

# ***The Post-Left: An Archaeology and a Genealogy***

**Gabriel Noah Brahm Jr.**

Distrust those cosmopolitans who search out remote duties in their books and neglect those that lie nearest. Such philosophers will love the Tartars to avoid loving their neighbor. – Jean-Jacques Rousseau

The victims most interesting to us are always those who allow us to condemn our neighbors. And our neighbors do the same. – René Girard

## **Prelude or Postmortem?**

A synchronic (structural) and diachronic (historical) analysis of today's anti-Western left is sorely needed. [1] This essay is a first attempt.

I will highlight the malaise experienced by parts of the left – the 'proto-post-left' so to speak – in the 1980s and 1990s. This period was defined by the demise of systemic opposition to liberalism and was experienced, as Fredric Jameson has confessed, as a time of 'existential disorientation.' In this period a pattern of discourse congealed that would help create a 'post-left' paradigm in the wake of 9/11. [2] During the interregnum of 1991-2001 – the period between the end of the cold war and the beginning of the war on terror – a post-cold war, postmodern, post-Marxist, postcolonial-theory 'left' emerged. It has been called, variously, a 'Zombie Left' (Bernard-Henri Levy), 'The Left that Doesn't Learn' (Mitchell Cohen), and 'The Unpatriotic Left' (Richard Rorty). In this essay I explain why, after 9/11, it became a 'post-left' – linked more with tyranny and reaction than emancipation and progress – and I explore its character and influence.

One hopes that what follows is its postmortem, but it is too early to say. Perhaps one day the 'post-left' will be seen as the last, desperate gasp of the 'sixties.' [3] For the moment, it deserves our urgent attention.

**Part I: Archaeology of the Post-Left: The Case for Discursive Regime Change**  
Post-left thought is an exercise in *ressentiment* unhinged from politics in the

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Aristotelian sense of politike, or the ‘art of the common life.’ These are its key elements.

1. *Inverted Exceptionalism.* Take the old ‘exceptionalist’ idea and flip it. America is unique among nations – just not uniquely good, that’s all. The horrid US, with its crude consumer culture, unparalleled racism, and war-mongering politicians, is to blame for everything.
2. *Post-Zionism.* Ditto the above for Israel. One is the tool of the other in the US-Israel relationship, though it’s not clear which is which. For Walt and Mearsheimer, Israel manipulates the US. For Chomsky, it’s the reverse. In any event, Israel’s right to exist is put in question (at best).
3. *Third Worldism.* The wretched of the earth (‘multitudes,’ whatever) are not just unlucky but morally superior to the earth’s beneficiaries. Empowered by powerlessness to take the place of the proletariat in conventional Marxist doxology, the Third World Other can do no wrong. It’s all ‘resistance’ whatever it is, up to and including terrorism. In this salvation myth, any two-bit despot – from Hugo Chavez to Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Hasan Nasrallah, even Osama bin Laden – can be seen to represent a salutary rebuke to American Capital and The West. So the millenarian imagination persists, after ‘the end of history.’
4. *Cultural Revolution.* It’s Manichean also. Because of #1 and #2, a complete transformation of consciousness is needed to wipe away all the micro-corruptions of US-led capitalism, and replace these with more salutary (revolutionary) habits of mind (to be discovered thanks in part to #3). Eventually, everything ‘bourgeois,’ ‘white’ and ‘male’ will have to go. For now it can all be ‘deconstructed.’ Stir in to this ‘methodology’ heavy doses of Sixties-style antinomianism and Seventies-style New Ageism, and you have a heady cocktail: the mind slips its moorings.
5. *Totalitarian Ideology.* Ah, but moorings are so very reassuring when one finds oneself adrift! In *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Hannah Arendt outlined the closed-world world-view of the totalizing mind and its self-serving auto-validating procedures. She was talking then about Stalinism and Nazism, but it works for the post-left too (if that sounds like a harsh comparison, see #6 below). [4] For inside the cramped and airless theoretical space of the post-left one finds that (a) every question receives an exhaustive total explanation, situating the smallest detail of an argument within a vast theodicy with no outside and little room for ambiguity

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or surprise. Nothing escapes and no light gets in, while (b) such explanations are independent of and resistant to experience. The post-left's is an entirely 'a priori' structure of thought. And this inclusive, arbitrary narrative without a referent is also (c) ultra-consistent. Why not, when you're making it up as you go along? Not only does everything fit that gets in, and nothing gets in that doesn't fit, but the results are always the same: the same demons, the same victims. And finally (d) we find the ascription of collective guilt to 'enemies.' The condemned in the post-left scheme of things will be judged not according to what they do or say or think but what they are. The post-left, in short, offers its followers a tidy picture of a messy world, suitable for lazy and credulous minds.

6. *Islamism.* With #1-5, the nascent post-left prepared the way for the embrace of radical Islamism after 9/11 as a form of 'resistance,' indigenous to the Third World (#3), aimed at a guilty US (#1) and Israel (#2), striking a blow for 'difference' (#4), that simply had to be good in some way (#5). And it was this final element, I suggest, that catalyzed the other ingredients to produce the post-left proper.

### Part II: Genealogy of the Post-Left: Microtrends & Macro-History

The first stage of the emergence of the post-left concerns its response to two existential challenges to a left-wing identity in the 1990s. These challenges are captured in the titles of two books: the end of history and the clash of civilizations.

'In watching the flow of events over the past decade or so,' a young researcher, Francis Fukuyama observed presciently from his desk at the RAND Corporation in Washington, D.C., nearly two decades ago, 'it is hard to avoid the feeling that something very fundamental has happened in world history ... The triumph of the West, of the western idea, is evident first of all in the total exhaustion of viable systematic alternatives to Western liberalism.' [5] While those noticing an undeniable lack of humility on the surface of such notions dismissed his words as more cold war chest-beating from the United States, soon everyone with eyes to see recognized that the author's timing at least could not have been better, as the forty-year standoff between superpowers came to an end. Having anticipated the fall of the Berlin Wall by several months, and predicting the ultimate collapse of Soviet Communism more than a year in advance, the calm, rational, soft-spoken and personally rather self-effacing writer became instantly famous.

Entitled portentously ‘The End of History?’ Fukuyama’s essay’s unabashedly comprehensive vision – couched in lucid prose that anyone could understand, flouting a then-fashionable postmodernist obscurantism – was gauged perfectly to capture not only the scrutinizing gaze of political philosophers and social scientists, but the mood of the times as well, and with that the attention of a broader literate public. It was also *guaranteed* to raise the ire of Western Marxist academics – who for once stood dumb before overwhelming empirical evidence, as the raw data of events seemed to confirm the hypotheses of bourgeois social science. Communism, and Marxism with it, was finished as anything more than a useful tool of literary criticism and ‘cultural studies.’ For when all the objections to Fukuyama’s discomfiting notion had had their say, liberalism – free-market economics with representative institutions of government and constitutionally guaranteed individual rights – was the only game left in town that anyone really wanted to play. And like the aging Gary Cooper in *High Noon*, it was the United States that had faced the Bad Guy and gotten the girl in the end, while others dithered. [6] Roll credits.

Or so it seemed – for what turned out to be but a brief, shining moment – until little more than a decade later, when the events of September 11, 2001 recast the pacific-seeming ‘end of history’ as a violent ‘clash of civilizations.’ In the popular imagination at least, no less than in the pages of Samuel Huntington’s influential book of that title, History was on again. And popular impressions were not to be discounted. For in the wake of such highly symbolic and consequential events, it was impossible to separate ‘popular imagination’ from what was ‘really’ happening: how the populace understood itself, and thought about events, was largely what was at stake. Truth be told, the mid-1990s had been no picnic, with ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia and genocide in Rwanda. Yet what 1989/90 was to Fukuyama, 9/11 was to Huntington – tangible proof that the author was onto something.

Out of the jaws of victory – near-consensus on the superiority of human rights, political freedom, and individual liberty – the post-left sought to snatch defeat. 9/11 was our fault and Islamism was now ‘the resistance.’ The emergent post-left would thus come to be defined by its willingness to apologise for suicide mass-murderers, misogynist theocrats, and anti-Semites. When this new ingredient was added to last century’s ‘leftovers’ – postmodernist cultural relativism, post-Marxism, postcolonial theory – the result was something qualitatively ‘other’ to all canons of traditional leftwing progressivism. All the departures (‘post’-this and ‘post’-that) had added up. A post-left was born.

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What about previous betrayals of principle on the left, you ask? For sure, Stalin and Mao were hardly pikers in their day, yet this was different. The totalitarians of yore at least kept their agendas for murder somewhat hidden. One could debate the gap between ‘means and ends’ and be ‘surprised’ by ‘revelations.’ Islamists, by contrast, announce their hideous agenda openly; the ends are worse than the means; and the means are a foul new kind of suicide mass-murder terrorism. No. That is not a left by any definition.

The roots of this new *fleur du mal* go deep back into the 20th century, no doubt. But the catalyst of cataclysm was Islamism, and its ability to fill the gap opened up by the demise of all other opposition to liberalism. For those who could imagine nothing worse for people than to be subjected to ‘US imperialism’ – not the Taliban, nor the Muslim Brotherhood or its offshoot organization, Hamas, nor the Mullahs of Iran, and certainly not Saddam’s Baath Party – anti-Americanism was next to godliness. At least the end of history wasn’t closing quite so fast upon us. And if there was a ‘clash’ of civilizations, then, well, it was our civilization – indeed, our very notion of what it is to be civilized – that was at fault.

On parts of the academic left, both Fukuyama and Huntington had always been equally (and nearly universally) reviled. For many, not benign liberalism (much less reason or freedom, as expressions of human nature) but rapacious and greedy capitalism was in the ascendant. So if Fukuyama was correct that Western liberalism was in some sense ‘universal’ in the age of globalization, well, all the more reason to assert one’s particularity and resist the hegemony of a new Empire.

Huntington’s demur, that Western civilization was actually ‘unique not universal,’ and as such was worthy of preservation against the encroachments of a host of emboldened rivals, was equally offensive to the sensibilities of this proto-post-left. [7] 9/11, and a series of attacks soon after, were not viewed as a struggle over incommensurable ‘civilisational’ values, in which the West could conceivably be credited as upholding its values at least – including women’s rights, gay rights, freedom of expression, separation of church and state, and so on – but rather *the advent of a new nodal point of ‘resistance’*. In short, whether inherently unique or potentially universal (this turned out to be unimportant), the predations of a feared and hated Western ‘other’ were not to be tolerated.

For what was at stake after 1989 was *identity*. How to find a way of remaining flamboyantly oppositional to a system that, according to radical theorists from

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Fredric Jameson to Antonio Negri, now had ‘no outside?’ 9/11 offered an answer. You want outside? You got it: the murder of three thousand in attacks on New York and Washington in 2001, the gruesome replay on a smaller scale on 7/7 in London a few years later (in which 52 died and 700 were wounded), the Madrid bombings of 2004 (191 massacred and over 2,000 wounded), the assassination of filmmaker Theo van Gogh by Mohammed Bouyeri in Amsterdam that same year, the violence as well as controversy that erupted over the Danish Cartoons in 2005 (resulting in over 100 deaths around the world), the election of Hamas in Palestine in 2006 (and the thuggish brutality of its internecine struggles with Fatah), Hezbollah’s role in igniting the Lebanon war with Israel later that same year (which began with the killing of Israeli soldiers inside of Israel and the kidnapping of several more, and which eventually claimed the lives of a thousand people, mostly Lebanese civilians, while displacing hundreds of thousands on both sides), the Sudanese Teddy Bear incident of 2007 (in which only sensitivities were finally hurt), and the ongoing wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

These events were interpreted by the post-left *neither* as reactionary strikes against a universalizing modernity-cum-liberalism corrosive of traditional identities, *nor* as skirmishes between fundamentally opposed value-systems, in which only one stood plausibly for freedom and equality. They were, more simply, ‘the resistance’ to ‘Empire.’ Radical Islamism’s disturbance of the post-cold-war status quo was the answer to the existential challenge implicit in Fukuyama and Huntington’s notorious propositions. A hitherto disoriented opposition now knew what they were against: liberalism, as a philosophy (a set of ideas embodied in institutions of government and economy), and the Euro-American West as a *tradition* (a broader set of habits and practices, grounding identity in history, language, culture and emotion, as much as reason and politics).

Deconstructing the metaphysics of liberalism is an old pastime, of course, and hating the United States was not exactly new. What was new, shockingly new, was the support for, or failure to oppose, radical Islamism. For some at least, this appeared to arise naturally, almost automatically, from a cultivated disdain for liberal politics and economics (Fukuyama’s telos) and well-rehearsed revulsion at Western culture in general, and mainstream American culture in particular (Huntington’s side in the clash). This sensibility, it would turn out, would overlap with that of Islamist philosophers like Sayyid Qutb of the Muslim Brotherhood, whose influence stood directly behind al-Qaeda. [8].

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### Wishful Thinking on Parade: From Berlin to Kabul

After the end of the cold war, books and articles had continued to be published with the phrase ‘late capitalism’ in the title, without anybody laughing. It was not clear what ‘late’ was meant to imply, other than an attitude of resentment couched in allusions to an entirely unspecified future. If this was ‘late,’ just wait until later!

Well, ‘later’ came in a form no one had anticipated. It was a case of back to the future as ‘Third Worldism’ – substituting the wretched of the earth for the proletariat, as the morally superior vanguard of the utopian future – was adjusted to the new realities of suicide-mass murder. The post-left would emerge as a *fount* of what Paul Berman called ‘rationalist naïveté’ and ‘wishful thinking’: pathological mass movements simply must have their good reasons, and the more desperate ‘their’ acts, the more guilty ‘we’ must be. [9]

What a stunning reversal this was! Just a decade earlier, as political freedom was reborn in places like Poland and Czechoslovakia, the popularity of Western consumer goods and the perceived legitimacy of limited government by the consent of the governed, in an open civil society, were credited with bringing the Cold War to a peaceful conclusion. [10] Back then progress – not reaction – was progressive.

Sure, Jean-Francois Lyotard had earlier announced the ‘death of grand narratives,’ in what now looked like a clever pre-emptive strike, preparing his readers to give up on the notion of universal history as ‘totalizing.’ True, Michel Foucault had already carefully instructed us that power was everywhere; ubiquitous, inescapable, and de-centered, with no privileged source and ‘no outside.’ But given the sheer magnitude and palpable significance of events at the close of the century, the professors faced a dilemma – how to remain ‘oppositional’ in a world-system without tangible opposition; how to stay ‘marginal’ in a network of economic and cultural exchange so capacious that it seemed, even to radicals, to be losing its center [11].

Studying this dilemma, and how it was resolved by the troubled intellectuals who felt its force, is not a trivial matter. For the manner of that resolution meant that as the United States led the world in responding to the new threats, it would have to go relatively unarmed into a new war of ideas – even though it had some very, very good ones. It meant that a significant chunk of what little remained of the truly progressive left in the new millennium preferred safe irrelevancy to risky engagement, while others invited ignominy by grounding their excuses for terrorism in increasingly ornate forms of Berman’s ‘wishful thinking.’ It meant that

too few would fight the war of ideas on behalf of liberalism at all, in this new phase of its long confrontation with totalitarianism.

My thesis, in short, is that the radical ego was threatened by the ‘end of history’ and the ‘clash of civilizations’ theses. Equilibrium was restored when the shockwaves felt after 9/11 were framed as a new form of systemic opposition to global capital. Here was something that went far beyond either a series of uninspiring brushfires on the edges of Fukuyama’s creeping ‘universal homogeneous state’ (the possibility of which the radicals would not abide), or some larger but no more uplifting conflagrations along the borders of Huntington’s precious but frightfully menaced ‘Western civilization’ (the virtues of which they *could* not believe in). Fredric Jameson had many times referred to the intelligentsia as being ‘disoriented’ throughout the 1980s and 1990s, and in search of a fresh ‘cognitive map.’ Well, it was disoriented no longer. To its great relief it had discovered a new ‘map,’ a ready-to-hand totalizing explanation to navigate by. [12] But the cost was enormous.

### Islamism & the Post-Left

Neither the terrorist tactics (after all, definitions of ‘terrorism’ could be deconstructed, couldn’t they?) nor the religious-fundamentalist aims of groups like al-Qaeda, Hezbollah and Hamas deterred the post-left from discerning a laudable ‘resistance.’ Indeed, hatred of Bush and opposition to the horrifying war in Iraq were so strong, that even a much more moderate figure, Richard Rorty – hardly a post-leftist – joined the chorus by declaring that he was more afraid of people like the U.S. Attorney General, John Ashcroft, than he was of Bin Laden. But whereas Rorty’s classically leftist anxiety for the future of his country was tempered by unabashed patriotism, support for liberalism, and clear rejection of terrorism and fundamentalism, this was not so for the major currents of the post-left by 2007.

‘The ends will one day justify the means,’ said the old left. But in the case of radical Islamism the ostensible ‘ends’ were not only unobtainable but intrinsically undesirable to any ‘left’ sensibility – sharia, a new caliphate, and what not. When the old left eulogized the old ‘liberation’ movements there was much romanticizing of authoritarian figures like Che Guevara. But it is qualitatively different to romanticize Hezbollah and Hamas.

The post-left denounces indigenous voices of reason from the Middle East, such as Azar Nafisi and Irshad Manji, as traitors to, of all things, feminism and lesbianism.

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While Nafsi was excoriated for telling the neocons what they wanted to hear, Manji would be pilloried for, of all things, ‘exploiting’ her gay identity – on behalf of the sort of society that protects the right to be gay! [13]

An ingrained cultural relativism, a durable anti-Americanism, an old anti-Zionism mixed with a so-called ‘new’ anti-Semitism, the cult of the victim known as ‘identity politics,’ a ‘multiculturalism’ that is hostile to Euro-American culture, and a simplistic rejection of globalization – these had all taken a heavy toll. A radical ‘oppositional’ identity had been kept intact and the promise of transcendence retained, but only at the price of a secession from participation in the broader community defined by its acceptance of the most basic norms, such as the prohibition on murder and the right of women to equal rights. For this was a left that could see al-Qaeda’s point.

### Rationalist Naïveté at Work: Get the Message?

As Berkeley professor of Anthropology, Saba Mahmood, put it recently, ‘Even Osama bin Laden was clear in his message at the time of the World Trade Center attacks.’ The ‘clear message’ from Osama, which one would have to be deaf not to hear in the rumble of collapsing office buildings, was that ‘he wanted U.S. troops out of Saudi Arabia, a just solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and an end to Euro-American domination of Muslim resources and lands.’ Paul Berman could not have asked for a better example of the ‘rationalist naïveté’ he’d discerned, from the start, in reactions to 9/11. Plenty of Bin Laden’s statements, including his 1998 fatwa against all ‘Jews and Crusaders,’ declared bloodthirsty revenge to be sufficient goal in itself. As the terrorism expert, Louise Richardson, explains:

When asked...whether he would call off his jihad against the United States if the United States were to withdraw from Arabia, bin Laden replied that he would not stop until the United States stopped all aggressive actions against Muslims everywhere. Later in the same interview, he referred to bringing an end not just to occupation but to ‘Western and American influence on our countries.’ On other occasions, bin Laden has articulated an even more ambitious agenda, the restoration of the caliphate. This would require the elimination of current political boundaries throughout the Middle East and beyond, and return, in essence, to the Middle Ages. Bin Laden, for all his carefully choreographed statements and all the colorful descriptions of the iniquities of the West, has completely failed to articulate a positive political alternative.

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Richardson concludes that ‘Like other revolutionaries before him, therefore, he appears to be more enamoured of the revolution itself than of the new world it would herald.’ [14] The same type of thing can be said of the post-left.

Judith Butler, professor of Rhetoric at Berkeley, and leading figure of the post-left, endorsed Hezbollah and Hamas as ‘part of the global left.’ [15] The leader of Hezbollah, Hasan Nasrallah, has said that ‘if [the Jews] all gather in Israel, it will save us the trouble of going after them worldwide.’ Granted, in a more compassionate mood, he says merely that, ‘Our goal is to liberate [Palestine]. The Jews who survive this war of liberation can go back to Germany or wherever they came from.’ Hezbollah’s charter reads, ‘Our struggle will end only when this entity [Israel] is obliterated. We recognize no treaty with it, no cease-fire and no peace agreements, whether separate or consolidated.’ [16] In either case – outright exterminationist genocide or mere ethnic cleansing on an unparalleled scale – this is who and what Butler now embraces as part of ‘the global left.’

And so it came to pass that after September 11, 2001 an alliance of sorts began to emerge between the post-left and elements of a totalitarian, clerical-fascist right, in opposition to the U.S., Israel, and the Rotary Club. (According to the Hamas Charter, ‘With their money, [the Jews] created secret organizations that spread around the world in order to destroy societies and carry out Zionist interests. Such organizations are: the Freemasons, Rotary Clubs, Lions Clubs, B’nai Brith and the like. All of them are destructive espionage organizations.’)

The disorienting period which Francis Fukuyama had called the ‘end of history’ was itself now brought to an end after a mercifully brief ten years. Now if the ‘clash of civilizations’ was on, only one side – the wretched of the earth – was allowed to see it that way, or to fight legitimately for its interests and way of life. So the wretched of Berkeley, Columbia, and Durham North Carolina had decreed.

### Conclusion: ‘Other than Freedom’

When the Islamists and the post-left rejected the inevitability of liberal democratic capitalism both sects found themselves at odds with their surroundings. Luckily, both were in possession of elaborate explanations, tailor-made for converting impotence into a sign of virtue and self-loathing into a badge of honor. They had both had the foresight to seal themselves off within layers of difficult text-based traditions that cocooned adherents inside a sort of ‘virtual reality’ of theory. Therein,

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believers became heroes pitted against a pervasive evil on behalf of an embattled good, traces of which were detectable in acts of ‘resistance.’ For both sects, the weakest of weaknesses – pure innocence – opposed the strongest of strengths – the globalizing West, led by America, but symbolized even more gallingly by Israel.

For the ‘post-left’ the culprits of the human drama are no longer the familiar scourges of poverty, famine, illegitimate hierarchy, unaccountable authority and remediable ignorance, but the inherently sinful ‘power and privilege’ of the U.S. and Europe. Not an illiberal Islamic Resurgence, but the liberal West is to blame for terrorism. The post-left has shored up a threatened identity with an all-purpose negation. Where there is the smoke of burning buildings there is ‘grievance,’ and where there is grievance there is the ‘right’ to target civilians. As Rousseau and René Girard (quoted at the outset) remind us, and as Samuel Huntington also points out (albeit more prosaically), ‘People use politics not just to advance their interests but also to define their identity. We know who we are only when we know who we are not and often only when we know whom we are against.’ In choosing to be against the United States, Israel, and the Euro-American/Western culture of liberalism, in favor of ideological multiculturalism, the claims of identity politics, and excuses for jihad, the post-left has become a haven for desires ‘other than freedom.’ [17]

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[1] See Alan Johnson, ‘Wright and the Post-left,’ [http://commentisfree.guardian.co.uk/alan\\_johnson/index.html](http://commentisfree.guardian.co.uk/alan_johnson/index.html), and Andrei Markovits and Gabriel Brahm, ‘Cosmopolitanism and the Post-Left,’ in *Democratiya* 12.

[2] Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham: Duke UP, 1991). Wendy Brown echoes this self-ascribed ‘disorientation’ in ‘Feminist Hesitations, Postmodern Exposures,’ in Gabriel Brahm and Mark Driscoll (eds.), *Prosthetic Territories: Politics and Hypertechnologies* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995), 115. The emphasis which the proto-post-left itself places on its own felt ‘disorientation’ is telling. The events of 9/11 will come as a relief, for some.

[3] For the intellectual underpinnings of the post-left in French poststructuralism, see *French*

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- Philosophy of the Sixties*, Luc Ferry and Alain Renault (Amherst: U of Massachusetts P, 1990).
- [4] See Hannah Arendt, *Totalitarianism: Part Three of the Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: HBJ, 1951), especially chapter 4, 'Ideology and Terror,' pp. 158-177.
- [5] Francis Fukuyama, 'The End of History?' (1). The essay appeared originally in *The National Interest* (Summer 1989). For convenience, citations are given here to an online reprint, easily available at <http://www.wesjones.com/eoh.htm#source>. Subsequent references to this edition appear cited in the text.
- [6] Lech Walesa cites the film as an inspiration to the Polish Solidarity movement, which used its iconography on a poster ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/High\\_Noon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/High_Noon)).
- [7] Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996), pp. 20-1.
- [8] See Paul Berman, *Terror and Liberalism* (New York: Norton, 2004).
- [9] See the chapter, 'Wishful Thinking' in Berman, *Terror and Liberalism* (New York: Norton, 2004), p. 152. See also Martin Amis, *The Second Plane* (New York: Knopf, 2008).
- [10] See for example, Timothy Garton Ash, *The Magic Lantern* (New York: Vintage, 1990), and Paul Berman, *A Tale of Two Utopias* (New York: Norton, 1996).
- [11] See for example Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 2001).
- [12] Fredric Jameson, 'Cognitive Mapping,' in Lawrence Grossberg and Cary Nelson eds., *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* (Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1988).
- [13] Saba Mahmood, 'Feminism, Democracy, and Empire: Women and the War on Terror,' in Joan Scott (ed.), *Women's Studies on the Edge* (Durham: Duke, 2008), 154. Subsequent references to this edition appear cited in the text.
- [14] Louise Richardson, *What Terrorists Want* (New York: Random House, 2006), pp. 84-5.
- [15] <http://kishkushim.blogspot.com/2006/09/berkeley-professor-hizbullah-and-hamas.html>.
- [16] Quoted in Richardson, p. 84.
- [17] 'I have tried to problematise the liberal valorisation of the value of autonomy and the concomitant ideal of freedom.... [W]hat desires, other than freedom, do people live by? What do we mean by freedom, from what, and toward what end?' (Saba Mahmood, interviewed by Nermeen Shaikh, *The Present As History: Critical Perspectives on Global Power*, New York: Columbia UP, pp. 150-1).