

CONTESTING CAMPUS WATCH: MIDDLE EAST STUDIES UNDER FIRE, THE ACADEMY AND DEMOCRACY AT RISK

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ABSTRACT: *This paper tackles the centers for Middle East studies in the wake of 9/11. By then, some Middle East think tanks in the US launched an attack on scholars of the Middle East accusing them of being unpatriotic because they did not support the government's ambitions in the region. The attack on Middle East scholars included Edward Said and his pioneering work Orientalism and its multiple critique. Moreover, attackers renewed their 1980s on the feminist scholarship on the Middle East. In the summer of 2003 Stanley Kurt urged the House of Representatives to increase control of Middle East centers. His proposal became part of House Resolution 3077 that would put Homeland Security agencies in charge of the production of knowledge about the Middle East. Author of this paper believes that human debate about the meaning, viability and application of human rights and democracy must continue so as to secure and guarantee freedom of speech, human rights, democracy and production of knowledge within and beyond the US University.*

INTRODUCTION

All is not well in the House of Education. Parents are worried that the standards of the School are falling. And so, the Ministry of Magic has “passed new legislation giving itself an unprecedented level of control at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.” In order to obtain “on-the-ground feedback about what’s really happening at Hogwarts” the Ministry has created the position of High Inquisitor with “powers to inspect her fellow educators and make sure they are coming up to scratch.” The Inquisitor soon decides to control the teachers. Legislation is passed banning them from “giving students any information that is not strictly related to the subjects they are paid to teach.”

This isn’t just something J.K. Rowlings dreamt up for her latest volume in the Harry Potter series it is also a fair description of House Resolution

3077. This is the International Studies in Higher Education Act of 2003 that would give the US government greater control over federally funded international programs through a new International Education Advisory Board. This seven-member board would include two appointees from agencies that have national security responsibility. Due to go to the floor the Senate this month, HR 3077 is the brainchild of Campus Watch a group of think tank employees who have assigned themselves the task of keeping an eye on and correcting the production of knowledge about the Middle East.

The Cold War:

Since World War II, U.S. scholars of the Middle East, and particularly of the Arab world, have been caught between their government and its critics. They have been variously cast as allies and traitors, collaborators and dissidents, necessary to U.S. projects in the region and, when not, a threat to national security. They have had to walk the razor's edge between the love and hate of various constituencies.

The 1958 National Defense Higher Education Act (NDHEA) called for the training of "US citizens so that they could protect and advance US interests. This legislation responded to what was called an educational emergency (due to lack of knowledge of foreign languages and foreign cultures among US citizens) that created a problem for national defense."¹ The NDHEA was explicitly non-interventionist in the language: "Nothing in this act shall be construed to authorize any agency or employee of the United States to exercise any direction, supervision, or control over the curriculum, program of instruction, administration, or personnel of any educational institution or school system."² In 1965 the Higher Education Act launched Title VI, a federal program to fund the study of foreign languages and cultures in US universities.

During the 1960s and 1970s language and area specialists became important to the waging of the cold war, especially in the Middle East. They were considered key to successful foreign policy initiatives in the region. In 1978, Middle East scholars' implication in US policies in the region was highlighted and systematized with the publication of Edward Said's *Orientalism*.³ Said linked 19th century colonial ambitions of some European nation-states in Asia and Africa with scholarly expertise that rested on a foundation of intermeshing and mutually reinforcing racialized discourses. He put not only 19th but also 20th century Middle East academics, regardless of political orientation, in the dock. The network of interests connecting Europe and the US to the Orient, Said wrote, compelled scholars to confront the fact they "come up against the Orient as a European or American first, as an individual second. And to be a European or an American in such a situation is by no mean an inert fact. It meant and means being aware,

however dimly, that one belongs to a power with definite interests in the Orient.⁴ For those critical of US policy in the region and fearing their work might be appropriated for unintended purposes, Said prescribed a strategy: locate yourselves clearly vis-à-vis the Orient and specify your own narrative voice and “the kinds of images, themes, motifs that circulate in (the) text.”⁵

After Said, self-reflexivity became an essential first step in broaching any Middle Eastern subject. Careful attention to identity and the politics of location led to an acknowledgment of the stakes involved in the production of knowledge and, by extension, to a new awareness of readership: texts are neither transparent nor self-evident; they are read differently depending on where they are read and by whom. Post-colonial critique that owes so much to Said’s pioneering work implies multiple consciousness and entails multiple critique.⁶ For example, writing about feminism in the Arab world may have the intention of empowering women and celebrating global sisterhood, yet it may look more like the 19th century imperial rhetoric of saving women from their uncivilized men on behalf of Civilization. During the 1980s, feminist scholarship on the Middle East by US historians, literary critics and anthropologists was subjected to intense scrutiny; it was x-rayed for its neo-colonial motives.

Grand narratives of civilization, modernity, patriarchy and progress came under attack as the stakes of their proponents were interrogated and deconstructed. In order to avoid making totalizing claims, some US-based scholars took care to mark the location from which they wrote. Many incorporated post-colonial critique into their projects that became increasingly dialogic. It was not enough to “get it right” it was important to get it right the right way. A new attention to the needs and concerns of those about whom these scholars wrote produced multi-vocal texts that often projected the points of view of Arabs wary of US government policy in the region. Some US critics were outraged. Their charge of pro-Arab or pro-Muslim ideological conformity in Middle Eastern studies fuelled the conservative backlash of the late 1980s and 1990s.

After the Cold War:

The end of the cold war threw area studies into crisis. Why should the US government continue to fund the study of languages and cultures in regions where it did not face an overt threat? Who was the enemy now that the Soviet Union was gone? The crisis was attenuated in 1991 when President Bush launched the US imperial project in the region. Chastising Saddam Hussein for invading Kuwait in August 1990, Bush coordinated a multinational military operation to restore democracy, human rights and freedom to the little oil kingdom. Massive mobilization for the Gulf War allowed the US to begin its occupation of the region. The military operation

in the Arab Middle East had its counterpart at home. Americans with Arab heritage began to be stigmatized and their role in the academy came into question.

1992 was a pivotal year for area studies and for the Humanities. The new visibility of Arab-American scholars in Middle East studies led Barbara Aswad, then-president of the Middle East Studies Association (MESA), to celebrate their growing numbers in the Association. But not everyone welcomed them. The most vociferous in their protest were hardliner Israeli government advocates like Martin Kramer, who three years later would become director of Tel Aviv University's Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies. Kramer accused Arab-American members of MESA of fomenting the "ideological transformation" of the Association from a conservative (i.e., good) and patriotic (i.e., even better) profile to one critical of Western domination of the countries of the Middle East.⁷ In the eyes of Kramer and others like him, the production of knowledge about the Middle East that did not march in lockstep with US government policy was anti-American and beginning to be a matter of national security.

In 1992 Senator David Boren introduced the National Security Education Act that used Defense rather than Department of Education funding to support the study of languages of strategically important and sensitive areas of the world. Boren laid the groundwork for government funding of foreign languages and cultures that accorded with political and military needs. The NSA funding made these scholarships very controversial for potential grantees, especially students. The African Studies Association and MESA boycotted the program. This boycott fueled the ire of neo-conservatives linked to the government and its organizations and think tanks.

In 1992 also and in an apparently independent initiative Lynne Cheney, NEH chair from 1986-92, published Telling the Truth, her report on the lamentable state of the Humanities. She was following recommendations from the Christian Coalition's Contract with the American Family that stressed the need to privatize the humanities and the arts because they were being politicized: "Many academics and artists now see their purpose not as revealing truth or beauty, but as achieving social and political transformation. *Governments should not be funding those whose main interest is promoting an agenda*" (my emphasis).⁸ Cheney's dismal charting of failures in the Humanities ended with a call to trustees and alumni to intervene in the affairs of their colleges and universities.⁹ Cheney's salvo launched a multi-staged, multi-pronged attack on the Humanities for having weakened the foundations of the whole American educational enterprise. They had to be controlled and contained, lest they compromise western civilization.

In 1995, Lynne Cheney, together with Senator Joseph Lieberman, created the American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA). In view of her hopes for the enhanced role in higher education of trustees and alumni the Council is a natural outcome of her 1992 NEH manifesto. The ACTA mission statement invokes “academic freedom, excellence and accountability on college and university campuses. It supports programs and policies that encourage high academic standards, strong curricula and the free exchange of ideas.”¹⁰ The language of excellence and academic freedom veils an agenda that was disclosed in November 2001: to identify and eliminate undesirable people and projects in the US Academy.¹¹ Coming two months after 9/11, the ACTA’s 30-page report was entitled, “Defending Civilization: How Our Universities are Failing America and What Can Be Done About It.”¹² The report documented 115 instances of anti-Americanism on college campuses, and it became the cornerstone of a campaign to identify and harass unpatriotic academics.

9/11 and Campus Watch:

9/11 created a state of emergency in the US. The Department of Homeland Security was quickly created and then given broad-reaching investigatory powers. The name alone sent shivers down the spines of South Africans and others who have lived under totalitarian rule. President George W. Bush treated the catastrophe as an international act of war rather than a non-state act of terrorism. Instead of calling for police action to prosecute the criminals he declared war on the sovereign nation-state of Afghanistan not because it was responsible for the attacks but because its mountains harbored the al-Qaeda terrorists and their leader Usama Ben Laden. A year and a half later he extended the war on terror to yet another sovereign nation-state, Iraq.

The war on terror creates a state of emergency that suspends norms and sanctions otherwise unacceptable measures even in educational institutions. The most obvious examples are Title VI centers, particularly those focused on Middle East studies. They have become the target of neo-conservative lobbyists who accuse them of harboring anti-Semitic, dangerously anti-American elements.

In late September 2002 three neo-conservative, pro-Israel Middle East and South Asia scholars created an organization with its own website called Campus Watch. Each hailed from a conservative think tank and none had an official affiliation with a university. Daniel Pipes was director of the Middle East Forum, a think tank founded in 1990 with a mission to “define and promote American interests in the Middle East Y in particular, it believes in strong ties with Israel, Turkey, and other democracies as they emerge; works for human rights throughout the region; *seeks a stable supply and a*

low price of oil; and promotes the peaceful settlement of regional and international disputes.”¹³ Martin Kramer from 1995-2001 was director of the Moshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies, formerly the Shiloah Institute¹⁴ and since 2001 has been editor of the Middle East Quarterly, a publication of Pipes’ Middle East Forum. Stanley Kurtz is a fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University and a contributing editor to the *National Review*. For quite some time Pipes, Kramer and Kurtz have individually been critical of area studies scholars who do not agree with them. They are now pooling their energies through Campus Watch, a new venue for promoting their special interests.

Campus Watch is an extension of the Middle East Forum. It has assigned itself the task of reviewing and critiquing Middle East studies in North America “with an aim to improving them. The project mainly addresses five problems: analytical failures¹⁵, the mixing of politics with scholarship, intolerance of alternative views, apologetics, and the abuse of power over students. Campus Watch fully respects the freedom of speech of those it debates while insisting on its own freedom to comment on their words and deeds.”¹⁶

Academic freedom is so precious that it entails defense that entails surveillance. To quote Lynne Cheney’s 1992 anti-Humanities manifesto, when the pursuit of truth and objectivity “is hindered from within academic freedom may well require those outside the department--and outside the university--to speak in its defense.”¹⁷ Cheney is giving license to non-academics to monitor professors in their classrooms and the content of their courses. Surveillance is at the heart of a culturally restrictive fundamentalist definition of academic freedom. On its website Campus Watch openly advertises its call for reports from students and faculty: the *original research* that Campus Watch produces is based in part on reports and other information provided by students and faculty on North American campuses. Indeed, relevant reports that reflect an insider’s view of Middle Eastern studies add an important element to our work.” Reporting on colleagues or teachers can be done on-line. They emphasize that information “*not yet published* or only reported in the local/campus press is most useful to us.”

Campus Watch student monitors and faculty are at work in North Carolina. On Nov. 29 2002, the Campus Watch site announced: “At Duke and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Jewish students are training to be better advocates for the Jewish state. The new activism comes in reaction to a petition now circulating at UNC that calls for divestment from Israel.” Never do they mention that such divestment was specifically connected with companies that produce equipment that may be used to damage or kill Palestinians. The call for divestment is simply labeled anti-Semitic. This is the strategy of Campus Watch: attach the label anti-Semitic

to undesirables whether the label fits or not.

Gary Hull of Duke University's Sociology Department is on the Campus Watch board. On their site under Endorsements, Dr. Hull praises Campus Watch, declaring: "With rare exceptions, humanities professors who hate America dominate our universities, there is no greater threat to the future of Western Civilization and America than the rise of militant Islam. Yet our scholars, especially many of those in Middle East Studies, argue that there is no moral distinction between militant Islam - which seeks slavery and murder - and America and her allies, such as Israel. As an antidote to academia's incessant anti-Americanism, I highly recommend a tremendously courageous organization: Campus Watch. Spearheaded by Middle East expert Daniel Pipes, the goal of this scholarly organization is to expose and combat the anti-American propaganda being taught to students, and fed to the media and policy makers. The future of Western Civilization depends on such noble efforts." I quote Dr. Hull at length not only because his language parrots that of other Campus Watch advocates but also because Pipes, Kramer and Kurtz have complained that their critics do not quote them but only distort their words.

During the summer and fall of 2003, Duke University's Middle East resource specialist found himself the target of "such noble efforts." A Berkeley-trained librarian, he had created a Palestine Internet Resources page that he linked to the home page of Duke University's Perkins Library. It attracted systematic and belligerent attacks led by a graduate student in the classics department. This student went to university officials, including the Provost, to demand changes in the site. The librarians made some changes but refused to remove it. The student remained shrill, regretting that the "library has learned no lesson."

But is there a lesson to be learned? It seems not. Rather, this is a call for ignorance and not for learning. The student's language merely parrots what the Campus Watch leaders say: knowledge about the Arab Middle East contaminates. Listen to Kramer on May 9, 2003 blurting out his opposition to production of knowledge about the Middle East: "the U.S. government decision, after 9/11, to double the number of scholarships in Muslim languages will only mean that in the next crisis, there will be even more experts urging us to stay home, lest we enrage the 'Arab street.' The U.S. doesn't need a lot of new grads to explain "why they hate us." What it needs are people who are so persuaded of its mission in the world that they are prepared to undergo some hardship and risk to advance it. I happen to think that calling that mission empire just gets in the way.¹⁸ But whatever that mission is called, its bearers have to be persuaded that it is the worthiest of causes. That demands cultural *self-esteem* and *self-mastery* as the true purpose of an elite education. It doesn't require a working knowledge of

Arabic.”¹⁹

Kramer, Kurtz and Pipes are of course right. People who are persuaded that the US mission in the world entails a blanket endorsement of American norms and values should avoid learning about those whom this mission threatens. Why? Because anyone who studies the Middle East or becomes a specialist in the region will learn that the US intentions in the region have relatively deep roots and relatively strong branches. They need go no farther than the mission statement of Pipes’ Middle East Forum (cited above) to find that one of its key objectives is to “define and promote American interests in the Middle East.” Reading on they will see that the goals of such a think tank and those connected with it is to “work for human rights” even while, and in the very same breath, they focus on assuring “stable supply and a low price of oil.” Reading a connection between human rights and oil, Middle East students will probably detect a contradiction of interests in this defense of human rights and oil (whose rights? Whose oil?), and they may not be persuaded that the US mission is the “worthiest of causes.” Consequently, they may well be led to “urge us to stay home”

Kramer’s advocacy of ignorance seems to be business-as-usual for 21st century US policymakers. Political scientist and Korea specialist Bruce Cumings writes that the American intelligence system, that includes the universities and the think tanks, “promotes state policy based on ignorance (further, it) will cement the necessity, the naturalness of the elite’s ignorant dangerous biases.”²⁰ But what does ignorance mean? It does not mean that anyone should not know anything, but that someone else should know something else. Ignorance means demanding a platform for those who have defined what the single and “true purpose of an elite education” might be and the silencing of those who dissent from this singular definition. Ignorance means affirmative action for neo-conservative ideas that are so extreme that even conservatives find them unpalatable.²¹

What is at stake here is academic freedom and the contradictory claim that it must be protected by surveillance, control and ignorance. When the nation is in extreme distress, educational institutions must devote themselves to the national project. There is an historical precedent for this rhetorical linking of academic freedom and its suspension as though they were the same thing. In her brilliant account of the roles of various institutions and individuals in shaping the Nazi conscience, Claudia Koonz has revealed how dangerous was the tailoring of education for specifically national purposes.²²

Authorizing Intervention:

These protests and calls for diversity of opinions cannot be dismissed merely because they clearly cover a self-serving agenda. They must be

understood for what they are and then opposed, because they have become influential. Campus Watch may invoke the nation in distress, yet it is less interested in combating terrorism than it is in reshaping national culture within the University.

It is instructive to think back to Bill Readings who in 1996 had warned of the corporatization of the US University. National culture, he wrote, “no longer provides an overarching ideological meaning for what goes on in the University, and as a result, what exactly gets taught or produced as knowledge matters less and less.”²³ Campus Watch suggests the opposite: since the Gulf War in 1991, but more starkly since 9/11, a new idea of national culture has been emerging that does not rely on shared language, religion or mythical, legal and artistic practices. It is the national culture of a newly conceived and symbolically unified nation-empire, and it is driving the kind of knowledge scholars, and particularly Middle East scholars, are expected to produce. Pace Readings, what gets to be taught or produced as knowledge matters more and more, especially to government officials and likeminded think tanks that see knowledge production only in patriotic, imperial terms!

The service university professors do or do not provide national culture, a.k.a. homeland security and the war on terror, calibrates the amount of fiscal support they are to receive and the amount of surveillance they must expect. Their non-compliance may threaten their futures. Columbia’s untenured professor of Political Science Joseph Massad had dared to criticize the terrorist tactics of the Campus Watch team in the Egyptian *Ahram Weekly*.²⁴ His essay brought a rejoinder from Martin Kramer, at once a rebuke and a threat. Professor Massad, wrote Kramer, has “failed to learn from (Edward) Said that you lie low until you have tenure, but that’s another matter.”²⁵

Such threats roll easily off the pens of the Campus Watch monitors and their supporters. Many Middle East scholars have been sent messages that range from racist to obscene to threatening. Columbia University seems to be an especially inviting target. Hamid Dabashi, chair of Columbia’s Middle East and Asian Languages and Cultures Department, earned the displeasure of Daniel Pipes. On June 25, 2003 Pipes wrote an article in the New York Post attacking certain Middle East scholars, Dabashi included, for their “anti-American, anti-Israeli and pro-terrorist sentiments. A barrage of threatening emails ensued. One announced: We are watching you. We know you are the enemy of this country, and we are going to get you. We know where you live, we know where you work.”²⁶

While the immediate targets of Campus Watch may be individuals, their long-term goal is to change national culture and educational policy vis-à-vis the Middle East. To this end, Pipes, Kramer and Kurtz work in

tandem. In July 2003, after a nationally orchestrated opposition to his nomination had appeared to succeed, President Bush approved a backdoor appointment for Daniel Pipes to the board of directors of the US Institute for Peace. This happened less than a month after Stanley Kurtz had given his testimony on “International Programs in Higher Education and Questions of Bias” before the Select Education Subcommittee of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce. The goal of Kurtz’s June 19 testimony was to expose the danger of scholars affiliated with Title VI Middle East centers and especially those critical of Senator Boren’s National Security Education Program (NSEP). Kurtz characterized them all as “abusing Title VI of the Higher Education Act and tend(ing) to purvey extreme and one-sided criticisms of American foreign policy.”²⁷

The major thrust of Kurtz’s attack was post-colonial theory and its architect Edward Said. Kurtz accused Said of introducing an anti-American theoretical paradigm into the academy. Post-colonial theory, laments Kurtz, has become “the ruling intellectual paradigm in academic area studies.” For the sake of national security, Kurtz called for the control of Said (who died in September 2003) and his Alike-minded colleagues.” During the twenty-five years that have elapsed since its publication Orientalism has garnered a wide range of criticism. Yet, the Campus Watch spokespersons have turned this book and its author into the uncomplicated vessel of mass unpatriotic sentiment, especially in the Humanities.

Martin Kramer anticipated the Campus Watch attack on Edward Said in Ivory Towers on Sand: The Failure of Middle East Studies in America. It was published by a pro-Israeli think tank called the Washington Institute for Near East Policy (WINEP) in 2001, in other words almost simultaneously with 9/11. Zachary Lockman shows how the book provides much of the language and justifications for the current attack on Middle Eastern Studies in the US. He questions Kramer’s insistence on correct predictions as a valid gauge of Middle East expertise. Ironically, it was Said who had written that the assumption that the future of the Orient is predictable because it is determined by its essential and a-historical characteristics is one of the most offensive conceits of Orientalism.²⁸ Lockman points out how enthusiastically mainstream media greeted the book: “Shortly after it appeared, Ivory Towers was favorably blurbed in the Chronicle of Higher Education and the Washington Post, and prominently featured in the New York Times. It was also the inspiration for a spate of critical articles on the Middle East Studies Association (MESA), the main North American professional association of Middle East specialists, in such magazines as the National Review, Commentary and the New Republic.²⁹ Not until the end of Ivory Towers, notes Lockman, does Kramer explicitly lay out “a political and moral judgment rooted in his own (theoretical) vision of the world: his

insistence that a healthy, reconstructed Middle East studies must accept that the US plays an essentially beneficent role in the world.” He does not bother to tell readers why they should accept this vision of the US role in the world as true.³⁰

In his testimony before Congress Stanley Kurtz was merely repeating what Martin Kramer had written in *Ivory Towers on Sand* and the mainstream media had praised.³¹ Kurtz’s solution to the crisis in Higher Education involved the appointment of a supervisory board for Title VI to include “policy makers and policy experts from think tanks (who) would oversee the work of area selection panels Y to make certain that due consideration was given to *national interest* (my emphasis). Additionally, he called for an “amendment that would remove Title VI funding from any center that engages in or abets a boycott of national security related scholarships (i.e., NSEP funding).”³² He also called for redirection of the \$20 million added to Title VI after 9/11 to the Defense Language Institute and to NSEP.

In October 2003, the House of Representatives subcommittee unanimously and by voice vote approved Kurtz’s slightly adjusted recommendations. They had become part of House Resolution 3077, the International Studies in Higher Education Act of 2003 that reauthorizes the Higher Education Act and renews Title VI programs. H.R.3077 would give the government greater control over Title VI programs through a new advisory board that will no longer be a part of the Department of Education but would second members from intelligence agencies or the Department of Homeland Security. The term “advisory” replaced Kurtz’s requested “supervisory”. Section 6 of the bill describes an independent International Education Advisory Board that will “advise Congress and the Secretary on title VI programs in relation to national needs with respect to *homeland security*, international education, international affairs, and foreign language training” (my emphasis). This advisory board would be given virtually unlimited authority thus contravening the non-interventionist language of the 1958 NDHEA.³³ The announcement of this International Education Advisory Board has caused many in the American Academy to fear that HR 3077 will undercut legislative safeguards to academic freedom.³⁴

Building a National-Imperial University:

Let me be blunt: Academic freedom is *not* good for national security when it is premised on the silencing of any critique of US imperial policy in the Middle East. Academic freedom is *not* good for the national-imperial US University. Commitment to a single interpretation of patriotism is giving content to a nation that Readings had described as having “no intrinsic cultural *content*.”³⁵ The national-imperial culture of the post-9/11 US does

not seek to foster ethnic, racial, linguistic, religious, or mythical cohesion, nor does it consist of spectacles like bullfights or the changing of the guard at Buckingham Palace or football. Rather the content of post-9/11 US national-imperial culture is the sharing of values like love of freedom, human rights and democracy, terms that have been defined in specific ways that do not admit of discussion. These shared values shape the Bush Doctrine declared in March 2003: the export of democracy to Iraq that would then become its beacon in the region. Like Dallas, jeans and cowboy boots, these values are exportable commodities. The post-9/11 US national culture is always already imperial and for the national-imperial project to succeed it must be furthered through the transformation of education policy.

The stakes of today's US national-imperial University are becoming precisely what Readings in 1996 claimed they were not, in other words "ideological" because they are "tied to the self-reproduction of the nation-state."³⁶ It is hard today to share Readings, hope that "the loss of the University's cultural function opens up a space in which it is possible to think the notion of community otherwise, without recourse to notions of unity, consensus, and communication. At this point, the University becomes no longer a model of the ideal society but rather a place where the impossibility of such models can be thought."³⁷ This vision of the utopian possibilities of the corporate University now seem outdated at best, complicit with the national-imperial project at worst. What Campus Watch and its sponsors want is precisely that single "model of the ideal society one that is so singular that it will brook no opposition and tolerate no difference."³⁸

Homeland security is playing a determining role in today's US national-imperial University and in shaping the kind of citizens who are considered valuable or threatening. How can Middle East specialists continue to research and write responsibly without being caught in the Campus Watch trap? How can they make their writing an instrument of justice and peace? How can they critique the tyranny of ruthless rulers like Saddam Hussein or Hafiz Al-Assad without falling into the arms of the Campus Watch advocates and thereby working toward the perpetration of greater injustices? Is there a place for dissent in the national-imperial University? If there is, what shape is it to take?

After Theory:

The answers to these questions may entail a reassessment of the political impact of thirty years of cultural theory and particularly the pioneering work of intellectuals like Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault. These questions may compel us to re-engage with dominant paradigms and grand narratives. Already in 1994, Bryan Turner had begun to point to the difficulty of

deriving “a coherent political position... (and) systematic radical politics from Foucault’s critical analysis... Deconstruction as a technique merely identified the problems of representation without offering many solutions.”³⁹ In *After Theory* Terry Eagleton faults postmodernists, post-colonialists and anti-foundationalists whose projects were at one time philosophically powerful but have now become politically disabling. During the 1980s, he writes, the revolutionary agendas of 1960s “third worldism” and Marxism gave way to deconstructive attacks on the post-Enlightenment grand narratives of civilization, progress, truth and reality. The terrible irony, Eagleton notes, is that even while the examination of meta-narratives was revealing what were the individual and institutional stakes in maintaining such a discourse, global capital was systematically sucking post-colonial states into its orbit.⁴⁰ The outcome has been a “dispirited pragmatism”⁴¹ that has served to undermine political action at a time when political and religious fundamentalists are mounting an offensive on the Humanities and the arts precisely in the name of civilization, progress, truth and reality.

Eagleton proposes that “cultural theory must start thinking ambitiously once again, so that it can seek to make sense of the grand narratives in which it is now embroiled.”⁴² This is no easy task for traditional leftist thought, he writes, because “when postmodernists turn their thoughts to universality, they see it first of all in terms of values and ideas. This, as it happens, is just the way George Bush sees it too. This is an idealist, not a materialist conception of universality.”⁴³ Eagleton exhorts us to return to the socialist project of “freedom and autonomy in and through the self-realization of others Y you cannot really have this process of reciprocal self-realization except among equals.”⁴⁴ Socialism returns us to a robust notion of human solidarity and also to utopian thinking that is, above all, framed in dialectical terms. What this means is that academic freedom and government surveillance must be thought together; progress and failure are understood to be aspects of the same story. Dialectical thinking confronts opposites not to resolve their contradiction but to redeploy them, to reveal, for instance, how the conditions enabling emancipation may be responsible also for domination.

The key is not categorically to deny truth and reality, not to be drawn into the monological and fetishistic world of the fundamentalists, but rather to make sense of the diverse, pragmatic, contingent and conflicting forms that universal truths assume across time and space. In *Learning Places*, a volume of essays devoted to an examination of the afterlife of area studies, scholars from various disciplines assert the need for a radical revision of cultural theory and a re-evaluation of universalities in order to restore “public vigor” to meta-narratives in the service of a reinvigorated cultural

politics.⁴⁵ Chow also urges the return of meta-discourses' because they continue to shape the ways we think, even in opposition. The duty of educators is "to train our students to read--to read arguments on their own terms rather than discarding them perfunctorily and prematurely--not in order to find out about authors' original intent but in order to ask, Under what circumstances would such an argument--no matter how preposterous--make sense? With what assumptions does it produce meanings? In what ways does it legitimate certain kinds of cultures while subordinating or outlawing others?"⁴⁶

Middle East scholars should address Chow's questions to the language and spirit of Campus Watch pronouncements and also to HR 3077 because this bill is based on arguments that until recently we "perfunctorily and prematurely" discarded. We need to train our students--but also ourselves I suspect -- to "read arguments on their own terms Y not in order to find out about authors' original intent but in order to ask, Under what circumstances would such an argument--no matter how preposterous--make sense? With what assumptions does it produce meanings?" Chow helps us to understand how HR 3077 may serve to "legitimate one kind of culture while subordinating or outlawing others." The increasing visibility of Campus Watch leaders in government institutions and the success of HR 3077 have made it clear that we must take preposterous arguments seriously because they make sense to people in Congress and the White House who decide what constitutes patriotism and academic freedom.

The return to politically effective discourses and strategies entails connecting the dots, looking out at the world and interconnecting "all the workings of political economic and artistic and cultural production."⁴⁷ Individuals, institutions, think tanks and government programs need to be linked internally and then to each other. How, for example, has Lynne Cheney, wife of the US vice-president Dick Cheney with oil interests in the region and mother of Liz Cheney who is Under-Secretary of State for Middle East Affairs with a special interest in women,⁴⁸ influenced the current face-off between neo-conservative and progressive, but also conservative, scholars of the Middle East? We need to follow her career from senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute to chair of NEH and author of Telling the Truth where she wrote: "In the last few years, as we have come to know what life was like under totalitarian regimes... we have seen how impoverished existence is when people are not permitted to pursue their insights and pass them along. We have also learned that suppressing thought that is ideologically inconvenient does not work." After her term in office at the NEH ended she became a founder of ACTA.

We need to think about think tanks with their generous government funding and access to Congress and the White House and their

extraordinary fascination with scholarship on the Middle East, and to ask whether they are catalysts for debate and disagreements that are at the heart of academic freedom or are they ideological engines? What role do the Hoover Institution, the Middle East Forum, the American Enterprise Institute, the American Council of Trustees and Alumni, and the Washington Institute for Near East Policy play in demonizing the majority of Middle East scholars in the US while promoting a few quasi-academics? Paul Bove has written that the political Right has decided to destroy the university as a place of intellectual work significant to society substituting activist politics as a replacement for anything approaching rigor or, if you will, disinterest in the production of knowledge about US society. In so doing, the right merely follows a path already well marked out by the history of its involvement with think tanks (whose principal aims were) to generate new naturalizing representations of a predatory transnational capital and to produce new kinds of public relations intellectuals always ready and available to operate in the media, on TV, in op-ed pages, and, when necessary, in government and foundations.”⁴⁹

Tracking those connections across time and space will help to uncover the ideological apparatus of the national-imperial state that strives to render Middle East specialists in particular, but also academics in general, irrelevant. They are irrelevant today not because they are unimportant as in the corporate University, but because they are absolutely “wrong” and therefore dangerous in a security environment where the parameters of what gets to be counted as truth are being drawn and policed by self-appointed “patriots” who will tolerate only one definition for freedom, human rights and democracy.

A key contribution of postmodernists to the production of knowledge was to question structures of power. However, their labor worked into the hands of today’s neo-conservatives who have described such academic inquiry as irrelevant at best, unpatriotic at worst. Miyoshi and others fascinated by the idea of the Corporate University and who blame the “demoralization and fragmentation, such loss of direction and purpose (on) the stunning silence, the fearful disengagement”⁵⁰ of the Humanities community, should be directing their attention and anger to Lynne Cheney, Campus Watch and the many well funded and strategically located think tanks who have consistently demonized them. There is no fragmentation at the top. What bonds this totality is not just the seamless domination of capital ⁵¹ but, and much more importantly, its use in the service of empire.

CONCLUSION

Campus Watch is the Trojan horse whose warriors are already changing the rules of the game not only in Middle East studies but also in the US

University as a whole. They threaten to undermine the very foundations of American education. Their project must be challenged. Even Harry Potter knows that freedom, human rights and democracy can only survive if there is debate about their meaning, their viability and their application within and beyond the US University.

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END NOTES

- 1- "Emergency Resolution 2003-A" presented to the MLA Delegate Assembly Meeting 29. 12. 2003, p. 2.
- 2- <http://ishi.lib.berkeley.edu/cshe?ndea.html>
- 3- The term Orientalism was added to the vocabulary of many languages as a name for hegemonic ideology of domination. This was to be the beginning of a new paradigm for equality and the open mind. In the context of the dominant practice of the Eurocentric formulation of knowledge, however, the anti-Orientalist criticism was looked on as a disturbing challenge. To the academic establishment, it was a movement of rebellion and resistance at least at the initial stage. See, Miyoshi "Ivory Tower in Escrow" 2003, pp 283-284.
- 4- Edward Said. Orientalism. (London: Vinatge Books, 1987), p. 11.
- 5- Said. Orientalism, p. 20.
- 6- See, miriam cooke. Women Claim Islam: Creating Islamic Feminism through Literature. NY: Routledge, p. 2001.
- 7- See, http://geocities.com/martinkramerorg/2003_04_02.htm
- 8- Excerpts from Paul Bove, "Can American Studies Be Area Studies?" in Miyoshi and Harootunian, Learning Places: The Afterlives of Area Studies. (N.C: Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), p. 213.
- 9- Lynne Cheney, Telling the Truth: A Report on the State of the Humanities in Higher Education, (Washington DC: National Endowment for the Humanities, 1992), pp. 49-51.
- 10- See <http://geocities.org> For critique of the ACTA that has been called the Patriotic Police, see sites like <http://www.mediatransparency.org/recipients/naf.htm> and <http://www.commondreams.org/views01/naf.htm>
- 11- The MLA 2003-A Emergency Resolution elaborates that the ACTA with its obvious ties to Congress and the White House has also been actively involved in hearings, resolutions, and legislative initiatives.
- 12- Two months after 9/11, the ACTA issued 30-page report entitled, "Defending Civilization: How Our Universities are Failing America and

What Can Be Done About It.”

- 13- For a collection of articles about pipes see http://www.cair-net.org/misc/people/daniel_pipes.html
- 14- In his essay “Behind the Battle over Middle East studies” in MERIP on line (January 2004, 5) Zachary Lockman writes: “The Dayan Center, which describes itself as “an interdisciplinary research of the Middle East, is named after the famous Israeli general and politician, but it incorporated and superceded an older institution, the Shiloah Institute, named after Reuven Shiloah, the founder of Israeli’s intelligence and security apparatus. Both the old and new name reflect the Center’s ongoing role as not merely an scholarly institution (though there have certainly been some serious scholars associated with it), but also as a key site where senior Israeli military, foreign policy and intelligence officials can interact with academic working on policy-relevant issues.”
- 15- Failure is a favorite word of Camp Watch and Lynne Cheney.
- 16- See <http://www.campus-watch.org/about.php>
- 17- Lynne Cheney, Telling the Truth, 1992, p. 35.
- 18- It is worth noting how Kramer uses the word “empire” to trivialize it. His language recalls what Edward Said wrote about “the literary-cultural establishment as a whole (that) declared the serious study of imperialism and culture off limits. For Orientalism brings one up directly against the question—that is, to realizing that political imperialism governs an entire field of study, imagination, and scholarly institution—in such a way as to make its avoidance an intellectual and historical impossibility.” (Edward Said, Orientalism. London: Vintage Books, 1978), pp. 13-14.
- 19- See http://www.geocities.com/martinkramerorg/2003_05_09.htm
- 20- See Paul Bove, “Can American Studies Be Area Studies?” 2002, p. 219
- 21- See Anders Strindberg, “The New Commissars” in http://www.amconmag.com/2_2_04
- 22- In her book The Nazi Conscious, Claudia Knooz writes: In his inaugural speech as rector of Friburg University Martin Heidegger said: “Out of the resoluteness of the German students to stand their ground while German destiny is in its most extreme distress comes a will to the essence of the university. To give oneself to the law is the highest freedom. The much lauded “academic freedom” will be expelled from the German university; for this freedom was not genuine because it was only negative. The new understanding of freedom entails three bonds. The first is to national community and it will be fixed and rooted in the existence of the student by means of Labor Service (Arbeistdienst). The second bond to the honor and the destiny of the nation (and it will)

- encompass and penetrate the entire existence of the student as Military Service (Wehrdienst). The third bond is to the spiritual mission of the German people. That is accomplished through Knowledge Service (Wissensdienst). These three sciences constitute the primordial concept of science that is the essence of the German university and it is this science that must become the power that shapes the body of the German university. (It) must intervene in and rearrange the basic forms in which the teachers and students act in a specific community.” (Neske & Kettering, Martin Heidegger and National Socialism. Questions and Answers. NY: Paragon House, 1990. 1990), pp. 10-11.
- 23- Bill Readings, The University in Ruin. (Cambridge: Harvard U. P., 1996), p. 13.
- 24- Al-Ahram Weekly (April 2003 # 633).
- 25- Al-Ahram Weekly. # 633.
- 26- Hamid Dabashi, “Forget Reds under Beds, there’s Arabs in the Attic” in NYT Higher Education Supplement, 17th October 2003.
- 27- See <http://www.campus-watch.org/about.php>
- 28- Said, Orientalism, p. 23.
- 29- Zachary Lockman, “Behind the Battle over Middle East studies” in MERIP on Line, January, 2004, p. 2.
- 30- Lockman, p. 10.
- 31- So approved had Kramer felt on April 16, 2003 that he opined that within ten years, (Saidians) will be turned out of *my* field, Middle Eastern studies, by a new generation for whom Orientalism already reads like a cuneiform inscription. Though a para-academic with no university affiliation, Kramer defiantly claims the field of Middle East studies for himself! One wonders whether Kramer was consciously using the Orientalist language of a Renan, de Sacy or Lane who, according to Said, claimed the Orient and its inhabitants as their property (Said 1978, 233). Or is he unconsciously replicating a discourse replete with the kind of *idees reçues* that Said so clearly delineated and debunked in the very same book that Kramer has gone to such pains to debunk? Kramer’s field of Middle East studies includes the “good” academics like Bernard Lewsi, Fouad Ajami and 36 others formally announced on 20 January 2004. We also know from ACTA and the campus Watch site that he and his colleagues already are collecting the names of the undesirables in universities who will be turned out of my field. This polarization of Middle East studies between good and bad scholars recalls again 1933 Germany when the party began to purge teachers’ ranks of so-called un-desirables. (See Claudia Koonz, The Nazi Conscience, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), p. 135.

- 32- See Stanley Kurt in <http://www.campus-watch.org/about.php>
- 33- Emergency Resolution 2003-A presented to the MLA Delegate Assembly Meeting 29 December 2003, p. 1.
- 34- In a memorandum sent to the Latin American Studies Association in January 2004 Duke University Vice-Provost for International Studies, Gilbert Merx clarifies that despite a prohibition against control of curriculum by the Board (Section 633 (b)), the Board can pretty much do what it wants. (It can) probe into grantee activities in a way that could be discriminatory or prejudicial. The Board can draw on the resources of any federal agencies, including the intelligence and law enforcement, and facilities of other agencies. For information see Section 633 (g) (4) (A). Moreover, the Board is authorized to utilize with their consent, the services, personnel, information, and facilities of other agencies. The Board is empowered to give contracts for the purpose of obtaining information and to hire consultants without regard for section 3109 of Title VI, United States Code, exempting it from federal regulations for contracting and hiring (Sec. 633 (g) (5). Thus the Board, if it wanted to, could contract with the Hoover Institution or the Heritage Foundation to carry out its work. Advisory boards normally advise the agency that administers a program. However, in this case the Board shall be independent of the Secretary and of the other officers and offices of the Department [of Education] (Sec. 633 (b). The Board would have seven members that include two from national security agencies, rather than play significant international roles.
- 35- Readings, The University in Ruins. p. 34.
- 36- Readings, The University in Ruins p. 14.
- 37- Readings, The University in Ruins p. 20.
- 38- Heidegger also called for just such a single model: the faculty of the German university "is a faculty only if it becomes capable of spiritual legislation, and, rooted in the essence of its science, able to shape the powers of existence that pressure *it* into the *one* spiritual world of the people." Students, too, must keep focused on this goal so that with their teachers they become "encompassed by the *same* final necessities and pressing concerns of the existence of people and state." So important was the struggle to advance the single model of the German university that Heidegger called it a battle" (Neske & Kettering Martin Heidegger and National Socialism. Questions and Answers. NY: Paragon House, 1990), pp.11-12, 13.
- 39- Bryan S. Turner. Orientalism, Postmodernism and Globalism, (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 6.
- 40- Terry Eagleton, After Theory (NY: Basic Books 2003), p. 10.

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- 41- Eagelton, After Theory. P. 52.
 - 42- Eagelton, After Theory. P. 73.
 - 43- Eagelton, After Theory. P. 160.
 - 44- Eagelton, After Theory. P. 170.
 - 45- Miyoshi, "Ivory Tower in Escrow," 2002, p. 49.
 - 46- A. Chow, "Theory, Area Studies, Cultural Studies," 2002, p. 115.
 - 47- Miyoshi "Turn to the Planet: Literature, Diversity and Totality" in Comparative Literature (2001), p. 295.
 - 48- Liz Cheney presided over a CIA-organized workshop entitled "Women as Agents of Change in the Middle East" in February 2003. The agenda for the workshop was to identify needy women in the Middle East, particularly in place where the US military is installed, so that the current \$29 million allocation might be raised to \$ 124 million. Any suggestion that such a policy recalled the British colonial invocation of women's abuse at the hands of their barbarian men in order to justify cultural, political and military intervention in 19th century India and Egypt was met with angry denial.
 - 49- Paul Bove, "Can American Studies Be Area Studies?" 2002, pp.214-215.
 - 50- Miyoshi, "Ivory Tower in Escrow," 2002, p. 48.
 - 51- Miyoshi, "Ivory Tower in Escrow," 2002, p. 48.

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