemonic discursive as the saviour and final
arbiter of women’s rights in family matters, but without any formalized input from any religious aspect. Many Muslim women who argued for Sharia to be recognized by the Ontario government were “left with no room” and “dismissed as naïve” (p. 155) in the public spaces within which these debates took place, while other “Muslim women were caught between the proverbial rock (a state likely to use their rights as a means to police Muslim populations) and a hard place (patriarchal and conservative religious forces within their own communities)” (p. 148) when it came to this issue. According to Thobani,

[the reaction] was so alarmist and so over the top that in the end, the result was that many Muslims who had not wanted Sharia law found themselves in a position of having to defend it. This is because the issue had sparked off this hysteria against Muslims, against Sharia, and many people who would have never demanded Sharia found themselves in a position where if they were to speak out against it, they were going to play right into this Islamophobia and demonization of Muslims. Many people were left with no way [out]: either you further the racialization and stigmatization of this community, or you play into the hands of a small group [of conservatives]. (Thobani, 2011)

Overall, the political decision of the Ontario government not to include Sharia marks clearly the division between what is acceptable law within the boundaries of the Canadian nation state. At the time, this debate exposed the markings of unacceptability of Muslims within a Judeo-Christian legal framework when it became a flash point, and led to a moral panic about this community. Thobani and Razack demarcate the boundaries of the underlying framework which operates along the, “secular / religious divide that functions as a color line, marking the difference between the white, modern, enlightened West and people of color, in particular Muslims” (Razack, 2008, p. 148). In the end, the coalitions of anti-Sharia proponents that
formed in Ontario lost an opportunity to facilitate a direct evolution of an existing model of Sharia Law practiced in Ontario. As difficult as the logistics of that may have been, an actualization of this prospect (a direct response) could have set a positive precedent for a new Sharia model in Canada, rather than reinforce a phobia that then turned into a moral panic throughout the nation (a native informant response). An ideal model along these lines would hold a promise for feminists to avoid creating “gendered subjects” and also prevent them from “being drawn into the framework of superior, secular women, saving their less enlightened and more imperilled sisters from religion and community” (p. 158).62

If native informant responses (such as those surrounding the Sharia debates) are in danger of codifying and reifying existing (mis)conceptions about Muslims and Islam, then status responses, albeit better, are not enough to enact systemic change or respond directly to racism. The following is an example of a direct response told as a multi-method narrative (see Section 3.5 Storytelling as Resistance: Multi-Method Composite Stories, for this method)

**On Queer Muslims in Need of Rescue: A Multi-Method/Composite Narrative**

“Pinkwashing,” or “to be gay-friendly, is to be modern, cosmopolitan, developed, first-world, global north, and most significantly, democratic.”  
~ Jasbir Puar (2010)

The question of gender and sexuality is central to colonial and imperialist projects as a guise of rescuing oppressed women and queers, and feminists and progressive liberals can be appropriated for such a project of colonialism and imperialism. A large part of the critique

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62 The current debates about the *niqab* and citizenship are part of the Sharia debates, a continuing legacy of othering Muslims in the West. This debate, while affecting only a hundred women, is also divisive like the Sharia debates. How Muslim community organizations position themselves in relation to *niqab* and citizenship determines their place – in either positions of power or victimhood.
levelled upon Islam/Muslims is that that they are illiberal and limiting to women’s and queer rights. It is not within the scope of this study or section to present an in-depth discussion of the role of sexuality as a tool of colonial expansion as it is understood in Muslim communities; this is brought up insofar as it emerges from the data with respect to answering my central research question on how Muslim and Arab organizations have responded to racism.

I met with three self-identified queer Muslim/Arabs in a café one afternoon, representing two organizations, NG3 and NO5 from one organization, and RO5 from another. Both organizations advocate for queer inclusion within Muslim/Arab communities and in society at large, and have worked with a number of organizations and communities for this purpose. They wanted to meet and tell me about their experiences organizing alongside an organization called Queers Against Israeli Apartheid (QuAIA) and their eventual participation at the Toronto and Vancouver Pride Festivals.

NG3 said that after having built good relations with a number of other LGBTQ+ support organizations over several years, “all of a sudden” they and other Muslim/Arab queers were being questioned – sometimes interrogated – about their lack of enthusiasm or support for Israel, as the “Only Bastion of Queer Rights in the Middle East” as one of them put it. “Does it sound familiar?” I was asked. “You mean about how Israel claims to be the only democracy in the Middle East?” I responded. “Yes, exactly,” replied RO5. They gave me a copy Jasbir Puar’s (2010) article “Israel’s Gay Propaganda War” as a reference. As I was scanning it, I noticed that it mentioned the Toronto Pride Festival, so I asked about it. NG3 explained as follows: “In 2008, a group was formed in Toronto in response to gay rights being used as a tool of appropriation and as a way to rationalize Israeli policies; the group is called ‘Queers Against
Israeli Apartheid.’ Check out their website.”

They are a coalition that take a queer analysis of anti-colonial, anti-racist, and feminist approaches to deconstruct how the Israeli apartheid state presents itself, basically pointing out that of late, Israel has been “pinkwashing” itself. In other words, Israel is promoting itself in the world as the only gay-friendly oasis in an otherwise Arab desert of intolerance. What pinkwashing does in LGBTQ+ and other communities, as Puar’s article points out, is to recruit sympathy and collusion that elevates the status of Israel and further demonizes Palestinians. The aim is to have Israel be seen as “Western” and “civilized,” and Palestinians as homophobic terrorists; further, Israel is cast as having no oppression as a free society that is hated by homophobic Arabs. NG3 went on to say,

So then, a couple years ago [in 2010], QuAIA organized to march at the Toronto Pride Parade. What happened then was a lot of pressure and threats of defunding was brought to bear onto the organizers of Pride Toronto, by Toronto City Council and right-wing Jewish groups pressuring them not to allow QuAIA to march in the parade, saying they are anti-Israel. We said “no, we are not anti-Israel, we are anti-Zionist.” Then people were calling for banning the term Israeli Apartheid. But after a lot of public pressure from all across the city and Canada and all over the world, Pride organizers decided to recant and let QuAIA march. So that was a huge victory – I marched in that one, but the following year [2011], again with Toronto City Council’s threats of defunding Pride Toronto, QuAIA withdrew from Pride.

NO5 then added,

So last year [2011], I chose not to march with a group I have been marching with for years and decided to march with QuAIA at Pride here [Vancouver]. We didn’t face any

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63 The QuAIA website is http://queersagainstapartheid.org/who/.
opposition from Pride Vancouver. What was interesting is that for the first time, as far as I can tell or recall in Pride Vancouver’s history, there was a pro-Israeli university students’ group that marched with placards and propaganda saying, “Israel, the Only Bastion of Queer Rights in the Middle East,” suggesting that Arabs and Palestinians queers have a safe-haven in Israel. The fact is, [while] there are pockets of acceptance of gays in Israel, it’s not global. But can you imagine! Arabs and Palestinians are not even allowed easily into Israel, and those who live inside are not treated well as it is. What happened after the parade [was that] myself and a number of other people were attacked for being anti-Jewish. That’s pinkwashing. This year we plan to march together with our groups and QuAIA together in solidarity.

When I asked “What’s pinkwashing again?” RO5 responded as follows, with reference to Puar’s article:

Israeli pinkwashing is a potent method through which the terms of Israeli occupation of Palestine are reiterated – Israel is civilized, Palestinians are barbaric, homophobic, uncivilized, suicide-bombing fanatics. It produces Israel as the only gay-friendly country in an otherwise hostile region. This has manifold effects: it denies Israeli homophobic oppression of its own gays and lesbians, of which there is plenty, and it recruits, often unwittingly, gays and lesbians of other countries into collusion with Israeli violence towards Palestine. (2010)

“So Heard of Peter Tatchell?” asked RO5. “No, but tell me.” I responded. NG3 brought up a YouTube video, “Peter Tatchell - Pink Iraq, Homotopia 2007,” on their cell-phone, with the

64 Retrieved February 2, 2015, from: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MlGoMVloFvc.
video description reading “Peter Tatchel [sic] - Pink Iraq: Queer Iraq, Mullahs and Death Squads. Part of Homotopia 2007, Liverpool's annual festival of queer culture.” In the video, Tatchell introduces himself as a member of a queer rights group called OutRage! as follows: “We are a direct action human rights group that champions the cause of equality, human rights, self-determination and the freedom for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. OutRage! challenges homophobia wherever we find it, whether in Britain or around the world” (2007).

The video is a focused discussion on LGBT rights in Iraq and Iran. According to RO5,

What he says totally deflects the rising trends of not only gay bashing but gay murders in the ‘West,’ and in places like the ‘Only Bastion of Queer Rights in the Middle East.’ I am not saying that the LGBT community is not tolerated to some degree in Israeli social life, just like it is to some degree in Muslim countries, but for the most part, queer bashing happens right here too – right on this street and down the road in the park. With this ‘pinkwashing,’ we are left with rebuilding solidarity at all levels, locally, nationally, internationally, rather than moving forward with the emancipation of all – because now the focus shifts back to us as Muslims and Arabs, and not people just like them.

The authors of Gay Imperialism (2009) argue that the “positive work” of queer acceptance by Muslims in their community, as done by their Muslim feminist cohorts, is largely ignored. But Muslims who repeat the mainstream mantras that imbibe Orientalist positions are articulating and locating the difficulties of being a woman and/or queer exclusively within Muslim/Arab communities themselves, and not linking the same to the mainstream dominant culture.

Just as white feminists have had imperial licence to proceed with the “civilizing mission” to liberate Muslim women domestically and abroad, it would seem that ‘white queers’ are in pursuit of a similar mission to liberate Muslim/Arab queers wherever they are found. Both
licences imply the advancements (read: civilized, modern, with values and processes of a superior nature) of gender and sexuality politics in the West, which acts to further minimize Muslims and/or Arabs. The construction of women and queers as “victims” of barbaric, backward, pre-modern civilization in need of rescuing furthers the justification for imperialism. Arguing that both constructions – of oppressed women and queers – stem from within the precepts of Islam fuels the flames of anti-Muslim racism and provides concomitant anti-terror in/security measures at home and abroad. Both constructions serve to advance the further marginalization of Muslims and Arabs both in the global South and in the West. Both NG3 and RO5, in this example directly responded to negative constructions internally within their own community spaces and externally as in this example of their solidarity action with QuAIA.
5 Conclusion: Reading Responses within the Current Climate of Islamophobia in Canada

“I’ve come upon something that disturbs me deeply. We have fought hard and long for integration, as I believe we should have, and I know that we will win. But I’ve come to believe we’re integrating into a burning house.”
~ Martin Luther King, to Harry Belafonte (1968)

As a community organizer and developer, I wanted to understand and analyze responses by Muslim and Arab community organizations to anti-Muslim/Arab racism in Canada. The primary analysis and theory used, to understand and analyze responses, has been critical race theory (CRT). CRT as primary because of its utility and complexity in its understandings and actionable outcomes in regards to the centering of race. As this study, research, analysis and physical placement of the same is conducted on unceded and unsurrendered Indigenous territories, it has been productive and imperative to utilize language and understandings from Indigenous and post-colonial theory to better situate, contextualize and further develop the elasticity of CRT. Pairing these theories has allowed for a deeper discussion of the situation of Muslims as well as other racialized communities in Canada and it is the hope that it has also continued to open up space for greater solidarity between Muslim, Arab and Indigenous communities in a commonality of understandings, struggles and resistance.

The usual responses to anti-Muslim racism by Muslim community leaders in Canada today have unfortunately fallen into a predictable diatribe about how Islam as a religion is peaceful, and how Muslims abhor and condemn terrorism. Rather than harkening for example to what the RCMP’s own reports are suggesting is a wider dragnet curtailing Canadians’ civil liberties, status responses are taken as the reasonable thing to do; but the danger inherent in such a seemingly
innocuous response is that it reifies the very erosion of the spirit of Islam by making it passive, rather than what it is, a movement towards seeking justice. The implication of my proposed heuristic is the understanding that for transformative change to occur, Muslims and racialized Others in Canada must take direct responses to their own racialization. Not doing so victimizes us all.

Because Canada operates as a nation-state predicated upon white supremacy and settler colonialism, race is integral to the equation. But despite Harper saying, Canada has “no history of colonialism” at the G-20 meetings (Ljunggren 2009), or saying that the greatest threat facing Canada is Islamism; there is a growing opposition to this kind of thinking. As the government starts to legislate against dissent as a whole by targeting the fear of one racialized community in order to target other racialized communities and Indigenous communities in resistance challenging the very roots of the settler colonial state, as it does with the anti-terror laws, we are witnessing researchers, academics and activists discussing and acting in solidarity with these communities. RO2, NG3, and NG2 discussed working and interacting with Indigenous communities through their programmatic activities. NG2 succinctly connected fear and hatred of Muslims on the one hand with the case of Indigenous people saying, “they are always going to fear them – if you steal somebody’s home you are always afraid the owner will come and claim his home – you will always fear Indigenous people as the Canadian government”. This link between freedoms of Muslims and Indigenous communities in resistance should be encouraged. To some extent this is already happening as more Muslim and Arab organizations formalize ties with Indigenous nations and communities.

When a response is status, it suggests that on the whole, we are living in a neutral racial system. Further, it feeds into the myth of the status quo that official multiculturalism is
sufficient, nay that we are already “post-racial,” and “post-colonial”, and we all simply need to learn more about each other whilst teaching, that Muslims are just like you and me – and by this point, the debate is already lost. This response – ostensibly the majority type response – has been the standard fare for nearly 30 years, and we have seen that racism in Canada has not abated in the least for Muslims; indeed, it has gotten worse. Calling out for more education about traditions, foods, and cultures to lead to a better understanding of Islam and Muslims would have worked by now were it were an effective way of addressing racism. Ultimately, a status response only offers to maintain the current system. However, education alone is not enough to change the system – unless it is able to affect its structural inertia.

Although each response has strengths and limitations, costs and benefits, I argue that the direct response is the only response that can produce structural change, and is the ideal response for Muslims and other racialized groups to institutionalized racism in Canada today. A direct response is willing to name the source of the oppression at the onset, makes it the center of the debate, and insists that racialization is unacceptable; further, any subsequent call for education must address systemic racism and colonialism in Canada. Again, this differs from a status response in that the status takes Canada as a race-neutral space at worst, or post-racial and post-colonial at best. The direct response is the polar opposite of the native informant response, which reifies Muslim communities into Fanon’s zone of non-being and themselves as the native intellectuals supporting the domination of their communities. How Muslim community organizations and individuals confront and deal with the reality of racism will be increasingly critical in the future, especially as it seems that this racialization is worsening. If Muslims don’t name the root cause of their racialization, first as a symptom of structural white dominance, then
to be followed by a call for anti-racist and anti-colonial education we end up reifying the very systems that produces anti-Muslim racism.

Since the events of September 11, 2001, non-Muslim North Americans and Europeans have reacted negatively out of fear of anything and everything associated with Islam; all the while our civil liberties are slowly and deliberately being legislated away. In Western metatopical spaces, Muslims males are routinely presented as terrorists, and Muslim women as oppressed by them. Muslims are said to be “taking over” and changing Western culture and values with foreign laws and dress (i.e. Sharia, the niqab and hijab)\(^{65}\) that are seen as “barbaric” and “pre-modern.” The historical prevalence of negative myths about Muslims and Arabs have made it rather easy for Western societies to prevent so-called Muslim-creep by legislating preventative laws that target Muslims, while the crimes committed in the name of white supremacy or patriarchy are not linked with the same voracity either to that particular ideology or to terrorism by the PMO or the media. “Terror” in Canada is still racialized along the line of the human, historically excluding Indigenous people and today excluding now also Muslims, inferring to them as barbaric in the Citizenship guide book Discover Canada (2009, p9), and then referring to them as such in legislative acts like Bill S-7 (2015).

Responses by Muslims and Arabs to their racialization are critical because their communities are increasingly becoming targeted and linked to the security and freedoms of Western nations and societies. Even though Muslim and Arab communities have been responding in static ways, Canadian society have not accepted them with hospitality as mentioned in Section 2.1, 51% of Canadians in 2006 had a negative impression of Islam and

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\(^{65}\) The current debates about the niqab and citizenship are part of the Sharia debates and the continuing legacy of “Othering” Muslims in the West. This debate, while affecting only about one hundred women, also is divisive like the Sharia debates. Where Muslim community organizations take on the issue of niqab and citizenship, their response either positions them in a place power (direct) or victimhood (status).
Muslim, and this trend has continued to increase. Canadian society has only tolerated them in the spaces that constitute the nation and only when it serves the purposes of the status quo, and more often than not have derided them. Indeed, it is because their responses are static that they are unable to affect change in white-dominant system. A direct response seeks to address the root causes of racism and through that, seeks justice for all of humanity. Direct responses by Muslim and Arab organizations could delink their racialization by association to terror for example by articulating real public safety issues obfuscated by government and media such as the number of pipe bombs detonated by white supremacists (see footnotes 35 and 37) and alarming rates of patriarchal violence committed on women on a daily basis.

It is important to take direct responses in today’s climate of rampant Islamophobia – as recent developments in Canada have only worsened the problem. We are living in a climate of anti-Islamic and anti-Muslim/Arab racism produced from the top down for political gain chiefly in order to pass anti-civil liberties legislation – something the public would have no palate for without the threat of imminent danger. For example, Canadian anti-terror acts such as C-51 are legislated to give more powers for surveillance and entrapment to state agencies, far reaching breech of privacy and information sharing, expansive powers of arrest and preventative detention these are being used against a broad spectrum of society as a whole in which Muslims and Arabs play a very small role, but for “national security.” Indeed, it is the very minutia of their effect upon greater society that Prime Minister Harper has counted on to fuel anti-Muslim racism. Opportunistically, this is not short of governing from a place of hate and bullying (Siddiqui, 2015), where the idea is to scare a majority of Canadians with descriptions like “a great evil has descended in our world” (Harper, as cited in Barber, 2015). By naming ‘jihadist terrorism’ above and beyond any other as the largest threat to the nation, fear is stoked, leading Canadians
into accepting Muslims as the boogeyman, and thus justifying “solutions” such as more security measures like Bill C-51 (the Anti-terrorism Act of 2015), and C-24 (Strengthening Canadian Citizenship Act) that effectively create second-class citizenship for many people of colour, along with S-7, (the Zero Tolerance for Barbaric Cultural Practices Act) expressly targeting Muslim communities.

Bill C-51 was given royal ascent in the Spring of 2015; it intends to bring in broad and sweeping changes to security and policing powers and practices without oversight, amalgamating powers previously separated from the RCMP and CSIS, and sharing information across government bureaucracy, raising privacy concerns. It also has the potential to “conscript judges to authorize Charter violations and unlawful acts, under the guise of providing judicial oversight” (Canadian Bar Association, 2015). In response, much of the mainstream media that previously had been silent or favourable towards the government’s terror bills came out against C-51 before it was law, as did scores of public figures – from former Canadian Prime Ministers to mainstream media journalists, academics and lawyers, as well as hundreds of community and civil society organizations from the Canadian Bar Association to the Privacy Commissioner, along with business leaders and some Muslim and Arab organizations – calling these newest iteration of terror laws extreme and dangerous, with exceptionally broad definitions and dystopian language with far reaching implications. C-51 caused Frederick Ghahramani, a Vancouver based Tech founder and businessperson to allocate one Million dollars of his own money to fighting C-51. He says,

I find it really sadly ironic that we have Syrian refugees that are running away from a horrible country that treats them horribly, listens in to everything that they do and watches them 100 per cent of the time arriving in Canada at a time when we’re eliminating those
very same rights that make us existentially Canadian,” …[he] says Bill C-51 reminds him
of the totalitarian regime he lived under in Iran… It just feels like I’ve woken up in North
Korea and our dear leader has eliminated our rights to think and speak and write and do
business in private without government oversight (McQuigge, 2015).

To some extent, a direct response by Muslim organizations is already happening.

Organizations such as the National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM) and the Canadian
Muslim Lawyers Association (CMLA), the Islamic Social Services Association (ISSA) do
address anti-Muslim racism as human rights violations. The NCCM has consistently encouraged
Muslims to report incidence of discrimination and hate crimes to them and the police, and run
national workshops educating Muslims about personal rights and freedoms under the law. They
have been on the forefront of challenging the government’s record in targeting Muslims, and
have testified on behalf of Muslim communities at Parliamentary and Senate committee hearings
and at the Supreme Court. The NCCM is currently in the process of suing the PMO for
defamation; for years, the organization has been on the receiving end of accusations from the
PMO, linking them terrorist entities without proof. Their lawsuit sends a signal that the kind of
innuendo and language the PMO uses to link them to terrorism not acceptable. Similarly, the
CMLA recently called the PMO out for linking terrorism with mosques as an attempt to defend
the communities’ interests against such poisonous rhetoric in the public sphere. Further, both
organizations have taken a leadership role with the ISSA in challenging Bill C-51, including
testifying at the Parliamentary and Senate hearings on Bill C-51 at which they were relentlessly
grilled at their sessions, described as *McCartyesque*, by Kirkup (2015), reminiscent of the
communist witch hunts of the 1950’s.
Unlike the Muslim Canadian Congress and Council For Muslims Facing Tomorrow that support Bill C-51 thereby reifying the implied links between terrorism and Muslims, organizations like the NCCM, the CMLA and the Canadian Council for Muslim Women (CCMW), the Canadian Arab Federation (CAF) and the ISSA are more helpful in calling out the Harper government’s rhetoric on Muslims by publically questioning his statements and sharing their concerns over the implications of legislations affecting their communities. However, as required as this response is, it is still not enough what these organizations could do additionally is demonstrate, for example, the biased nature of the rhetoric arguing for this bill on the grounds of dealing with public safety. This is especially important given that statistically, there are more acts endangering public safety perpetrated by white supremacists in Canada than by Muslims, and of the fact that the government is waging an ideological campaign of fear that continues the legacy of colonialism in its targeting of Indigenous, black, yellow and brown bodies. For example, the United Against Terrorism Handbook, a booklet put out in 2014 by NCCM and ISSA only focuses on definitions of terrorism by the U.S. and Canada and on “radicalization” within Muslim communities without pointing out that this same phenomenon of radicalization also exists within dominant white communities organizing hate groups that target Muslims and other racialized persons. These groups also ideologically radicalize members of their own communities. Community organizations can raise the question: Why then, when we speak of radicalization, does the government and media not discuss the issue of public safety comprehensively within the Canadian context?\(^{66}\) By pointing this out and making links to the

\(^{66}\) The Anti-Racist Canada (ARC) Collective has assembled a useful timeline of the history of violence in Canada, tracking white supremacist violence in particular, that can be found at the following URL: http://anti-racistcanada.blogspot.ca/2011/10/history-of-violence-1989-2011.html.
histories and present day realities of communities of colour Muslims can begin to undertake a transformative response to their racialization.

Today, despite the veneer of a “post-racial/post-colonial” society, Muslims and Arabs are seen as a barbaric pre-modern threat to “innocent” and vulnerable Westerners (Thobani, 2007). The exponentially miniscule acts of violence committed by Muslims are associated with Islam and called ‘domestic’, and ‘home grown’ terrorism; because of this, we are told, we require even more legislation that curtail our civil liberties despite existing laws on the books to handle such cases – ironically and without satire, we are told that because they “hate us for our freedoms,” the same freedoms must be legislated away. While similar plots and acts of mass murder committed by whites are described as isolated, idiosyncratic incidents; and perpetrators as “lone wolves,” motivated by mental illness, or described as “murderous misfits” (ie. the people held responsible for the alleged Valentine’s Day massacre plot in Halifax) these are said to not be “culturally motivated” and therefore not terrorist acts (Justice Minister Peter MacKay, as cited in Brean, 2015). White terrorism is called anything but terrorism, and is not attributed to the ideology of subcultures like the neo-Nazis or white supremacists prevalent in Canadian society; these are not seen as a concern to the national security of the nation because they are seen as emerging from within the nation. This is most notable in the way the media downplays ideologies that breed racial hatred in numerous examples of figures like Andres Breivik, the Norwegian shooter who drew upon his right wing Christianity ideology in 2011 to take innocent lives; in fact, Breivik’s Christian ideology and his anti-Semitism are not discussed in the media to the extent if he had been Arab or Muslim. Another recent high-profile example is Craig Hicks, responsible for the 2015 Chapel Hill murders of three Muslim youth, whose actions have been seen as motivated by the anti-theist ideology of the “New Atheists” mixed with a penchant
for gun culture. A Canadian example of this from 2015 is the white supremacists responsible for the alleged Valentine’s Day massacre plot in Halifax to kill random people in a shopping mall. All three instances have left a trail of evidence of white ideological vitriol against people of colour and, in the case of Hicks and Breivik, display a particular hatred for Muslims.67

My point here, in giving the examples above, is to reiterate that it is only when there is a perceived link to Islamic ideology that phrases like anti-Semitism and terrorism, radicalization and extremism are invoked, and these events are rare compared to the significantly higher risk to public safety posed by white supremacists. When a Muslim is alleged to have committed a crime, there is no room for discussion; it is immediately attributed to terrorism, a claim that that entire Muslim community then has to disavow, the opposite is not true and there is no pressure for white people to disavow or distance themselves. It has become quite apparent in Western societies today that the mainstream media and police do not treat non-white lives in the same way as white lives – this is why there is a proliferation of enclaves on the internet like #JusticeForMuslims that have received hits in the millions: Muslims in countries such as Canada and the U.S., as well as across Europe are starting to feel increasingly targeted. Many non-black Muslims in the U.S. are beginning to empathize with black people and demonstrating their solidarity with movements such as #BlackLivesMatter; they are beginning to realize that their lives are similarly not treated as equal, or held with the same respect as white lives.68

67 Andres Breivik, the perpetrator of the Norway attacks in 2011, wrote a 1500 page manifesto outlining his beliefs and hate for Islam and Muslims which the media paid scant attention to. Craig Hicks killed three Muslims in their Chapel Hill apartment in 2015 and left evidence of his particular revulsion of Muslims and Islam along with photographs of a loaded pistol on social media; further 14 firearms were seized from his home (Sims, 2015). If the opposite had occurred – if Breivik and Hicks had been Muslim – we can be certain that the mainstream media would have run the manifesto and disparaging comments on a 24-hour cycle for a number of days.

68 Shortly after BlackLivesMatter hash tag was launched, some Muslims copied the idea to social network resistance to their racialization by forming #MuslimLivesMatter. Many Muslims in solidarity with the struggles of racialized people felt this as an appropriation and negation of Black struggles or competition with and began a dialogue within allied Muslim communities to drop the moniker in favour of #JusticeForMuslims in solidarity with Black Lives Matter.
equally true of Indigenous lives and struggles, as evidenced by solidarity expressed by Muslims in and with actions and sites of Indigenous resistance. It is in the interest of all racialized communities to express and build solidarity and align themselves with Indigenous resistance and movements in Canada because if and as we secure our rights from Canada, it is at the cost of dispossessing the Indigenous Nations of their inherent rights and titles. This process of communities reaching out to each other and the solidarity it engenders can only strengthen what is already apparent on the ground; for example, in discussing their works, Anushka Nagji J.D., and lawyer Fathima Cader, Lecturer at University of Windsor, Faculty of Law (both identifying as Muslim women), spoke about the importance of solidarity in their work and indeed have built alliances with Indigenous Nations on these theoretical grounds and more (Nagji and Cader, personal communication March 23, 2015). As Muslim communities routinely place their solidarity and freedom with all people of colour, and not with system, which oppresses them, true transformation will begin to occur.

The scenario in Canada is similar to the anti-Muslim/anti-Islamic sentiments expressed around the world in the U.S. in particular. The tropes and tactics are generally the same. Where the Canadian government’s differs from the U.S. is in its direct emphasis on Islam as the exclusive connection to terrorism. For example, in describing the events of the Halifax Valentine’s Day plot, planned by white supremacists from the U.S. and Canada, Minister of Justice Peter MacKay suggested that the incident is not terrorism because there was no cultural component saying,

This group of individuals we would not define as a terrorist group.... Their friendship is not based on culture or ideology. They were four individuals who formed a friendship and decided to plan and commit a heinous crime....[T]his appeared to be a group of
murderous misfits that were coming here or were living here and prepared to wreak 
havoc and mayhem on our community. (Auld and Tutton, 2015)

When such plots have been uncovered there is no rush to attribute it to terrorism, whereas the 
Harper government has consistently associated plots by Muslims to “terrorism”, throughout his 
tenure.

The Harper government has consistently linked “terrorism” and responds with draconian 
law and codes of justice applied unequally to brown black and Indigenous bodies. Another 
example that betrays this kind of thinking is in the responses to the Moncton and Ottawa 
shootings of 2015. While the incident in Moncton was eventually connected to a mentally ill 
white supremacist named Justin Bourque, it was not until the Ottawa shootings literally weeks 
later that the government voiced a sense of public danger. Michael Zihaf-Bibeau, the Ottawa 
shooter – a person tracked by CSIS with a history of criminal offenses dating back to 2004 and a 
history of addiction and mental illness – became the fodder for justifying enhanced terror laws, 
C-51 due to its association with jihadi terrorism. This difference in response acts to reify the 
narrative of Muslims as “the boogeyman,” the rhetoric used to justify changes to our laws.

Despite the RCMP’s internal documents (obtained via a freedom of information request by 
Carlos Tello for the Vancouver Observer) states the following:

The Canadian law enforcement and security intelligence community have noted a 
growing radicalized faction of environmentalists who advocate the use of criminal 
activity to promote the protection of the natural environment. …It is highly probable that 
environmentalists will continue to mount direct actions targeting Canada's energy sector, 
specifically the petroleum sub-sector and the fossil and nuclear fueled electricity 
generating facilities, with the objectives of: influencing government energy policy,
interfering within the energy regulatory process and forcing the energy industry to cease its operations that harm the environment (Tello, 2014).

It is likely that the administration of President Obama shares this concern, as the U.S. State Department’s own rhetoric has begun to delink Islam’s exclusivity to the propensity of terrorism. For example, the U.S. Senate Committee Report on Homeland Security from 2008 has changed its language from “Violent Islamist Extremism” to “Violent Extremism.” Removing the word Islamist signaling that the threat is much wider. In his recent National Prayer Breakfast speech, Obama said “people should consider the history of terrible deeds committed in the name of Christ before describing violent extremism as a problem exclusive to Islam” (Boren 2015). In other words, in these address to the international summit aimed at countering violent extremism in Washington, Obama specifically included rhetoric on the need to disassociate Islam’s perceived exclusivity in regards to extremism (President Obama, as cited in Panetta, 2015). It seems, however, that the Harper government was committed to rhetoric in the opposite direction. Canada’s minister attended the summit in Washington determined to defend Canada’s newest anti-terror legislation, based on Islam generating terrorism contrary to the facts on the ground.

In my discussions with people from other communities and organizations about the tactics of their own native informants in reifying structural racism, and majority of status responses from their communities to racism there’s agreement that these responses are largely ineffective due to the reasons given above. Elders from racialized communities such as Grand Chief Stewart Phillips representing the Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC – the largest union of Indigenous Nations), Sid Chow Tan, key strategist responsible for the ongoing pressure on the

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69 By this token I am in no way suggesting that the U.S. is not targeting Muslims and Arabs domestically and in its current Middle/Near East and Afghan wars. My point is that there is an attempt at shifting the rhetoric towards an inclusion of other groups possibly because the old rhetoric of linking Islam with extremism is comparatively as apparent on the ground. While this may take off some pressure and stresses from Muslim communities it can also lead to opportunities to build resistance and solidarity with other targeted communities.
Canadian government to address the legacy of the Chinese Head Tax, and Charan Gill, community organizer for racial equality from the South Asian community and CEO of the Progressive Intercultural Community Services, have each exemplified the importance of direct responses when dealing with government as the way forward. This view was expressed at a media conference in 2014, where they called out the BC Liberal government for outright racism (Griffin, 2013). However, this kind of response to racism is not seen as without cost. Over their careers, these leaders have each fought for equal rights and better treatment on behalf of their communities, this has come with a huge backlash from the government and from their own communities. That the direct response is not as easy to take as a status response may be one of the reasons it is frequently not taken by the majority; but for there to be effective change and transformation in the current discourse about anti-terrorism, radicalization and their effects on further restrictions on rights and civil liberties, Muslim and Arab communities must start to take a direct response in alliance with other communities.

This is the third electoral campaign in a decade that has pivoted on “the Muslim” question in a bid to win re-election. Dalton McGuinty’s Provincial Liberals won in 2007 over hysteria created by his campaign strategists over extending partial funding to religious schools couched as funding the teaching of Sharia Law in Islamic Schools in Ontario. Pauline Marois created a moral panic over religious symbols in public spaces targeting Muslim women who wear the niqab and burka, and also implicating Jewish and Sikh men, under the guise of a “Charter of Values” (2014). Marois lost that election and her seat and resigned as party leader.

The Federal electoral campaign of 2015 was in a three-way tie amongst the major political parties in the last eight weeks until the news in early September of Aylan Kurdi a Kurdish toddler who was found drowned on a Turkish beach as his family fleeing war were
headed to Canada. The Syrian refugee/immigration issue diffused in the media and campaign over the next week as political parties played to Canadians sensibilities. The leaders of the New Democratic Party (NDP) and Liberals promising to take in large numbers, against a cautionary Harper arguing the need for proper screening raising the specter of security vis-à-vis terrorists hiding in amongst people fleeing from Muslim majority regions. Then in mid-September, 2015 Harper announced his government would appeal a ruling of the Federal Appeals Court, which had just overturned Jason Kenney’s 2011 ministerial directive banning Zunera Ishaq from taking her citizenship oath wearing a niqab (without doing so meant that she was a citizen for the past 4 years on paper only). And Harper continued playing up a values clash politic with his remarks about “old stock Canadians” at the Globe and Mail election debates on September 17, 2015. The issue of dual and second-class citizenship, Bill C-24 which was passed in the Summer of 2015 also surfaced around this time buoyed by the governments announcement that in addition to Deepan Budlakoti who was born in Ottawa they would also move in a separate case to strip the citizenship of Saad Gaya who was born in Montreal, in addition to others found guilty of terrorism.

Despite Harper’s insistence regarding the niqab and citizenship oath issue, saying, “this is not the way we do things here” (Beauchamp, 2015) and his intentions to appeal the decision to the Supreme Court, Zunera Ishaq took her citizenship oath in a niqab once the court cleared the way on October 5, 2015, during the final days of the Federal election. Days earlier, on October 2, the Minister of Immigration Chris Alexander proposed introducing a dedicated tip line for neighbours to report on “barbaric cultural practices” (Beauchamp, 2015), in effect creating two processes: one to report “normal” crimes like domestic violence or any other crime to an already existing tipline called “crimestoppers” and a new tipline for reporting “barbaric practices,” this
along with two citizenship regimes (as with C-24) cynically reifies people of colour and refugees against “old stock Canadians” said to be defending so-called Canadian values. On October 9, it was reported that the PMO had put a halt on the Syrian refugees cleared by the U.N. to settle in Canada in order to conduct a “security audit” that in effect was for vetting Muslims from Christians with a preference for the latter (Berthiaume, 2015). For a brief moment, the xenophobic politics worked, boosting the Harper Conservatives to top ranking with support mainly in Quebec. However, in the end, regardless of Harper’s polarizing dark politics of division and fear, Canadians elected Liberal leader Justin Trudeau with a clear majority, a politician offering hope and promising “sunny ways” – even though the Liberals had voted in Parliament in favour of Bill C-51, and the Zero Tolerance for Barbaric Cultural Practices Act and “[t]hat Trudeau [had] skipped the vote on Bill C-24, the “[s]trengthening Canadian Citizenship Act”, Harper’s “anti-immigrant, anti-Canadian, anti-democratic, and unconstitutional” law” (Madondo, 2015), despite having a choice of voting for the Official Opposition that voted against the said Acts discussed above.

Zunera Ishaq took a stand and a direct response that received tremendous moral support from Canadians in cash and kind to continue her fight. The niqab debate is another opportunity for Muslims to revisit the Ontario Sharia debates in a new context and articulate clear and direct responses from Muslim community organizations, instead of reifying victim stereotypes. Another example of a similar direct response is Naheed Nenshi calling out Harper’s dog whistle politics, as Gillian Steward reported,

[n]o one on the campaign trail has so far challenged Harper on his scapegoating of Muslims in order to garner votes as passionately and eloquently as Nenshi, the first Muslim mayor of a large Canadian city Calgary ... Where others repeatedly talk about the
“politics of division” Nenshi calls out Harper for deliberately creating fear of Muslims and then positioning the Conservatives as the only party capable of taking on the threat.

(2015)

Jason Kenney (Minister of National and for Multiculturalism) responded to Nenshi in the Calgary Herald, saying, “[i]t seems to me that it’s the mayor and people like him who are politicizing it [the niqab ban]. I don’t think this should be an issue of contention.” “People like me,’ eh?”Nenshi responded on twitter. “Let’s just assume (Jason Kenney) means ’thoughtful people,’ shall we?” (Wood, 2015). On a CBC National interview, Nenshi linked the Harper governments claims about protecting oppressed women saying, “[i]f we want to have a conversation about the status of women in this country, let’s have that conversation. Let’s talk about murdered and missing aboriginal women” (2015). In answering Evan Soloman’s question “is there dog whistle politics here?” Nenshi replied, [o]f course there is. But I’ll tell you that the dog whistle politics is badly missing the mark. Because, you know, as I’ve been speaking about it, sure, I’ve got some racists who come and complain about it. That happens. Right? But I have been absolutely overwhelmed – absolutely overwhelmed – by the number of everyday people who have contacted me with one simple question: what can I do to help? (2015)

That the Canadian public is supportive can be seen in the avalanche of tweets buoyed by the positions Ishaq and Nenshi. Many Canadians of privilege are also showing support by mocking Harper and wearing a niqab in public spaces and during the advanced voting in the Federal elections of 2015. Many phoned the barbaric cultural practices tip hot line calling out the Harper government for its own barbaric practices. But for Lena Amaruq Aittauq an Inuk woman from Baker Lake, Nunavut, and Tasha Spillett of Cree/Trinidadian ancestry from
Manitoba the issue is much more serious and closer to home. Aittauq the creator of the hashtag #DoIMatterNow in response to the barbaric cultural practices tip hotline to point out that everyone is,

talking about niqabs but not murdered and missing Indigenous women? Yet the woman in a niqab is just asking to be left alone. … Indigenous women are fighting for the right to be safe and in control of our own bodies, and instead of launching an inquiry to uncover the systemic racism that caused an epidemic of missing and murdered Indigenous women, Harper attacks our Muslim sisters for what they choose to wear, reads the #DoIMatterNow manifesto. PM Harper, it's my body, my clothing, and MY decision. You will not distract me from issues that actually matter to me as a Canadian. In solidarity with our Muslim sisters. (Noel & Bastien, 2015)

Tasha Spillett wrote in an op-ed for the CBC that she connected the niqab with Indigenous ceremonial markings as part of a struggle to honor and reclaim cultural identities “and in doing so interrupting the colonial legacy”, she wrote,

I see this "tip line" as a direct act of violence against our Muslim relatives but I also feel its threat. I hope indigenous people understand that “those” people are our people, because as Canadian history dictates, “them” also means us…From developments this week, I fully understand how the sovereignty I have over my body, and the ability I have to be part of a ceremony in which I honour my cultural identity, could be seen as a barbaric act — but only as defined by our current federal government. Consequently, the people who I share my ancestral territory with could, out of fear and lack of understanding, report my participation in this ceremony to the RCMP. In the end, while a great show of Conservative election forces have been designed to divide us and to
entrench fear of “the other,” we must resolve to always connect, to eschew hatred and to acknowledge a truth far too unarticulated in this campaign: that we are more alike than we are different. In recognition of this truth, the struggle of my Muslim sister is indeed woven to my struggle. Anything which serves to undermine this certainty is the ultimate “barbaric cultural practice” (2015).

Lena Amaruq Aittauq and Tasha Spillett share powerful, undeniable and essentializing truths: for transformative change to occur, Muslims and Arabs ought to recognize that our struggles and victories are interlaced with Indigenous people; further, their invitation to our communities must compel us to endeavor to break down our barriers and connect on the basis of our similarities.

There are hundreds of Muslim and Arab organizations in Canada, with the majority of them taking status responses to the racism faced by their communities. At the same time, there are hundreds (including some Muslim and Arab) organizations that are active responding directly to racism, with some specifically working on issues of justice for Muslim individuals. Mainstream Muslim and Arab organizations would do well by building alliances with this variety of non-governmental and Indigenous organizations to work in support of both individuals and communities. It is critical that responses to racism be tied into the racialization and oppression of others, for when diverse communities come together they are inevitably stronger in the struggle for justice. The outcomes from Bill C-51, and the other legislations named above loom as a threat over the Canadian landscape, for as it targets Muslims and Arabs, it also targets dissent by giving government agencies more power to disrupt the work of Indigenous land defenders, environmentalists, and animal rights activists (BCCLA, 2015). In response, Muslim and Arab community organizations must not focus narrowly on just their own interests, but become more active in forming collectives, alliances, and coalitions that express solidarity with
especially Indigenous communities, but also with communities across the spectrum of communities (and vice versa) that are targeted through anti-terror legislation; in fact, it is nothing short of moral, strategic, and urgent for everyone to do this.
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190


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Appendix – Interview Protocol

I welcomed the participants and introduced myself to them including that I am a Muslim and community organizer. I briefly told participants about the sections to be covered in discussion. I informed them that in Sections 1 and 2, I would ask questions, and in 3 and 4 I would read them some theoretical perspectives and ask for their responses to them.

Section 1. You, Your Organization, Your Work, and Your Constituency

1. Kindly tell me a little about yourself.

2. How / Why did you come to do the kind of work you currently do? What has been your career path, so to speak?

3. When you did first hear of [name of organization] & what drew you to work/volunteer there?

4. Would you tell me specifically about your role in the organization? What kinds of work do you undertake for the organization?

5. Lets discuss the [name of organization]’s work in a general capacity …

6. Who does your work reach/ What is your constituency? In other words, who do your projects and campaigns serve?

7. When you are networking with your non-Muslim peers, how do you describe what your organization does?

8. What are some of the issues your organization has taken up over the past 18 months?

9. How does your organization gauge its own effectiveness, in terms of the projects and campaigns?

10. What kinds of work/i ssues has your organization had the capacity to address/take up in the past few years that might still exist, but which are now beyond the capacity of your organization currently address?

11. What are some of the reasons you attribute to not having this capacity? What has changed? Or what are/have been the obstacles to serve those needs?

12. Beyond the needs that your organization currently serves and had served in the past, which we discussed above, in general terms what kinds of needs exist that you would want to see addressed? In other words, what kinds of needs are currently inadequately addressed for your constituency?

13. What are some of the reasons you attribute to this lack of attention?
Section 2. Your Organization and its Relationship to Funding

1. Where do you seek sources of your funding?
   e.g. Philanthropic organizations | Government | Private Donations

2. What kinds of funding agencies do you prefer to approach?

3. What is your approach to fundraising?

4. What kinds of fundraising is the easiest, and which are the most difficult?

5. Do you / How do you advocate for yourselves as a community organization specifically in the funding market?

6. What kinds of additional fundraising has your organization done in the past 18 months?

7. What kinds of difficulties do you face with respect to grants and fundraising?

8. Do you partner with other organizations and share projects and resources?

9. Have you worked / Do you work with other groups? If so, which ones?
Section 3a. Perception of the Situation of Muslims in Canada: What Would You Tell a Martian?

Let’s talk about the situation of Muslims in Canada today? That is: What are your understandings of the current situation of Muslims today globally and in Canada?

It’s a large question, which I can also ask it in this way: If I were from Mars, and I knew nothing about the situation of Muslims particularly in Canada and globally, what would you say about the situation of Muslims today? Let’s start with the global scenario and then focus in on Canada.

Section 3b. Comments on the Nexus of Good Muslim and National Capital

Now I am going to suggest a theoretical perspective from an article by Riley (2009), and ask you to comment on it.

Riley has argued that “the practices of certain high-profile Canadian Muslims who call themselves “progressive” or “moderate” as an example of attempts to increase one’s claims to national belonging [and increase their national capital] through a reification of tropes that designate many Muslims as fanatical, scary and a threat to the Canadian nation.” (Riley – Abstract) By branding some Muslims as “bad”– they invariably position themselves as “good Muslims” and increase the accumulation of their national capital which “occurs in three main ways, with portrayals of the “good” Muslim as a patriotic Canadian, as an object of threat from other Muslims and as a protector of oppressed Muslim women” (Riley – Abstract).

What do you think of the theory above? Would you share your perspective in this light when you look upon the Canadian landscape? What is your take about the above proposition?

Section 4. Comments on Community Government

I will now read you information about the Canadian Voluntary sector, which offers a theory about the way governments have interacted with the sector, and ask for your comments, perspectives and experiences.

I read the following:

Canada’s voluntary sector is “the second largest in the world (after the Netherlands)” (Elson, 2006). A 1997 National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating found that 7.5 million Canadians volunteer a total of 1.1 billion hours annually; 78,000 organizations are registered as Canadian charities; and there are more than 570,000 people employed by voluntary organizations whose “voluntary hours contributed translate into the equivalent of more than half a million full-time jobs” (Phillips, 2001, p. 241). The government’s newest citizenship guidebook encourages Canadians to “freely donate their time to help others without pay” (Discover Canada, 2009, p. 9).
With their support of the voluntary non-profit sector, governments offload direct responsibility of social welfare by providing funding and training community organizations “to act in ways that are aligned with the principles and expectations imposed on them by advanced liberal governmental agendas” designed to re-shape responsible citizenry (Basok and Ilcan 2006). Under the logic of ‘advanced liberalism,’ community as a means of government defers the numerous tasks of maintaining social safety nets to a variety of ‘naturally occurring’ community citizen sites (organizations, associations and agencies) coordinated towards new ends (Rose, 1999; Dean, 1999; Isin, 2000). Governing through community, or what Ilcan and Basok (2004) call ‘community government,’ entails states exercising political power through fiscal policies that seek to control shape and direct the programmatic endeavours and conduct of community organizations, while remaining at arm’s length, seemingly neutral to the process (Rose, 1999; Dean, 1999; Isin, 2000; Li, 2002; Phillips and Ilcan, 2003).

It is in this regard that a wide range of programs and rationalities [and technologies] have been designed to manage the conduct of diverse human capacities, groups, and populations … [through] social regulation that can transform the way citizens [are] conceptualized by Western states. … to take responsibility for social programs in their communities, and formulate appropriate orientations and rationalities for their actions (Ilcan and Basok, 2004, p. 131-32).

Does this context and theoretical construct make sense to you? Can you see your organization placed and working within such a context and theoretical construct?

If yes, then how then do you conceptualize the work of your organization within this macro context and theoretical framework I presented?

End:

We have come to the end of our questions – do you have any questions or comments for discussion?

Thank you for your time.