Theresa Barton

Research Essay First Draft

RLST Prof Kassam

11.11.15

Ayaan Hirsi Ali is a controversial Somali-Dutch activist, writer, and political figure whose criticisms of Islam and Islamic Society have captured the attention of a global audience. Her work has been cited by groups ranging from the secular humanist movement to European Anti-Immigration campaigns.

In this research essay, I propose to interrogate Ali’s philosophy, and more broadly its political impact, through the anti-orientalist and anti- universalizing arguments presented to us by Mohanty, Zine, and Mogadam. Striving to situate Ali’s work in the volatile geopolitical ‘Immigration Crisis’ moment, I want to put her vision of what is fundamental about Islam in conversation with the diversity of lived experiences and interpretations we have been exposed to in this class.

Bibliography:

Survey of Ali’s works:

1. Ali, Ayaan Hirsi. *Infidel*. Simon and Schuster, 2008.
2. Ali, Ayaan Hirsi. *Nomad: From Islam to America: A personal journey through the clash of civilizations*. Simon and Schuster, 2011.
3. Ali, Ayaan Hirsi. *The caged virgin: a Muslim woman's cry for reason*. Simon and Schuster, 2008.

Frameworks:

1. Mohanty, Chandra Talpade, and Ann Russo. *Third world women and the politics of feminism*. Vol. 632. Indiana University Press, 1991.
2. Mohanty, Chandra Talpade. "Feminist encounters: locating the politics of experience." *Social postmodernism: Beyond identity politics* (1995): 68-86.
3. Zine, Jasmin. "Between orientalism and fundamentalism: The politics of Muslim women's feminist engagement." *Muslim World Journal of Human Rights* 3.1 (2006).
4. Said, Edward. "Orientalism: Western concepts of the Orient." *For a discussion of this debate, see: Penguin, Harmondsworth* (1978).

Criticisms:

1. Ghorashi, Halleh. "Ayaan Hirsi Ali: daring or dogmatic? Debates on multiculturalism and emancipation in the Netherlands." *FOCAAL-UTRECHT-*(2003): 163-172.
2. Snel, Erik, and Femke Stock. "Debating Cultural Difference: Ayaan Hirsi Ali on Islam and Women." *The Family in Question. Immigrant and Ethnic Minorities in Multicultural Europe* (2008): 113-33.