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**ISLAM IN THE 'HOOD:
EXPLORING THE RISE OF A GLOBAL GHETTO**

by

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I) *Statement of Problem*

With BPSN tattooed upon his forehead, a 30-something member of the legendary Black P. Stone Nation street gang debates intricacies of Islamic theology with a Palestinian liquor store owner on Chicago's South Side.

An old-school hip hop beat weaves in and out of a Muslim call to prayer on a track entitled Allah U Akbar; as the Bronx-based Rap legends, the Brand Nubians, spills from the car speakers of Chicago-raised Palestinian Muslim youth cruising Ramallah's center.

My interest and activism in the contemporary urban ghetto began in the early 1990s while thinking through these types of anecdotal observations. In addition to unsettling notions of the ghetto as a space ensconced in hyper-isolation and parochialism, such encounters also signaled the development of an urban Muslim aesthetic and culture amid a set of transnational and global circuits. After a series of interviews, months of ethnography and years of community work, I began to assemble an intellectual project that hypothesized the emergence of a “global ghetto” as one way to further explore and theorize these discoveries. This project inquires into the emergence of such a space through an ethnographic account of Islam’s encounter with two uniquely post-industrial ghetto developments: 1) the legacy of one of Chicago’s oldest black street gangs: the Black P. Stone Nation (Hereinafter “the Stones”) and 2) the emergence and rapidly globalizing trends of Hip Hop. Using ethnographies of these two developments, this dissertation essentially hypothesizes that aspects of these encounters illustrate how unique facets of the contemporary American ghetto have gone global.

There is a growing consensus among urban social scientists that a “new” set of dynamics characterizes the modern ghetto. Often citing the late 1960s as the beginning of this historical period, various terms have been deployed to signify the emergence of this distinct space: “the third ghetto,” “the post-industrial ghetto,” “the excluded ghetto” and “the hyperghetto” are but a few. The theoretical and empirical variables underlying assertions of a new-ghetto thesis coincide and often mirror some of the same contentions that some globalization theorists deploy in claims about the rise of a global city.

In building upon these arguments, this work will posit a portrait of the contemporary ghetto operating amid specific globalizing circuits and in doing so seeks to expand upon work that looks for the global in seemingly provincial spaces. In considering the counter-intuitive dimensions of the last point, I hypothesize specific features of contemporary ghetto spaces are the unlikely source for alternative notions of cosmopolitanism and that in this process we see a reconfiguring of racial and ethnic tropes associated with ghetto space. Further, the ethnographic focus upon the intersection of Islam with specific ghetto cultural and structural processes aims at contributing to the exploration and understanding of Muslim identity in the West.

The research produced through these three primary angles should contribute to: 1) Thickening an existing theoretical framework up until now not applied to the ghetto, so as to assist in researching the globalization of the ghetto; 2) Positing the potential of what I will be calling *ghetto cosmopolitanism* to challenge conventional notions of cosmopolitanism ; 3) Positioning the encounter between Islam and the ghetto as one way to complicate and theorize a growing interest in a transnational American Muslim identity.

The notion of a global ghetto is, in part, an argument about an emerging type of physical space anchored within the periphery of today's global city. Globalization theorists like Saskia Sassen have persuasively argued that such a site can be understood as part of a larger "geography of centrality and marginality." Using the notion of *geographies of marginality* enable us with the theoretical framework here proposed to probe the physicality of peripheral spaces which even though existing in the shadows of global command centers are themselves globally networked. Yet, Sassen and others caution reading this new topography as something uniformly or pervasively inscribed in urban space: not everything in these spaces is a manifestation of the global.

Throughout this project I rely on these insights, to posit my notion of the global ghetto as instantiations of processes and spatial configurations that have been shaped by and in some cases contributed to disparate forms of globality. I don't intend to use my formulation of the global ghetto to ask whether or not a totalizing and absolute condition is replicating itself around the world. In other words, I'm not asking if the contemporary ghetto has been structurally and spatially reconfigured by economic forces of globalization in a way that can explain poverty and marginalization in urban centers across the world: while that may be the case, engaging in a sociological examination of this question is well beyond the scope of my project.

Rather, I seek to explore instances of the global in the contemporary North American ghetto as a way of asking if this partial condition can unsettle conventional understandings of

the stigmatized and parochial space of the post-industrial American ghetto that would exclude ex ante the possibility of transnational and global processes in this ghetto space. Therefore, when I extend the parameters of this study to spaces in the West Bank and Israel, I'm not intending to engage in a comprehensive comparison of marginalized and ghettoized spaces. Instead, I explore the emergence of Hip Hop among Palestinians and Arab Israelis as an opportunity for researchers to study the way in which globalization has dramatically extended the conceptual and cultural framework of the American ghetto for Hip Hop artists and aficionados across Palestine and Israel. These are unique processes that require more theorization and in the Palestinian and Arab Israeli case, as is certainly true for other case studies around the world, the empirical data for such a study must be extracted with a keen eye towards the way global processes are inflected through a localized set of political, cultural and economic conditions.

The Literature

While acknowledging distinct developments in the ghetto over the last 30 years, many have yet to theorize the presence of the global through these changes. Sociologist Loic Wacquant, who has written extensively on theorizing multiple aspects of the post-industrial ghetto or what Wacquant calls the “hyperghetto,” cautions restraint when attempting transnational comparisons of race-based American ghetto institutions with those multi-ethnic class-based ghettos of Parisian suburbs for instance. Historian Carl Nightingale engages the term “global ghetto” to explore historical based processes that position the U.S. ghetto as “fundamentally immersed in...a century of world-spanning political conflict.” Not unlike Wacquant, Nightingale seeks to historicize these developments by “periodizing U.S. Ghettos in Global Context.”

A growing number of social scientists have also engaged Eurocentric and elitist notions of cosmopolitanism and global civil society to contend with the implications of such views. These studies include a range of authors who have utilized the notions of Homi Bhabha’s “vernacular cosmopolitanisms” or Sassen’s “non-cosmopolitan globalities” to challenge the dominant discourse on this subject. Oddly enough, not many ethnographers have picked up on intuitions by Chicago School sociologist Harvey Zorbaugh posited over 70 years ago. It was in the late 1920s when Zorbaugh described the Near North Side slum as one of “the most cosmopolitan areas in a distinctively cosmopolitan city.” On some levels, that claim is even more dramatically counterintuitive for today’s ghetto then it was when Zorbaugh wrote his legendary study on “The Gold Coast and the Slum.” The ghetto/slum is commonly described as a hyperisolated and an

intensely parochial space, but Zorbaugh's observations about a slum/ghetto-based cosmopolitanism recognized the presence of multiple strands and complex identities in the slums he was studying. I'm suggesting that today we are also seeing a similar presence, only now in a form associated with globalization and the transnational flows of culture, capital and people in the contemporary era.

Finally, my dissertation project can't be understood outside the larger context of Islam's development in America and the black community in particular. In the last decade a compelling scholarship has developed to strengthen our understanding of this history. Moreover, additional sociological attempts to explore Islam and the North American Muslim community have grown exponentially in the wake of 9/11. This project hopes to make an original and critical contribution to that literature by focusing on the encounter of Islam and the Muslim experience with unique developments in the American post-industrial ghetto.

a) Post Industrial Ghetto and Its Global Link?

In asking how notions of globalization have been incorporated into an analysis of the contemporary ghetto literature, it is instructive to look at how the ghetto has been framed in the literature over the last several decades. Sociologists emerging from the University of Chicago, many of whom were students of William Wilson, helped set the terms of debate around the "post-industrial ghetto." The focus of their work was the black American ghetto and the policies, structural forces and societal pressures that sustained it. Douglass Massey and Nancy A Denton ushered in *American Apartheid*, a landmark study on race and segregation in the inner city (Massey and Denton 1993.) Written and published during the height of the anti-apartheid era in American and across much of Europe, the jolting comparison of American ghettos with the Bantustan reservation systems of South Africa's National Party had scathing implications. In making such an argument they forcefully differentiated themselves from any older Chicago Ecological framework that somehow suggested that the ghetto had naturally evolved in urban space:

American Apartheid attributes a great degree of agency to race and the violent imposition of the color line in American cities like Chicago, as opposed to more innocuous forces like neighborhood invasion and succession as determinative variables in shaping the ghetto. Racial segregation was always a bloody affair in white America and the black ghetto has always been stemmed in spatially by terrible outbursts of violence, reminiscent of the institutions of control and degradation used during slavery.

Indeed it was this premise that drove Loic Wacquant to posit a historical context to explicate the modern ghetto. Wacquant developed a spatial analysis to think about the post-industrial inner city as a “hyperghetto” and conceived of an analytic that provided a means to talk about this space in direct relationship to the violent institutions of racial segregation, beginning with American slavery and ending with the prison-industrial complex. In a set of articles published in various journals Wacquant has pieced together a radical approach to theorizing the ghetto, one that challenges perspectives that mask power and larger structural forces in creating the black urban ghetto. In a piece entitled “Deadly Symbiosis: when the Prison and Ghetto Meet and Mesh” Wacquant cogently makes an argument to consider the sprawling prison industrial complex and the many urban jails that feed them as spatial extension of the hyperghetto.

In addition to providing a context to think about the category of the ghetto in direct spatial connection to the growing prison industrial complex, Wacquant has enthusiastically published a series of articles arguing for a lucid and unambiguous categorical conception of “the ghetto.” Driven, in part, to deal with the long standing ambiguity and lack of distinction between ethnic neighborhoods and ghettos, Wacquant also argues for conceptual clarity in order to “disentangle the relationship between ghettoization, urban poverty and segregation.” Wacquant essentially hinges this categorical distinction upon three claims:

- 1.) Poverty is a frequent but derivative characteristics of ghettos...
- 2.) all ghettos are segregated but not all segregated area are ghettos.
- 3) Ghettos and ethnic neighborhoods have divergent structures and opposite functions. (Wacquant 2004)

For Wacquant the ideological and political implication in framing ghetto analysis have had significant theoretical and policy based implications.

There is indeed great variance in the way ghetto scholars incorporate notion of globalization discourse. Massey and Denton emerge from a debate within a set of very local and national forces and aside from a provocative gesture towards comparison with the racial Bantustans of South Africa, *American Apartheid* doesn't make any pretension towards transnational or global analysis. Wacquant, never fully embraces a discourse of globalization either and in "Red Belt, Black Belt: Racial Division, Class Inequality, and the State in the French Urban Periphery and the American Ghetto," critiques the overanxious impulse of comparison between such spaces. Yet, his analysis of the ghetto is greatly informed by acknowledging a larger set of economic and ideological forces. His direct comparison of ghetto spaces and their

intimate connection with the growing penal state system is a critique of the neo-liberal market polices commonly associated with the globalizing economic forces.

Finally in “American Project: The Rise and Fall of a Modern Ghetto” Sudhir Alladi Venkatesh’s wrestles with an attempt to bring a broader lens into an ethnographic analysis of the ghetto projects and in so doing makes a nod to globalization theory through a direct reference to larger structural forces of “global capitalism.” Venkatesh struggles with a methodical approach entrenched in micro-sociological observations; one which constructs theory from the ground up. To begin the other way around, is relatively distant from the Chicago “grounded” tradition of ethnography. Part of Venkatesh’s struggle to connect the ghetto to a larger global analysis is in part this methodological hesitation, one that casts ethnography as an intrinsically local affair far removed from larger macro forces.

Yet making that connection is precisely sociologist Michael Burawoy’s argument for a “global ethnography.” Completely and candidly dependent on theoretical frameworks that convincingly contextualizes local space within a broader set of global forces has been the logic behind utilizing Burawoy’s “Extended Case Method” to do “global ethnography” (Burawoy 2000). Burawoy and his students have turned to Saskia Sassen, Manuel Castells, Arjun Appadurai and other global theorists to help bring the urban slums, ghettos and other marginal spaces into the context of larger transnational processes of globalization.

These theorists have indeed provided alternative framework through which the centrality of urban space in relationships to transnational markets can be revisited. Saskia Sassen provides ways to begin thinking about the city as part of a larger network and cross-national circuits. For Sassen, these global centers are driven by service economies that constitute themselves spatially around command nodes of power often located in the central business districts (Sassen 2000). Moreover, these spaces also reinvigorate that marginal slum or ghetto with a new founded purpose in such a relationship. In other words the “global glamour zones” simultaneously reinforce the presence of “the global war zones” and both spaces mutually constitute themselves within a larger set of transnational nodes. (Sassen 1998.)

The idea that certain globalization processes generate great disparities in wealth within these global centers becomes the foundation upon which “global ethnographers” can then frame their post-industrial ghetto ethnographies. Some urban and even globalization theorists are not as certain in what ways, the broad circuits and nodes associated with economic globalization drive certain economic disparities that have been part of these urban spaces since their inception. Janet

Abu-Lughod expresses such ambivalence in her analysis of a classic hypothesis posited by Freidmann in an article on world cities:

The proposition that changes at the international level are leading, via a clear causal line, to growing inequality in global cities has become an article of faith in the growing literature...It may be true that in today's global cities there is a return to the old pattern of 'the citadel' and 'the ghetto,' as Friedmann and Goetz have suggested, but the causes run deeper than the overarching process of globalization. (Abu-Lughod 1999: 420)

Abu-Lughod's reaction to such claims are reinforced by reservations by many theorists who are concerned by the way haphazard and all-encompassing formulations of "globalization" are used to posit explanations for an entire range of disparate processes. Cautioning against such analysis but holding true to the original hypothesis of Freidman, Sassen's formulation of the global city has gone a significant distance in positing a concrete set of processes linked to globalization through "major changes in the organization of economic activity." She mentions three distinct processes that help to explain such a phenomenon:

1) The growing inequality in the profit-making capacities of different economic sectors...2) the polarization tendencies embedded in organization of service industries and the casualaition of the employment relation; and 3) the production of urban marginality. (Sassen 1999: 137)

Significant on many levels these theoretical contributions enable studies of the post-industrial urban slums and ghettos with the theoretical tools to connect peripheral spaces with a series of global and transnational processes. Again Burawoy makes a compelling case for how such studies were present in a more latent form in some of the Chicago's school early analysis of such spaces. Yet, he contends that the theoretical limitation that framed those early studies (such as Thomas and Znaniecki's *The Polish Peasant* prevented exploration of the ghetto from moving beyond an ecologically entrenched and provincially retreating framework. For Burawoy, the theoretical context provided by globalization theorist's greatest contribution is the means to connect urban sites to similar process of transnational flows and cross national circuits of global capital.

Moreover, theoretical insight forged by globalization theorists exploring transnational flows of culture and capital invites comparisons of the post-industrial ghetto examination with spatial analysis of the global periphery. Arjun Appadurai, for instance, provides one such framework, when exploring how the language of locality and cultural flows localizes in peripheral sites like the urban ghetto. Appadurai argues that ethnographers and other social scientists with the theoretical means to connect to locally marginalized global spaces could use these sites

For the examination of how locality emerges in a globalizing world, of how colonial processes underwrite contemporary politics, of how history and genealogy inflect one another, and of how global facts take local form.(Appadurai 1997: p18).

In “Modernity at Large” Appadurai posits a set of *scapes* as conduits for cultural meaning across that world. For instance in his discussion of *ethnoscapes* he mentions the proliferation of "imagined worlds," which are "constituted by the historically situated imaginations of persons and groups spread around the globe” (Appadurai 1997: p33). His theories of cultural flows are yet another means through which urban ethnographers like Burawoy could employ analyses to connect the local processes of the post-industrial ghetto to larger forces of globalization. While there has yet to emerge such a study on any significant scale, I believe the empirical and theoretical possibilities are certainly available to generate one and my hope is that this project can serve as one way to engage this issue.

- ***Ghetto Cosmopolitanism***

In shaping debate over contending notions of civil society and citizenship, cosmopolitanism discourse frames a significant facet of the broader globalization literature. Considerable dimensions of this discourse have been linked to explicating urban space and in much of this discussion the ghetto, as an inexorable part of post-industrial urban space, gets either dismissed or rendered insignificant when considering what sociologist Bryan Turner dubs *cosmopolitan virtues*. For Turner these virtues emerge from the global city and enable the individuals in possession of them with the practical ability to navigate the terrain of the post-emotional city. While Turner eagerly calls for adopting cosmopolitan virtue as a means to facilitate tolerance for a range of hybrid identities and rejection of totalizing grand narratives, Turner’s formulations of

cosmopolitan virtue retain a universalizing and elitist neo-liberalism that marginalizes the working class and urban poor. Acknowledging this limitation, Turner ultimately categorizes this large segment of the population as incapable of acquiring such virtue because of their relative immobility in relation to the elite citizens of global cities who are constantly on the move:

By contrast, those sections of the population which are relatively immobile and located in traditional employment patterns (the working class, ethnic minorities and the under classes) may in fact continue to have hot localities and thick patterns of solidarity.

Turner posits issues of mobility, spatial limitations and segregation at work as reasons for this phenomenon. Turner himself recognizes the implicit elitism in this formulation of cosmopolitanism and attempts to reconcile this open bias by honestly sharing his particular agenda in formulating cosmopolitanism, “as the global elites become more culturally diverse and flexible, they will have to embrace global diversity more seriously and with greater determination.” (Turner, p. 61) While challenging “global elites” to become more “culturally diverse” and “flexible” may be interpreted as a right step towards a more critical cosmopolitanism in relationship to urban space, Turner’s call to trickle-down cosmopolitanism does little to calm the apprehension that current elitist constructions of *cosmopolitan virtues* reflect the disparities associated with economic globalization and the way they are instantiated in the topography of today’s global city. Saskia Sassen, on the other hand, posits notions of globalizing urban centers as providing disempowered actors with the means to resist. For theorists like Sassen the global city becomes a strategic site that enables a range of “non-state actors” and “informal political actors” to “acquire presence in a broader political process that escapes the boundaries of the formal policy.” (Sassen, p.58). For Sassen unlike Castells and Turner it is this political process that expands the parameters of “international civil society” and affords even those in the most marginal segments of society with the means to move beyond the segregated and local experiences of a confined spatiality.

Others like Edward Soja have repeatedly made the argument for a *thirdspace* in which a type of authentic cultural hybridism can emerge in the postmodern global metropolis. Always anchoring this analysis in a city space, the notion of alternative cosmopolitanism here emerged from this analysis through a post modern global metropolis that a handful of scholars have referred to as a *cosmopolis*. Soja makes the argument about the possibilities of this analytic

highlighting a new spatial terrain of cosmopolitanism, particularly for the marginal, hybrid, immigrant and urban poor. Soja references several urban geographers, many whom have taught at UCLA and have been making one aspect of this argument over the last decade. Like Sassen, who sees the global city and the multiple transnational circuits revolving through it as enabling formerly disempowered actors, Soja is hopeful that the idea of a cosmopolis can enable the working poor and marginalized immigrant to engage in “new urban spatial (rather than just social) movements” that will ultimately confront and challenge the bifurcated dual city structures of exclusion. Soja seems to suggest that ideas around this new space can help to provide a foundation upon which alternative notions of global citizenship, civil society and just socio-political orders can be debated and forged. In this sense Soja contends that the idea of a *cosmopolis* helps to:

Recenter the spatially urban discourse not just on the negative impacts of globalization but also on the new opportunities and challenges provoked by globalization to rethink from a more explicitly spatial perspective established notions of citizenship and democracy, civil society and the public sphere...(Soja, p. 231)

How a particular configuration of urban space enables or occludes the project of a “Global Civil Society,” are questions that seem critical to a range of theories exploring the claim making processes at the core of any civil society and cosmopolitan project. Ananya Roy’s critique of neoliberalism as a spatial order is instructive in understanding the on-going centrality of urban space in debating issues of a civil society and globalization. Roy’s contention that neoliberalism is a “spatial order” and that urban space is the critical locality upon which this ideology can be clearly discerned and debated becomes a critical part of a larger argument.

Roy makes a cogent argument for the continued importance of urban space in positing alternatives understandings of globalization and cosmopolitanism. Yet, she also points to some of what she characterizes a key limitation to urban space theories when exploring alternative issues of cosmopolitanism. Roy argues that urban theory particular theories about urban space have been developed in such close and intimate connection to specific urban centers over the last hundred years that little attention has been given to significance of non-Western European cities convergence with some of these same global forces. Roy argues:

While urban theorists debate the move from Chicago-style sociology to LA style geography, I am calling for a radical journey beyond the EuroAmerican core...Locating global history or urban materiality in the Third World, I believe, yield not simply a new repertoire of cities but also a new repertoire of theory.
(Roy,)

Roy calls this “making theory at the margins” and I would further suggest that finding real and significant ways to connect American urban ghettos to urban centers by generating analytical frameworks that enable empirical observations of these transitional connections will further challenge the way we theorize the ghetto beyond the confining paradigm through which most literature treats it today. It could further enable us to think about transnational cosmopolitanism and hybrid racial, ethnic and cultural identities as configurations that have local immediacy. Returning to notions of “ghetto cosmopolitanism” in Chicago’s urban ghettos and slums, to empirically explore what Zorbaugh noticed so vividly over 70 years ago could yield results that expand a sociologically informed approach to contemporary theories of alternative cosmopolitanism, hybrid identities and contending notions of citizenship.

Islam, the African American Experience & Hip Hop:

Several of the key questions at the center of my dissertation project require an historical engagement with the larger issues around Islam and the African American experience. In fact, my central argument that aspects of the post-industrial ghetto encounter with Islam makes legible the global contours of contemporary ghetto space can only be made when considering the spatial dynamics and implications of earlier African American encounters with Islam.

Thus in order to make comparisons and analyze nuanced distinctions between the post-1960s and earlier connections between Islam and African American life, I use this literature section to explore three broader subjects. The first deals with a set of theoretical explanations for Islam’s growth in the African American community over the 20th century. Here I will consider what facet of that experience is directly related to the post-industrial ghetto encounter of Hip Hop and the Blackstone legacy with Islam. I will also consider to what extent these encounters had a special component to them. The second subject explores some of the mid and early 20 century instantiations of transnational encounters between immigrant Muslims and African Americans. The last subject in this section revolves around the growing Hip Hop literature and here again I

explore some of the earlier musical encounters between Be Bop and Islam to engage what I contend is the distinctive and unique dimensions of Hip Hop's post industrial ghetto encounter with Muslim discourse and identity.

As suggested above exploring the predisposition for some of the early Hip Hop pioneers or Blackstone leaders to gravitate towards Muslim teachings and sensibilities necessitates understanding the growth of Islam among African American in the early part of the 20th century. The focus on the last hundred years of this development is not to deny the earlier presence of Islam in the Americas. On the contrary, a serious scholarship has arisen around thoroughly documenting the role of Islam among African Americans in the Antebellum period and throughout the transatlantic voyage. Works like Syan Diouf's *Servants of Allah*, Alan Austin's *African Muslims in Antebellum America* and Michael A Gomez's *Black Crescent: The Experience and Legacy of African Muslims in the Americas*, have paved the way towards an revealing scholarship about the otherwise under theorized and frequently minimized significance of Islam in the lives of blacks during slavery.

Yet, in spite of the scope and important of this relatively new scholarship, scholars like Dr. Sherman A Jackson , in the recently published *Islam and the Blackamerican: Looking Toward The Third Resurrection* prefers to theorize the rise of Islam in the black community as primarily a 20th century phenomenon:

That there were African Muslims among America's slave population is incontrovertibly known and well documented. My point in limiting spread of Islam among Blackamericans to the twentieth century is simply to emphasize that prior to that time Islam was unable to sustain and perpetuate itself on North American soil. (p.39)

Even then Jackson argues that Islam's appeal to African Americans in the early part of the 20th century must be understood within the historical legacy and centrality of Black Religion. Jackson argues that the "central preoccupation of Black Religion is the desire to annihilate or at least subvert white supremacy and anti-racism.(Jackson, p.29)" He suggests that it is in light of this tradition that early 20th century proto-Islamic and Pan Africanist movements and discourse converge. Jackson posits nine key reasons for the selection of Islam among these early movements Among those nine are: Islam was perceived to be of the East; it was seen as something independent of the Western Europeans; it had a well established tradition of resistance;

it had a basic creed and that it was connected to a glorious past civilization that was partially instantiated through the African continent.

Jackson's insight and elaboration on each of these issues continues to be relevant for understanding the incorporation of Islamic beliefs and practices with the Blackstone legacy and Hip Hop. Moreover, Jackson argues that Islam was successfully integrated, indigenized and sustained as a viable expression of African American Black Religion because of the dynamic and vibrant way in which it was appropriated by the pioneers of this movement:

A black adopts Islam...not to become an honorary Arab or white but to become a truer, more authentic "Blackman"...This is ultimately the vehicle of appropriation enables him to do. (Jackson, p 28)

This notion will be critical, in examining the way in which Islam was incorporated into the larger Blackstone and Hip Hop lexicon. I will hypothesize that in some respects the processes were very similar yet in the post-industrial ghetto these processes, particular through hip hop, go global in a way that would have been unimaginable fifty years earlier.

Another area of this scholarship quite central to my work deals with transnational connections between postindustrial urban Muslim community and Muslims across the globe. Again, a fascinating narrative is captured among several key descriptions of the Ahmadiyya Movement in the 1920s. Again, Turner's description of this historical encounter between an immigrant presentation of Islam and the indigenous black community is tremendously insightful. Turner suggests that the Ahmadiyya Mission was very successful in forging a multicultural and multiracial movement in the heart of Chicago's South Side, one that was focused on using Islam as a means to confront the racial inequities confronting the black community. They had a monthly journal and grew exponentially within a short period of time. Far from marginal to the black community, the teaching and presence of the Ahmadiyya Movement, primarily led by Muslims from India, were tremendously influential in some of most influential Pan-Africanist movements of the day, including Marcus Garvey's UNIA. Turner sites one instance where over 20 of Garvey's UNIA members convert to Islam through the Ahmadiyya Movement.

These encounters between the Muslims from India and black pan-Africanists on Chicago's South Side had to be understood in the historical connect. That is in the wake of

one of the largest migrations to the United States and at a time when urbanism begins to emerge as the mode of life for people around the world. Moreover, it was also amid the decline of Western Europe Colonial hegemony and the coalescing of the nation state. It's in such a context that the leaders of the Ahmadiyya sect of Islam used to generate followers and support among indigenous black organizations. Thinking about how those appeals and rational would change or remain similar in the post-industrial context may help us to understand one facet of globalization's impact upon the cultural, racial and urban landscapes of our times.

Additionally, the history of Islam and the Be-Bop era is yet another point of relevance that Turner describes while discussing the intimate circles within which influential be-boppers, Jazz musicians and leading Muslims revolved. Some of these artists were greatly influenced by the Ahmadiyya and Moorish Science teachings and found innovative ways to integrate them into a genuinely African American aesthetic. This lays both an empirical and theoretical framework to engage in the explication of hip hop and Islam and my project will aspire to add an additional layer of sociological and theoretical complexity to the urban global/local development of that identity over the last 30 years.

Considering the legacy of hip hop's connection to the post-industrial ghetto space from which it emerged was an essential argument of Black Noise, Tricia Rose's seminal and leading work on hip hop. In Black Noise, Rose repeatedly argues that in order to understand the historical emergence of the subject, one must place an analysis firmly within the explicit context of post-industrial urban New York:

I intend to demonstrate the importance of locating hip hop culture within the context of deindustrialization...Worked out on the rusting urban core as a playground, hip hop transforms stray technological parts intended for cultural and industrial trash heaps into sources of pleasure and power...Hip Hop replicates and reimagines the experiences of urban life and symbolically appropriates urban space through sampling, attitude, dance, style and sound effect.(Rose, p.22)

Since the publication of Black Noise in 1994, a voluminous number of books, journal articles and essays have explored the multiple facets of hip hop as it spreads and grows to become one of the most popular sounds throughout much of the world. In developing upon the global trends of rap, Global Noise was published in 2001 with a focus on the multiple manifestations of global hip hop. In extolling much of this global manifestation of the musical and cultural genre as

increasingly more worthy of attention and analysis than American Hip Hop, Tony Mitchell posits the process of “hip hop indigenization” as a way to discern authentic expressions of localized identity and culture within this global trend:

For a sense of innovation, surprise, and musical substance in hip-hop culture and rap music, it is becoming increasingly necessary to look outside the USA...where strong local currents of hip hop indigenization have taken place. Models and idioms derived from the peak period of hip hop in the USA in the mid-to late 1980s have been combined in these countries with local musical idioms and vernaculars to produce excitingly distinctive syncretic manifestations of African Americans influences and local indigenous elements.(Mitchell, P. 3)

Among one of the chapters in Mitchell’s volume is a chapter by Ted Swedenburg, who explores the rise of Islamic hip hop in France and England. Swedenburg’s explores how European Muslims’ roles as leading hip hop activist and artists as been one of the “manifold responses” to a rising Islamophobia. Swedenburg also explores the links and distinction between European Muslim rappers and State-side groups.

An extremely sophisticated and analytical examination of urban space and the emergence of hip hop, was published recently from Wesleyan Press. Murray Forman’s “The Hood Comes First” provides an engaging and through interrogations of urban space in shaping the multiple facets of rap. In clear homage to Lefebvre’s dynamic analysis of urban space, Forman explores, multiple spatial terrains identified with rap and hip hop.

One such terrain is that of discursive space, through and upon which much of hip hop and rap culture get conveyed. Forman explores Michel de Certeau ideas to consider how the intersection of narrative and discursive space inscribe themselves in the psychological spatiality and actual practices of urban life:

Michel de Certeau’s emphasis on narrative as a crucial cultural element in the inscription and delimitation of boundaries offers insights as to how narrative space (stories and texts) and spatial narratives rendered in textual form operate in tandem. The narrative descriptions of tours and journeys, for instance, circulates into the social space of meanings, where they might , in turn informs people’s common practices. Over time, through our encounters with spatial narratives e

adopt a set of spatial dispositions, developing potential ways of being in relation to particular geographies or social setting. P 16

Following the instructive and insightful logic behind Forman's explication of De Certeau's reading of narrative's ability to delimit and inscribe spatial boundaries, throughout this project I posit that Islam's ubiquitous intersection with multiple hip hop narratives has made it an integral part of the hip hop ghetto landscape. While, simply one of many narratives the centrality of various references to Muslims and Islam throughout the history of hip hop, have rendered it one of the predominant trends in this narrative.

Islam's spatial configuration is often alluded to, through direct or indirect references to urban ghetto spaces clearly associated with the legacy and presence of Muslims and Islam. These references may range from a simple allusion to Halal Muslim Chinese restaurants by groups like the Fugees to the more overt spatial categorization of an entire section of the city as is in common among groups associated with Wu Tang Family and other Five-Percent influenced rappers that look to places like Brooklyn and Harlem as spatial representations of the Holy Muslim cities of Mecca and Medina. This dissertation project explores and posits such discursive connections as essential in producing a set of cosmopolitan virtues that speak to the multiple layers of global ghetto space.

- ***Research Design***

--Hypothesis and Problem Questions

My hypothesis' key assertion is that aspects of the Blackstone and hip hop encounters with Islam makes legible global dimensions of the contemporary ghetto and that these encounters illustrate the evolution of what I suggest is a *ghetto cosmopolitanism*. I would posit ghetto cosmopolitanism could work as an analytical category that helps to uncover global processes in peripheral spaces where "the global" gets enacted through various means. Such an analytic could allow us to deconstruct the often binary equations that get deployed by some social scientists and journalists to frame globalization analysis, particularly among the more marginal subjects of the world. In other words, ghetto cosmopolitanism could help to illuminate those moments in which variables otherwise considered hyper parochial and tribal become operational in producing counterintuitive global processes. Ghetto Cosmopolitanism does suggest that such processes could be empowering, as in instances where the marginalized urban subject transcends isolating

and often criminalizing conditions associated with poverty, racism and other oppressions to forge non-traditional networks across the globe while complicating notions of global civil society.

When considering the specifics of my dissertation project, the discussion of ghetto cosmopolitanism will hinge on the following set of questions: How does, if at all, the post-industrial ghetto contact of Islam with a black street gang and hip hop both reveal and contribute to larger processes of globalization? How do we reconcile notions of ghetto cosmopolitanism with the hyper-segregated and structurally disenfranchised space of the contemporary black ghetto and what are the implications of such counterintuitive claims? How does the intensely parochial emergence of a black street gang on Chicago's South Side or hip hop in the Bronx lend itself to a sociological exploration of globalizing processes and formations of alternative cosmopolitanisms? What role if any has Islam and Muslims had in shaping the emergence of an alternative cosmopolitanism through this space and how have these processes developed out of larger historical patterns associated with the ghetto and the African American Muslim experience?

-Research Methods

Throughout this project I plan to deploy a range of qualitative methods while acquiring data. Some of my research will use interviews, archival records and a type of historical ethnography that attempts to return to prominent sites associated with legacy of the Blackstones to interview older neighbors and residents in the area. Other more contemporary aspects of my project allow me to engage a wide array of research options that include in-depth interviews, participant-observation and email correspondence.

As it relates to the Hip Hop segment of my study, the parameters of my site will be defined by my engagement with the artists, fans and spaces within which Hip Hop gets collectively performed and received by some facet of the public. I will undoubtedly use my leverage as an activist/organizer with many Hip Hop artists across the country to secure interviews and request opportunities to spend time with artists during performances. Part of this research will include trips to Harlem and other urban areas across the country. I also plan to conduct a range of interviews with Arab Israelis and other Palestinian Hip Hop artists while attending various shows and concerts in Israel/Palestine.

Concerning the work around the Blackstone legacy, a number of interviews with former and current gang members along with archival data will anchor my Blackstone historical narrative. Two key sites provide direct ethnographic opportunities around the Blackstone legacy. The first, The Fort, is now more of a historical site notoriously associated with the Blackstones in

the mid-1980s and is the heart of modern day Bronzeville. The Fort was the headquarters and spiritual center for the El Rukns, the entity which had evolved out of the Blackstones and was an integral part of its larger legacy. The second is Mo Town, a space that still exists in some form, although far from the way it did during 1990s when it was one of the largest and arguably most cohesive gang territories on Chicago's South Side. Finally, I will be seeking access to Chicago's Cook County Jail to conduct interviews and spend time with former and current Blackstone detainees.

Over a decade of community work and activism provides an ongoing portal, albeit a complicated and conflicted one, into both of my research subjects and will be used over the next two years to acquire any additional data. I have adopted the insights of Michael Burawoy's "Extended Case Method" as an attempt to reconcile concerns about theory, methods and the often conflicted role of an activist/scholar. The Extended Case Method demands a reflective application of theory in executing any particular study as one way to avoid the pitfalls of a grounded methodology. As explained by Burawoy, the latter masks a set of theoretical presuppositions that are at work but not acknowledged by the researcher as opposed to the Extended Case Method which challenges the ethnographer to be cognizant about the intervention of theory from the outset. Therefore, through my literature review section I will attempt to be self-reflective about the set of theoretical insights I take into the field and remain critically aware of how these perspectives shape my acquisition and interpretation of the data.

While I don't presume to fully reconcile the tension endemic to the fate of any aspiring activist/scholar, I do embrace Burawoy's insights as one means of being critically reflective throughout my work. For instance, instead of assuming that most Blackstones interact with me as some type of neutral observer, I attempt to be fully aware of how my interaction with them as a Muslim of Palestinian origin who is actively engaged in community organizing, shapes or curtails certain language and behavior. Such interaction may prevent access to certain data but can also enable me a vantage point to acquire other observations that could shed a particular light on one facet of a larger story. This form of tenuous and often anxiety ridden field work, does not occlude an informative and engaging account of any given social reality but simply forces the researcher to be forthright with complex issues of power and narrative in rendering the story of any research subjects, particularly when they belong to disenfranchised segments of society.

-Periodization Explanation

In conducting this research, I will make an argument to isolate three historical periods in the intersection of Islam with the Blackstone legacy and Hip Hop in the post-industrial ghetto to ultimately compare and contrast a distinct set of developments in both cases over the last 35 years. The first period will begin in the late 1960s and end in the late 80s; the second period will mostly focus on the early to late 90s; and the third will cover the most contemporary period.

The rationale behind dividing the post-industrial ghetto into three distinct periods is driven in part by the methodological and theoretical specificity of my project and is greatly informed by the post-industrial ghetto analysis of the aforementioned theorists. I also hope to explore and apply the possibilities of considering any insights this historical framework may hold for concomitant post-industrial ghetto phenomenon. Listed below are a brief set of descriptions that hypothesize a relationship between these three post-industrial ghetto periods with my dissertation case studies. For each of those periods I will entertain some of the underlying and broader trends while identifying specific implications for Islam's encounter with the Stones and Hip Hop during those years.

1) 1st Period 1973-1989 *Evolution of a New Ghetto*

Contextual Backdrop

As stated earlier in the literature review this is the period in which the ghetto begins to look like much of what the contemporary urban ghetto elicits in the public imagination. The association with Islam during this period grows out of a localized context of black power and a struggle against the mainstream. This is in some senses a continuation of an earlier encounter between the black community and a proto-Muslim identity. It is this identity that becomes intimately associated with several of the emerging gang structures, which fashion themselves as more ideal minded community entities deeply infused within the cultural and political lexicon of black America.

Blackstone Legacy

This period coincides with the first wide-scale incorporation of Islamic teachings and principles into the structure and daily functions of the Blackstones. It's during this period that the Blackstones evolve into the El Rukns and emerge as a powerhouse entity with clear

allusions and connections to a global identity. Buildings are purchases throughout Chicago's South Side and highly ornate ceremonies are incorporated into the Blackstone teachings.

Hip Hop

The golden era of hip hop is also a time when early pioneers in the medium freely and liberally incorporate a broad range of Islamic teachings and principles. Greatly influenced by the Five Percent Nation and other unorthodox teachings, many emcees use a highly specific and localized interpretation of Islam as a vehicle to convey social, political and cultural messages.

2) Second Period 1990-1999: *Recognizing the Global Reach*

Contextual Backdrop

Nothing so clearly reveals the often conflicted rise of a global society then the phenomenal global reach of hip hop during this period. Hip hop goes from a very localized and parochial ghetto phenomenon to spilling into every corner of the world as a result of the many modes of technological, economic and cultural globalization.

Blackstone Legacy

In the wake of allegations that connections and trips to Libya were part of a money laundering and terrorist plot, federal agents siege the El Rukn's main headquarters and the global reach of the Blackstone legacy is at the heart of the federal agent's case. The Blackstones had transformed themselves from a local urban street entity into an organization that was symbolically and spatially connected to a larger global community. More specifically this period also coincides with the rise and fall of Mo Town, the new Blackstone stronghold, emerging in the wake of the El Rukn's federal take down. The presence of an increasingly transnational group of Palestinian Blackstones during this period also helps to highlight just how global the reach of the Blackstones actually becomes.

Hip Hop

The global industry around hip hop begins to take shape as the sounds and appeal of the medium begin to permeate every corner of the globe. The Muslim influence and Islamic sensibilities in hip hop are undeniable during the early part of this period, when the most

sought after hip hop groups and personalities very publicly espouse some form of Muslim sentiment or beliefs. Later in the decade another crop of Muslim artists very committed to keeping hip hop on its less commercial course become intimately associated with “the underground.” Muslim personalities world over begin to identify with this movement as a way of preserving what they often argue is the more righteous and socially conscious foundation of Hip Hop.

- 3) Third phase-2000-: *Implications of a Global Ghetto Reality*

Contextual Backdrop

The events of September 11th bring into stark relief the very interdependent world we all inhabit. Within Hip Hop this type of interdependence and connectedness is underscored by how it has been appropriated by many disenfranchised segments of urban society across the world as a medium to explore and articulate their own particular aspirations and grievances. Moreover, transnational collaboration between various hip hop activists and artists regularly take place and it becomes common to find young b-boys from Chicago’s South Side, for instance, participating in global hip hop conferences and competitions in urban centers across South American, Europe and Asia.

Blackstone Legacy

During this period the Blackstones become yet another consequence of a debilitating war on drugs and crime. Their strength, like that of most super gangs across major cities has eroded or been significantly reduced. Yet, at the same time, a hybrid identity emerges that synthesizing many previous incarnations of Islamic consciousness with an increasingly fluid relationship with a global Islam. The Blackstone Legacy once again, obtains significant attention during this period as local connections to a global Islam become a media obsession and while oversimplified and poorly understood, the Blackstone legacy is a fascinating component of that story.

Hip Hop

Muslim Hip Hop artists and activists emerge with a distinct agenda to organize themselves across the world. They often refer to American urban realities within the context of localized spaces in European and Middle Eastern cities in their rhymes and in constructing agendas. In

Europe, it's primarily second generation Muslim immigrants who are in the midst of framing their struggles within the context of black American discourse and who have collaborated with a range of leading underground Hip Hop artists to shape an indigenous European Muslims framework infused with black urban sensibilities. It is also during this period that much of the underground Hip Hop movement coalesces around leading Muslim emcees and groups.

- ***Dissertation Outline***

Part I) Introduction

The Global Ghetto, Islam and Cosmopolitanism

- Posing the core questions
- Story of the Blackstones, Hip Hop and Islam in the Ghetto
- This story in regards to the contemporary focus on Muslims and Islam in the West

Chapter 1: Framing the central questions: Literature Review

- Process of connecting disparate literatures
- Exploring the ghetto/slum
- Reviewing the literature around Muslims and Islam in Urban America
- Framing the globalization, cosmopolitanism and hybrid identity literature.

Chapter 2: Researching the global in the ghetto: Methods

- Describing various qualitative methods deployed throughout the study-
- Issues of Reflectivity: Community Organizer, participant and observer tension
- Reflection on Buravoy's "Extended Case Method"

Chapter 3: Alternative Cosmopolitanisms & Hybrid Identities: Hypotheses

- Globalization and the reemergence of Zorbaugh's Slum/Ghetto based Cosmopolitanism
- Hyper-parochial locations producing global connections and flows

Chapter 4: The Post-1960s New Ghetto Argument: Positing three Historical Periods

- Rationale for the three phases in relationship to larger theory and specific research
- First phase-1970-1989: Evolution of a New Ghetto
- Second phase-1990s: Recognizing the Global Reach
- Third phase-2000-: Implications of a Global Ghetto Reality

Part II) Islam and the Blackstone Legacy

Chapter 5: The first phase-1973-1989

- Beginning of the El Rukns
- From the Moorish Koran to the Muslim Quran
- Libya Connection
- The rise and fall of the Fort

Chapter 6: The second phase-1990s

- Rise of Mo Town and the Prince

- Palestinian Mos
- Transnational Connections

Chapter 7: The third phase-1998-

- Amalgamation of all Traditions: Recreating a narrative
- Emergence of a Hybrid Muslim/Blackstone-ElRukn identity
- Post 9/11 Scrutiny of the Stone legacy & Islam

Part III) Islam and Hip Hop

Chapter 8: The first phase-1973-1989

- H. Rap Brown and Malcom X-within Hip Hop
- Inception of Hip Hop in South Bronx
- Early Muslim-Islamic Influences/Sensibility

Chapter 9: The second phase-1990s

- Emergence of Seminal and Mainstream Muslim Artists
- Islam & Music Videos-Eric B and Raheem
- Dominance of 5 Percent Imagery

Chapter 10: The third phase-1998-

- New transnational Hip Hop artists & Islam
- Global Collaborations/Connections
- Muslim & Hip Hop in the wake of 9/11

Part IV) The Case for a Global Ghetto: Discussion

Chapter 11: Ghetto Cosmopolitanism & A New Global Provincialism

- Alternative forms of cosmopolitanism emerging through these narratives
- Making the Global Legible
- New global provincialism-
- A Global Soul Searching for Muslim Identity -

Chapter 12: Post 9/11 Reflections

- Global and Muslim identities-Become further suspect
- Ghetto Cosmopolitanism-shields Muslims from abuse
- Implications of the pros/cons of Islam in the Global Ghetto

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