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Psychoanalysis, "Islam," and the Other of Liberalism

Historically, psychoanalysis did not take "Islam" as an object of study, as a concern, or as a problem. Except for Freud's passing comments in *Moses and Monotheism* about "the founding of the Mohammedan religion" seeming to be "an abbreviated repetition of the Jewish one, of which it emerged as an imitation," little was written on the topic.[1] Indeed, psychoanalytic studies on religion have been remarkable for the absence of any mention of Islam. This includes, for example, the early study by Erich Fromm on the topic, which makes no mention at all of Islam, while attending to Christianity, Judaism, "Buddhism," and "Hinduism."[2] Psychoanalysts and psychoanalytic thinkers working more recently on the object called "Islam" have, however, become active participants in the process of multiplying its significations, referents, and antonyms with little self-questioning or analysis of what they are doing.

In addition to Arab clinical psychoanalysts trained in France and the United Kingdom, who began to practice and teach in Egyptian universities during the 1930s and after and to translate works of Freud and other psychoanalysts,[3] Arab intellectuals showed an early interest in psychoanalytic knowledge, especially in studies of the unconscious.[4] Yet those who employed a psychoanalytic method were not interested in applying it to the Qurʾan, or the biography of the Prophet, or "Islam" *tout court*,[5] but used it rather for cultural analyses that took as their subjects secular historical figures such as the medieval poet Abu Nuwas,[6] or modern Arabic literature (especially novels),[7] or the "group neurosis" said to afflict contemporary Arab intellectuals working on the question of culture and modernity.[8] The Moroccan intellectual Abdelkebir Khatibi once noted in this regard that "in short, one could say that Islam is an empty space in the theory of psychoanalysis."[9] While psychoanalytic works, especially those of Freud, were translated into Arabic and engaged with seriously by Arab intellectuals from across the Arab world, those works of Freud's that dealt with religion and civilization (*The Future of an Illusion*, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, and *Moses and Monotheism*), as their Arabic translator Jurj Tarabishi states, were latecomers to the Arabic library on account of the very topics they discuss.[10] Tarabishi, in his 1974 introduction to the Arabic translation of *The Future of an Illusion*, does add that Freud's Western readers had also failed to appreciate the importance of these works because of the topics they engaged.[11]

More recently, however, there have emerged a number of psychoanalytic attempts to evaluate critically not only Islam as religion, its scriptures, and theological tradition, but also contemporary Islamist movements, often conflated with/as "Islam." While an American-based Indian Muslim psychoanalyst wants to showcase the contributions of Muslim immigrant psychoanalysts to psychoanalysis (which did not include writings on Islam and psychoanalysis), and another speaks of her experience with anti-Muslim analysands in the United States,[12] Arab psychoanalysts and psychoanalytic thinkers—including Moustapha Safouan (Egyptian), Fethi Benslama (Tunisian), Adnan Houbballah (Lebanese), Khatibi (Moroccan), and Tarabishi (Syrian), to name the most prominent, who are without exception male and living in France, and whose psychoanalytic writings (except for Tarabishi, who is the only one writing in Arabic and who writes on Arab intellectuals and Arabic literature)[13] are mostly written in French and focus on "Islam"—started to write on the linkage between Islam and psychoanalysis in the context of the rise of Islamisms, the phenomenon of which seems to have triggered their interventions.[14] Khatibi is the first to have broached the subject, initially in a text he wrote in 1984 (and published in 1988) on the Prophetic Message.[15] He later revisited his article and its conclusions from a more explicitly psychoanalytic angle in a 1987 lecture at a colloquium Benslama

and he had organized on "The question of psychoanalysis in the area around [*aux abords de*] Islam," held at the Collège International de Philosophie in May 1987. Khatibi's paper and the other colloquium papers were published in 1991 in the first issue of the journal *Cahiers Intersignes*, edited by Benslama. One of Khatibi's more interesting points has to do with the Prophet's "sacrifice" of his "signature" on the Qurʾan as book to God. This sacrifice, Khatibi claims, is the condition of Muhammad becoming a prophet.[16] Khatibi has nothing to say about contemporary Islamisms or Islamists in these texts.[17]

The approach of the other writers, however, as we will see, is characterized by a perception on their part that "Islamism" is a "return of the repressed" of something that should, according to these thinkers, have disappeared long ago. Benslama, for example, states explicitly: "This generation [of Arab and Muslim intellectuals], which opened its eyes at the end of colonialism and the beginning of the establishment of the nation-state, thought that it had finished with religion, that it would never again be a question in the organization of society."[18] Algerian anthropologist and psychoanalytic thinker Malek Chebel, who also lives in France and writes in French, states without equivocation that Islamism, as "theological awakening," constitutes the "return of the repressed and what is repressed is always related to childhood and what Islam is experiencing at the moment is a return to the period of childhood."[19] Houbballah speaks of Islam's "waking up" to face possible dangers.[20] What is not thought in these propositions, though, is the possibility that the return of the repressed is a feature of these thinkers' own anxiety and not only, or necessarily, that of other Muslims or Islamists. This "return" reopens the scene of the trauma, for these thinkers, of the persistence of Islam as *not only* "religion" in the life of Arabs and Muslims; and this causes some of our psychoanalytic thinkers "embarrassment" and "shame" before their European counterparts and, more importantly, before their Europeanized selves.[21] Indeed, much of their writing on this question displays a deep narcissistic injury suffered by these writers, who as Arabs and Muslims, as *Europeanized* Arabs and Muslims, who grew up in modernizing times and sought Europeanization as the telos of modernity, now found themselves inhabiting an era in which the project of Europeanization had failed as a result of the "return" of Islam in the form of Islamisms. The most ambitious of these thinkers, in terms of dedication, serious attention to detail, depth of thinking, and passion, is Fethi Benslama. Given the importance of his analysis, I will address his work in more detail than that of the others in an attempt to examine the intellectual and psychic mechanisms at work in his thinking on this interesting but uninterrogated conjunction of a reified psychoanalysis *and* a reified Islam.

Benslama's book, *La psychanalyse à l'épreuve de l'Islam*, published in 2002, is perhaps the most serious engagement with one possible relationship that a certain psychoanalysis could have with a certain "Islam," namely, one in which this psychoanalysis is put (or puts itself) to the test of this "Islam," in which it stands before the test or crisis of Islam. Benslama proceeds as if he were writing a corollary to Freud's *Moses and Monotheism* along the lines of *Muhammad and Monotheism*. This is, in fact, his second attempt to do so. His first book to deal with "Islam," *La nuit brisée* (*The Shattered Night*), published in 1988, was less explicitly presented as such a project. *La psychanalyse à l'épreuve de l'islam* is a more profound second attempt, a *repetition*, at an engagement with that very same project, and it intensifies Benslama's dependence on *Moses and Monotheism* as the main psychoanalytic and Freudian scripture guiding his project.

One of the more important achievements of Benslama's book is his exploration of the role of Abraham and Ishmael as the grandfather and father of the Arabs, coupled with his argument that the Qurʾan, following the Torah, imposed the figure of non-Arab Ishmael (whose mother is the Egyptian Hagar and whose father is the Mesopotamian Abraham) on Arab lineage—a lineage which was never resisted by post-Islam Arabs, even though neither Abraham nor Ishmael had any presence in their cosmological lore prior to the Qurʾanic moment. Here, Benslama seems to ignore the fact that in

contrast to “pagan” Arab tribes, for Jewish and Christian Arab tribes, perhaps not considered Arabs by him, Ishmael and Abraham were indeed present. In fact, and in accordance with post-Qurʾanic stories about pre-Islamic Mecca, which may be apocryphal, even Arab “pagan” tribes had much knowledge of Abraham, whom they deemed the original builder of the Kaʿbah. Unlike Freud’s Moses, who is exposed *contra* the Jewish scriptural and theological tradition as an Egyptian outsider to his chosen people, Benslama’s Ishmael, who is not the main prophet of the Muhammadan call, is *not revealed* to be non-Arab, since his non-Arab lineage is clear enough in the Qurʾan and in Islamic theology. Rather, what Benslama aims to do is consider this non-Arabness in relation to the question of identity and maternalism in order to argue that Hagar is “repressed” in “Islam” and Islamic theology in favor of Sarah without much deviation from the Judaic story.

To some extent, Benslama’s discussion corresponds to Edward Said’s important reading of Freud’s Moses as an antinationalist call that rejects essentialism and group homogeneity as necessary founding myths. “In other words,” Said concludes his discussion of Freud’s Moses, “identity cannot be thought or worked through itself alone; it cannot constitute or even imagine itself without that radical originary break or flaw which will not be repressed, because Moses was Egyptian, and therefore always outside the identity inside which so many have stood and suffered—and later, perhaps, even triumphed.”[22] But Benslama, in contrast, wants to read the repression of Hagar as informing “Islam’s” views of women and the figure of the mother more generally: “Islam was born from the stranger at the origins of monotheism, and this stranger remained a stranger in Islam.”[23]

Benslama does not limit himself to a discussion of paternity and maternity, the question of origins in the Qurʾan, and subsequent theological exegesis, but brings his conclusions to bear on the contemporary situation. It is clear throughout the text that the entire archeological project Benslama is engaged in is an attempt to respond to the claims put forth by many contemporary Islamisms and their enemies about “Islam” and Islamic origins. It is in the context of discussing contemporary Islamisms, however, that Benslama’s book shows less engagement with psychoanalytic thought and concepts and moves to liberal critiques concerned with the individual, freedom of thought, tolerance, and the separation of the theological from the political.

Definitionally, Benslama insists that “Islam” is multiple and that it is always already “Islams,” yet at key moments in his narrative these multiple “Islams” converge into one which is conflated with a singular “Islamism,” as both an utterable name and one that should only be used under erasure (“sous rature”). My concern is the ideological context of these slippages, conscious and unconscious, and the political philosophy and psychic processes that inform them. While he does not define Islam in his book, Benslama provides two meanings in a later article on the subject, in which he claims that the word *Islam* “has been fixed by a theological connotation into ‘an abandonment to God’ [*un abandon à Dieu*],” and that its etymology designates this act as “having been saved after abandoning itself.”[24] The latter, in fact, may be one possible connotation of the word, though not necessarily its immediate one, since the most common meaning of Islam in Arabic is “deliverance [of one’s self] to God,” and not “abandonment,” or the more common Orientalist translation as “submission to God,” which Benslama problematically cites as the “theological” meaning of the word in “Islam,” even while mentioning its other meaning(s) of “being saved,” but curiously not its meaning of “deliverance.”[25] While he claims that it is only Islamists who want to render the meaning of Islam as “submission,” he participates, if ambivalently, in the same project with his endorsement of the Orientalist meaning of *Islam* as *submission* when he insists that “the Islamism of groups and institutions today is . . . submission [*soumission*] to the religion of submission.”[26] The word for *submission* in Arabic, however, is *khuduʿ* (which also means subjection), a word that has no etymological or other connection to the word *Islam*. Perhaps Benslama is here projecting onto Islam his own liberalism, which, after all, is the tradition that

speaks oxymoronically of the "freedom of the subject." As Étienne Balibar reminds us, "Why is it that the very name which allows modern philosophy to think and designate the *originary freedom* of the human being—the name of 'subject'—is precisely the name which *historically* meant suppression of freedom, or at least an intrinsic limitation of freedom, i.e. *subjection*?"[27]

Benslama is certainly not alone in his problematic translations. The question of translation and language is essential for psychoanalytic thinkers in general.[28] The major thesis of Safouan regarding what he constantly refers to as Arab "backwardness" is that it is a problem of language. Like Benslama, but with less erudition, Safouan often seems to confound Arabic and Latin etymologies in ways that exoticize modern Arabic, as he does, for example, in his discussion of the difference between the Latin-based word "sovereignty" and its Arabic equivalent *siyada*.[29] Safouan objects that the Arabic word, *siyada*, "unlike sovereignty," means mastership, "whereas its true meaning, at least according to Karl [*sic*] Schmitt's definition, is the 'right to take decisions in the last resort.' The translation leaves us only with the primitive, dual relation of master and slave, whereas what is at stake is a political conception of decision."[30] Safouan appears to regard Schmitt as offering a linguistic definition of sovereignty rather than a staking out of a position in a theoretical debate. He also seems not to know the Latin meaning of the term *sovereignty*, which comes from "over above," in Latin "superanus," nor that the traditional English use of the term, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, is "sovereign lord," and "one who has supremacy or rank above, or authority over, others; a superior; a ruler, governor, lord, or master (*of* persons, etc.)" and that "sovereignty" means "supremacy or pre-eminence in respect of excellence or efficacy." It remains unclear whether Safouan would consider the original Latin meaning of *sovereignty*, and the later English one, as "primitive" or if only its Arabic rendering is so.

The answer Safouan discovers in addressing his own question, "Why are the Arabs not free?" is found in what he considers to be the division between literary and vernacular (spoken) Arabic: the former is a "sacred" language and slated for the use of elites, while the latter is the language of the masses. Safouan reifies the two uses of Arabic as completely separate and even splits them into two languages, showing utter unfamiliarity with their actual imbrication in one another. He is under the impression that literary Arabic today is the same Arabic of the Qurʾan when in fact it is as different from the latter as are the contemporary vernaculars. While contemporary educated Arabic speakers have the ability to read texts from the seventh to the eighteenth century with varying degrees of difficulty (just as contemporary educated English speakers are able to read Marlowe, Chaucer, and Shakespeare with varying degrees of difficulty), it would be next to impossible for seventh-century Arabic readers to read contemporary literary Arabic (since the script itself has changed), much less comprehend it, given the changes in syntax, structure, and vocabulary. This reification of modern literary Arabic as fossilized in the language of the Qurʾan is not unique to Safouan but is a common Orientalist claim that has no substantiation in fact. Indeed, neither contemporary literary nor spoken Arabic could exist independently of one another; so integrated are they in their very syntax, structure, and vocabulary that any attempt to disentangle them would require a project of social engineering of the sort that Safouan attributes to the Pharaohs, who, he claims, first instituted the division between the literary and the spoken in order to rule the masses unhindered. Yet it is he who calls for such a project, namely that the state institutionalize the split he thinks already exists between literary and vernacular Arabic and that it teach the vernacular in its schools as a precondition for democracy.[31] This view of literary Arabic, which also equates it with Latin, harkens back to Orientalist assessments and to debates among Arab intellectuals in the colonial times of the 1930s and 1940s.[32] Safouan, however, presents it not only as a sane rational fact but also as one that, if denied by any Arab, would expose an antidemocratic position: "It is often thought and said that Arabic is one language, but in fact the distance between classical Arabic and the Arabic of Egypt, the Gulf States and North Africa is analogous to the relation between

Latin and the Romance languages Italian, Spanish, and French. The failure, or rather the refusal, to acknowledge these differences is the refusal to allow the uneducated a full say in their future."[33] Since cultures achieve modernization through language, Safouan wonders: "Who could imagine the destiny of Europe if Latin had remained the language of literature, science, philosophy, and theology?"[34] But one need not spend much time imagining, since Safouan offers the Arab world as the answer. Indeed, even the Europe that Safouan imagines remains in the grip of the very Latin (and Greek) that he believes had disappeared (and this includes the German Schmitt, who used the Latinate form "souverän" for sovereign and not a German word). In fact, Latin survives in Europe *specifically* as a specialized language of science (including medicine), philosophy, law, and theology whose Latin-based conceptual vocabulary dominates these fields. This is also true for the language of psychoanalysis itself, at least in its English translation, where Freud's ordinary German terms were Latinized to endow them with scientificity. Perhaps the most illustrious example is his book *Das Ich und das Es*, which was rendered in Latinized English as *The Ego and the Id*.[35]

Benslama, like Safouan, locates the "crisis" in Islam in language: "It does not have to do only with a lack of modernity, as is often said, but rather with a modernity that has ignored its subject, one that had to do with a progressivist ideology, in which had to be included the imperative of economic and technical development without taking into account the work of culture . . . or, if you will, a modernization without the linguistic foundations that constitute the work of civilization," something both Christianity and Judaism, in contrast, had obviously done.[36]

It is clear that the two meanings of Islam Benslama posits are not the only ones he employs in *La psychanalyse à l'épreuve de l'islam*. While Benslama explains at the outset that the many "Islams" he posits are diverse, various, and sometimes unconnected, even though they may all hide "behind" the singular name "Islam,"[37] he soon abandons this multiplicity in favor of a singular Islam whose signifieds and referents remain multiple but unspecified even as they are presented consciously and ideologically as singular. It is rarely made clear, for example, when he uses the term *Islam*, whether he is referring to all Islamist movements and individuals or just some of them; whether *Islam* refers to the history of Islamic theology from the seventh century to the present, or to the history or present of states that call themselves Islamic, or even those that call themselves "Muslim"; whether it refers to the Qurʾan, the Hadith, the Sunnah, or all combined, and so on and so forth. While Benslama sees the attempt to homogenize "Islams" into Islam as not only an Islamist project but also as a "superficial" European attempt to deal with the rise of many "Islamist" movements in different geographic and social contexts, their reduction by a European political sociology to one Islam, Benslama declares, is nothing short of "resistance to the intelligibility of Islam" on the part of Islamologists, a resistance that, he maintains, also applies to European psychoanalysts.[38] It is remarkable that Benslama would insist upon such "intelligibility" even as he insists upon the proliferations and incommensurables of "Islam's" invocations; that he would call upon this intelligibility under the heading of a "resistance" to it by others, thus situating intelligibility negatively, through its failure to register, while making, it would appear, the intelligible uniquely available to him.[39]

Benslama's understanding of the multiplicity of Islams as signifiers—whose signifieds, however, remain obscure in Benslama's own text—falls by the wayside through his constant invoking of "Islam" in the singular as a subject with a self that expresses itself and whose meaning is readily intelligible. Benslama speaks of the "actuality of Islam"[40] that imposes itself on him, of "the tradition of Islam"[41] within which people grow up, and how he had "realized [*je m'apercevais*] simply that, in the majority of cases [he consulted], Islam was always the effect and the cause of subjective and trans-individual structures."[42]

In these telling slippages (and there are many more), what is most interesting is that the perception of

the singularity of Islam and its effect on Muslims belongs not to Benslama alone but is shared by many (though not all) Islamist thinkers. Indeed, Benslama identifies the reaction of many Islamists and Muslims to Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* as occurring within the singular world of Islam. He states that the "shock in the case of Islam came from where we did not expect it, from literary fiction that put on stage the truth of origins as a trick."[43] In doing so, Benslama follows a liberal secular tradition, which often seems to recognize the Islam of some Islamists as the one "Islam," even though he is well aware (and curiously adds a footnote to the Arabic translation of his book clarifying this point) that what is at stake in contemporary debates is the "meaning of Islam," and what is unfolding is indeed "a war of the name," or a nominalist war.[44]

In his book, however, and despite his noted vigilance, Benslama opts not only to analyze the terms of this war between the different antagonists, but, and herein lies the contradiction, also to join in as a party to the war. In this light, the battle over the Islamist notion(s) of Islam (which Benslama and many secularists often oppose as the one Islam) is, as many Islamists correctly claim, between those who want to uphold "Islam" and those who want to uphold anti-"Islam." In fact, Benslama ambivalently posits this singular "Islam," whose meaning, as we have seen, he often shares with many Islamists and Orientalists, as the other (or the Other?) of liberalism.[45] He does not do so explicitly, but his invocation of "freedom," "tolerance," and "individualism" as the values or key ingredients, absent from the one Islam but necessary to the Islam he wishes for, structures his polemic against Islamists. Moreover, his insistence that Islam be transformed from a *din* into the Christian *and* secular liberal notion of "religion" ("La religion musulmane")[46] as well as his attack on Islamists who, unlike him, regard "Islam not only as a religion,"[47] commits him to a hegemonic form of liberal epistemology whose aim is the assimilation of the world in its own image.[48] To make his point unequivocal, he titles his more recent pamphlet *Déclaration d'insoumission*, that is, "declaration of rebellion" or more precisely of "insubmission," to "the religion of submission."[49] But if Islam for Benslama means submission, then his declaration is essentially and consciously a "declaration of un-Islam," or, to be more precise, a "declaration of anti-Islam"!

But there is an important ambivalence in Benslama's project. While this Islam seems, according to him, to be opposed to the individual freedoms of writers of the caliber of Rushdie, he also criticizes European Islamologists for not recognizing that another Islam (whose referents again remain multiple—the Qurʾan, Islamic theology, Islamic "culture," and so on) upholds individualism. Benslama insists that "Islam rather deploys one of the extremely powerful dimensions of individuality, a dimension of great conceptual abundance. This dimension could not have developed without being compatible with the reality of the culture. This is indeed a culture of individuality, but one that is essentially governed by an identification with God."[50] Benslama is very critical of those Western psychoanalytical pronouncements on Islam and Muslim cultures that represent it as the obliterating of the individual, and which see the Western achievement that gave birth to the individual as the ultimate achievement of civilization *tout court*. He declares that those who insist that an alleged absence of individualism in Islam prevents Muslims from being accessible to psychoanalysis are simply "ignorant," adding: "I will not cite anyone's name so as not to privilege those who are in the order of ignorance and carelessness."[51]

The problem of the multiplicity of Islam as Islams, however, is something Benslama does not explain adequately if at all. If Islam should always be seen as plural and multiple, in the form of Islams, and never in the singular form, then what are "Islams" a plural of, what are they multiples of? Since for Benslama this plurality refers to the signifier and the signified, he does not elaborate on whether the signifieds have anything in common other than the signifier. Moreover, if both signifiers and signifieds are plural, would this mean that the term "Islam" is actually and simply a homonym, which in itself is what creates the confusion for religious Muslims and for liberals (including psychoanalysts), whether

Muslim or not? But the notion of Islam as plural, as Islams, does not solve the problem that Benslama wishes to solve, namely that Islam in its entirety and in all its forms constitutes the other of liberalism, since even if one accepts the contention that there may be varieties of Islams that are compatible with liberalism, one of those that is not would still be singled out as the other of liberalism, and that is the one Islam that liberalism contests and wants to eliminate, which brings us back to the same troubling question with which Benslama began.

Benslama's ambivalence is not necessarily and only a conscious one, but more likely the effect of an ideological commitment that imagines different audiences differently. The reference to multiple Islams might be said to be an ideological position (the position of political correctness?) and/or an expression of a *wish*, while the references to one singular Islam in the many slips seem to betray what Benslama actually *fears* to be the case. This could indicate his own unconscious resistance to the claim (his own claim) that there are many Islams, or his conscious recognition that his claim is a mere wish and not an acknowledgement of observable reality, and that what he does notice or "realize," as he tells us, is that there actually exists only one Islam and therefore that this Islam must be opposed (hated?) for not pluralizing itself as it must and should. In this regard, he announces at the outset of the book that the origins of his own interest in writing on Islam emerged in the early 1980s (elsewhere, he would tell us that his interest started in the mid 1980s)[52] or "in a critical historical situation marked by a fanatical surge," as a decision to explore "the gap between a terminable Islam and an interminable one."[53] While Benslama cautions us (and perhaps himself) to use a new vocabulary and to adjust to a new epistemology wherein we (he) must "hear Islams when we say Islam," it would seem that he often remains deaf to his own warning.[54] Perhaps then, the singularity of actual Islam is itself the scene of the trauma that one cannot but revisit and whose claims one (or Benslama) is compelled to repeat at the very same moment and in the very same text where he insists that he, and we, must resist.

La psychanalyse repeats many of the same scenes (and discussions) in the biography of the Prophet Muhammad that Benslama had conjured up in *La nuit brisée*. It remains unclear if this act of repetition is merely a self-repetition that revisits his first (inaugural?) text (child?) on "Islam" or a revisiting of the Prophetic scenes themselves as the site of trauma that compels repetition. Indeed, one of the main scenes of *La nuit brisée*, repeated in *La psychanalyse*—the one in which Khadija, the Prophet's wife, reassures Muhammad that the angel Gabriel who had appeared to him was indeed an angel and not a demon—is a scene Benslama borrows, and therefore revisits, from the inaugural article by Khatibi, the very first psychoanalytic visit to that scene.[55] *La psychanalyse* surely is a repetition with a twist. It is a more comprehensive, more elaborated second attempt by Benslama at producing a psychoanalytic reading of "Islam." As Benslama's youngest child (and, as we know, books which carry the names of their authors are always reproductively connected to them, just as children carry the name of the father), *La psychanalyse* seems more privileged and more celebrated by critics, just as the younger male child in the Torah is always more privileged—Abel, Isaac, Jacob, and others. It is unclear if an unconscious wish on the part of Benslama is at work here, one of preferring, once again as God and Abraham did, Isaac to Ishmael.

Before I indulge in further speculations, let me cite Benslama's own statement of his task in his important book: "to translate the Islamic origin in the language of Freudian deconstruction. . . . Translation is not application or annexation, but through a signifying displacement, conveys the very texture of a tradition in its language and its images, in order to give access to what is unknowingly thought, inside it [*à son insu*]."[56] I am unpersuaded by this assertion, mostly because translation of "Islamic" texts into European languages often seems to mean retrieval of dictionary meanings of words and their etymology without much attention to the intellectual context and historicity of the uses and significations of words and how they change over time—the "links" that Mohammad Arkoun has

juxtaposed as “language-history-thought”[57]—something all contemporary interpretative exercises of the texts of the past must attend to in order to avoid projecting contemporary meanings and values onto them. It is clear that Benslama is concerned that translation can be a form of annexation. But he wants to insist that translation in this case gives access to the unconscious of the tradition (“à son insu”). While this may be so, it does not do away with his initial concern. Translation in this case is not “annexation” but *assimilation*, in that Benslama’s “Freudian deconstruction,” whether it uncovers an “Islam” that is individualist or anti-individualist, can only do so in relation to a modern liberal European value that Benslama posits as universal, namely, “individualism.” This assimilationist move is presented as useful for psychoanalysis and as useful psychoanalytically to the extent to which it secures “the intelligibility of the logic of repression, which subtends the foundation of a symbolic organization.”[58] There is some tension in this assimilationist project, however. On occasion, like the Orientalists, Benslama insists on *not* translating Arabic words, including the one for God, *Allah*, into its French equivalent, *Dieu*, when translating an Islamist text from Arabic, but he seems invested in exoticizing it as the specific and exclusive proper name of the Muslim God, when, and as noted earlier, it is the name that Arab Christians had used for their God before Muhammad and still use after him.[59] On another occasion, he insists on using the Arabic word *‘awra*, whose etymology he provides, without translating it into the French (and English) “pudendum” (which has similar etymological origins), which would render its equivalent meaning to his French readers.[60]

Ultimately, however, Benslama wants to present his Islam as assimilable to the liberal notion of the individual, even if it is so with a difference. It is possible here that Benslama is engaged in deploying this Islamic individualism as a way of passing his Islam off as European, and that this passing off is indeed a form of resistance to Orientalist liberal accounts of Islam as lacking in individualism, while simultaneously condemnatory of Islamist resistance to this passing off, which he brands as pathological or as suffering from some form of “group delirium” (*délire collectif*).[61] In another related but earlier text, he makes a policy recommendation for Arab pedagogy by cautioning that if Arabs were to fail to “introduce Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* into their educational curricula, they would be committing a horrendous error.”[62]

Benslama is engaged in a project of simultaneously othering the Islam of the Islamists and identifying his own wished-for Islam with Europeanness. In this vein, he is partly mimicking Freud who, in *Moses and Monotheism*, insists on assimilating European Jews by declaring that they are not “Asiatics of a foreign race, as their enemies maintain, but composed for the most part of remnants of the Mediterranean peoples and heirs of the Mediterranean civilization.”[63] Edward Said wondered about Freud’s move: “Could it be, perhaps, that the shadow of anti-Semitism spreading so ominously over his world in the last decade of his life caused him protectively to huddle the Jews inside, so to speak, the sheltering realm of the European?”[64] Unlike Freud, Benslama, it seems, is caught between the Scylla of Orientalist hostility to all Islams and the Charybdis of his own hostility to the one (Islamist) Islam, which leads him to the (in)decision of identification *and* othering simultaneously.

Herein lies the importance of the discourse of scientism and rationalism—with which Benslama identifies modernity, the West, and psychoanalysis—to which he opposes Islamism (in the singular, despite his own assertions that it is a plural phenomenon) and the one Islam.[65] He consecrates a series of binaries to make this opposition clear:

> This line does not only pass between those who are tolerant and those who are fanatical, between rationalists and believers, between the logic of science and the logic of faith, but also between the position that thinks it can find the truth of origin in the texts of tradition—and this position thinks that this could be done through rational procedures armed with the valid discourse of the historical method—and the position that considers these same texts as a fiction or as a legend.[66]

In this regard, it is perplexing that Benslama discusses some Islamists' attempts to make the Qurʾanic text correspond to scientific knowledge as a sort of neurosis or, more precisely, as "interpretative delirium" (*délire interprétatif*), and not part of their rationalization of the Qurʾan.[67] He adds that "examining these [Islamist] documents leaves one with the impression of an immense interpretative delirium, ushered in from a destruction anxiety [*angoisse de destruction*] and constituting an attempt to repair from the outside that which has collapsed on the inside."[68] This is ironic, given Benslama's commitment to rationalism and the fact that he chose the *non-ironically* named "Association of Arab Rationalists," of which he is a member, to publish the Arabic translation of his book.[69] Benslama's use of these taxonomies of rationalism and irrationalism, science and faith, knowledge and ignorance, is in fact shared by many Islamist thinkers. If the Islamist thinker, Sayyid Qutb, referred to his contemporary Muslims and non-Muslims as still living in an age of ignorance (echoing the Qurʾan's description of the pre-Revelation period), Benslama, aside from using post-Enlightenment descriptions of "darkness" and "obscurantism" to characterize Islamists, insists that Muslim men of religion live "in great ignorance."[70]

The opposition of science to religion, and the correlate characterization of psychoanalysis as a "science" that is opposed by Islam as "religion," is shared among many of Benslama's psychoanalytic colleagues, including Tarabishi, Safouan, and, more recently, Houbballah. Safouan, for example, offers two theories to explain the nature of the relationship between "Islam" and science. On the one hand, he contends that "the Arabs" were open to learning from foreign science and building on it when they were in power, but upon losing power, they henceforth refused to learn from a science that came from colonial powers.[71] On the other hand, he offers an analysis that does not fully cohere with the first, namely that it was the Turks who destroyed science in "Islamic civilization."[72] He also asserts that "Islam was the victim of the nations it invaded, because they themselves were the victims of political regimes and administrative apparatuses whose sole purpose was to ensure the state's domination over all the aspects of life."[73] Yet Safouan makes a sweeping and disconcerting generalization that, in the contemporary period, "the West has accomplished great things on account of this separation [between religion and science], while the Islamic world has produced nothing as a result of their generalization of the idea that scientific discourse is the product of infidels and therefore should not be adopted."[74] The angry and contemptuous tone of this last declaration may be due to the fact that the text is in Arabic, which renders it an address exclusive to Arab Islamist audiences, an auto-critique to which most Europeans would not have access.

Safouan contends that, unlike the church in Christianity, the church in Islam is the State, specifically in the form of a dictatorial monarchy that eliminates the possibility of civil society (and here he is invoking Oriental despotism without naming it). This produces in many Muslims and Islamists an "excessive normopathology" of conformity to practicing religious rituals.[75] Safouan refuses essentialist arguments that privilege Christianity's alleged openness to science and democracy over Islam's. Yet, his materialist analysis leads to the same conclusion, namely, that whether Islam or the Arabs are essentially hostile to science or democracy, or have become thus on account of socioeconomic reasons and foreign invasions, they are today hostile to them, which accounts for their state of unfreedom.

Houbballah, to take another example, is concerned with the relations among science, religion, and psychoanalysis (a theme around which he and other psychoanalysts convened the third international conference of Arab psychoanalysts in Beirut in 2007), as well as with the "inhospitable" reception that psychoanalysis is said to have received in "Arab intellectual circles."[76] Houbballah is most interested in the lack of democracy in Arab countries, to which he credits this inhospitality to psychoanalysis, as the latter cannot be "imagined" to exist in a repressive country, for "psychoanalysis is the acting out of one's freedom of thought."[77] Houbballah insists that democracy "has failed to conquer Arab thought. The concept of the individual is eclipsed before *el raiiya*, the community, where the power of the

shepherd, 'the caliph,' is imposed by divine order, an order to which all the people cannot but be subjected [*être soumis*]."[78] What is remarkable here is Houbballah's understanding that the concepts of the individual and democracy are European concepts, while *raʿiyyah* ("*el raiiya*"), which means "subjects" in Arabic, as in "the king's subjects," becomes an Islamic concept! How *raʿiyyah* becomes essentialized as an Islamic concept that cannot be conquered by democracy and that must eclipse the individual is key to understanding Houbballah's approach, which insists that "the subject of science has not gained an entry into Arab culture."[79]

Houbballah, who uses "Islam" in all the same ways Benslama uses it, without specification, argues in his opening address to the third international conference of Arab psychoanalysts:

> Islam in the Ottoman period remained removed from these scientific developments [that had unfolded in Europe], and social revolutions (the French Revolution) on account of geographic limitations. Now, however, as the gates have loosened and opened wide, Islam no longer has a choice but to confront the scientific wave of postmodernity. In my opinion, the violence exploding everywhere constitutes a primitive phenomenon as a first defensive reaction which will have to be followed later by an intellectual wave that can absorb modernity and interact with it.[80]

The question he poses is "Why did Islam experience modernity as a danger?"[81] The answer he offers is that Arabs/Muslims (who are used interchangeably in the very title of his essay) have not been "subjected to two surgeries since the emergence of Islam, namely, the separation of religion from authority, for there did not occur a revolution like the French Revolution, and the separation of religion from science."[82]

Here, the reification of psychoanalysis as a science and the elision of the important debates within psychoanalysis about its own scientificity, let alone Freud's own overdetermined and ambivalent relationship to science, are never acknowledged or referenced by any of these thinkers. Perhaps Benslama's (as well as Safouan's and Houbballah's) resistance to, or anxiety about, the possibility of many *psychoanalyses* rather than one true psychoanalysis parallels his anxiety about the one Islam and the many. Still, these thinkers differ among themselves in certain respects regarding the nature of the relationship between "Islam" and science. This opposition, which they consecrate, however, is not new but continues a tradition inaugurated by Orientalist Ernest Renan's infamous debate with Jamal al-Din al-Afghani in the nineteenth century about this very question and which we discussed in chapter 1, wherein Islam and the Arabs were castigated as "hostile to science"—a debate which none of these thinkers cites or seems familiar with.[83]

These liberal commitments are not confined only to Arab psychoanalysts. Iranian psychoanalyst Gohar Homayounpour shares many of them, though unlike Houbballah, who thinks psychoanalysis has had difficulty in the Arab world due to the "lack" of democracy, Homayounpour seems to think that the Iranian context, which she seems to also believe "lacks" democracy, has not been a hindrance to her in practicing psychoanalysis in Tehran. In a memoir of her practice of psychoanalysis in Tehran after her return from Boston, she informs the reader at the outset that while she takes Edward Said's work on Orientalism seriously, she is quick to echo Western liberal mantras about taking responsibility for one's failures: "I would like to add the responsibility of the 'Orientals' themselves in creating orientalism. . . . We have to stop blaming the West for our condition, for our destiny."[84] Homayounpour's political assessment of postrevolutionary Iran is not distinguishable from Western liberal views, though her ability to practice psychoanalysis there is:

> I do not need to play any political games, none whatsoever, in Tehran. Ironically, this privilege has been given to me in a country that at this moment in history is one of the most politicized countries in the world. A country stigmatized by the world for its violations of human rights, its lack of democracy, its nuclear ambitions, and its lack of freedom of speech. . . . In Tehran, in one of the most controversial countries in the world, I have gotten closer to my rights as a psychoanalyst than I could have anywhere else.[85]

Homayounpour's memoir constantly enacts contrasts between "traditional" Iranian society and ancient Greek society, between the modern West and contemporary Iran, and between Iranian and Oriental cultures on the one hand and American culture on the other. Despite her belief in the "universality of Oedipus," she asserts that "the Iranian collective fantasy is anchored in an anxiety of disobedience that wishes for an absolute obedience," wherein it is the sons who are killed by the fathers and not the other way around: "To avoid being killed, they settle for the fear of castration. I find that this is characteristic of traditional cultures."[86] Therein lies the difference between Islam and Christianity, or at least Catholicism, for Homayounpour:

> Islam means submission, and demands absolute obedience to God the father, while in Christianity the demarcation between God the father and Christ the son is not quite as clear. It seems as though religions were socially constructed to fulfill the collective fantasies of these differing cultures. An analysis of Iranian history reveals that it has constantly been a one-man show, while democracy was born within and is the essence of Greek society.[87]

We need not rehearse again how her characterizations reflect Christian and Western, not Muslim, views of Islam. Homayounpour's Iranian nationalism as essence cannot be contained. Though Shiism began as a movement by Arab Muslims in the eighth century and the majority of Iranians did not convert from Sunni to Shiite Islam until the sixteenth century, Homayounpour bestows on Iranians the credit of creating the sect:

> We never properly mourned the loss of our glorious past before it was taken over by Islam. Our melancholic response was to create Shiism, which is a culture of mourning, as a way of mourning the symbolic past. . . . One has to bear in mind that in countries like Iran the past is everything, and unfortunately we do indeed breathe the air of regrets.[88]

It is perfectly clear that the "one" who has to bear this "in mind" is Homayounpour's Western reader. Her quest for origins does not only drive her to go back from Boston to Tehran, but she also seeks to find in Tehran the origins of psychoanalysis, of the era of Freud himself, a century ago. Going back to Tehran seems to be for her a way of joining Freud the father, as Iran, for her, is living in the time of Freud. Unlike the contemporary West, where Homayounpour believes sexuality is no longer central to psychoanalysis, when she moved to Tehran, she, like European Orientalists, embarked on time-travel to a time where arrested development can be observed in situ: "I have found sexuality in Tehran. In Tehran, today's sexuality is still Freud's sexuality. . . . In short, in Tehran I have encountered a kind of patient who is very much in line with the kinds of patients Freud was seeing during his time, a kind of patient that reminds me of a time when psychoanalysis was still in its early years."[89]

In the tradition of Western liberalism, which she cherishes (her invocation of Milan Kundera's dissidence from Czechoslovak communism and yearning for West European liberalism is in evidence throughout the book), the psychoanalyst Homayounpour is compelled to value "freedom instead of happiness, *à la* Simone de Beauvoir."[90] In her description of Iran and Tehran specifically to her English readers, comparisons abound—between Iran and the ancient Greeks, Iran and the United States, Tehran and Paris, upper class and lower class people, and between group A and group B of a 1970s American mental health study, where group A children grew up in "traditional" and "conservative" families and group B grew up in "more open-minded, intellectual" families. It is the latter that seems to instantiate liberal goals that Homayounpour seeks in Tehran, as they allow "for creativity to surface and enabl[e] freedom."[91] In her commitment to liberal concepts rather than psychoanalytic ones, Homayounpour fits neatly in our cohort of Arab psychoanalysts.

Benslama in turn has a major concern with the liberal notion of tolerance, which he finds lacking in the one Islam propagated by the Islamists (all of them?), but which he seems to think is in abundance in European rationalism and secularism (all of it?). Here Benslama's commitment to liberalism is also a commitment to the Freudian equation of individualism with phylogenetic and ontogenetic maturity—to

which Freud opposes group solidarity and organicism as primitive and regressive—*and* a commitment to Freud's consideration of tolerance as the highest achievement of liberal politics—which is essentially synonymous with the highest degree of civilization. Freud's accounts of these questions, as Wendy Brown has shown, can be read in two different directions, both as the way men overcome primitive asociality through forms of social life free from strife in a social contractarian manner (*Civilization and Its Discontents* and *Totem and Taboo*), and as the overcoming of primitive solidarity and organicism in the achievement of civilized individuality (*Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*). In contrast, liberal notions insist that civilized individualist liberal tolerance, as Brown put it, "is only available to liberal subjects and liberal orders and constitute the supremacy of both over dangerous alternatives. They also establish organicist orders as a natural limit of liberal tolerance, as intolerable in consequence of their own intolerance."[92] Thus, while Benslama chastises the one Islam and Islamists (always seen as deploying one singular meaning and interpretation of the one Islam) for lacking any rationalism or tolerance (denying them any tolerance on the grounds of their own alleged intolerance), he extends tolerance to the individualist Islam he rescues from (all?) the Islamists and from the Orientalists as one that features this important civilized value. In this sense, his liberal values differ little from the general understanding liberalism has of societies that insist on different forms of sociality and which it thus considers other. As Brown maintains, "Organicist orders are not only radically other to liberalism but betoken the 'enemy within' civilization and the enemy to civilization. Most dangerous of all would be transnational formations imagined as organicist from a liberal perspective, which link the two—Judaism in the nineteenth century, communism in the twentieth, and today, of course, Islam."[93] Here the historic links between liberal anti-Semitism and Orientalism and liberal anticommunism are shown to inhabit the very same politics of identity and othering.

International lawyer and Cambridge University professor Clive Parry offered in 1953 a slightly different historiography than Brown, though he would agree with her premise in principle: "We smile now to read how a century ago James Lorimer [the eminent Scottish lawyer who was a founder of the discipline of international law] could argue that an Islamic state ought not to be admitted into the family of nations because of the essentially intolerant character of Islam, because there would be lacking what Professor MacIver has called 'the will for society.' But if we substitute Communism for Mohamemedanism, we may perhaps confess that the problem is as large as it ever was, if not larger."[94] Little did Parry know in midcentury that once the Communist threat would be neutralized, the threat of Islam would take center stage again.

I should note, however, that Judaism, having emerged in the shadow of World War II within the liberal Western dyad identified as "Judeo-Christian" civilization—replacing the earlier prewar formulation, which Freud referred to as "our-present day white Christian civilization"[95]—now mostly escapes such descriptions, except for those Judaisms that resist their inclusion in this liberal order. Indeed, Benslama himself is implicitly so impressed with the Jewish achievement of Western liberalism (that is, Jews having reached and achieved Western liberal individual maturity), which he would have Muslims emulate, that he exaggerates the scientific achievement of Jews by endowing Christian thinkers with Jewish identities. In his rush to demonstrate his defense of the Europeanized and therefore liberal, mature, and Enlightened "Jews" against a fantasized primitive obscurantist Arab anti-Jewishness that would explain what he sees as an "Arab" or "Muslim" rejection of psychoanalysis as the "Jewish science" (a European notion which in fact has little resonance among Arab or Muslim thinkers, though some American Jewish and Zionist scholars formulate it as such),[96] Benslama responds thus: "I feel some shame when I find myself having to draw attention to the fact that he who thinks like this must also deny the theory of gravity or the theory of relativity, which were both the result of the work of Jewish scientists, Newton and Einstein."[97] It seems Benslama is not only unfamiliar with the fact that

Newton was Christian (perhaps Newton's first name "Isaac" led to Benslama's confusion?) but also with the latter's major exegetical contributions to Christian theology.[98] His exaggeration of Jewish achievements and Arab failures recalls his preference for Isaac over Ishmael noted earlier.[99]

In reading Benslama, one gets the general sense that psychoanalytic studies of Islamists (seen in their entirety as upholding the one illiberal Islam) replicate ego psychology's method of looking for neurotic mechanisms in the childhood of a person to explain his or her inability to accept authority and respond to the call of normativity. Islamist and Muslim resistance to Western secular and liberal (read Christian) normativity is seen as psychic resistance to maturity and adult authority, as a rebellion against normativity. Like American imperialism, a liberal civilizational psychoanalysis of the sort Benslama promotes seeks to bring recalcitrant and sick elements back into society and nurse them back to good health.

Jacques Derrida worried about what Freud once termed the "foreign policy" of psychoanalysis, and complained about the silence or equivocation of psychoanalysis, as institution, on the question of torture and violence in the "rest of the world," which he feared was a form of complicity. Derrida maintained:

> Psychoanalysis may serve as a conduit for these new forms of violence ["invisible abuses, ones more difficult to detect—whether in Europe or beyond its borders—and perhaps in some sense newer"]; alternatively, it may constitute an irreplaceable means for deciphering them, and hence a prerequisite of their denunciation in specific terms—a necessary precondition, then, of a struggle and a transformation. Inasmuch, indeed, as psychoanalysis does not analyze, does not denounce, does not struggle, does not transform (and does not transform *itself* for these purposes), surely it is in danger of becoming nothing more than a perverse and sophisticated appropriation of violence, or at best merely a new weapon in the symbolic arsenal.[100]

Psychoanalytic interventions, however, in the form of translation in the direct or indirect service of power might also be accomplices of abuse and violence. Benslama does not seem to share Derrida's concern about certain forms of psychoanalysis and the way they approach an object they name "Islam." He fortifies himself behind the liberal language of individualism, freedom, and human rights. But as Derrida maintains, these are not psychoanalytic concepts: "Shelter is taken behind a language with no psychoanalyical nature. . . . What is an 'individual'? What is a 'legitimate freedom' from a psychoanalytical point of view?"[101] Benslama's answer might very well be more "translation." This is not to say that psychoanalysis, since its inception, did not rely on a certain liberal understanding of the individual and the social, as many of its Marxist critics pointed out; it is to say, however, that psychoanalysis undid and undoes the liberal sovereign subject, when it demonstrates time and again that this subject is not sovereign at all and indeed is not always, if ever, in command of her/his actions, let alone her/his choices.

In the year 2000 Derrida commented that "what still links psychoanalysis to the history of Greek, Jewish, Christian Europe is not very well known. And if I add—or if I don't add—Muslim to fill out the list of Abrahamic religions, I am already opening the gulf of an immense interrogation."[102] He added "why does psychoanalysis never get a foothold in the vast territory of the Arabo-Islamic culture? Not to mention East Asia."[103] Derrida's answer seemed to have to do with the "Europeanness" of psychoanalysis above all else, despite its recent attempts at globalization. For those who have reiterated Derrida's question, however, an Orientalist answer seemed most apt; for them, like for the Lebanese Christian Mounir Chamoun, it was not the resistance of psychoanalysis to abandoning its European origins and presumptions that prevents it from globalizing itself except in European terms; rather:

> The resistance to psychoanalysis in the Arab and Islamic world is due to the closure linked to the fact of religion, the dogmatic fixity of the religious law and the impossibility to interpret the text of the law, which leads to the passivization of the subject as freedom. It equally has to do with . . . the fascination of the Muslim peoples with dictatorial and autocratic regimes that are linked to a theocratic conception of society that reduces any prospect of democracy, which is an essential condition for the establishment and practice of psychoanalysis.[104]

It is not clear how or if this answer applies to East Asia as well. Indeed, it is fully in tune with Benslama's, Safouan's, and Houbballah's propositions. But for Derrida, liberal forms of democracy differ little from monarchical structures of authority on questions of cruelty and sovereignty, or even patriarchality: "for who will seriously claim that our [French] republic is not monarchical, and that modern democracy, in the form we know it, does without a monarchical principle and a founding reference to a prince, as to a principle of sovereignty?"[105]

Two trends are juxtaposed in Benslama's text: condemnation of a static Islamic theology, which he sees as "fossilized by centuries of immobility,"[106] and a break with Islamic origins (ushered in by modernity via colonialism) which brought about the one Islam in reaction to this break. Based on his research, Benslama diagnoses the situation today as follows: "What has happened in Islam in the last twenty odd years emerges from this conjuncture; it proceeds from a break which cuts through its history and opens inside it another possibility of history."[107] The findings he arrives at while researching "the transformation of the figure of the father and of the paternal function" in a Tunis suburb in the mid 1980s were sufficient for him to recognize that there was a "deeper" and "more longstanding" dis-ease (*malaise*) afflicting "Islamic civilization," and not merely one suburb.[108] It is unclear if this is the result of Benslama's or his Tunisian subjects' symbolic conflation of the father and the paternal function with Islam as one and the same. This is significant because Benslama argues, correctly, that unlike in Christianity, in "Islam" God has no paternal role at all to play; indeed, such a role is explicitly repudiated in the Qurʾan. Benslama blames Arab and Muslim intellectuals and the political elite for the dis-ease from which "Islam" seems to suffer: "an elite that did not know how to translate the modern to the public, nor how to deploy the interpretative and political possibilities to moderate the public's excesses."[109] His conclusion that, in the Arab world, "modernity was nothing but a simulacrum of the modern"[110] betrays a belief that "modernity" in the West is an unmediated fact, rather than an interpretation.

Even though Benslama insists that "~~Islamism~~ [again, seen as a single phenomenon] does not sum up Islam" (but which Islam?),[111] he maintains that analyzing the destructive effects of the break (*césure*) should not serve an essentialist process, which would in turn ignore the contemporary historical and material forces that have led Islam to "be out of joint."[112] The work of culture, he continues, has difficulty thinking through this "deracination" of Muslims from their own history in their encounter with a simulacrum of modernity. It is "this transgression, without words, that has determined here the task of the psychoanalyst."[113] Yet at the end of the book, and after he presents the reasons why Islamism should be read under erasure, we are reminded that "one cannot exonerate Islam of this ideology," of Islamism![114] This tension between the one Islam and the many informs Benslama's discussion throughout.

There is, however, a resolution to this tension. Believing that the only way out of the one Islam is the way into liberal secularism, Benslama has more recently co-founded "The Association of the Manifesto of Freedoms" and is signatory (author of?) to its founding declaration.[115] It is noteworthy that the vocabulary that informs the declaration, including the alleged "totalitarian" nature of Islamism, is borrowed wholesale from French, West European, and American cold-war anticommunism. The declaration affirms that its members who are "holders of the values of secularism and of sharing a common world . . . [are] linked by our own individual histories, and in different ways, to Islam," which the declaration defines "as a place where many of the dangers of a globalized world crystallize: identitarian fascism and a totalitarian hold, civil and colonial wars, despotisms and dictatorships, inequality and injustice, self hatred and hatred of others, amidst political, religious, and economic extremes."[116] Islamists (all of them?) are said to constitute "forces of destruction" that must be opposed through democracy and the institution of the political, which cannot be imposed militarily but must

"target the internal structures of Islam and modify its relations to its geopolitical borders."[117] It is not clear which structures Benslama wants to target. While a singular Islam (which seems to be the only state in which "Islam" can exist at present, according to Benslama's reading) is being singled out in the declaration for this transformation, the signatories insist that they will fight and resist what they call "totalitarian Islamism."[118] This cold-war language is sometimes ironically compounded with Christian anti-Judaism, wherein the "loving" and "forgiving" God of Christianity has always been compared to the "angry" and "vengeful" God of Judaism. Benslama (unconsciously?) adopts the same description. What Islamists offer to the "subjected" Muslims of today, he tells us, is nothing short of "a vengeful and rewarding God [*un Dieu vengeur et rémunérateur*]."[119] The latter term, *rémunérateur*, mainly a business term, implies further that Islam's God is "profitable" in a financial sense, suggesting more connections to anti-Semitic notions of Jews and money.

The connections between anti-Islam and anti-Judaism are not just coincidental here but also productive of the coupling of Islamophobia and anti-Semitism. The two are picked up from Benslama and put to use by flamboyant Slovenian psychoanalytic thinker Slavoj Žižek, who affirms that "the difference between Judaism and Islam is thus ultimately not substantial, but purely formal: they are the SAME religion in a different formal mode." He adds that "we usually speak of the Jewish-Christian civilization—perhaps, the time has come, especially with regard to the Middle East conflict, to talk about the *Jewish-Muslim civilization* as an axis opposed to Christianity."[120]

Ironically, and contra Benslama, not all Islamists oppose psychoanalysis, and some of them are in fact open to it.[121] Unlike Benslama's full scale rejection of Islam as Islamism (both seen as singular, as signifiers and signifieds), Ahmad al-Sayyid ʿAli Ramadan, an Egyptian professor of psychology teaching in Saudi Arabia, is not only tolerant of Freudian psychoanalysis but offers an Islamist assessment of the "positive" and "negative" aspects of it from an "Islamic" perspective. After reviewing and commenting on the oeuvre of Freud and the psychoanalytic method, as well as the history of Western critiques of psychoanalysis and the history of its practice in Egypt, Ramadan concludes with a list of the "positive" contributions of psychoanalysis, including Freud's concept of the "unconscious," the method of "free association," "releasing the patient's anxieties," "giving confidence [to the patient]," "bringing unconscious struggles to the surface of consciousness," "reducing the resistance" of the patient, the discovery of the Oedipus complex, and more.[122] Ramadan takes psychoanalysis so seriously that he compares it to the Qurʾanic notions of the psyche and shows where they converge and diverge.[123] My point here is not only to cite the openness of Ramadan to Freudian psychoanalysis but also to show that Benslama seems not only intolerant of the "intolerance" of Islamism(s), but also of its *tolerance*.

Benslama, then, like some of the Islamists he decries, but certainly not like others who do not exist in his epistemological framework, wants to fix the many Islams he identifies in one form. For him the only tolerable Islam is a liberal form of Islam that upholds all the liberal values of European maturity and is intolerant of the Islam of the Islamists whose values are said to oppose liberal values even *when they do not*. This seems to be the Islam that is "intelligible" to him but not to others. He also wants to fix the meaning of Islamism as one that upholds the illiberal Islam, which he cannot tolerate. In Benslama's work, psychoanalysis becomes a handmaiden of European liberalism and demonstrates neither internal ambivalence nor ambivalence toward its projected other. On the contrary, the certainty with which "Islam" is christened *the other of liberalism* and the West aligns it with the figure of the primitive and the pre-oedipal child in the cosmology of Freudian psychoanalysis. Benslama is not alone in effecting this transformation but is rather part of a large group of European and Arab and Muslim thinkers who are insistent on these representations. While he has brilliantly analyzed the figures of Abraham and Ishmael in the Qurʾan and, along with Hagar, in the Islamic theological tradition (neither Hagar nor

Sarah are in fact named in the Qurʾan at all), when he deals with contemporary Islamists his psychoanalytic insights are transformed into invocations (shall we call them incantations?) of liberalism.

Showing an ongoing concern with the horrors that are committed "in the name of Islam," Benslama is much less worried about the greater horrors that are committed in the name of *anti*-Islam.[124] In fact, as I have shown earlier, he is an ambivalent participant in the discourse of anti-Islam as his consciously chosen title *Déclaration d'insoumission* clearly illustrates. But the problem of the name could be more complicated than I have hitherto allowed. In the context of writing on the Prophetic Message, Khatibi investigates the reasons for his decision to write on it, and cites his brother's name, Muhammad, his father's name, Ahmad (one of the names by which the Prophet is also known), and his own name, Abdelkebir (as he was born on the day of *al-ʿId al-Kabir*, the major Muslim feast of Abraham's sacrifice of his son), as reasons that might have led him to write on these themes.[125] In contrast, Benslama, instead of reading his own name into his desire to work on psychoanalysis and Islam, shifts the blame onto "Islam." He tells us that "it is because Islam began to concern itself with us that I decided to be concerned with it."[126] Reading his name into this equation, which Benslama himself does not do (though he is remarkably playful in his books when dealing with words, names, their Arabic etymologies and three-letter roots, and their relationship to the unconscious), produces an interesting psychoanalytic interpretation of his discoveries. Benslama—or "bin Salamah," as his name is written in Arabic, as two separate words, meaning "son of Salamah" (not unlike the formulations of English last names, such as Johnson, meaning "son of John," or more relevantly "Christianson" and "Christopherson")—shares his patronym with Islam, since both are based on the three-letter radical *s-l-m*. Salamah means peacefulness and safety, which Benslama recognizes as two of the meanings of Islam.[127] In this sense, one might consider that Benslama speaks also in the name of Salamah, his patronym, the name of the symbolic father who imposes the law and who says no (Lacan's "le nom/non du père"), which is also the name of Islam, but he speaks in its/his name to produce a declaration against it/him, against his own name and his own "father," Salamah-Islam. His entire project is in fact to fight this Islam ("pour combattre partout"),[128] the one Islam, the Islamist Islam, indeed, to kill it and replace it with a kinder, gentler father who does not lay down the law, namely, a liberal Islam, which Benslama spends considerable time wishing into existence. This contingent reading of Benslama's name and his relationship to "Islam" would address the Oedipal rebellion (*insoumission*) that he stages against Islam *as* the symbolic father who regulates desire, and this might be read in relation to Benslama's ongoing and impressive attempts to rescue Hagar, the (grand)mother of the Arabs, from "Islam's" marginalization of her.

Benslama's political and geographical location in France, like others of his cohort, seems to account consciously for his liberal commitments, as does the time period in which he is writing, beginning in the late 1980s, coinciding with the weakening and later collapse of the Soviet Union and the globalization of imperial capital; it certainly explains his sense of "shame" for belonging to a group of Muslims with a questionable relationship to psychoanalysis and also his ambivalent rejection of his own patronym and, more generally, his paternal lineage, in favor of a European (French) liberal psychoanalysis. It also contextualizes the kinds of critiques with which he wants to engage and in which he wants to *insert* his own. He himself pauses to assert that the issuing of his declaration "here in France, on this European continent that is being reorganized, obligates us especially and in many ways. Primarily, by the opportunity of being in a democratic space that wonders about its future and appeals to a democracy to come."[129] This unwavering commitment to the liberal values of individualism, freedom, tolerance, and separation of the theological from the political[130] begins increasingly to function like religious doctrine for those intellectuals who uphold them, and, insofar as they do, can be likened to obsessional neurosis,

just as religion was by Freud. Indeed, Freud articulates objections to his commitments to science by ventriloquizing critics who would state: "If you want to expel religion from our European civilization, you can only do it by means of another system of doctrines; and such a system would from the outset take over all the psychological characteristics of religion—the same sanctity, rigidity and intolerance, the same prohibition of thought—for its own defence."[131] Freud's feeble retort to this criticism is that "my illusions are not, like religious ones, incapable of correction."[132] As liberal doctrine's prejudice against Islam proves less open to correction than the very Islamist doctrines it wants to criticize, its "illusions" are indeed more "religious" than those of Islamisms. In this light, and as Freud described followers of religions, devout followers of liberal doctrine "are safeguarded in a high degree against the risk of certain neurotic illnesses; their acceptance of the universal neurosis spares them the task of constructing a personal one."[133] Arab and Muslim intellectual migrants to Europe (and the US), in the geographical and/or political sense, who are converted to liberal doctrine have the added and difficult task of self-othering, of repudiating Islam as *not only* "religion," in order to integrate a version of it into the liberal Christian and secular notion of *only* a "religion," which would make it tolerable to devout liberals.

This liberal identity and the mechanisms through which it produces its others are taken as uninterrogable referents in Benslama's work and that of others like him. This constitutes a serious limitation of Benslama's oeuvre generally and can be productively read in a psychoanalytic way. Indeed, this might be useful for psychoanalysis at present, namely to study the processes through which the liberal self is constituted by Europeans and by Muslim and non-Muslim intellectual migrants from non-European postcolonies. A more curious psychoanalysis would perhaps do well to undertake a study of the group psychology of liberal and secular thinkers more generally on the question of "Islam" in order to uncover the unconscious processes and mechanisms at play in the formation of their liberal ego, which in turn privileges this liberal reading of something they insist on othering as "Islam." In the words of British scholar Roger Ballard:

> The most urgent priority is not for Europe to understand its *alters* better, but rather itself and its own history—for it is within Europe's own longstanding structures of self-definition that pluralism in general, and the Islamic presence in particular, have been rendered into nightmares. If so, it is Europe itself which stands in urgent need of therapy. But as yet the patient is still in denial, and as any psychotherapist would confirm, those who refuse to acknowledge the seriousness of their self-generated plight find it far easier to engage in a process of transference. Rather than confronting the illusory character of their own mental constructions, they prefer to ascribe the very behavior which they refuse to acknowledge in themselves to those whom they believe are harassing them.[134]

In the meantime, the important question Benslama and Khatibi posed in the call for papers for their inaugural 1987 colloquium on psychoanalysis and Islam—namely, "from which foundations and in relation to which specific problems can psychoanalysis enter into a relationship with this other civilization without doing so in the mode of a cultural psychology or a pure transposition that would reproduce the avatars of colonial thought with regards to the matter of the psychic being?"—is still in search of an answer and thus remains an open challenge.[135]

Footnotes

1 Sigmund Freud, *Moses and Monotheism*, in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* (hereafter *S.E.*), ed. and trans. James Strachey et al. (London: Hogarth Press, 1953–1974), 23:92.
2 Erich Fromm, *Psychoanalysis and Religion* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1950).
3 On the history of Egyptian psychoanalysts, see Hussein Abel Kader, "La psychanalyse en Egypt entre un passé ambitieux et un future incertain," *La Célibataire*, no. 8 (Printemps 2004): 61–73, and Raja Ben Slama, "La psychanalyse en Egypte: Un problème de non-advenue," *La psychanalyse au Maghreb et au Machrek*, a special issue of *Topique: Revue Freudienne*, no. 110 (June 2010): 83–96. On the biography of Mustafa Zaywar (1907–90), the founder of psychoanalysis in Egypt and the first Arab member of the International Psychoanalytical Association, see Husayn ʿAbd al-Qadir, "Atruk Sharayini Fikum," in *Mustafa Zaywar: Fi Dhikra al-ʿAlim wa al-Fannan wa al-Insan*, ed. Usamah Khalil (Paris: Maʿhad al-Lughah wa al-Hadarah al-ʿArabiyyah, 1997), 7–14. On the history of psychoanalysis in Morocco and the involvement of French psychoanalysts during French colonial rule and beyond, see Jalil Bennani, *Psychanalyse en terre d'islam: Introduction à la psychanalyse au Maghreb* (Strasbourg: Éditions Arcanes, 2008), first published in 1996 by Éditions Le Fennec in Casablanca.
4 See Salamah Musa's early book *Al-ʿAql al-Batin wa Maknunat al-Nafs* (The Unconscious and the Soul's Latent Innermost Thoughts) (Cairo: Dar al-Hilal, 1928), and his later book *ʿAqli wa ʿAqluk* (My Mind/Reason and Yours) (Cairo: Salamah Musa Lil-Nashr, 1947).
5 In his 1968 biography of the Prophet, French Orientalist Maxime Rodinson does employ the notion of the unconscious to explain some of the Prophet's experiences, but does not do so in any strict psychoanalytic sense. See Maxime Rodinson, *Muhammad: Prophet of Islam* (London: Tauris Parke Paperbacks, 2002), 77.
6 See Muhammad al-Nuwayhi, *Nafsiyyat Abu Nuwas* (The Psychology of Abu Nuwas) (Cairo: Dar al-Fikr, 1970), first published in 1953, and ʿAbbas Mahmud al-ʿAqqad, *Abu Nuwas, al-Hasan Bin Hani: Dirasah fi al-Tahlil al-Nafsani wa al-Naqd al-Tarikhi* (A Study in Psychoanalysis and Historical Criticism) (Cairo: Kitab al-Hilal, 1960), first published in 1953. For a critical take on the psychoanalytic study as applied to Abu Nuwas, see Husayn Muruwwah, *Dirasat Naqdiyyah, fi Duʾ al-Manhaj al-Waqiʿi* (Critical Studies, in the Light of the Realist Method) (Beirut: Maktabat al-Maʿarif, 1965). For a detailed discussion of these studies, see Joseph Massad, *Desiring Arabs* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 84–92.
7 See Jurj Tarabishi, *ʿUqdat Udib fi al-Riwayah al-ʿArabiyyah* (The Oedipus Complex in the Arabic Novel) (Beirut: Dar al-Taliʿah, 1982), *Al-Rujulah wa Aydiyulujiyyat al-Rujulah fi al-Riwayah al-ʿArabiyyah* (Manliness and the Ideology of Manliness in the Arabic Novel) (Beirut: Dar al-Taliʿah, 1983), and *Untha Didd al-Unuthah: Dirasah fi Adab Nawal al-Saʿdawi* (A Female against Femininity: A Study of the Fiction of Nawal al-Saʿdawi) (Beirut: Dar al-Taliʿah, 1984).
8 See Jurj Tarabishi, *Al-Muthaqaffun al-ʿArab wa al-Turath, al-Tahlil al-Nafsi li-ʿUsab Jamaʿi* (Arab Intellectuals and Heritage: Psychoanalysis of a Group Neurosis) (London: Riyad al-Rayyis lil-Nashr, 1991).
9 Abdelkebir Khatibi, "Frontières," *Cahiers Intersignes*, no. 1 (Spring 1990): 15.
10 Jurj Tarabishi, "Taqdim," in Sighmund Fruyd, *Mustaqbal Wahm*, trans. Jurj Tarabishi (Beirut: Dar al-Taliʿah, 1974), 5. Tarabishi had also translated *Moses and Monotheism* from the French in 1973 as well as Freud's *Civilization and Its Discontents* in 1977. See Sighmund Fruyd, *Musa wa al-Tawhid*, trans. Jurj Tarabishi (Beirut: Dar al-Taliʿah, 1973), and Sighmund Fruyd, *Qalaq fi al-Hadarah*, trans. Jurj Tarabishi (Beirut: Dar al-Taliʿah, 1977). This is not to say that there was no familiarity in the Arab World with *Moses and Monotheism* prior to its translation. Fethi Benslama mentions the controversy that ensued in Cairo upon the announcement of the publication of the book's English translation, which was noted in the Egyptian newspaper *Al-Ahram* on 10 May 1939 in a report by the newspaper's London correspondent citing the British *News Chronicle*. Several readers (one Mansur Wahbah was a university graduate of the natural sciences, another, Hilal Farhi, was a "doctor") in Cairo objected to Freud's de-judaization of Moses and his attributing to him Egyptian origins, basing themselves on scriptural and other historical evidence (see *Al-Ahram*, 13 May 1939 and 20 May 1939 respectively). The controversy is reproduced in ʿAbd al-Wahhab Najjar, *Qisas al-Anbiya'* (Cairo: Muʾassasat al-Halabi wa Shurakaʾihi lil-Tabʿ wa al-Tawziʿ, 1966), 155–57. The book was initially published circa 1933 with updated later editions. Fethi Benslama refers to it in *La psychanalyse à l'épreuve de l'Islam* (Paris: Flammarion, 2002), 277–78.
11 I should note here that Egyptian psychoanalysts and psychologists published an encyclopedia in 1993 that also contained an English–Arabic glossary of psychoanalytic and psychological terms in order to unify their use in Arabic across the Arab world. See ʿAbd al-Qadir Taha, ed., *Mawsuʿat ʿIlm al-Nafs wa al-Tahlil al-Nafsi* (The Encyclopedia of Psychology and Psychoanalysis) (Kuwait: Dar Suʿad al-Subah, 1993).
12 See Salman Akhtar, "Muslims in the Psychoanalytic World," and Aisha Abbasi, "Whose Side Are You On? Muslim Psychoanalysts Treating Non-Muslim Patients," in *The Crescent and the Couch: Cross-Currents between Islam and Psychoanalysis*, ed. Salman Akhtar (Lanham, MD: Jason Aronson, 2008), 315–33, 335–50.
13 Tarabishi, more recently, started to write on "Islam," and occasionally punctuates his texts with psychoanalytic references, as he does in *Hartaqat 2: ʿan al-ʿIlmaniyyah ka-Ishkaliyyah Islamiyyah-Islamiyyah* (Hereticisms 2: On Secularism as a Muslim-Muslim Problematic) (Beirut: Dar al-Saqi, 2008), where he references Freud's *Moses and Monotheism* and *Totem and Taboo*, speaks of the "return of the repressed" in addressing Shiite–Sunni sectarianism in post-US invasion Iraq, and claims to differ from Freud in considering Christianity and Shiite Islam as "son-religions" rather than "father-religions," as Freud "had interpreted the emergence of monotheistic religions from his illusory scheme of parricide," which Freud, according to Tarabishi, correctly applied to Judaism but which does not apply to "Christianity and Shiite Islam." See *Hartaqat 2*, 11, 15, 17n. This is an odd assertion of difference with Freud on the part of Tarabishi, as Freud was quite clear at the end of *Moses and Monotheism* that "Christianity, having arisen out of a father-religion, became a son-religion" (*S.E.* 23:136).

14 Indeed, Benslama recognizes this clearly, by excepting himself as having shown interest in “Islam” earlier than his colleagues. He states that his initial interest in “Islam” had started due to an encounter with Pierre Fedida after which he published his first book dealing with psychoanalysis and Islam in 1988 “when Islam had not constituted yet a sharp problem in the international public sphere, nor a question for psychoanalytic research.” Fethi Benslama, “Une recherche psychanalytique sur l’islam,” in a special issue of *La Célibataire* entitled “La psychanalyse et le monde arabe,” no. 8 (Printemps 2004): 77. On Benslama’s first book on the subject, see Fethi Benslama, *La nuit brisée* (Paris: Éditions Ramsay, 1988). This is an interesting assertion since the more usual dating of the international interest in “Islam” as “Islamism” coincides with the Iranian Revolution of 1978–79.
15 Abdelkebir Khatibi, “Du message prophétique (argument),” in *Par-Dessus l’épaule* (Paris: Aubier, 1988). He writes on page 135 that he had written the text in 1984.
16 Khatibi, “Frontières,” 17.
17 There are also others writing on psychoanalytic themes like the Egyptian Karim Jbeili who is based in Canada and whose book *Le psychisme des Orientaux: Différences et déchirures* (Montréal: Liber, 2006) consists of a series of contemplations that rely on strong identitarian essentialisms of what an “Oriental” and “Occidental” are, what their psyches consist of, and how, in pointing this out, Jbeili is simply attending to their particularities and not necessarily engaging in reification.
18 Benslama, *La psychanalyse à l’épreuve de l’Islam* (Paris: Flammarion, 2002), 17. At the time of writing this chapter, an English translation of Benslama’s book was still forthcoming; all subsequent translated quotations are thus my own, while pagination refers to the 2002 French edition. It is noteworthy that the latter part of this sentence “that it would never again be a question in the organization of society” is dropped, without explanation, from the Arabic translation of the book. See Fathi Bin Salamah, *Al-Islam wa al-Tahlil al-Nafsi*, trans. Dr. Rajaʾ Bin Salamah (Beirut: Dar al-Saqi and Rabitat al-ʿAqlaniyyin al-ʿArab, 2008), 29.
19 See the interview of al-Muʿti Qabbal with Malek Chebel, “al-Islam wa Sahwat al-Tufulah” (Islam and the Awakening of Childhood), in *Al-Tahlil al-Nafsi wa al-Thaqafah al-ʿArabiyyah-al-Islamiyyah* (Psychoanalysis and Arab-Islamic Culture) (Damascus: Dar al-Bidayat, 2008), 77.
20 He describes it thus in a dialogue with Moustapha Safouan in Mustafa Safwan and ʿAdnan Hubbu Allah, *Ishkaliyyat al-Mujtamaʿ al-Arabi: Qiraʾah min Manzur al-Tahlil al-Nafsi* (The Problematics of Arab Society: A Reading from a Psychoanalytic Perspective), with an introduction by Adunis (Beirut: Al-Markaz al-Thaqafi al-Arabi, 2008), 96.
21 In response to a question about the (alleged) rejection of psychoanalysis in Arab-Islamic societies on account of it being “foreign,” Malek Chebel states that “this statement reveals an actuality that can cause embarrassment.” See al-Muʿti Qabbal’s interview with Malek Chebel, “al-Islam wa Sahwat al-Tufulah,” 78. In contrast, Moustapha Safouan feels pain not on account of the return of Islam but by what he believes to be the absence of democratic thinking in the Arab world manifested by his mistaken presumption that Alexis de Tocqueville’s *Democracy in America* has not been, but should be, translated to Arabic given its pedagogical importance for a people lacking democracy: “it is a painful proof of our backwardness that [Alexis de Tocqueville’s *Democracy in America*] is still not translated into Arabic.” Moustapha Safouan, *Why Are the Arabs Not Free? The Politics of Writing* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2007), 60. Leaving aside what the translation of this book into Arabic could mean or not mean, the book had in fact been translated and published in 1984 (twenty-three years before Safouan felt the pain and expressed it in a 2007 book) by Amin Mursi Qandil, edited by Muhsin Mahdi, and published by Dar Kitabi in Cairo and again by ʿAlam al-Kutub in Cairo in 1991 under the title and exact translation *al-Dimuqratiyyah fi Amrika*. I should note that in July 2006, the American occupation government of Iraq, through its “ambassador” to the country Zalmay Khalilzad, distributed free copies of the book in Arabic to Iraqis on US Independence Day to teach them democracy (Kim Gamel, “Fourth of July Iraqi Style,” Associated Press Blog, published in the Washington Post, 4 July 2006, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/07/04/AR2006070400818_pf.html). Clearly whatever expectations Safouan entertained about the effect of its publication in Arabic have yet to materialize.
22 Edward W. Said, *Freud and the Non-European* (London: Verso, 2003), 54.
23 Benslama, *La psychanalyse*, 171.
24 Benslama, “Une recherche psychanalytique sur l’islam,” 79. He also enumerates many of the possible meanings of Islam except that of “deliverance” in Fethi Benslama, *Déclaration d’insoumission: À l’usage des musulmans et de ceux qui ne le sont pas* (Paris: Flammarion, 2004), 28–29.
25 Benslama, *La nuit brisée*, 176.
26 Benslama, *Déclaration d’insoumission*, 24.
27 Étienne Balibar, “Subjection and Subjectivation,” in *Supposing the Subject*, ed. Joan Copjec (London: Verso, 1994), 8.
28 On the various translations of psychoanalytic concepts into Arabic which have created incommensurable uses of psychoanalytic vocabulary, see Raja Ben Slama, “L’arbre qui révèle la forêt: Traductions arabes du vocabulaire freudien,” *Transeuropeenes: International Journal of Critical Thought*, 5 November 2009, http://www.transeuropeennes.eu/en/articles/106/The_Tree_that_Reveals_the_Forest (accessed 1 April 2014). Ben Slama borrows most of her information on translations from Egyptian psychoanalyst Husayn ʿAbd al-Qadir, who was critical of Jurj Tarabishi’s translations of psychoanalytic concepts and Tarabishi’s refusal to use the terms translated by Mustafa Zaywar. See Husayn ʿAbd al-Qadir, “Atruk Sharayini Fikum,” in *Mustafa Zaywar: Fi Dhikra al-ʿAlim wa al-Fannan wa al-Insan*, ed. Usamah Khalil (Paris: Maʿhad al-Lughah wa al-Hadarah al-ʿArabiyyah, 1997), 14.
29 See Safouan, *Why Are the Arabs Not Free?* 65.
30 Ibid.
31 Safouan elaborates on these views in a dialogue with ʿAdnan Hubbu Allah in “Al-Tahlil al-Nafsi wa al-Mujtamaʿ al-ʿArabi” (Psychoanalysis and Arab Society), in Mustafa Safwan and ʿAdnan Hubbu Allah, *Ishkaliyyat al-Mujtamaʿ al-ʿArabi*, 137–38.
32 On this debate, see Yasir Suleiman, *The Arabic Language and National Identity: A Study in Ideology* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2003).
33 Safouan, *Why Are the Arabs Not Free?* 10.

34 Ibid., 49.
35 For a discussion and a critique of the English translations of Freud's works, see Bruno Bettelheim, *Freud and Man's Soul* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1983).
36 Benslama, *Déclaration d'insoumission*, 76–77.
37 Benslama, *La psychanalyse*, 23.
38 Ibid., 24.
39 I thank Lecia Rosenthal for raising this point.
40 Benslama, *La psychanalyse*, 26.
41 Ibid., 27.
42 Ibid.
43 Ibid., 43.
44 Fathi Bin Salamah, *Al-Islam wa al-Tahlil al-Nafsi*, 36n.
45 See page 45 of *La psychanalyse* on his liberal defense of personal freedom and the individual.
46 Benslama, *La psychanalyse*, 24.
47 Ibid., 25.
48 I should note here that Benslama is aware that one of the meanings of the word *din* in Arabic is "debt" and that the logic of its meaning is different from that of religion but still thinks that it is the word through which the Qurʾan "designates the equivalent or the similar term which we call in Christianity 'religion.'" See Benslama, *Déclaration d'insoumission*, 26n. On how the universal definition of "religion" originated in early modern Christianity, see Talal Asad, "The Construction of Religion as an Anthropological Category," in *Genealogies of Religion: Disciplines and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), 27–54. See also Tomoko Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions: or, How European Universalism was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).
49 See Benslama, *Déclaration d'insoumission*, 24.
50 Benslama, *La psychanalyse*, 302.
51 Ibid.
52 Benslama, "Une recherche psychanalytique sur l'islam," 77.
53 Benslama, *La psychanalyse*, 20.
54 Ibid., 76.
55 Abdelkebir Khatibi, "Du message prophétique (argument)," 83–84. Benslama does cite the article for Khatibi's views on the question of the Prophet's literacy or illiteracy and on the importance of Khadija to the question of revelation, but does not cite him for introducing him to this important scene, which is not one of the more standard stories about the beginning of revelation and is not usually included in modern narratives of the Prophet's biography, even though Khadija's relationship to the beginning of revelation is extensively discussed in such biographies. See Benslama, *La nuit brisée*, 44, 140–41, 143. On the absence of the story from the Prophet's modern biographies, see for example Safi al-Rahman Mubarakfuri's celebrated *Al-Rahiq al-Makhtum: Bahth fi al-Sirah al-Nabawiyyah ʿala Sahibiha Afdal al-Salah wa al-Salam* (The Sealed Nectar) (Riyad: Maktabat Dar al-Salam, 1995). I thank Ahmad Atif Ahmad for sharing with me some of his extensive knowledge of the classical and contemporary biographies of the Prophet.
56 Benslama, *La psychanalyse*, 319.
57 Muhammad Arkun, *Tarikhiyyat al-Fikr al-'Arabi al-Islami* (The Historicity of Arab Islamic Thought) (Casablanca: Al-Markaz al-Thaqafi al-ʿArabi, 1998), 16.
58 Benslama, *La psychanalyse*, 319.
59 Ibid., 59.
60 Ibid., 197. He uses it again in *Déclaration d'insoumission*, 35.
61 Benslama, *La psychanalyse*, 49.
62 "Shajarat al-Islam, al-Tahlil al-Nafsi, al-Huwiyyah" (The Tree of Islam, Psychoanalysis, Identity), interview conducted by Husayn al-Qubaysi with Fethi Benslama, in *Al-Tahlil al-Nafsi wa al-Thaqafah al-ʿArabiyyah-al-Islamiyyah* (Psychoanalysis and Arab-Islamic Culture) (Damascus: Dar al-Bidayat, 2008), 15.
63 Freud, *Moses and Monotheism, S.E.* 23:91.
64 Said, *Freud and the Non-European*, 40.
65 Benslama, *La psychanalyse*, 24–25.
66 Ibid., 36.
67 Ibid., 70.
68 Ibid.
69 See Fathi Bin Salamah, *Al-Islam wa al-Tahlil al-Nafsi*. Jurj Tarabishi is one of the main founders of this Association.
70 "Shajarat al-Islam, al-Tahlil al-Nafsi, al-Huwiyyah," 18.
71 Mustafa Safouan, "Pratique analytique dans le monde arabe: Incidences et difficulté," *La Célibataire*, no. 8 (Printemps 2004): 15.
72 Ibid., 16.
73 Safouan, *Why Are the Arabs Not Free?* 43.
74 Safwan in a dialogue with ʿAdnan Hubbu Allah in "Al-Tahlil al-Nafsi wa al-Mujtamaʿ al-ʿArabi" (Psychoanalysis and Arab Society), in Mustafa Safwan and ʿAdnan Hubbu Allah, *Ishkaliyyat al-Mujtamaʿ al-'Arabi*, 117.
75 Safouan, *Why the Arabs are not Free?* 14.
76 For the proceedings and papers of the conference, see *Al-ʿIlm wa al-Din wa al-Tahlil al-Nafsi: Aʿmal al-Muʾtamar al-Dawli al-Thalith lil-Muhallilin al-Nafsiyyin al-ʿArab, Beirut 17–19 May, 2007* (Science, Religion, and Psychoanalysis: The Proceedings of

the Third International Conference for Arab Psychoanalysts) (Beirut: Dar al-Farabi, 2008) in Arabic and French. When I refer to this volume, I will indicate if I am quoting from the Arabic text, which has its own pagination, or the French text, which also has its own separate pagination. On Arab intellectuals' alleged inhospitable response to psychoanalysis, see Houbballah's introduction to Mustafa Safwan and ʿAdnan Hubbu Allah, *Ishkaliyyat al-Mujtamaʿ al-Arabi*, 8. He also discusses this at length in Adnan Houbballah, "La psychanalyse et le monde arabe," *La Célibataire*, no. 8 (Printemps 2004): 19–28. Before his recent concern with Islam and science, Houbballah had written a semi-autobiographical study of the Lebanese civil war in which many of his recent concerns were not present. See Adnan Houbballah, *Le virus de la violence: La guerre civile est en chacun de nous* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1996). His book was translated into Arabic as *Jurthumat al-ʿUnf, al-Harb al-Ahliyyah fi Samim kull Minna* (Beirut: Dar al-Taliʿah, 1998).

77 Houbballah, "La psychanalyse," 20.

78 Ibid., 22.

79 Ibid., 28.

80 ʿAdnan Hubbu Allah, "al-ʿIlm wa al-Din fi ma baʿd al-Hadathah" (Science and Religion in Postmodernity), in *Al-ʿIlm wa al-Din wa al-Tahlil al-Nafsi*, 15 of the Arabic pagination. It is curious that the paragraph from which this quotation is taken is not included in the French version of the speech contained in the same volume (see 16 of the French pagination).

81 ʿAdnan Hubbu Allah, "Limadha takhallafa al-ʿArab ʿan al-ʿIlm al-Muʿasir: ʿAmaliyyatan Jirahiyyatan lam Yakhdaʿ lahuma al-Muslimun" (Why have Arabs Remained Delayed from Contemporary Science: Two Surgeries to which Muslims have not been Subjected), in *Al-ʿIlm wa al-Din wa al-Tahlil al-Nafsi*, 67 of the Arabic pagination.

82 Ibid., 73.

83 On this important debate, see Massad, *Desiring Arabs*, 11–16.

84 Gohar Homayounpour, *Doing Psychoanalysis in Tehran* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2012), xviii.

85 Ibid., 4–5.

86 54–55.

87 Ibid., 55–56.

88 Ibid., 56–57.

89 Ibid., 129–30.

90 Ibid., 92.

91 Ibid., 141, 143.

92 Wendy Brown, "Subjects of Tolerance," in *Political Theologies: Public Religions in a Post-Secular World*, ed. Hent De Vries and Lawrence E. Sullivan (New York: Fordham University Press, 2006), 303.

93 Ibid., 310.

94 Clive Parry, "Climate of International Law in Europe," *Proceedings of the American Society of International Law at Its Annual Meeting* 47 (April 23–25, 1953): 40.

95 Freud, *The Future of an Illusion*, *S.E.* 21:20.

96 See for example Yosef Haim Yerushalmi, *Freud's Moses: Judaism Terminable and Interminable* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991), 46–50, 96–100.

97 "Shajarat al-Islam, al-Tahlil al-Nafsi, al-Huwiyyah," 14. He returns to this theme later when he speaks of "the traditional anti-Judaism in the Arab world," and of "the anti-Judaism that has existed since the origins of Islam," in Benslama, *Déclaration d'insoumission*, 38, 40. In the context of discussing the Palestinian–Israeli conflict, he shows concern only about the Islamist "religious readings" of the origins of the "conflict" but not of the Judaization of the Zionist colonial endeavor since the beginnings of Zionism. While clearly critical of the policies of Israeli governments, he only praises those Palestinians who are willing to "compromise" by recognizing Israel as he refers to them as "democrats," without noting that they are willing to recognize an Israel that is racist and *undemocratic* by law, granting legal privileges and rights to its Jewish citizens that it denies to non-Jewish citizens. It is curious that Benslama considers the democratic position on the part of Palestinians as the position of "non-violence" while he deems the position of violent resistance to a violent occupation undemocratic (see ibid., 44). Benslama's sister and translator Raja Ben Slama, who is a psychoanalytic scholar, is equally committed to condemning Arab criticisms of Zionism. For example, she dismisses Mustafa Zaywar's analysis of Israeli Jewish psychology as motivated by anti-Jewish racism, though not on the same level of the "elementary racism of his disciples who used to speak of a 'Jewish personality.'" R. Ben Slama concludes that "conspiracy themes and amalgamations motivated by the hatred of Jews have led and still lead today to [Arab] scholarly constructions about the relationship between psychoanalysis and Zionism," in Raja Ben Slama, "La psychanalyse en Egypte," 88. In fact, contrary to R. Ben Slama's allegations, Zaywar was sympathetic to European Jews in all his writings; see for example his 1952 lecture "Saykulujiyyat al-Taʿassub" (The Psychology of Chauvinism), reproduced in *Mustafa Zaywar: Fi Dhikra al-ʿAlim wa al-Fannan wa al-Insan*, ed. Usamah Khalil (Paris: Maʿhad al-Lughah wa al-Hadarah al-ʿArabiyyah, 1997), 59–77. In the case of Israel, Zaywar diagnosed Israeli Jewish psychology as one of "identification with the aggressor" and former enemy of Jews, namely the Nazis, and that this identification is what propels Israeli Jews to oppress the Arabs and the Palestinians. Nowhere in his analysis does Zaywar show any antipathy towards Jews but he rather proceeds from a Hegelian understanding of identity, showing how for Israeli Jews their new sense of identity as "masters" is directly related to and dependent upon their transformation of the identity of the Arabs and Palestinians into "slaves." In exchanging their former status as Hegelian "slaves" to Nazi "masters," Zaywar invokes Sándor Ferenczi's and Anna Freud's thesis of the "identification with the aggressor" as well as a study on the surviving Jewish children of Buchenwald to support his diagnosis. See his "Adwaʾ ʿala al-Mujtamaʿ al-Israʾili: Jadal al-Sayyid wa al-ʿAbd" (Shedding Light on Israeli Society: The Master-Slave Dialectic), *Al-Ahram*, 8 and 9 September 1968, republished in *Mustafa Zaywar*, 78–92. On Zionist identification with anti-Semitism and the transformation of Palestinians into Jews, see Joseph Massad, *The Persistence of the Palestinian Question: Essays on Zionism and the Palestinians* (London: Routledge, 2006), especially the last chapter of the book. I should note here that the earliest text that accuses psychoanalysis of Zionist sympathies was written by an Egyptian Christian

psychiatrist who had championed Freud in the 1930s and repudiated him in 1970. See Dr. Sabri Jirjis, *Al-Turath al-Yahudi al-Suhyuni wa al-Fikr al-Fruydi: Adwaʾ ʿala al-usul al-Suhyuniyyah li-fikr Sighmund Fruyd* (Zionist Jewish Culture and Freudian Thought: Shedding Light on the Zionist Origins of the Thought of Sigmund Freud) (Cairo: ʿAlam al-Kutub, 1970). Egyptian psychoanalyst Hussein Abdel Kader explains that Jirjis's repudiation of Freud was part of a dispute he had had with Mustafa Zaywar, the doyen of Egyptian psychoanalysts, who was the real target of his attack, "and not Freud." See Hussein Abdel Kader, "La psychanalyse en Egypt," 65. Incidentally, Zaywar edited and introduced Safouan's 1958 translation of Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* into Arabic. For the most recent edition of the translation published under the auspices of the Arab Center for Psychological and Psychoanalytic Research (ACPPR) headed by Adnan Houbballah, see Sighmund Fruyd, *Tafsir al-Ahlam*, trans. Mustafa Safwan (Beirut: Dar an Farabi and ACPPR, 2003). ʿAbd al-Munʿim al-Hifni retranslated the book in 1995 in a new edition with a respectful yet critical discussion of Safwan's translation, and republished it with a new introduction in 2004. See Sighmund Fruyd, *Tafsir al-Ahlam*, trans. Abd al-Munʿim al-Hifni (Cairo: Maktabat Madbuli, 2004).

98 I should add here that Newton dabbled in early Protestant Zionism, which may be another reason for Benslama's mistaken presumption that he was Jewish. In his *Observations upon the Prophesies of Daniel and the Apocalypse of St. John*, Newton asserted that the Jews would be restored to Palestine: "The manner I know not. Let time be the interpreter." See Regina Sharif, *Non-Jewish Zionism: Its Roots in Western History* (London: Zed Press, 1983), 36.

99 A vulgar Islamophobic psychoanalytic study is that of the French Zionist writer Daniel Sibony, who wants to psychoanalyze Palestinian resistance to European Jewish colonization of their country. In his book on the topic, which reads more as official Israeli *hasbara* (or propaganda), Sibony alleges that Palestinian resistance is not based on the actual theft of Palestinian land and the expulsion of the Palestinians but is rather related to how the Qurʾan allegedly expelled the Jews who were "indigenous" to the Islamic Message because the Jews refused to accept to "submit" to Islam, that is, to "Islamize themselves." See Daniel Sibony, *Proche-Orient: Psychanalyse d'un conflit* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2003), 16. The "return" of the Jews to Palestine, Sibony alleges, was perceived by the Palestinians (which he represents as Muslims in their entirety, thus eliding the presence of Palestinian Christians who were always and remain prominent in the resistance to Zionism) not as part of a European colonial population taking over a land that previous European Christian Crusaders had colonized with similar religious justifications and arguments a millennium earlier and which European converts to Judaism were emulating through Zionism, but rather as the return "d'une faille dans un Texte qu'il l'a déniée" (16). For Sibony, the problem of the Palestinians is that they thought that the fact that they were born in Palestine was sufficient for them to be in possession of the land, but in doing so, Sibony tells us, they did not see "the nature of the symbolic link [that their country constitutes for Jews] that has come back" (18). Sibony could have added that the Palestinians also do not see the nature of the "symbolic link" that their country constitutes for European Christians either, which the latter justified/justify to conquer them. Statements that allege that the Qurʾan today (though Sibony does claim that it was not always like this) is essentially anti-Jewish, that it is a call for the hatred of Jews—"un appel à les hair" (37)—and that the Palestinians allegedly use it "comme Manifeste de libération," proliferate throughout the book.

100 Jacques Derrida, "Geopsychoanalysis: '. . . and the rest of the world,'" *American Imago* 48, no. 2 (Summer 1991): 211.

101 Ibid., 215.

102 Jacques Derrida, "Psychoanalysis Searches the States of its Soul: The Impossible Beyond of a Sovereign Cruelty" (Address to the States General of Psychoanalysis), in Jacques Derrida, *Without Alibi* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002), 255.

103 Ibid.

104 Mounir Chamoun, "Islam et Psychanalyse dans la culture arabo-musulmane," *Pratiques Psychologiques* 11 (2005): 3. See also pages 6–7.

105 Derrida, "Psychoanalysis Searches the States of its Soul," 260.

106 Benslama, *La psychanalyse*, 43.

107 Ibid., 317.

108 Benslama, "Une recherche psychanalytique sur l'islam," 76.

109 Benslama, *La psychanalyse*, 317–18.

110 Ibid., 318.

111 Benslama, *La psychanalyse*, 319. Bracketed commentaries are mine and do not appear in Benslama's text.

112 Ibid., 319.

113 Ibid.

114 Ibid., 318.

115 Jurj Tarabishi is also a signatory to the manifesto, but not Safouan or Houbballah. See http://www.manifeste.org/signatures.php3?id_article=1&alpha=T (accessed 1 April 2014). Tarabishi was also consulted on the translation of Benslama's *La Psychanalyse* into Arabic. See the translator's introduction in Benslama, *Al-Islam wa al-Tahlil al-Nafsi*, 18.

116 "Déclaration de fondation de l'Association du Manifeste des libertés," in Fethi Benslama, *Déclaration d'insoumission*, 91–92.

117 Ibid., 92.

118 Ibid., 93.

119 Benslama, *Déclaration d'insoumission*, 48–49.

120 Žižek's quotes are taken from Slavoj Žižek, "A Glance into the Archives of Islam," http://www.lacan.com/zizarchives.htm (accessed 1 April 2014). As for the question of Islam and women, for Žižek, who praises and relies on the work of Benslama, "Islam itself is grounded on a disavowed femininity, trying to get rid of the umbilical cord that links it to the feminine." For a scathing critique of Žižek and his views of Muslims and Islam, see Anne Norton, *On the Muslim Question* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013), 7–8, 45–46, 174.

121 For an Islamist misapprehension of Freud's theories and their dismissal as "pornographic" in nature, see Sa'd al-Din Sayyid Salih, *Nazariyyat al-Tahlil al-Nafsi ʿind Fruyd fi Mizan al-Islam* (Freud's Theory of Psychoanalysis [weighed] on the scales of

Islam) (Jiddah: Maktabat al-Sahabah, 1993). The association of Freud's thought with Zionism and Jewishness in this book is hardly an Islamist innovation. As cited earlier in the footnotes, it was a Christian Egyptian psychiatrist who had first elaborated on these themes.

122 Ahmad al-Sayyid ʿAli Ramadan, *Al-Islam wa al-Tahlil al-Nafsi ʿind Fruyd* (Islam and Freud's Psychoanalysis) (al-Mansurah, Egypt: Maktabat al-Iman, 2000), 227–28.

123 Ibid., 269–327.

124 Benslama, *Déclaration d'insoumission*, 69.

125 Khatibi, "Du message prophétique (argument)," 88–89.

126 Benslama, *La psychanalyse*, 17.

127 Benslama, *La nuit brisée*, 176.

128 Benslama, *Déclaration d'insoumission*, 93.

129 Ibid., 59–60.

130 A shorter version of this chapter was presented at the London Freud Museum as a keynote address on November 29, 2008 at the conference, "Psychoanalysis, Fascism, and Fundamentalism," sponsored by the London Freud Museum, Middlesex University, and the French Société Internationale d'Histoire de la Psychiatrie et de la Psychanalyse. Unfortunately, I could not deliver the keynote in person because the British embassy delayed my British visa while checking my fingerprints. Professor Glenn Bowman graciously read the address on my behalf. I was able to join in by telephone at the end of the session to answer audience questions. In response to my lecture, Elisabeth Roudinesco, who was a member of the audience, stood up and declared that Fethi Benslama was her friend, proceeded to give an extensive list of his other friends, including Jacques Derrida and Etienne Balibar, and insisted that Benslama was not a "neoliberal" as my lecture supposedly claimed, when in fact no such claim had been advanced. She demanded in conclusion that I should inform the audience of whether I "support terrorism or not." Roudinesco is a signatory to Benslama's Manifesto of Freedom, which, interestingly, she did not mention in her comments. See http://www.manifeste.org/signatures.php3?id_article=1&alpha=R. In a different context, Roudinesco, who is a declared enemy of Islam and French Muslims and who was/is one of the most vocal supporters of the French racist ban of the hijab (dubbed "veil"), had labeled French feminists who opposed the ban in 2003 as supporters of "fundamentalism" and as "partisans of the veil." On her views, see Joan Wallach Scott, *The Politics of the Veil* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 105, 132, 157–58, 166–67. Indeed, at a conference on "psychoanalysis in the Arab and Islamic world" held in May 2005 at the Université Saint-Joseph in Beirut and co-organized by Roudinesco and financed "directly" by the French foreign ministry and under the aegis of the French ambassador to Lebanon and in which Fethi Benslama participated (see the address by the French ambassador to the conference, where he underscores the interest of the ministry of foreign affairs in financing the conference "directly" in "Mot de S.E.M. Bernard Emié, ambassadeur de France," in *La psychanalyse dans le monde arabe et islamique* [Beirut: Presses de l'université Saint-Joseph, 2005], 23), Roudinesco, in a classic Orientalist way that also endorses sectarian right-wing Christian claims in Lebanon, identified the city of Beirut in her opening address as lying "on the border between the Orient and the Occident," and saw no irony in speaking about the relationship between psychoanalysis and democracy and freedom, but not colonialism, at a conference hosted by a Jesuit university set up initially as a French colonial institution and under the aegis of the French government, the former colonial and current neocolonial master of Lebanon. Roudineso expressed the hope in her remarks that psychoanalysis would inaugurate a "new sovereignty" in Lebanon as it had done in Europe. See Elisabeth Roudinesco, "Mot d'ouverture," in *La psychanalyse dans le monde arabe et islamique*, 19–20. It is noteworthy that Adnan Houbballah did not participate in this conference.

131 Freud, *The Future of an Illusion*, *S.E.* 21:51.

132 Ibid., 53.

133 Ibid., 44.

134 Roger Ballard, "Islam and the Construction of Europe," in *Muslims in the Margin: Political Responses to the Presence of Islam in Western Europe*, ed. Wasif Shadid and Sjoerd von Koningsveld (Kampen, Netherlands: Kok Pharos, 1996), 49.

135 Khatibi, "Argument," *Cahiers Intersignes*, no. 1 (Spring 1990): 11.