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Research Essay First Draft

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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.

Background of Hirsi Ali, Duch political scene, killing, America,

**Why its important to study her**

At this point it is important to disclose my motivations for choosing to research this author, despite her uses of hate speech and apparent support for systems of neocolonial oppression. Part of the solution for the situations which trap third-world feminists in counterrevolutionary positions, according to Narayan, is to bring more third-world feminists into the discourse; I seem to be perpetuating the problematic situation by continuing to focus primarily on Hirsi Ali.

However, I think this focus is justified. Ayaan Hirsi Ali has an incredibly compelling life story and holds her beliefs at extreme personal cost- she is in constant danger for her life. This is a testament to the strength of her conviction and thus an indicator of the rage with which feminists emerging from Islamic contexts might feel, and where the debate needs to be addressed. I think it is important to provide a critical framework for understanding the ways in which a third-world feminist, and those who blindly follower her, can engage in the process of the very patriarchal system they seek to destroy.

**Ayaan and Enlightenment**

Hirsi Ali’s thought rooted in the enlightenment. She often cites Voltaire in justifying the importance of free thought and criticism. Enlightenment thinking and anti-colonialism have a historically problematic relationship.

The paradox of enlightenment anti-imperialism is that human dignity is understood to be rooted in the universal human capacity for reason. Yet when people engage in cultural practices that are unfamiliar or disturbing to the European observer, they appear irrational and thus undeserving of recognition and respect.[SEP]

Hirsi Ali specifically locates unfamiliar and disturbing, from her perspective irrational practices in the core of Islam. Her own exegesis conclude that every sura Osama bin Laden

She implicitly denies the Qur’an to be polysemic; a denial which is both dubious and harmful to feminist theologians such as \_\_\_\_.

However, as a personal aside, this is precisely why Ayaan Hirsi Ali does not make a good Islamic reformer, despite her desire to do so. As an atheist, she is ill-posed to try to salvage

**Ayaan and context**

Orinarily such blatant xenophobic neo-fascist Islamophobic vitriol would be written off as racist fiction: the baseless rambling of an acrid mind,”[Zine 5]

**Zine and the orientalism/fundamentalism double bind**

Through her article on the discourse surrounding the War on Terror, Zine

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