The Politics of the Garden (*pairadaeza*)

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Abstract

This essay explores how the garden (in Persian, *pairadaeza*) may function as an image of flourishing pluralism among theists and naturalists. Initially, the essay draws upon *A Thousand Plateaus* to formulate the principles of a Deleuzian comparative political theory. Next, the essay interprets and evaluates the work of the Sufi scholar Seyyed Hossein Nasr, the al-Qaeda ideologue Ayman al-Zawahiri, and the Shi'i political reformer 'Abdolkarim Soroush. The essay concludes by considering how diverse existential faiths (or flowers) in the garden may collaborate to address the ecological crisis.

In *The Future of Islam*, John Esposito explains why understanding Islam and Muslims is a domestic imperative and foreign policy priority for Americans and Europeans. Currently, there are 1.5 billion Muslims residing in fifty-seven Muslim-majority countries and constituting significant minorities in Europe and America. Islam's major cities and capitals span the globe, from Cairo and Jakarta in the Muslim world to New York, Paris, and Berlin in the West. Today, Islam and Muslims are principal actors on the global stage and part of the fabric of American and European societies. "In a world in which we too often succumb to the dichotomy between 'us' and 'them,' we are challenged to transcend (though not deny) our differences, affirm our common humanity, and realize that 'we,' whether we like it or not, are interconnected and co-dependent, the co-creators of our societies and our world."[1] Esposito, like many thoughtful observers of global politics, recognizes the dangers inherent in models of pluralism that reify antagonisms between Muslims and non-Muslims. And yet many political theorists still wonder how to envision pluralistic societies that affirm the interconnectedness of existential faiths and the deep differences between, say, theists and naturalists. In this essay, I draw upon Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus* to help political theorists envision the globe as a garden and engage Muslim constituencies as represented by leading contemporary Islamic political thinkers.

   On its face, this is a surprising endeavor given that Deleuze is a prominent advocate of an immanent, or naturalist, theory of ethics. Deleuze situates himself in a line of naturalists that goes back to Epicurus and Lu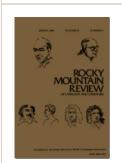cretius and continues up to Spinoza and Nietzsche.[2] Naturalists oppose moralities of transcendence that judge existence from a supposedly higher ontological plane. In their stead, they proffer an ethics of immanence that evaluates modes of existence by whether they cultivate health or sickness, joy or sadness. Thus Nietzsche replaces the categories of good and evil with noble and base modes of existence just as Spinoza proposes an ethics based on the distinction between passive and active affections. Likewise, "for Deleuze transcendence is the fundamental *problem* of ethics, what prevents ethics from taking place, so to speak."[3] Though Muslim schools and thinkers differ on how to conceptualize the relationship between immanence and transcendence, virtually every Muslim holds that God transcends and is incomparable (*tanzih*) with every other thing in the universe.[4] This is the doctrine encapsulated in the Qur'anic saying: *Allahu akbar*, "God is great."[5] The Qur'an also states that, "[Believers], you are the best community singled out for people: you order what is good, forbid what is evil, and believe in God (*al-amr bi al-ma' ruf wa al-nahy 'an al-munkar*)" (3:110). Deleuzian ethics and Islam differ profoundly in how they conceptualize the structure of the universe and the appropriate standard for measuring a good life.
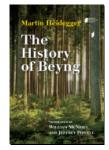
***Scholae in Liberales* by Petrus Ramus, and: *Colectaneae Praefationes, Epistolae, Orationes* by Petrus Ramus and Audomarus Talaeus (review)**

Deleuze's political vision, however, is not the same as his ethical vision. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari state that they are "tired of trees" and that "nothing is beautiful or loving or political aside from underground stems and aerial roots, adventitious growths and rhizomes" (ATP 15).[6] Deleuzian ethics, we might say, is a flower. Looking inwards, this flower strives not to become a tree, setting state policy and blocking out the sunlight for other existential faiths, or a weed, an extra-state force committed to marginalizing and hurting other existential faiths.[7] Yet a Deleuzian flower must also articulate a foreign policy to sustain the garden conditions that make its way of life possible. Thus a Deleuzian flower will forge alliances with other noble faiths (or flowers) committed to maintaining the health and diversity of the garden. A Deleuzian flower will also combat or contain ignoble faiths that wish to destroy, through either the state or extra-state forces, the flowering of diverse faiths. To interact thoughtfully and effectively with other constituencies, Deleuzians must study and evaluate the political theories of other existential faiths, or do comparative political theory. In this essay, I describe the main features and principles of a Deleuzian comparative political theory and perform a Deleuzian analysis of several major thinkers and schools within Islamic political thought. My hope is that multiple existential faiths find insights in this analysis for how thoughtful people today from multiple traditions may interact respectfully across deep differences.

The essay begins by explaining what Deleuze's concept of the *regime of signs* contributes to thinking about the coherence, complexity, and plasticity of an intellectual and political tradition. Then, the essay presents Deleuzian principles for engaging another regime of signs such as Islamic political thought. These principles include to trace its major borders and internal divisions, to diagram the porous or fluid lines that make possible interreligious dialogue and cooperation, and to create or rearrange concepts to generate a new way of thinking and acting. The second half of this essay performs a Deleuzian reading of the Sufi scholar Seyyed Hossein Nasr, the al-Qaeda ideologue Ayman al-Zawahiri, and the Shi'i political reformer 'Abdolkarim Soroush. The essay argues that Deleuzians may forge close alliances with Sufis, challenge the claims of militant Islamists, and collaborate with critical Muslim scholars. Finally, the essay discusses a real-world payoff to the Deleuzian approach, namely, it illuminates a path whereby Muslims and naturalists may work together to inhibit or reverse the ecological crisis.

I. Principles for a Deleuzian Comparative Political Theory

In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari define a regime of signs thusly:

> We call any specific formalization of expression a regime of signs, at least when the expression is linguistic. A regime of signs constitutes a semiotic system. But it appears difficult to analyze semiotic systems in themselves: there is always a form of content that is simultaneously inseparable from and independent of the form of expression, and the two forms pertain to assemblages that are not principally linguistic.... Hence the necessity of a return to pragmatics, in which language never has universality in itself (ATP 111).

There are linguistic, historical, and political aspects to a regime of signs. A regime of signs is a linguistic entity insofar as it is a fairly coherent hanging-together of words, grammar, and meanings; it is an immaterial force—or an abstract machine—that shapes how people think about and thus structure their households, families, economies, polities, cultures, and so forth. A regime of signs proffers certain rules that make possible communication and coordination: it is a form of expression. A regime of signs is also tethered to the historical milieus from which it arose and on which it persists. Social, cultural, economic, and political forces undergird any system of symbolic communication and introduce material traces to any ostensibly abstract use of language. Finally, a regime of signs is a site of political contestation. Language evinces certain patterns that make it possible for linguists to generate grammars and dictionaries, but these are merely snapshots of a metamorphosing entity. "Language stabilizes around a parish, a bishopric, a capital. It forms a bulb. It evolves by subterranean stems and flows, along river valleys or train tracks; it spreads like a patch of oil" (ATP 7). Language is a flux that may coagulate for a time but that is also always liable to start flowing in new directions. A regime of signs, in sum, is a linguistic system that has

some consistency, is composed of multiple historical elements, and is subject to reconstruction.

Deleuze and Guattari offer the following advice about how to study a regime of signs:

> Pragmatics as a whole would consist in this: making a *tracing* of the mixed semiotics, under the generative component; making the transformational *map* of the regimes, with their possibilities for translation and creation, for budding along the lines of the tracings; making the *diagram* of the abstract machines that are in play in each case, either as potentialities or as effective emergences; outlining the *program* of the assemblages that distribute everything and bring a circulation of movement with alternatives, jumps, and mutations

(ATP 146-47).

I now extract from this passage three principles for a Deleuzian comparative political theory with illustrations from scholarship on Islamic political thought.

Trace the regime of signs

The first activity in a Deleuzian comparative political theory is to trace the major lines and divisions that structure a regime of signs. A regime of signs provides the syntax, semantics, and logic that make possible an intelligible proposition within a community. To map this regime, a scholar goes back and forth between analyzing specific propositions and constructing general rules that impose a certain order on a class of such propositions. A regime of signs cannot be observed comprehensively nor thought *a priori*: it is, rather, a transcendental idea that goads scholars to constantly seek and consider new evidence. Still, scholars may periodically make tracings of their investigations and impose a pattern on the authors, texts, schools, argument, and so forth that they have encountered.

Consider, for example, how Roxanne Euben and Muhammad Qasim Zaman trace the main contours of Islamist political thought in their introduction to *Princeton Readings in Islamist Thought*. "We take Islamism to refer to contemporary movements that attempt to return to the scriptural foundations of the Muslim community, excavating and reinterpreting them for application to the present-day social and political world."[8] To delimit its borders, Euben and Zaman contrast Islamism with other Muslim orientations and groups. Religious scholars ('*ulama*) hold great moral and legal authority within the Muslim world but they have been challenged by Western colonizers and internal critics. Modernists believe that Muslims may and should interpret Islam's norms according to the needs of changing times and sometimes adopt western notions and practices. Salafis claim to adhere to the normative practice of the pious forbearers (*al-salaf al-salih*). And Sufis believe that certain "friends of God" possess gnosis ('*irfan*) of the deeper levels of meaning in the Qur'an. Lest the tracing become too neat, Euben and Zaman show that Islamists are both Sunni and Shia and disagree with one another about gender roles, the meaning of jihad, and the legitimacy of democracy. This type of scholarship, both nuanced and synoptic, is necessary to make sense of the borders and segments of a complex semiotic system such as Islamism or Islamic political thought more broadly.

Diagram the regime of signs

If the first activity of a Deleuzian comparative political theory is to map fairly solid lines and breaks in a semiotic system, the second is to diagram the more fluid elements that transgress borders within and on the borders of the regime of signs. When reading texts with this mindset, "one would look into the possibilities not only of mixture but also of translation and transformation into another regime" (ATP 147). Deleuze and Guattari illustrate this procedure in a discussion of prophecy in Judaism. Judaism requires prophets: "The god averts his face, which must be seen by no one; and the subject, gripped by a veritable fear of the god, averts his or her face in turn. The averted faces, in profile, replace the frontal view of the radiant face.... The prophet is the main figure in this assemblage; he needs a sign to guarantee the word of God, he is himself marked by a sign indicating the special regime to which he belongs" (ATP 123). There is no Judaism without Moses. And yet a prophet sees things that no one else sees and refuses to do what he has been commanded: "Even the prophet, unlike the seer-priest, is fundamentally a traitor and thus fulfills God's order better than anyone who remained faithful could" (ATP 123). Deleuze and Guattari observe, "The Jewish God invented the

reprieve, existence in reprieve, *indefinite postponement*" (ATP 123), in other words, Judaism invented the myth of immortality that the Epicurean tradition seeks to dispel. Rather than disprove Judaism on this point (as if that was an option), Deleuze and Guattari point to elements within Judaism that make it an unstable system, namely its notion of prophets forging positive lines of flight away from the community. In this way, they spotlight ways that another religious tradition may temper its dogmatism and make possible more modest and respectful conversations across difference.

Carool Kersten performs this type of comparative political theory in his book, *Cosmopolitans and Heretics: New Muslim Intellectuals and Islam*. Kersten focuses on the Indonesian public intellectual Nurcholish Madjid, the Egyptian philosopher Hasan Hanafi, and the French Algerian historian Mohammed Arkoun. These new Muslim intellectuals believe that the cumulative Islamic heritage (*turath*) is complex and multifaceted; that rational thought is compatible with the message of Islam; and that Muslims may practice a new form of humanism. "Madjid, Hanafi, and Arkoun represent an oppositional postcolonialism that exercises its agency through endogenous intellectual creativity grounded in the acceptance of cultural hybridity rather than a misleading essentialist or unsubstantiated purist understanding of authenticity."[9] On the one hand, these new Muslim intellectuals mine the Islamic heritage for ways to promote creative, postcolonial thinking. In no way do these intellectuals uncritically accept western ideas. On the other hand, each of these thinkers revives a thesis—controversial from its earliest formulations among the Mu'tazilis up to its more recent presentations by Fazlur Rahman and Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd—that the Qur'an was created in history and thus may be reinterpreted by each generation.[10] If the new Muslim intellectuals are not western liberals, they also pose an intellectual challenge to Islamists and Salafis who think that the Islamic sources speak for themselves. Kersten acknowledges that the new Muslim intellectuals are marginal to the Muslim *umma*: literally so for the Indonesian intellectuals far from the Muslim homelands of the Middle East.[11] But old people retire, cassettes break, kids befriend kids of other religions, movies expose people to new ways of life, and so forth: the task of the Deleuzian comparative political theorist is to be sensitive to when a regime of signs changes and if possible to accelerate that process in a positive direction.

Create propositions

The final activity of a Deleuzian comparative political theory is to create propositions for a regime of signs: "one could try to create new, as yet unknown statements...even if the results were a patois of sensual delight, physical and semiotic systems in shreds, asubjective affects, signs without significance where syntax, semantics, and logic are in collapse" (ATP 147). An example of this approach may be the novel *Cyclonopedia: Complicity with Anonymous Materials* by the Iranian philosopher Reza Negarestani. In lieu of a summary of this enigmatic book, I cite a review on the book jacket by Graham Harman: "Reading Negarestani is like being converted to Islam by Salvador Dali." As intriguing as that prospect sounds, there are real challenges for anyone who tries to create propositions in Islamic political thought. First, there is a powerful strand in Islamic political thought that condemns innovation ('*bida*) within Islam. Muslims who believe this point to such passages in the Qur'an that state, "This day have I perfected your religion, for you, completed" (5:3) or *hadith* such as one attributed by the Prophet's wife, Aisha: "Allah's Messenger said, 'If somebody innovates something which is not present in our religion, then that thing will be rejected.'" Even for Muslims who hold that Islam celebrates innovative thinking—and there are many who do—there is still a presumption against being taught one's religion by someone who does not believe it.[12]

A Deleuzian comparative political theorist may make two responses. First, the ontology of *A Thousand Plateaus* holds that every being in the universe is connected through thick or thin fibers to every other being (ATP 7). Regardless of whether one believes this ontological principle, one can still recognize that in the modern world virtually everyone is affected by people of another existential faith. There is no sharp divide between one regime of signs and another; virtually all of us have a stake in conversations within multiple linguistic communities. One task of comparative political theory is to persuade others to reexamine their tradition to see the world in ways that may make possible a fruitful coexistence. This method does not need to be imperialistic

or duplicitous: one may simply ask others to reexamine their sources or consider the work of another thinker in their tradition.[13] Deleuzians should also show the same courtesy to Muslims when asked hard questions that probe the weak spots of immanent ethical theories. The second response is that non-Muslims do not need to invent new words to say something new in another regime of signs: they can merely drop or rearrange elements. The Islamic sources are a keyboard that may play many songs depending on how the notes are arranged.[14] This hermeneutic principle is a source of contention between Islamists and reformers.[15] Deleuzian comparative political theorists, however, forthrightly admit that they prefer to support, publicize, and communicate with Muslim political theorists who promote the peaceful flourishing of many existential faiths.[16]

II. Deleuzian Engagements with Islamic Political Thought

Deleuze and Guattari, we have seen, use garden imagery to promote a model of pluralism in which multiple constituencies (flowers) confidently and modestly live their existential faith and collaborate with others to fight off the twin dangers of authoritarian states (trees) or nomad war machines (weeds). Above, we identified three activities that Deleuzian comparative political theorists perform when negotiating with other constituencies, namely, study their regime of signs, determine where points of contact may be made, and, if necessary and possible, inject new ideas and arguments into their political discourse. Now, I enact a Deleuzian engagement with Islamic political thought to consider multiple issues that arise when actually conversing with someone of another existential faith. According to Deleuze and Guattari, "wherever there is multiplicity, you will also find an exceptional individual, and it is with that individual that an alliance must be made" (ATP 243). Taking this advice to heart, this essay initiates a conversation with three exceptional figures who represent different points on the map of Islamic political thought.

Seyyed Hossein Nasr on the Sufi Garden

Seyyed Hossein Nasr is perhaps the most prominent Sufi scholar in the west. Nasr was born in Tehran, Iran in 1933 and moved to America in 1945. He studied physics at MIT and geology and geophysics at Harvard University and in 1958 defended a dissertation that became his first book, *An Introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrines*. In 1958, Nasr moved back to Iran to teach philosophy at Tehran University and in 1974 helped found the Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy. In 1979, Nasr left Iran for London and after several visiting academic appointments in 1984 became University Professor of Islamic studies at George Washington University. Nasr's book, *The Garden of Truth: The Vision and Promise of Sufism, Islam's Mystical Tradition*, "issues from the lived reality of Sufism, the experience of Sufi spirituality, the all-important centuries-old oral tradition, and truths that are metahistorical."[17] In this section, I consider how Nasr's conception of Sufism relates to Deleuze's conception of immanent ethics. The impetus for this comparison arises, in part, because Deleuze's supposed affinities to Sufism are at the heart of Peter Hallward's critique of Deleuze in *Out of this World: Deleuze and the Philosophy of Creation*. According to Hallward, "Deleuze's work tends to proceed broadly in line with a *theophanic* conception of things, whereby every individual process or thing is conceived as a manifestation or expression of God or a conceptual equivalent of God."[18] Hallward reads Deleuze in light of the Sufi mystic Shihab al-Din Yayhy al-Surhawardi (1154-91) who envisions an "imaginal world" (*alam al-mithal*) that individual souls may enter through a process of subtractive individuation, effectively the same advice Deleuze gives about becoming imperceptible to reach the plane of consistency. Hallward highlights these similarities to imply that Deleuze, like al-Surhawardi (who was executed for heresy), is not "a thinker of this world."[19] A more serious and sustained comparison, however, shows Deleuzian ethics and Sufism are existential faiths that, though far apart on important issues of doctrine and practice, could be close political allies across the globe.

We may begin by noting ontological, ethical, and political resonances between the work of Nasr and Deleuze. Nasr adopts Ibn 'Arabi's ontological doctrine of *wahdat al-wujud*, the unity of being. This doctrine is grounded in Quranic verses such as "Wherever you turn, there is the face of God" (2:115) as well as *hadith* in which God

states, through the Prophet, "I was a hidden treasure; I desired to be known. Therefore I created the world so that I would be known." Nasr emphasizes God's presence in all things and repudiates readings of the textual sources—by rational theologians (*mutakallimun*) or Salafis—that, from a Sufi perspective, overemphasize God's majesty to the detriment of His compassion. A strong account of dualism implies that there is a being other than Absolute Being, or God, which is impossible. "Every level of existence, all that constitutes the many levels of the universe, all the creatures from the fish in the sea to the birds of Paradise are nothing but the Self-Disclosure of God. As the Sufis say, 'there is no one in the house but the Master of the house.'"[20] Although Deleuze draws upon different authors and traditions, rarely citing Muslim authors,[21] he too speculates that there is one plane of reality on which everything transpires though human perception and cognition may only reach certain strata of it. "At the limit, there is a single phylogenetic lineage, a single machinic phylum, ideally continuous: the flow of matter-movement, the flow of matter in continuous variation, conveying singularities and traits of expression. This operative and expressive flow is as much artificial as natural; it is like the unity of human beings and Nature" (ATP 406). Both Deleuze and Nasr grapple with the mystery of how one Being can manifest itself in multiplicity. In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze explores this mystery using a naturalist, or more precisely geological, account of the strata (and parastrata, epistrata, metastrata, and so forth) of reality. Nasr, alternatively, works within Ibn 'Arabi's account of the Divine Presences that hierarchizes Being into *Hahut* (the Supreme Essence of the Divinity), *Lahut* (the level of the Divine Names), *Jabarut* (the archangelic level), *malakut* (the imaginal world), and *nasut* or *mulk* (the terrestrial world).[22] I myself understand and am attracted to the Deleuzian account more than the Sufi one. In *The Garden of Truth*, Nasr explains why this may be the case: "The truth of the oneness of Being can be fully known only by being experienced spiritually."[23] Unless one actually lives and practices Sufism, there are limits to how far one can enter its *Weltanschauung*. This point probably holds true across all worldviews and should thus infuse Deleuzian comparative political theory with humility and respect for alternate ways of grasping and navigating the universe.

On the terrain of ethics, the Sufi ideas of annihilation (*fana'*) and subsistence (*baqa'*) are remarkably similar to Deleuze's notions of deterritorialization and reterritorialization. Sufis trace their ideas back to the Quranic verse: "Everything upon the earth is undergoing annihilation, but there subsists the face of your Lord, Possessor of Majesty and Generous Giving" (55:26-27). The goal of Sufi practice is to annihilate the obstacles and impediments between oneself and God, to obliterate the ego in order to realize one's true self and God. Nasr explains, "To be human in the full sense is to be able to realize the Truth and become fully immersed in its light. It is to be drawn so intimately into the bosom of the Beloved that one could say with Rumi, I am no longer in this body or soul but have 'become' the Beloved."[24] As Hallward rightly notes, Deleuze's philosophy is replete with advice to annihilate aspects of one's mind, unconscious, and body: e.g., "how can we unhook ourselves from the points of subjectification that secure us, nail us down to a dominant reality" (ATP 160)? And yet a comparison to Sufism highlights an aspect of Deleuze's philosophy that is missing from Hallward's account. For Sufis, the highest stage on the path (*tariqah*) is not the intoxication of *fana'* but the sobriety after intoxication of *baqa'*. "In traveling to God, the seekers undergo total transformation, but now they come back with helping hands. They began as stones, they were shattered by the brilliance of the divine light, and now they have been resurrected as precious jewels."[25] Likewise, Deleuzian ethics may involve exploring the upper and lower reaches of the universe but it also entails bringing this heightened and deepened awareness to changing the material world: "molecular escapes and movements would be nothing if they did not return to the molar organizations" (ATP 216-17). One could easily imagine productive conversations between Deleuzians and Sufis about techniques—e.g., chanting (*dhikr*) or music (*sama'*)—to perforate the borders of the ego and overcome *ressentiment*.

On the political terrain, Nasr's notion of the *philosophia perennis* opens up the prospect of respectful dialogue across philosophical and religious difference. The *philosophia perennis* holds that there is a Primordial Tradition— "received through direct revelation when Heaven and earth were still 'united'"—that is reflected in all later

traditions. "Each tradition is marked by a fresh vertical descent from the Origin, a revelation which bestows upon each religion lying at the center of the tradition in question its spiritual genius, fresh vitality, uniqueness, and the 'grace' that makes its rites and practices operative."[26] Speaking more concretely, Nasr explains that different existential faiths today may enrich each other through sacred art, profound religious doctrines, and human beings of deep spirituality. Unlike many secularists, Nasr thinks that the public sphere needs more religious discourse and interaction rather than less, though Nasr also shares the secularist concern with exclusivists who try to crowd out all other religious traditions, which, on Nasr's account, are also bearers of revelation. Nasr's vision of deep, public, and respectful religious pluralism resonates with that of William E. Connolly, a Deleuzian political theorist who believes that "refashioning secularism might help to temper or disperse religious intolerance while honoring the desire of a variety of believers and nonbelievers to represent their faiths in public life."[27] From a Deleuzian perspective, there is nobility in Nasr's respect for and curiosity about other existential faiths.

Any ethical and political alliance between naturalists and theists, however, is bound to be fraught with tensions. On each of the points we have just considered, Deleuze and Nasr differ. The famous tenth-century Sufi Mansur al-Hallaj said, "I am the Truth" (*ana'l-Haqq*) and paid for it with his life. Ever since, Sufis have had to dispute the notion that they are anything other than orthodox Muslims. The doctrine of the oneness of being denies, "that God is the world and the world in its totality is God, a position held by pantheists. How could a metaphysics that speaks so categorically of the transcendence of God be accused of pantheism?"[28] Throughout his work, Deleuze registers debts to perhaps the most famously accused pantheist in modern European philosophy: Spinoza. Deleuze himself explored themes that the vast majority of believers in the Abrahamic religions consider heretical, including "a hermetic conception of the potencies of lived creation, mathesis universalis, and regenerative gnosis."[29] When looking at the relations between Sufis and Deleuzians, one should attend to the dissonances as well as the harmonies between their existential faiths.

Regarding ethics, Nasr endorses the Sufi practice of *walayah*, the initiatic power of a master over a disciple. "When a person wishes to embark upon the path to the Garden, he or she must find an authentic spiritual master in whom this power is present and receive through a rite that goes back to the Prophet the initiation transmitting power of *walayah*."[30] Once a disciple has found an authentic master, his or her job is to "submit completely."[31] Perhaps problematically, Deleuze advocates a notion of apprenticeship without adequately identifying to whom or what one apprentices.[32] Deleuze counsels: "Make a rhizome. But you don't know what you can make a rhizome with, you don't know which subterranean stem is effectively going to make a rhizome, or enter a becoming, people your desert. So experiment" (ATP 251). From a Sufi perspective, Deleuze fails to see the importance of following a path (*tariq*) to God. Deleuze, by contrast, opposes the "judgment of God" (from whatever religious tradition) that organizes and limits what humans may think, feel, do, and so forth (ATP 159). On the question of authority, Sufism adheres to a pre-modern conception of spiritual authority and Deleuzian ethics advocates a modern, Romantic notion of autonomy.

Finally, Nasr emphasizes that Sufism presupposes that Islamic law (sharia) ought to govern the Islamic community. Sufism is a way of "doing the beautiful" (*ihsan*) in addition to having faith (*iman*) and submitting to the Law (*islam*).[33] Some Sufis have been antinomians, or law-breakers, but according to Nasr, "for Muslims the doing of God's Will on earth begins with the practice of the *Shari'ah* or Divine Law, which Islam considers as the concrete embodiment of the Divine Will for its followers."[34] Nasr is not a jurist and his work focuses on cosmology, theology, philosophy, and ethics rather than on overt political or legal topics. Furthermore, there are many ways to interpret and implement sharia in the modern Muslim world.[35] So it is hard to glean what Nasr envisions as a sharia society. At the least, though, Deleuzians would be wary of any conception of Islamic law that establishes a *dhimma* system that punishes or humiliates non-Muslims, particularly constituencies that fall outside of the People of the Book (*ahl al-kitab*).[36]

In *Sufism: A Global History*, Nile Green raises several points about Sufism that a Deleuzian comparative political theorist ought to address.[37] First, twentieth-century European Muslims such as René Guénon (1886-1951) and Frithjof Schuon (1907-98) presented a version of Sufism that made it seem like just another oriental religion of immanence (a *religio perennis*, in Schuon's words). To generate a profound and meaningful conversation, Deleuzians should interpret Sufism as the majority of its adherents do, that is, as Islam, or more precisely, as the practice (*sunna*) of the Prophet. Second, too often modern scholars of religion interpret Sufism through a Protestant lens that focuses on individual relations with God rather than on community practices. If scholars attend to the history, rather than merely the phenomenology, of Sufism, then they can see that Sufis have often possessed great intellectual, social, economic, religious, and political authority. This connects to the third point: Sufism, despite the ways in which it may garner the admiration of Deleuzians, has often been a conservative, authoritarian, and anti-individualistic force in Muslim communities. Finally, Sufism has suffered catastrophic setbacks in the twenty-first century for many reasons, including the widespread belief that Sufism has been partly responsible for Islam's decline in the face of growing European and American power in the twentieth-century. Even if Deleuzians decide that Sufis represent their closest conversation partners among Muslims that does not mean that they necessarily hold much sway within their communities.

While recognizing the complexity of Sufi doctrine and practice, Deleuzians may still agree with Nasr that Sufis can "play an important role in bringing about understanding across religious borders"[38] and thus constitute valuable partners in promoting fruitful global pluralism.

Ayman al-Zawahiri on Loyalty and Separation

"The rhizome includes the best and the worst: potato and couchgrass, or the weed" (ATP 7). Ayman al-Zawahiri (b. 1951)—a leading spokesman, polemicist, and ideologue for al-Qaeda[39]—exemplifies the worst form of rhizomatic politics. Al-Zawahiri is not a trained Muslim scholar ('*alim*), nor does he speak for many Muslims around the world. But he does draw upon and launch a dangerous line of flight from the Islamic political thought regime of signs.[40] We now consider how the Deleuzian framework can add nuance to academic and popular debates about how best to respond to the al-Qaeda war machine.

The problem with couchgrass is that it threatens the diversity of the garden. A tree kills difference by casting every other existential faith into shadows, including through repressive state policies; a weed, by contrast, spreads its roots horizontally making it impossible for other faiths to find water and soil, intellectual and material sustenance. Garden politics requires noble faiths to exercise vigilance on multiple fronts. Trees may provide homes for healthy rhizomes: "there are anarchic deformations in the transcendent system of trees, aerial roots, and subterranean stems" (ATP 20). Democratic majorities, powerful states, and monotheistic religions can facilitate pluralism. Conversely, "there are despotic formations of immanence and channelization specific to rhizomes" (ATP 20). The qualities that distinguish rhizomes from trees— being acentered and largely imperceptible—may facilitate microfascisms that breed social conformity and destructive habits and policies (ATP 214-15).

In December 2002, al-Zawahiri published an essay on "Loyalty and Separation: Changing an Article of Faith and Losing Sight of Reality" in the Arab newspaper *Al-Quds al-Arabi*. The essay interprets recent events in Afghanistan, the Middle East, and the United States but also constitutes part of "the heart of the jihadist ideological corpus," particularly the doctrine of *al-wala wal-bara* whereby Muslims are loyal to each other and separate from everyone else.[41]

Al-Zawahiri's argumentative strategy in "Loyalty and Separation" has four components. Al-Zawahiri quotes a passage from the Qur'an, such as the verse (5:51): "O you who believe! Take not the Jews and the Christians for your friends and protectors: They are but friends and protectors to each other. And he among you that turns to them (for friendship) is of them. Verily God guides not a people unjust."[42] Al-Zawahiri cites

an authority, such as Ibn Tamiyya (1263-1328 CE), who interprets this verse as follows: "The believers belong to the fellowship of God, and are allied among themselves; the unbelievers are the enemies of God and of the believers. God commanded Muslims to ally with one another, and explained that this was an *article of faith*."[43] Al-Zawahiri applies this principle to contemporary circumstances, asking rhetorically, for instance, "What would Tabari, Ibn Hazm, and Ibn Tamiyya say if they saw the forces of the Americans and their allies striking Muslims in Iraq from their bases in the Gulf?"[44] Finally, al-Zawahiri calls for violence against Islam's enemies: "*Young Muslims need not wait for anyone's permission*, because jihad against the Americans, the Jews, and their allies, hypocrites and apostates, is now an individual duty."[45]

One way to help dismantle the Al-Qaeda regime of signs is to show that Islamic political thought is more complex than al-Zawahiri indicates. In this task, Deleuzians may promote the work of Muslim political reformers such as Khaled Abou El Fadl, Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im, Fatima Mernissi, and Tariq Ramadan. In *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam*, Ramadan describes the problem with literalist readings of the Qur'an: "No trouble is taken to work out a reading based on critical distance, contextualized interpretation, or determination of the meaning of a verse in light of the message of the whole."[46] Ramadan objects to each step of al-Zawahiri's argument. The Qur'an contains many passages promoting interreligious dialogue and cooperation, including the verse (10:99): "If God had willed, He would have made you community but things are as they are to test you in what He has given you." Muslim reformers may draw upon their own predecessors—including Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and Muhammad 'Abduh—to employ a "dynamic relation to the scriptural sources and a constant desire to use reason in the treatment of the Texts in order to deal with the new challenges of their age and the social, economic, and political evolution of societies."[47] Muslims may reject simplistic dualisms—such as between *dar al-Islam* and *dar al-harb*—when thinking about European countries and the United States of America where Muslims are by-and-large free to practice their religion. And Muslims may promote interreligious dialogue based on mutual respect rather than endorse the nihilist stance of al-Qaeda. For Ramadan, "One of the best testimonies that a religious or spiritual tradition can give of itself lies in acts of solidarity between its adherents and others."[48]

One advantage of Deleuze's concept of rhizomatic pluralism is that it abandons the demands for cultural unity that can alienate Muslim constituencies in Europe or America. In February 2004, al-Zawahiri castigated the French law forbidding Muslim girls from wearing the Islamic headscarves in state schools.[49] From both an ethical and a strategic perspective, Deleuzians will prefer to welcome Muslim constituencies in the west in order to fashion alliances on more important issues than clothing.[50]

Deleuzians should also encourage U.S. policymakers to find a peaceful resolution to the conflict between Israel and Palestine. In a 1983 article called "The Grandeur of Yasser Arafat," Deleuze made prescient remarks about the contemporary Palestinian situation. Deleuze notes that the Jews "suffered the greatest genocide in history," and yet the Zionist appropriation of Palestine has inflicted evil upon an innocent people. Furthermore, Israel has deliberately destroyed "all the occasions on which a solution or element of solution was possible." The Palestinian people may disappear by integrating into an Arab state or Islamic fundamentalism, "but this would be in such conditions that the world, the United States and even Israel would not finish regretting the lost occasions, including those that still remain today."[51] For Deleuze, the best prospect for Israel's survival is to find a way to preserve Palestinian dignity and autonomy. If the world is a garden, then sometimes flowers from other corners can broker peace between flowers competing on the same plot of land.

Al-Zawahiri's work starts from an Islamic point of reference but launches into a line of "abolition pure and simple" (ATP 229).[52] The majority of al-Qaeda's victims are Muslims, including Shi'a, Sufis, Muslims deemed heretics or apostates, as well as innocent bystanders. [53] Deleuzians can help combat the al-Qaeda regime of signs by collaborating with critical Muslim scholars and supporting policies that cultivate positive relationships between peoples of different faiths.

Sufism is a welcome addition, and al-Qaeda a dangerous intrusion, to the Deleuzian garden. How should Deleuzians proceed, however, with assertive flowers of different faiths? That is, how should Deleuzians articulate a foreign policy to approach political bodies that endorse a transcendent, proselytizing morality but affirm the ideas of interfaith dialogue and cooperation?

Take 'Abdolkarim Soroush (b. 1945), a leading Shi'i political reformer. Prior to the 1979 Iranian revolution, Soroush was influenced by Ali Shariati, the Iranian sociologist and critic of Westoxification (in Persian, *gharbzadegi*), and immediately after the revolution, Ayatollah Khomeini entrusted Soroush to help restructure the Iranian universities, including removing the Marxist presence. In the course of the 1980s and 1990s, Soroush became an internal critic of Iran's political system—the "guardianship of the jurist" (*velayat al-faqih*)—and argued for Muslim versions of democracy and human rights. In the 2000s, Iranian authorities and their proxies harassed Soroush—including physical assaults by Ansar-e Hezbollah—until he left the country. Currently, he is a visiting scholar at the University of Maryland and widely considered one of the most important public intellectuals in the world.[54] In this section, I focus on Soroush's concept of *religious democracy* as formulated in *Reason, Freedom, and Democracy in Islam*.

Soroush lays the foundation for his political reflections through the notion of the contraction and expansion (*qabz-va-bast*) of religious interpretation. Soroush frames this notion using ideas from philosophers of science, including Karl Popper and Thomas Kuhn, which he read as a graduate student in London in the 1970s. The key idea is that, "religion is sacred and heavenly, but the understanding of religion is human and earthly. That which remains constant is religion (*din*); that which undergoes change is religious knowledge and insight (*ma'refat-e dini*)."[55] According to Soroush, reason ('*aql*) and revelation (*shar'*) complement rather than compete with one another. Revelation is eternal and reason is the faculty of interpreting the teachings of religion. The teachings of Islam do not change, but human understandings of these teachings do. Muslim scholars once thought that Islam was compatible with slavery; now, they realize that it is not.[56] Any Muslim religious scholar works within a paradigm that has "a collective and dynamic identity and that remains viable through the constant exchange, cooperation, and competition of scholars."[57] Just as Western scientists reject the phlogiston theory of combustion but still believe in science, Muslim scholars may reject certain political appropriations of Islam and still remain Muslims. In fact, a fallibilistic approach to Islamic political commitments best takes up the Qur'anic injunction (39:18) to hear all and choose the best.[58]

Soroush defends democracy and pluralism on epistemological grounds, to ensure that Muslims choose political and social policies that best advance the Islamic ends of freedom and justice. Democracy is a method "of restricting the power of the rulers and rationalizing their deliberations and policies, so that they will be less vulnerable to error and corruption, more open to exhortation, moderation, consultation."[59] Religious guardianship entrusts decisions to one or a few individuals, who may not have access to all or much of the facts available in society at a given moment. Democracy is the best available political procedure to incorporate the widest range of perspectives. Likewise, Soroush thinks that Muslims inevitably perceive the world from different vantage points and the splintering of the Muslim community (*ummah*) into "seventy-two nations" is a blessing rather than a curse. "Like wild flowers in nature, faith will grow and flourish wherever it wishes and in whatever fragrance and color it pleases. The faithful community is more like a wild grove than a manicured garden."[60]

Soroush's concept of religious democracy does place limits on what kind of flowers are welcome in the garden. "Democratic religious regimes need not wash their hands of religiosity nor turn their backs on God's approval. In order to remain religious, they, of course, need to establish religion as the guide and arbiter of their problems and conflicts."[61] Soroush emphasizes that in Muslim religious democracies sharia will be the law of the land and Islamic norms will permeate society.

> Through protection of the outward appearances, the fragrance of religion will reach even the weakest of nostrils and the faithful will gain a better insight into their religious existence and identity. Pilgrimage to Mecca, public prayers, and religious duties such as calling others to good deeds and calling them away from evil are among the graceful actions that have such blessed effects.[62]

Soroush's religious democracy permits Shi'i Muslims to elect leaders and disagree with each other about Islamic principles of justice. Soroush does not specify how minorities such as Baha'is, Jews, or atheists fare when the State and the public political culture express Shi'i norms.

A Deleuzian critique of Soroush could start with his appeal to the conception of religious politics in Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*. Tocqueville's famous thesis is that American pluralism works because virtually all citizens share Christian mores. "Although religion has no direct role in the government of the American society...it should be considered among the basic foundations of the political system of the country."[63] Soroush endorses this insight to formulate a Muslim democratic politics, officially secular but sustained by Islamic habits of the heart and mind. Unfortunately, Tocqueville's conception of pluralism—while admirable compared to more militant and dogmatic Christian conceptions—justifies antagonism or indifference to non-Christians such as the Native Americans.[64] Soroush contests western ideologies such as Marxism, liberalism, and atheism that fight for external freedom but that neglect the question of internal freedom. "Internal freedom can be achieved only by the light of submission and through following the guidance of the divine messengers."[65] Deleuze, by contrast, considers atheism "philosophy's serenity and philosophy's achievement."[66] Keeping the precedent of Tocqueville in mind, one wonders how charitable Soroush would be towards atheists if he were in charge.

But rhizomatic politics presupposes deep differences between ethical visions. When interacting with other faiths, Deleuzians need thick skins and capacious imaginations. There are multiple problems that confront the global garden that need resolution before any conceivable rapprochement between partisans of transcendence or immanence. Al-Qaeda. Nuclear proliferation. Environmental degradation. In the short term, multiple constituencies need to collaborate to protect the health of the garden.[67]

Over the long term, diverse existential faiths may still respect one another. Working within an Islamic universe of reference, Soroush presents a vision of deep pluralism:

> Those who have endured ebbs and flows of the heart, avalanches of doubt, clashes of belief, surges of faith, the violence of spiritual storms, and the plundering swell of visions that restlessly and ruthlessly assail the delicate sanctuary of the heart understand that the heterogeneity of souls and the wandering of hearts is a hundred times greater than that of thoughts, tasks, limbs, and tendencies.[68]

Soroush immediately qualifies this passage: "Belief is a hundred times more diverse and colorful than disbelief."[69] Soroush does not much elaborate in *Reason, Freedom, and Democracy in Islam* how Muslim pluralists should reach out, if at all, to hypocrites, unbelievers, Christians, or Jews. But one could imagine that Soroush's theory of contraction and expansion, as well as his defense of dissident perspectives in his native Iran, could pave the way for a disposition of respect towards multiple existential faiths, including naturalists. In comparison to his persecutors, Soroush represents an openhearted and open-minded conversation partner.

III. The Politics of the Garden (pairadaeza)

In the summer of 2012, the Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore, Maryland (USA) hosted an exhibit on "Paradise Imagined: The Garden in the Islamic and Christian World." Through the exhibit, we learn that the pre-Islamic Persian concept of *pairadaeza*—an enclosed garden—inspired the Arabic concept of *firdaws*, the Greek concept of *paradeisos*, the Latin concept of *paradisus*, and much of the terminology we have used in this essay.[70] It is also notable that the Epicureans—arguably Deleuze's earliest direct philosophical ancestors—called their community on the outskirts of Athens "The Garden." Pointing out that multiple existential faiths use garden imagery does not by itself solve political dilemmas. Instead, garden imagery can broaden and deepen the

conception of pluralism that James Madison articulated in his contributions to the *Federalist Papers*. According to Madison, the way to prevent tyranny is to multiply centers of power; likewise, Deleuze maintains that a flourishing garden will house multiple constituencies and prevent anyone from destroying the garden through macropolitics (e.g., the state) or micropolitics (e.g., mores). Deleuze presents a philosophical framework to think about pluralism, but that still leaves real-world actors with the responsibility of enacting and participating within a political garden.

To illustrate this point, I now turn to the question of how Deleuzians could collaborate with Muslims to protect the natural environment. I begin with a reading of Seyyed Hossein Nasr's "Religion and the Environmental Crisis." In this essay, Nasr makes a sensible argument for the origins of and potential solutions to the ecological crisis. "The modern outlook is based on fanning the fire of greed and covetousness."[71] Historically and even to some degree in the present, religion has served as a barrier to covetousness. The Arabic virtue of *rida*—"contentment with our state of being"—is one such barrier, but there are analogous virtues in Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism, and other religious traditions. Only by appealing to such virtues and traditions does one have a chance to assemble a large enough force to stop the modern ideologies and practices that threaten to destroy the planet's viability: "from a practical point of view the only ethics which can be acceptable to the vast majority, at the present moment in the history of the world, is still a religious ethics."[72] Only a religion can exposit the rituals that make possible a vertical connection to the cosmos or articulate a coherent doctrine of nature. Nasr's conception of the *philosophia perennis* holds that a wide array of traditions—including Eskimos, Australian Aborigines, Taoists, and Muslims[73]—can and need to join coalitions to halt or reverse the ecological crisis. In Deleuzian terms, to protect the health of the garden, in this case the natural environment, one needs the help of many existential faiths, or flowers, and many of them will be religious.

And yet at the end of his essay, Nasr takes aim at one faith that does not qualify as a traditional religion nor as a worthy partner in an environmental coalition: New Age. No one, to my knowledge, has called Deleuzian ethics New Age. But Nasr's attack on New Age movements performs collateral damage on naturalists who express gratitude for the cosmos but do not believe in a Creator God. "In this New Age climate the word 'cosmic' has gained a great deal of currency precisely because of the dearth of an authentic religious knowledge of the cosmos in the present-day world."[74] Mainstream western religious organizations—Catholic, Protestant, or Orthodox—"rightly oppose" these pseudo-movements.[75] Why does Nasr confront New Age? Here, one touches upon a profound difference between Nasr (and most Muslims) and Deleuze (and most naturalists). The Qur'an calls Muhammad the "Seal of the Prophets," "and, in fact, fourteen hundred years of history have confirmed Islam's claim, for during all the time there has not been another plenary manifestation of the Truth like the ones that brought about the births of Buddhism and Christianity, not to speak of the earlier major religions."[76] The Qur'an names 25 prophets and in a hadith, Muhammad indicates that there have been 124,000 prophets, and thus, it is possible that God sent prophets to, say, the Eskimos and Aborigines. But anyone who claims to found a religion and be a prophet after Muhammad tells a falsehood. In *What is Philosophy*, Deleuze differentiates the philosopher and the prophet, philosophy and religion: "Whenever there is transcendence, vertical Being, imperial State in the sky or on earth, there is religion; and there is Philosophy whenever there is immanence."[77] The Qur'an states of the prophets, "We make no distinction between any of them" (2:136), because they all recited the same truth about the oneness of God. For Deleuze, on the contrary, philosophers have a right and responsibility to generate new systems (or planes of immanence) to filter order out of chaos.[78] There cannot be a seal to philosophy because chaos is a problem that demands ever-new concepts. Deleuze and Nasr are speaking past each other: Deleuze does not claim to be a prophet or to vindicate prophecy. But anyone who claims to speak of *Deus sive Natura*, as the Spinozist and then the Deleuzian philosopher does, could be seen as entering the territory of prophesy.

Here is one approach to invite Nasr to reconsider his theoretical and practical dismissal of post-revelatory existential faiths. Nasr writes in *The Garden of Truth* that "the traditional Islamic garden is an earthly reflection of Paradise."[79] As the exhibit at

the Walters demonstrates, part of what makes a traditional Islamic garden beautiful is the brightness and diversity of the beings that it sustains. If what makes a garden exquisite is its wealth of colors, scents, and textures, and if Muslims cultivate their gardens to reflect Paradise, then might Nasr view Deleuzianism as an orchid that makes the garden more beautiful and more like the Garden of Truth? Just as Nasr views Eskimos and Taoists as potential allies without for a moment doubting the veracity of his own faith, Islam, so might he view naturalists as potential allies in policy arenas (such as protecting the air, soil, and water around the globe) and respected competitors in describing the cosmos? Deleuzians may pose these questions to Nasr and other senior scholars, but the answers that matter are offered by younger generations entering a multicultural, interconnected world who wish to cultivate in beautiful ways the rhizomatic world we all already inhabit.

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Notes

1. John L. Esposito, *The Future of Islam* (New York: Oxford, 2010), 5.

2. Brooke Holmes, "Deleuze, Lucretius, and the Simulacrum of Naturalism," in *Dynamic Reading: Studies in the Reception of Epicureanism*, eds. Brooke Holmes and W. H. Shearin (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 316-342.

3. Daniel W. Smith, *Essays on Deleuze* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 176.

4. William C. Chittick, *Sufism: A Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2000), 31.

5. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *The Essential Seyyed Hossein Nasr*, ed. William C. Chittick (Bloomington: World Wisdom, 2007), 44.

6. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987). Hereafter ATP in the text.

7. On Deleuze's concern for the many levels of politics, from the macropolitical State to the micropolitical forces that flow beneath it, see Nathan Widder, *Political Theory After Deleuze* (New York: Continuum, 2012).

8. Roxanne L. Euben and Muhammad Qasim Zaman, *Princeton Readings in Islamist Thought: Texts and Contexts from Al-Banna to Bin Laden* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 4.

9. Carool Kersten, *Cosmopolitans and Heretics: New Muslim Intellectuals and the Study of Islam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 234.

10. See Fazlur Rahman, *Islam & Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982); Nasr Abu Zayd, *Reformation of Islamic Thought: A Critical Historical Analysis* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006).

11. "The new Muslim intellectualism that has been investigated here has found a more positive response in Indonesia than anywhere else in the Muslim world." Kersten, *Cosmopolitans and Heretics*, 235.

12. Tariq Ramadan, *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 210.

13. On the role of conjecture in comparative political theory, see Andrew F. March, *Islam and Liberal Citizenship: The Search for an Overlapping Consensus* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

14. On Deleuze's approach to the history of philosophy—citing accurately but arranging elements to say something new—see Gilles Deleuze, "Letter to a Harsh Critic," in *Negotiations, 1972-1990*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 3-12.

15. In 2006, the Egyptian philosopher Hasan Hanafi gave a lecture in Alexandria where he likened the Qur'an to a supermarket where one can take what one likes. On the scandal this comment generated, see Carool Kersten, "Heretics," *Critical Muslim* 2 (2012): 101-122.

16. On the argument that "U.S. strategists have struck a common chord with self-identified secular liberal Muslim reformers who have been trying to refashion Islam along the lines of the Protestant Reformation," see Saba Mahmood, "Secularism, Hermeneutics, and Empire: The Politics of Islamic Reformation," *Public Culture* 18, no. 2 (May 2006), 329. Mahmood's

argument does not apply to the thinkers discussed in this essay. Deleuze is not a Protestant (in doctrine or ethos), and his model of pluralism promotes the flourishing of multiple faiths around the globe. Nor do Seyyed Hossein Nasr or 'Abdolkarim Soroush favor a Protestant conception of secular normativity.

17. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *The Garden of Truth: The Vision and Practice of Sufism, Islam's Mystical Tradition* (New York: HarperOne, 2007), xiii.

18. Peter Hallward, *Out of this World: Deleuze and the Philosophy of Creation* (New York: Verso, 2006), 4.

19. Ibid., 86.

20. Nasr, *The Garden of Truth*, 50.

21. Ibn Khaldun, author of the *Muqadimmah*, is one of Deleuze's main sources on the relationship between *bedouin* (or nomads) and city-dwellers in *A Thousand Plateaus* (ATP 366, 481).

22. Ibid., 49-50.

23. Ibid., 38.

24. Ibid.

25. Chittick, *Sufism*, 43.

26. Nasr, *The Essential Seyyed Hossein Nasr*, 22-23.

27. William E. Connolly, *Why I Am Not a Secularist* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 5.

28. Nasr, *The Garden of Truth*, 40.

29. Joshua Ramey, *The Hermetic Deleuze: Philosophy and Spiritual Ordeal* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012), 209.

30. Nasr, *The Garden of Truth*, 107.

31. Ibid., 111.

32. William Behun, "The Body of Light and the Body without Organs," *Substance: A Review of Theory & Literary Criticism* 39, no. 1 (March 2010), 137.

33. Chittick, *Sufism*, 4.

34. Nasr, *The Garden of Truth*, 97.

35. See Sadakat Kadri, *Heaven on Earth: A Journey through Shari'a Law from the Deserts of Ancient Arabia to the Streets of the Modern Muslim World* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2012).

36. Abdullahi An-Na'im, *Islam and the Secular State: Negotiating the Future of Shari`a* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008).

37. Nile Green, *Sufism: A Global History* (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012).

38. Nasr, *The Garden of Truth*, xvi.

39. Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11* (New York: Knopf, 2006), 38-68.

40. On how al-Qaeda ideologues depart from the Islamic legal tradition, see Andrew F. March, "Anwar al-'Awlaqi Against the Islamic Legal Tradition," in *Islam, the State, and Political Authority: Medieval Issues and Modern Concerns*, ed. Asma Afsaruddin (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 225-247.

41. Stéphane Lacroix, "Introduction: Ayman Al-Zawahari, Veteran of Jihad," in *Al Qaeda in its Own Words*, eds. Gilles Kepel and Jean-Pierre Milelli, trans. Pascale Ghazaleh (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 170.

42. Ayman Al-Zawahari, "Loyalty and Separation: Changing an Article of Faith and Losing Sight of Reality," in *Al Qaeda in its Own Words*, eds. Gilles Kepel and Jean-Pierre Milelli, trans. Pascale Ghazaleh (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 210, 231.

43. Ibid., 214.

44. Ibid., 218.

45. Ibid., 234.

46. Ramadan, *Western Muslims and the Future of Islam*, 205.

47. Ibid., 26.

48. Ibid., 212.

49. Lacroix, "Introduction," 161.

50. At the same time, Deleuzians defend the right of Muslim women not to veil. Amnesty Internal exhibits a Deleuzian characteristic by promoting letter-writing campaigns to authorities in other countries that harass dissidents. In other words, Deleuzians defend rhizomatic offshoots from cultures and traditions on any corner of the globe.

51. Gilles Deleuze, "The Grandeur of Yasser Arafat," *Discourse* 20, no. 3 (October 1998): 30-34.

52. An al-Qaeda leader wrote in 2004: "The last months of al-Qaeda provide the tragic example of a very poorly managed Islamic movement. Everyone knew that their leader was leading them toward the abyss, indeed that he was leading the entire country to its destruction, but they continued to carry out his orders." Cited in Kepel and Milelli, *Al Qaeda in its Own Words*, 331.

53. "What is required of us in the ordinary, quotidian course of democracy? I think we are required to say something to the rogue, to the Muslim *shehab*...: '*Marhaba*' there is room enough for you, and '*ahlan wa sahlan*' you are among your people here." Anne Norton, "On the Muslim Question," in *Democracy, Religious Pluralism & the Liberal Dilemma of Accommodation*, ed. Monica Mookherjee (New York: Springer, 2011), 74. It is valuable to expand the conception of the democratic body to include multiple existential faiths, but for a political community to survive it needs to police its borders and protect its culture, institutions, territory, and so forth. See the discussion of "the art of caution" in *A Thousand Plateaus* (ATP 159-60). Alternatively, consider how some western Muslims warn against the presence of Wahhabi and Deobandi imams in their country; see Irfan al-Alawi, "8Radicalization of Young British Muslims," *Center for Islamic Pluralism* (February 13, 2012). **http://www.islamicpluralism.org/1984/radicalization-of-young-british-muslims**.

54. On how Soroush criticizes political Islam, formulates his conception of religious democracy, and contributes to a dialogue among civilizations, see Fred R. Dallmayr, *Dialogue among Civilizations: Some Exemplary Voices* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 167-84.

55. Abdolkarim Soroush, *Reason, Freedom, and Democracy in Islam: Essential Writings of 'Abdolkarim Soroush*, trans. Mahmoud Sadri and Ahmad Sadri (New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 2000), 31.

56. Ibid., 127-28.

57. Ibid., 34.

58. Ibid., 100.

59. Ibid., 134.

60. Ibid., 143.

61. Ibid., 128.

62. Ibid., 147.

63. Cited in Ibid., 153.

64. William E. Connolly, *The Ethos of Pluralization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 163-98.

65. Soroush, *Reason, Freedom, and Democracy in Islam*, 104.

66. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, trans. Graham Burchell and Hugh Tomlinson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 92.

67. At a minimum, democratic constituencies should practice "studied indifference" to certain distasteful constituencies while collaborating with others. On this virtue, see Connolly, *The Ethos of Pluralization*.

68. Soroush, *Reason, Freedom, and Democracy in Islam* 144.

69. Ibid., 144-45.

70. Melik Kaylan, "Heaven on Earth," *Wall Street Journal* 259, no. 166 (July 18, 2012), D5. **http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304022004577519212735901578.html**

71. Nasr, *The Essential Seyyed Hossein Nasr*, 32.

72. Ibid., 33.

73. Ibid., 23.

74. Ibid., 38.

75. Ibid., 39.

76. Ibid., 54.

77. Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 43.

78. Ibid., 42.

79. Nasr, *The Garden of Truth*, xv.

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