

## **Articulating an Islamic Liberation Theology: A Scriptural and Historical Analysis**

Much the rhetoric around revolution has been framed around the exclusion of religion and religious thought. When religion is included, it is largely framed around Christian liberation theology and the life of Jesus. What this paper hopes to expose to a Western audience is the strong tradition of liberation theology within the Islamic faith. The paper will begin with a presentation of Islam as a revolutionary faith. By drawing on the Holy Qur'an, the traditions and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad and the symbol of Husain's martyrdom, this paper will show that the spirit of revolution is deeply embedded in the Islamic tradition. Besides my own interpretations, I will be drawing on established scholarship for their interpretations including Ali Shariati, Hamid Dabashi, Malcolm X and Moulana Bhashani. This portion of the essay will also include how this liberation theology can be applied here in Canada, specifically in terms of building alliances with indigenous peoples, opposing pipelines and fighting government corruption and oppression.

The second portion of the paper will be devoted to the historical background of Muslim revolution and rebellion throughout the past 1,400 years, focusing on three major rebellions in the Muslim world: the Abbasid Revolution in 750, the Zanj Slave Revolt in Iraq in the 9th century and the various revolts and revolutions throughout West Africa from the 17th to 19th century. These are the most relevant Muslim led rebellions for the subject of Islamic revolution since none were directed against a non Muslim power but instead against the power structure within their own societies. This shows that these revolutions, while using the language of religion in order to fight against oppression and exploitation, were also authentically Islamic since none of them were influenced by Western ideas and are a symbol of self criticism in the Muslim world. The paper will conclude with a brief analysis of the current situation of Islamic

liberation theology and the challenges for the future, both in Canada and across the Muslim world.

**Bibliography:**

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Barazangi, Nimat Hafez. *Islamic identity and the struggle for justice*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1996.

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Chowdhury, Anisuzzaman. *Moulana Bhashani: Leader of the Toiling Masses*. New York: Bhashani Foundation, 2012.

Dabashi, Hamid. *Islamic liberation theology: resisting the empire*. London: Routledge, 2010.

Popovic, Alexandre. *The revolt of African slaves in Iraq in the 3rd-9th century*. Princeton, NJ: M. Wiener publ., 1999.

Rahnema, Ali. *An Islamic utopian: a political biography of Ali Shari'ati*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

Ramadan, Tariq. *In the footsteps of the prophet: lessons from the life of Muhammad*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Sharon, Moshe. *Black banners from the East: the establishment of the Abbasid state - incubation of a revolt*. Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 2012.

X, Malcolm, and Alex Haley. *The autobiography of Malcolm X*. New York: Grove Press, 1966.

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## **Address:**

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## **Education:**

September 2015- October 2017 History Masters, Joint Masters Program, University of Manitoba and Winnipeg

2010-2015 Bachelor of Arts Honours, History, University of Winnipeg

## **Teaching and Research Interests:**

- Islamic History
- Algeria during the Ottoman Period
- Intellectual History

2012-2013 Guest Lecturer, University of Winnipeg  
Course Title: Islam and the West  
- Gave 5 lectures on various topics in Islamic history

## **Professional Experience:**

- May 2016-August 2016 Student Archivist at St. Boniface Historical Society:**
- Analyzed and organized boxes of archival material
  - Catalogued and arranged over 150 boxes from Gaboury Archive
  - Entered all the information from boxes into a computer program
- January- April 2016 Student Corrector for Adele Perry
- Corrected papers for second year class
- December 2014 Student Corrector for Ahmet Seyhun
- Corrected papers for first and second year history courses
- June 2014-August 2014 Student Archivist at the United Church Archives
- Received first hand experience in the Archives
  - Completed an entire archival project on the Diakonia of the United Church of Canada
  - Analyzed and organized boxes of archival material

- Cataloguing and describing collections

**Languages:**

- Reading knowledge of French, improving writing and speaking abilities

**Conference Papers:**

“An Ottoman Modernity: Algeria, the Modern Age and the Wider Ottoman World” paper presented at the Fort Garry Lecture Series, May 8, 2016

“The Eternal Crusade: The Barbary Wars in Post 9/11 American Historical Imagination” paper presented at the Fort Garry Lecture Series, May 1, 2014

**Invited Talks:**

“Themes of Justice in the First Five Chapters of the Qur’an” Youth Panel at Muslim Students Association Conference February 25, 2017

“Moses as a Revolutionary according to the Qur’an” Bi-Monthly Halaqa (Lecture) at Winnipeg Central Mosque January 6, 2017

“Panel Discussion” at ISSA event December 1, 2016

“Islamic History 101” at ISSA event November 17, 2016

“Islam in Victorian Britain” at Screening of BBC documentary, October 2015

“When the Moors Ruled in Europe” at Screening of Documentary *When the Moors Ruled in Europe*, October 30, 2014

“Islamic Political Thought in the Liberal Age” at the Launch of Islamic History Month in Manitoba, October 5, 2014

**Public Research:**

- Made posters about various characters in Islamic history for Islamic History Month Manitoba 2014 and 2015

**Awards Received:**

- Awarded the 2014 Manitoba Islamic Association Scholarship