



The Faces of Contemporary Islam:

Fresh Perspectives on Theory,
Practice, and Foreign Policy

Conference Report

November 18, 2008, Washington, DC

Women's Foreign Policy Group

*The WFPG is grateful to the Carnegie Corporation of New York for its generous support
of the Carnegie Scholars Islam Conference.*



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About the Carnegie Corporation of New York:

Carnegie Corporation of New York was created by Andrew Carnegie in 1911 to promote "the advancement and diffusion of knowledge and understanding." Under Carnegie's will, grants must benefit the people of the United States, although up to 7.4 percent of the funds may be used for the same purpose in countries that are or have been members of the British Commonwealth, with a current emphasis on Commonwealth Africa. As a grantmaking foundation, the Corporation seeks to carry out Carnegie's vision of philanthropy, which he said should aim "to do real and permanent good in this world."

Since 1999, the Carnegie Scholars Program has been supporting individual scholars to conduct research that extends the boundaries of its grant-making priorities. For the last few years, the Scholars Program focused on supporting scholars whose research relates to intellectual and policy developments in Islam and Muslim communities. The overall aim is to build a critical mass of thoughtful and original scholarship in order to add to our fund of knowledge regarding Islam as a religion as well as the cultures and civilizations of Muslim societies and communities, both in the US and abroad. Recognizing that in order for ideas to influence society they must be widely communicated to a variety of audiences, the fellowship emphasizes the communication of scholarly research beyond the academic community to policymakers and the public. The program annually awards up to 20 fellowships for a period of one to two years. At the end of the fellowship period, Scholars will submit a written report along with books or manuscripts prepared as a result of the Corporation's support. For more information on the Carnegie Corporation and their Scholars Program, please visit www.carnegie.org.

About the Women's Foreign Policy Group:

The Women's Foreign Policy Group (WFPG) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, educational membership organization that promotes global engagement and the leadership, visibility and participation of women in international affairs. The WFPG's in-depth global issues programs feature women leaders and highlight their contributions. The organization also hosts mentoring activities to promote the next generation of leaders. The WFPG partners with many foreign policy organizations and is a key player in broadening the constituency for international affairs, bringing together participants from across disciplines, and linking professionals domestically and internationally.

The WFPG hosts numerous global issues programs with women leaders and experts, including senior-level UN and government officials, diplomats, academics, and prominent journalists. Each year the WFPG also highlights women's leadership in international affairs at its annual UN Study Visit in New York and its annual luncheon in Washington, DC. Speakers have included: President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia, Secretaries of State Condoleezza Rice and Madeleine Albright, Senators Hillary Rodham Clinton and Kay Bailey Hutchison, Deputy Secretary General Asha-Rose Migiro and World Food Programme Executive Director Josette Sheeran. For more information on the WFPG please visit www.wfpg.org.

About the WFPG's Carnegie Scholar Islam Program Series:

The WFPG's Carnegie Scholar Islam Program Series, which was launched in 2005, brings together scholars with leaders from across the international affairs community for an in-depth exchange to increase awareness and understanding of Islam through highlighting the work of the scholars. For full transcripts of all WFPG Carnegie Scholar Islam Program Series events and the podcast of this conference, please visit www.wfpg.org.

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On November 18, 2008, the Women's Foreign Policy Group held a conference on "The Faces of Contemporary Islam: Fresh Perspectives on Theory, Practice, and Foreign Policy" at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington, DC. The conference, supported by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, focused on the diversity and complexity of Islam and on ways to promote a better understanding between the Muslim world and the West. Eight Carnegie scholars explored key issues including the compatibility of Islam and democracy, the myths and realities regarding women's rights, policies and attitudes toward Muslims in Europe, media coverage of Islam, and US-Muslim relations. The conference also featured two keynote speakers, who were instrumental in connecting the scholars' work to pressing foreign policy issues: Professor John Esposito, Founding Director of Georgetown University's Prince Alwaleed bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding and H.E. Dr. Hussein Hassouna, Arab League Ambassador to the US.

The in-depth, nuanced presentations of all the speakers addressed realities facing the majority of Muslims that do not receive sufficient attention in the West. The speakers cited examples from history, polls, and their own research to contradict pervasive myths, stereotypes, and misconceptions prevalent in the West. In addition, analysis of situations facing Muslims across Europe and of the American and British media's coverage of Islam helped to enhance understanding of today's realities.

Scholars presented historical and contemporary examples of the compatibility of Islam and democracy to address whether the two can successfully function together. Asma Afsaruddin pointed out that there was once similar skepticism of Christianity's compatibility with democracy, and that in the case of Islam, the democratic principles of consultation, consent, and consensus – which have roots in the Quran and traditional Muslim practices – provide the building blocks for Islamic democracy. Elizabeth Thompson recounted the beginnings of an Arab democracy in 1920 in Damascus that included a constitutional assembly, a democratic constitution, and a burgeoning women's suffrage movement, which was derailed by an impending French invasion. Elora Shehabuddin criticized Western disregard for Islamic history and politics and rejected the concept of "the moderate Muslim," terming it a creation of think tanks, media and popular memoirs which are not representative of Muslims, especially women. Alternatively she urged the West to view the lives of Muslims – both as individuals and as groups, states, and ideologies – in contemporary and historical context.

Lila Abu-Lughod, along with the other speakers, called on the Western media to end the rampant and dangerous stereotyping of Muslim women as prisoners of culture and faith and for the media to include the diverse voices of Muslim women. Madhavi Sunder highlighted the work of Muslim women reformers across the world, which she termed, the "new enlightenment." She explained how these grassroots movements have made unprecedented strides promoting women's rights and supporting democracy and equality from within the spheres of Islamic culture and religion. Speaking about the situation of women in her native Iran, Farzaneh Milani lamented the West's ignorance of Iran's complexity, the role women are playing in changing the country, and all the changes occurring for women outside the political arena. For example, she pointed out that books by Iranian women cultural icons go largely unread in the West, while books promoting the image of Iranian women as prisoners regularly make *The New York Times* best-seller list.

John Bowen cautioned against generalizing about European attitudes and policies towards Muslims. He went on to explain that the unique relationship that each country has with their Muslim populations is shaped by historical colonial ties, transnational pathways of Muslims from their countries of origin, and the particular opportunity structures. Susan Moeller discussed the impact that the US and UK media's "broad brush" coverage of Islam has had on shaping and reinforcing Western misconceptions. In particular, she discussed the effect three pivotal issues of media coverage – audience, language, and content – have on attitudes and policies.

Keynote speaker John Esposito discussed the causes of both Western and the Muslim misperceptions, which have hindered US-Muslim relations and analyzed what Muslims and Americans really think based on recent polls. Luncheon speaker, Ambassador Hussein Hassouna, emphasized the need for the US to understand that while Muslims are linked by their faith, they are otherwise quite diverse. Esposito pointed out that most Muslims want democracy that reflects religious values and view sharia as a source of law. Both speakers agreed that the essential rift between the Muslim world and the West is not over religion or culture, but over differences on foreign policy, particularly over a prevalent view among Muslims of the US government's double standard towards the Muslim world. Both men view the arrival of a new administration as an opportunity to improve US-Muslim relations and promote understanding through a greater emphasis on diplomacy and dialogue.

By providing an opportunity for scholars and foreign policy practitioners to engage in a dialogue and discuss these important aspects of contemporary Islam in depth, the conference served as an important step in promoting a better understanding of the Muslim world.

II. CONFERENCE PROGRAM

MORNING KEYNOTE ADDRESS: WHO SPEAKS FOR ISLAM? LETTER TO PRESIDENT-ELECT OBAMA

John L. Esposito, Professor and Founding Director of the Prince Alwaleed bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University

Moderator: **Gail Leftwich Kitch**, Vice Chair, Women's Foreign Policy Group Board

LUNCHEON KEYNOTE ADDRESS: THE US AND THE MUSLIM WORLD

H.E. Dr. Hussein Hassouna, Ambassador of the League of Arab States to the United States

Moderator: **Judy Woodruff**, Senior Correspondent, *The News Hour with Jim Lehrer*

PANEL 1: THE COMPATIBILITY OF ISLAM AND DEMOCRACY

Asma Afsaruddin, University of Notre Dame

2005 Carnegie Scholar: *Striving in the Path of God: Discursive Traditions on Jihad and the Cult of Martyrdom*

Elizabeth Thompson, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars

2005 Carnegie Scholar: *Seeking Justice in the Modern Middle East*

Elora Shehabuddin, Rice University

2006 Carnegie Scholar: *Women at the Muslim Center: Islamist Ideals and Democratic Exigencies*

Moderator: **Gail Leftwich Kitch**, Vice Chair, Women's Foreign Policy Group Board

PANEL 2: EUROPEAN POLICIES AND ATTITUDES ON ISLAM

John Bowen, Washington University in St. Louis

2005 Carnegie Scholar: *Shaping French Islam*

Susan Moeller, International Center for Media and the Public Agenda, University of Maryland

2008 Carnegie Scholar: *How Media Report on the Intersection of Islam and Terrorism*

Moderator: **Shireen Hunter**, Visiting Professor, Prince Alwaleed bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University

PANEL 3: INTERPRETATIONS OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND REALITIES FOR MUSLIM WOMEN

Lila Abu-Lughod, Columbia University

2007 Carnegie Scholar: *The Ethics and Politics of Muslim Women's Rights in an International Field*

Madhavi Sunder, University of California at Davis

2006 Carnegie Scholar: *The New Enlightenment: How Muslim Women are Bringing Religion and Culture Out of the Dark Ages*

Farzaneh Milani, University of Virginia

2006 Carnegie Scholar: *Re-mapping the Cultural Geography of Iran: Islam, Woman, and Mobility*

Moderator: **Patricia Ellis**, President, Women's Foreign Policy Group

III. KEYNOTE SPEECHES AND PANELS

A. KEYNOTE ADDRESS:

WHO SPEAKS FOR ISLAM? LETTER TO PRESIDENT-ELECT OBAMA



In his address, Georgetown University **Professor John L. Esposito** discussed what the incoming Obama Administration can do to improve US relations with the Muslim world. Esposito began by explaining a dual distortion: while there is a perception among many Americans that the US is engaged in a global war on terrorism, there is a perception in many parts of the Muslim world that the West is waging a war on Islam. He attributed much of the post-9/11 difficulties in US-Muslim relations to the dominant voices on both sides: neocons, the Christian right, authoritarian Muslim regimes, and Muslim extremists. Professor Esposito also noted that there has been an ongoing battle of Western expert opinion regarding policy towards the Muslim world, making it hard for the average citizen to know who or what to believe. In addition, by capturing attention and headlines, the voices of extremists and terrorists have come to represent the identity and goals of Muslims to the West. Not surprisingly, there is a general feeling in the West that the Muslim world hates Americans. According to Esposito, the lack of communication between the two sides has not helped: “We consistently have people talking about *them* rather than going directly to *them*.” As Esposito explains in his recent book, *Who Speaks for Islam: What a Billion Muslims Really Think*, Americans do not have an accurate picture of how the majority of Muslims feel about the US. After analyzing data from the recent and extensive Gallup and Pew polling of Muslims, Esposito concluded that for Muslims the primary area of concern about the US is not religion or culture, but foreign policy.

Specifically, the polls revealed that most Muslims, rather than hating Americans, actually admire them for their technology, expertise, knowledge, and rule of law, and that the anti-Americanism that exists among Muslims stems from the perception that the US is not living up to its principles and values. Professor Esposito also pointed out that while there is admiration for the US, most Muslims deeply value their religion and culture and have no desire to follow the secular Western paradigm. He explained that this Muslim majority wants democracy that includes religious values and that they also “want sharia to be a source” – though not “the source” – of law. Additionally, while most individuals in the Muslim world want better relations with the West, when considering foreign policy, they distinguish between the US and the UK on one hand, and France, Germany, and Canada on the other. Esposito explained that the polling revealed that the majority of Muslims feel that the US maintains a double standard of promoting democracy and human rights while supporting authoritarian regimes. He noted that this is not a new feature of US foreign policy, but that it continues to undermine our moral stature and credibility. It is not surprising then that the majority of responses from Muslims on how the US can improve its relations with the Muslim world speak of the need for US policies that demonstrate more respect for Islam and treat Muslims as equals rather than as inferiors.

While polling showed that anti-Americanism in the Muslim world is primarily linked to US policies, polls of the American public revealed a widespread anti-Muslim sentiment. Significant percentages of Americans believe that the religion of Islam is the source of the problem in US-Muslim relations. When asked about improving relations, polls show that majorities on both sides support actions that would promote better understanding, such as educational exchanges. Esposito pointed out that according to the polls, “Americans stop there. Foreign policy is not on their window.” He explained that it is vital for the US to do “more than the PR” if it is to reach the 7% of Muslims that he sees identified by the polling as potential radicals. According to Esposito, the polling revealed that these individuals are not violent, nor more religious than other Muslims, but they are better off economically than most Muslims and have been educated in an international environment. He explained that while this 7% believes in democracy and relations with the West, they are nevertheless more cynical than other Muslims and see a Western invasion and dominance in the political, military, and cultural arenas.

Professor Esposito was hopeful that the Obama Administration will pursue a foreign policy agenda that aims to limit the credibility of terrorists by emphasizing diplomacy along with economic, educational, and technological development, over military response. Yet, while Esposito believes that Obama will be an international president, he expressed concern about how the new administration will manage US relations with the Arab and Muslim worlds. He pointed out that the key things to watch will be who Obama chooses as his advisors on the Middle East and the Muslim world, as well as how the new president handles the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

B. LUNCHEON KEYNOTE ADDRESS: THE US AND THE MUSLIM WORLD



In his luncheon address and the interview that followed with The News Hour's Judy Woodruff, **Ambassador Hussein Hassouna**, Arab League Ambassador to the US, discussed US-Muslim relations from the perspective of the Muslim world. His presentation linked the Carnegie scholars' in-depth analysis of contemporary Islam with the current foreign policy issues focused on by Professor Esposito. Ambassador Hassouna echoed the scholars' sentiments on the lack of understanding between the US and the Muslim world, and suggested that the West should understand that the Muslim world is "a mosaic" composed of diverse people who, while sharing a faith, have different institutions and histories. He also noted that the average American is unaware that not all Arabs are Muslims and that not all Muslims are Arabs, citing Indonesian and Iranian Muslims as examples. The Ambassador also expressed the importance of understanding the ongoing clashes between

the conservatives and modernists and between different sects, which he added, have sadly been exploited by politicians for political purposes.

Ambassador Hassouna also discussed the devastating effect of 9/11 on US relations with the Muslim world and noted that this event revealed, not just extremist elements, but also the multi-layered view most Muslims have of the US. As Professor Esposito pointed out, analysis of polling data indicates that most Muslims, while admiring the US for being an open and uniquely tolerant society, do not agree with – and often question the fairness of – US policies. Additionally, while 9/11 encouraged the belief of a clash between the two cultures, Ambassador Hassouna asserted that the only real clash is between extremists on both sides and that both the Muslim and Western mainstream are moderate and want to co-exist. The Ambassador also considered 9/11 to be a wake-up call for all people to come together to overcome the root causes of terrorism and promote better understanding between the West and the Muslim world.

The Ambassador suggested that with the new administration there is an opportunity to improve the way that the US engages with the Muslim world. He expressed his hope that the incoming administration will listen to the concerns and aspirations of the Muslim world and that the US will offer more assistance to combat societal problems, including poverty, illiteracy, and despair. In doing so, he believes the US will help to overcome another tremendous challenge for itself and for the world at large: the recruitment of youth by extremists.

Ambassador Hassouna also expressed a desire for the US to support the emergence of democracy in the Muslim world. Rather than attempting to swiftly impose its own brand of democracy, the US, he explained, should recognize that democracy can only emerge at a country's own pace and rate of development. For example, in reference to the political participation of Arab women, Ambassador Hassouna acknowledged that while political participation has not reached a very high level, the empowerment of women is growing and needs encouragement.

The Ambassador advised that during its first year, the Obama Administration should work towards finding a just and lasting settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The Ambassador acknowledged that high priority should be given to Iraq and Afghanistan, but that the primary focus should be the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which although complex, has a solution. He emphasized that a resolution would require assistance from the US as an "honest broker" and should include active involvement of a special envoy, the Secretary of State, and eventually the full backing of the President. He also spoke about the general expectation that the new administration would place a greater emphasis on multilateral approaches and do a better job of abiding by international laws and standards. The Ambassador added that the election of Barack Obama gave hope to the world in general and that "... there is a kind of sympathy among Muslims ... towards him" because of "his Muslim roots and his upbringing in Indonesia."

Ambassador Hassouna concluded by saying that while significant challenges face US-Muslim relations, there are many opportunities to promote a better understanding through dialogue, education, cultural exchange, and development assistance, as well as through working with the Arab countries to resolve the Palestinian issue, which he says, "... lies deep in the conscience of the Muslim world."

C. PANEL 1:

THE COMPATIBILITY OF ISLAM AND DEMOCRACY



One of the most controversial issues in Islam today is whether – and if so, how – Islam is compatible with democracy. To address this, **Professor Asma Afsaruddin** spoke about a new paradigm for government arising in the Muslim world: Islamic democracy. In response to critics who label Islamic democracy an oxymoron, she pointed to Turkey and the election of Abdullah Gul as “a glistening example of the compatibility between Islam and democracy,” explaining how the compatibility of Christianity and democracy was once similarly questioned and deemed unconvincing up to the mid-twentieth century. Most importantly, she pointed out that just as the Christian political tradition has roots in the democratic principles of that religion, Muslim thinkers believe the Islamic democratic paradigm “can draw on certain internal resources to lay a theoretical ground for the promotion of what constitutes democratic ideals today.”

According to Afsaruddin, the practices of consultation, consent, and consensus – what she called the “three C’s” – have been standard among Muslims since ancient times and are the building blocks of the democratic paradigm within Islam. The first “C” is consultation – *shura* in Arabic – and stands for consultative decision-making rooted in the practice of the prophet Muhammad. Afsaruddin noted that for liberal and modernist Muslims, *shura* means that the only kind of government Islam permits is one which is representative, accountable, and upholds justice and equitable treatment for all citizens. The second “C” is consent – *bay’ah* in Arabic – and describes the important concept of giving one’s explicit or tacit allegiance to specific individuals and being willing to be governed by them. The third “C” is consensus – *ijma* in Arabic – and underscores an inherently democratic impulse in Islam, which is rooted in consultative and collective decision-making and the custom of building a broad base to legitimize key political decisions. Professor Afsaruddin acknowledged that the “three C’s” are not being fully applied in most Muslim-majority countries and expressed hope for an alliance between religion and democracy that would allow for religious and moral values to reinforce democracy as a consultative, accountable form of government. She added that this alliance would require, as it does in the West, continual and open negotiation to ensure a positive symbiotic relationship appropriate to its time and place.

Professor Afsaruddin also discussed the recent wide-ranging polls which have revealed that most Muslims desire democratic governments that respect religious values and feel that sharia and the practice of democracy are compatible. Afsaruddin recommended addressing the issue of compatibility head-on to allay the fear that democracy will threaten religious values and she explained that doing so would “pull the rug out from under various anti-democratic elements.”

Professor Afsaruddin also pointed out two misguided assumptions that make “the selling of liberal democracy much harder” in the Muslim world: a belief in what she refers to as “democratic absolutism,” which claims that democracies must be secular and banish religion from the public sphere, and a belief that separating religion and politics would violate a presumed divine commandment of Islam. In calling for strict secularization, Afsaruddin explained that “democratic absolutism” only defines “one recipe for democracy” and belief in it as the only option fails to take into account the many successful democracies in the world with varying degrees of secularism. She explained that the second assumption – which suggests that in Islam “religion and politics are forever joined at the hip” – comes from an ahistorical and uncontextualized reading of Islamic political thought. Afsaruddin noted that there is no evidence in early sources or in the history of the Muslim world that government should be a realization of a religious imperative or that there is a divinely mandated form of government. She asserted that any system of government that adequately reflects the Quranic prescription of consultative and collective decision-making would be deemed acceptable in the Islamic framework.



Professor Elizabeth Thompson described how, before the French invasion of 1920, King Feisal of Syria was inspired by the idea that World War I was won in the name of democracy. King Feisal, “in the spirit of the moment,” called together a constitutional congress that consisted of Arabs from many regions in the Middle East, including Lebanon, Palestine, Transjordan, Egypt, and Iraq. Additionally President Woodrow Wilson – who Thompson likened to President Barack Obama as “the rock star of his age” – was seen internationally as a hero of the victory. Wilson’s post-war speeches promoting the right of all free nations to self-government were published in Arab newspapers and helped rally support for democracy in the region.

According to Professor Thompson, the key lesson to take from this story of a rally for democracy in the Middle East is that the impetus for this form of government came from within Muslim society, not from Western powers. Furthermore, the West, which regards itself as a promoter of

democracy and human rights, has often undermined these causes. She cited the example of how France contributed to the downfall of a burgeoning women’s suffrage movement in 1920 in Damascus: the constitutional congress was facing the impending invasion of the French into Damascus precisely at the moment when the question of giving women the right to vote was being addressed. Thompson recounted the concerns of men at the time regarding their authority on all levels: “if women went off to vote, would they obey their husbands?” She noted that these men “had to worry that they would not even be able to rule themselves; that they would not be given the dignity proclaimed by Wilson of self-determination.” Considering this situation, the president of the constitutional congress, Rashid Rida, felt it necessary to appease the opposition party – with its backing of popular groups who were against women’s suffrage – and therefore set aside the vote on the issue during that precarious time. The French invasion and occupation of 1920 also left a legacy of great division between Islam and the West and propagated the idea that Islam and democracy are somehow incompatible. Additionally, according to Thompson, the French occupiers – like other foreign occupiers, including the US in Iraq and Afghanistan – found that they had to rule through intermediaries, such as landowners, tribal chiefs, or religious figures who look stable and can control the population. While such intermediaries are necessary, they are often anti-democratic. Yet, Professor Thompson pointed out that just as the twentieth century’s foreign occupations live on in the memory of many Arabs, so does the constitutional congress of 1920 as well as the words of President Wilson, promoting the right to self-determination and democracy for all free countries.



Professor Elora Shehabuddin also lamented the significant ignorance of Islamic history and politics in the West and discussed the many misconceptions and generalizations made about Muslims – and particularly Muslim women – today. She rejected the concept of “the moderate Muslim,” terming it a creation of think tanks, media and popular memoirs which are not representative of Muslims, especially women. Alternatively she urged the West to view the lives of Muslims – both as individuals and as groups, states and ideologies – in a contemporary and historical context.

Shehabuddin pointed out that popular novels and memoirs, such as those by Ayaan Hirsi Ali and Irshad Manji, blame abuse and injustice on Islamic faith and culture while maintaining largely uncritical views of Christianity, Judaism, and Western culture. She explained that

because many in the West consider these books to be representative of the Muslim world – rather than personal stories – they fail to see the problems facing the majority of Muslim women. Specifically, many of these authors attack the treatment of women in Muslim countries while unilaterally celebrating gender equality in the West. Moreover, a significant number of Western readers consider these authors to be authorities on Islam, Muslim women, and feminism, despite their lack of attention to context and history. The popularity of these books thus perpetuates Islamophobia and complacency in regard to intolerance.

In contrast to the message of these books, Shehabuddin explained that the large numbers of Muslim men and women struggling for change do not consider Islam to be the source of their problems. She noted that many Muslim women are working through secular and Islamic organizations to fight unjust interpretations of the Quran as well as unjust secular laws. She went on to name a handful of organizations and individuals that – while largely ignored by the US government and media – have made great strides in fighting injustice, such as the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA). RAWA openly criticized US plans to bomb Afghanistan on the grounds that they would increase the suffering of Afghan women. Unlike the bestselling authors and speakers of Muslim origin familiar to the West, these women, she noted, include the US and Israel in their criticism and therefore do not fit the Western profile of the “moderate Muslim.” Thus, while Islam and democracy may indeed be compatible, the individuals who form and support the Muslim world’s future democracies may “hold views on women, Israel, and US foreign policy that confound us.” Rather than turning away from Muslims who do not fit the mold, Professor Shehabuddin implored the US media and government to understand that such critiques of unjust policies are vital to all democracies and their voices need to be heard too.



Panelists with Moderator Gail Leftwich Kitch

D. PANEL 2:

EUROPEAN POLICIES AND ATTITUDES ON ISLAM



As inaccurate as it is to make broad generalizations about the Muslim world it would be equally misleading, as **Professor John Bowen** explained, to make sweeping statements about attitudes and policies towards Muslims in Europe. European countries vary widely in their experience with Muslim populations: some have been home to Muslims for generations, others have a colonial legacy in Muslim countries, and some are experiencing Muslim immigration as a relatively new phenomenon. Western Europe's colonial ventures and the subsequent patterns of Muslim labor migrations after WWII have greatly influenced attitudes and policies in the region. The 1980s saw a rise in Muslims identifying themselves first as Muslims rather than immigrants from North Africa, West Africa, or South Asia. In the 1990s and 2000s Muslims in Europe began working with governments and policymakers across Europe to find ways for Muslims and Europeans to mutually adapt. This has led to new and creative thinking about legal systems, schooling, and the construction of mosques.

In his overview of Europe, Bowen discussed how the assimilation of Muslims into specific European countries is influenced by the distinct pathway from their country of origin as well as the particular structure of opportunity they find in their European country. Transnational pathways and opportunity structures, which depend on the particular country's connections to its Muslim population, have resulted in very different ways of building institutions and thinking about Islam. In the case of the UK, villages found in districts of India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh have been virtually transplanted into some British neighborhoods. During the 1960s and 1970s, these distinct local communities coincided with the particular opportunity structure in the UK that entailed aiding ethnic associations on the local level and thus enabling these Muslim communities to function successfully. By the time government aid was pulled back in the 1980s the pattern of operating locally was firmly in place and enabled these established local groups, including mosques, to flourish. The focus on local control led to the rise of sharia councils in the UK, which provide mediation on issues relating to marriage, divorce, finance, and business. Bowen pointed out that these councils take on demands from women seeking Islamic divorces and "have a certain degree of legitimacy because of these pathways that have been laid down, with local control and reference to the transnational world from which people have come."

In France, the intersection of transnational paths and the country's opportunity structure also plays an important role in shaping its Muslim community. France's current structure of opportunity is rooted in broad national organizations that play down community differences. Many French Muslims who came from Algeria were part of a circular migration from Algeria to France – where there was factory work available – and then back to Algeria. Bowen noted that the majority of Muslims in France came from North Africa, which is free of the strong theological differences that characterize South Asia. Due to this "historical accident" mosques in France, unlike their counterparts in the UK, tend to be multiethnic. Additionally, because there are not as many community differences, Islamic groups in France participate on the national level more than their UK counterparts. Also unlike the UK, France does not permit sharia councils due to its low tolerance for public displays of religious or ethnic identity. However, Bowen pointed out that the country gives serious thought to ways in which French legal practices and Islamic practices can find equivalences. For example, there is a question of whether a marriage in city hall can be considered an Islamic marriage.

In the Netherlands, policies fostering an emphasis on ethnic divisions have prevented true adaptation and integration of Muslims. Additionally, unlike the UK or France, the Netherlands lacks a colonial legacy connecting it to its Muslim population's countries of origin. This absence – combined with the last legs of a policy of "pillarization" whereby the country's different ethnic, religious, and social groups were supported in the creation and maintenance of their own schools, religious organizations, and political parties – gave the Dutch Muslim community access to education in their own language and to their own cultural and social institutions. Each ethnic group – such as the Turks and Moroccans who make up the majority of Dutch Muslims – has occupied its own pillar, but incidents, such as the assassination of filmmaker Theo van Gogh, have led the Dutch to rethink having a policy based on separation.

Professor Bowen also discussed Germany and the country's large number of Turkish Muslim immigrants, many of whom arrived as guest workers over a generation ago. He explained that the German situation for Muslims has been shaped by the country's sponsorship of churches and religious groups as public entities and by the changing view of citizenship and ethnicity in its society. Germany's Turkish Muslims have strong ties back to the Turkish government and to the Milli Görüş, a large European organization that helps build mosques. These ties, as well as the older German view that citizenship should be defined by ethnicity, have led the Muslim community to keep strong ties with its national origins. Bowen cited the example of Turkish television programs in Germany that target Turkish audiences in Germany and

Turkey equally. He also pointed out that the recent election of a Turkish politician to lead Germany's Green party illustrates how Turks are becoming increasingly incorporated in the country's broader political structures.

The Scandinavian countries, Professor Bowen explained, are at "the epicenter of controversy about toleration" and have a unique dynamic regarding their Muslim populations due to the recent labor migration, which was quickly followed by refugees and asylum seekers. The region's unique migration pattern reveals that a high percentage of Muslims in Scandinavia plan to return to their native land and thus have little incentive to integrate themselves into the society. Bowen noted that despite the welcoming nature of many Scandinavian countries, there has been a lack of viable "bridge institutions" to assist Muslims. Thus relations between Scandinavians and the Muslim population have been comparatively more brittle than in the rest of Europe, as exemplified by the Danish cartoon case.

Professor Bowen closed by calling attention to a European-wide phenomenon in which creative jurists from the Islamic and European civil courts are beginning to look at the use of contracts as a way to build bridges between the legal norms of Islam and Europe. In looking to the future he stated that there are "ways in which legal innovation and legal creativity can provide new institutions that will bridge these particular divides."



Professor Susan Moeller discussed American and British media coverage of the Muslim world and its impact on Western audiences. Moeller focused on Western media coverage of Pakistan and how it has, in general, "tarred the entire country with a very broad brush." She also pointed out the media's tendency to use "Islam" as an umbrella term, particularly in the Middle East. She explained that it is only when a region becomes the focus of prolonged media attention that nuances and distinct groups are brought to light.

Moeller discussed the question, "why do they hate us?" asked frequently after 9/11, and used it as an example of how the media can limit the definition and thus the solution of a problem. It was the Western media that both posed the question and provided its answer, which was to identify women as "good Muslims" who would potentially proselytize on behalf of the West and help end the violence coming from extremists in the Muslim world.

Professor Moeller discussed three pivotal issues of media coverage: audience, language, and content. In terms of audience, Professor Moeller explained how reporters and editors make judgments concerning what they believe their audiences are interested in seeing. Turning to her experience as a photojournalist, she explained how during her coverage of the war in El Salvador she was taught to adapt her photography for the mainstream US media, which meant censoring excessively graphic pictures. Moeller rejected the idea that language is transparent and shared the results of a study that examined the different ways the media and other organizations, including governments, define certain commonly used terms, such as "human rights," "terrorism," and "Islam." Regarding media content, Moeller noted that "the sins of omission are at least as important as sins of commission." She discussed how the noticeable lack of scrutiny regarding the "war on terror" in the years immediately following 9/11 was partially due to the media's fear of being seen by Americans as contemptuous of national security and the armed services. Moeller explained that this lack of critical analysis gave politicians tremendous latitude in categorizing events, individuals, groups, and even states as terrorist threats. She asserted that during the post-9/11 period the US media, "both literally and figuratively," generally followed the administration in coverage of foreign policy, national security, and intelligence, and therefore failed to give its audience sufficiently objective content.

Professor Moeller went on to explain that the Western media has been more critical of US foreign policy in the last couple of years. She also noted the difference between the British and American press coverage since the July 2005 bombing in London, observing that since the attack, the British press has focused more attention on terrorism at the local level and has coupled Islam and terrorism more frequently than the US did after 9/11. In the case of the American press coverage, she observed that controversies over the US war on terror and its human rights practices have caused media attention to shift away from demonizing Muslim men to portraying Americans as the "bad guys."



Panelists with Moderator Shireen Hunter

E. PANEL 3: INTERPRETATIONS OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND REALITIES FOR MUSLIM WOMEN



When it comes to the topic of Muslim women, stereotypes, misconceptions, and myths abound. **Professor Lila Abu-Lughod** addressed the images of Muslim women that circulate in the West, as well as the media's role in shaping Western perceptions. She expressed concern about how these images influence Western thinking, attitudes, and policies towards the Muslim world in a way she considers "dangerous" to Muslim women. She referred to the images of Muslim women in "forbidding white shrouds" or "in black, often with only their eyes showing" that are propagated by Western media and explained how these promote the perception of a "strange uniformity" of a single Muslim culture, a monolithic religion, and a distant and alien woman. The repetition of these images sends the subliminal message that Muslim women are silent and oppressed, and ignores the diversity and variety of Muslim women's aspirations, values, and even clothes. She explained that Muslim women's lives vary greatly and include the hard-working peasant woman raising sheep and chickens, the devout woman doing good works in the public sphere, the rapper singing about military occupation, and the wealthy woman shopping at Harrods in London.

Professor Abu-Lughod's research confirmed that these misrepresentative images blind the West from noticing the things that Muslim and non-Muslim women share in terms of basic issues, including family, health care, and employment, as well as women's rights. In addition, she pointed out that there is little awareness in the West of the numerous Muslim women's groups working to improve the conditions and rights for women in their countries.

Abu-Lughod further questioned why the image the West has of ordinary Muslim women does not include the variety of rights commonly enjoyed by them. She described women she typically met in Egypt who were well-informed about their legal rights, as well as those guaranteed by the Quran or sharia. She explained that these women learned about these rights from national TV and radio, as well as from their families, communities, and religious establishments. Abu-Lughod also discussed the various channels women use to resolve disputes – ranging from courts, to family elders, to local religious figures – and how self-respect and dignity were central to their decision-making.



Speaking from a legal perspective, **Professor Madhavi Sunder** discussed how current human rights laws – and specifically those relating to women's rights – "misconceive" religion. She noted that religion is not the problem, but rather the legal conception of religion and culture as static, homogenous, and as existing in an extra-legal area where inequality is "not only accepted, but to be expected." Women reformers throughout the Muslim world are at the forefront in challenging both the fundamentalist and legal view that religion is monolithic and incontestable. These reformers are pursuing a two-pronged strategy that aims to recognize the plurality of options within Islam while contesting its monolithic depiction.

According to Sunder, these Muslim women reformers are part of a "new enlightenment," which she describes as a transcontinental, transnational movement, seeking to bring reason, critical thinking, freedom, and democracy – long restricted to the public sphere – to the spheres of religion and culture. By rejecting the traditional human rights framework that forces women to choose between religion and rights, they are working to integrate democracy and equality into religion and culture on both grassroots and official levels. As Professor Sunder explains, their approach is that of "separating that part of religion which is ineffable and divine and that part which is in fact the result of human interpretation and construction and is thus eligible for reconstruction." To do so, they have engaged the works of progressive academics and theologians that distinguish sharia – which encompasses divine law and timeless principles – from actual interpretations and applications of sharia in societies in the form of legal rules, or *fiqh* in Arabic, which are subject to change.

Professor Sunder then focused on the success of Sisters in Islam (SIS), an organization founded in Malaysia in 1989, which recognized the need for Muslim women's rights activists to analyze what their religion has to say about women. Initially, this group of women lawyers, journalists, and academics met weekly to study the Quran. Sunder described the great strides SIS has made in battling human rights abuses committed in the name of religious or cultural freedom. In 1991, when Malaysian legislators argued that a domestic rights law would not apply to Muslims, SIS went public for the first time by publishing the polemical retort, *Are Muslim Men Allowed to Beat Their Wives?*, which aroused robust public debate over issues – such as polygamy and family planning – traditionally shielded by the assumption of religious sovereignty. Sunder attributed the success of SIS to a "common

sense” approach in questioning religious authorities, which exposes “dissent and plurality within the religion,” and forces a “reasoned dialogue.”

Sunder also described how Sisters in Islam initiated a dialogue among women at the grassroots level throughout the Muslim world. For example, the Moroccan women’s One Million Signatures campaign to change the country’s family law borrowed SIS’s arguments on polygamy and guardianship and emerged victorious in 2004 with a new Moroccan family code that improved women’s rights in the country. The code is considered one of the most progressive in the Muslim world and a model for other countries. Professor Sunder cited the example of how another One Million Signatures campaign – launched in Iran by Iranian women – found inspiration and support from the Moroccan reformers, who assisted their Iranian counterparts by publishing their handbook in Persian. Sunder discussed how these and other grassroots organizations have had a significant impact in encouraging women to critique, question, and debate religious texts, as well as to offer their own interpretations. Professor Sunder remarked that the “viral transnational nature of these reform efforts suggests that reading the Quran in Kuala Lumpur may ultimately prove more radical than *Reading Lolita in Tehran*.”



Speaking about the rights and realities for Muslim women in her native Iran, **Professor Farzaneh Milani** detailed how Iranian women are changing political and cultural norms in their country. She also admonished the West for its ignorance of Iranian women cultural icons, whose writings go largely unread in the West, while books promoting the image of Iranian women as prisoners regularly make *The New York Times* best-seller list.

Focusing on freedom of movement and its impact on the lives of Iranian women, she explained that this basic individual right – long recognized as a masculine prerogative – has often been denied to women. Restricting women’s mobility, she explained, “has been sanctioned in the name of religion, chastity, safety, beauty, or autonomy, and anatomy.” Milani pointed out that women in Iran have been fighting for their right of movement for over 160 years. The last two decades in particular have seen Iranian women emerge as a moderating and modernizing force in renegotiating their boundaries and making improvements in life expectancy, marital age, education, and fertility rates. One of the most striking changes has been in education: 64% of all students admitted to Iranian universities are women.

As an expert on Iranian literature, Professor Milani noted that recently there has been a significant increase in the number of novels published by women in Iran and that, currently, women not only publish as many novels as men, but routinely outsell their male counterparts. For example, Simin Behbahani became Iran’s first woman national poet and Forough Farrokhzad – a poet whose work was banned after the revolution – has become a cultural icon for many Iranians. However, Milani lamented that the works of many of these revered Iranian novelists and poets have not been translated into English.

Many modernizing and moderating changes in Iran have been accelerated by the internet and Professor Milani noted that the country has the fastest growing number of internet users in the Middle East. She pointed out that the One Million Signatures campaign, mentioned by Professor Sunder, is an example of a movement that is being successfully facilitated through the internet.

In terms of political participation for women, Professor Milani harbors no illusions about the current situation in Iran, where repression, censorship, political and religious purges, and gender inequality are the norm. For example, although women have nominated themselves for the presidency, they have routinely been disqualified. However, Milani asserted that these problems do not make up the whole picture of Iran. She expressed hope that the West will recognize that Iran is a complex country “full of paradoxes” and that the West will stop perpetuating the image of the Iranian woman as “a virtual prisoner, without a pardon or parole.”



Panelists during the Q&A with the audience

IV. BIOGRAPHIES OF SPEAKERS AND MODERATORS

A. KEYNOTE ADDRESS:

WHO SPEAKS FOR ISLAM? LETTER TO PRESIDENT-ELECT OBAMA

John L. Esposito is a University Professor as well as a Professor of Religion and International Affairs and of Islamic Studies at Georgetown University. He is also the Founding Director of the Prince Alwaleed bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding at the Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University. He is editor-in-chief of the four-volume *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World*, *The Oxford History of Islam*, *The Oxford Dictionary of Islam*, *The Islamic World: Past and Present*, the six-volume *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Islamic World* and Oxford Islamic Studies Online. His more than thirty five books include: *Who Speaks for Islam? What a Billion Muslims Really Think* (with Dalia Mogahed), *Unholy War: Terror in the Name of Islam*, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?*, *Islam and Politics*, *Political Islam: Radicalism, Revolution or Reform?*, *Islam and Democracy* (with J. Voll). His writings have been translated into more than 28 languages. A former president of the Middle East Studies Association of North America and the American Council for the Study of Islamic Societies, he is currently an Ambassador for the UN Alliance of Civilizations member of the World Economic Forum's Council of 100 Leaders.

Esposito is a recipient of the American Academy of Religion's 2005 Martin E. Marty Award for the Public Understanding of Religion and of Pakistan's Quaid-i-Azzam Award for Outstanding Contributions in Islamic Studies. He has served as a consultant to the US Department of State and to governments, corporations, universities, and the media. In 2003 he received the School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University Award for Outstanding Teaching.

B. LUNCHEON KEYNOTE ADDRESS:

THE US AND THE MUSLIM WORLD

H.E. Dr. Hussein Hassouna was appointed Ambassador of the League of Arab States to the United States of America in July 2002, having previously served for five years as Ambassador of the League of Arab States to the United Nations. Prior to this, he was Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs of Egypt for International Legal Affairs & Treaties (1996-1997), Ambassador of Egypt to Morocco (1992-1996) and to Yugoslavia (1989-1992), Director of Cabinet to the Deputy Prime Minister & Minister of Foreign Affairs of Egypt (1986-1989), and Director of the Egyptian Press & Information Bureau in Paris, France (1983-1986).

A native of Egypt, Ambassador Hassouna received his LLB & PhD in International Law from Cambridge University in England. This led to a distinguished career in international diplomacy, which saw him serve as a Member of the Permanent Mission of Egypt to the United Nations and a Representative of Egypt to major United Nations conferences, Non-Aligned, African and Arab meetings. He also served as a Member of the Egyptian delegation to successive Middle East peace negotiations in Cairo, Tel Aviv and Washington, DC, leading to the signing of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty.

Dr. Hassouna has lectured at major universities in the United States, Canada, England, and France, including Yale, Georgetown, UCLA, McGill, Cambridge, Duke, and the Sorbonne. He is the author of a book, *The League of Arab States and Regional Disputes, a Study of Middle East Conflicts*, and of numerous articles on international law and world affairs which have been published in the American Journal of International Law, World Policy Journal, and various United Nations publications.

Judy Woodruff, a broadcast journalist, has covered politics and other news for more than three decades at CNN, NBC and PBS. Most recently, she signed on as a senior correspondent and political editor for the NewsHour with Jim Lehrer. In early 2007, Woodruff concluded initial reporting and production, along with MacNeil/Lehrer Productions, on Generation Next: Speak Up. Be Heard. Generation Next is a project that interviewed American young people and reported on their views, and included an hour-long documentary aired on many PBS stations in January, 2007, a series of reports on the NewsHour with Jim Lehrer, reports on NPR and in *USA Today*, and partnerships with Yahoo! and Film Your Issue. A second hour-long Generation Next documentary aired on PBS stations on September 5, 2007.

For 12 years, Woodruff served as anchor and senior correspondent for CNN, anchoring the weekday political program, Inside Politics. At PBS from 1983 to 1993, she was the chief Washington correspondent for The MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour, and from 1984-1990, she anchored PBS' award-winning weekly documentary series, Frontline with Judy Woodruff. At NBC News, Woodruff served as White House correspondent from 1977 to 1982. For one year after that she served as NBC's Today Show Chief Washington correspondent.

C. PANEL 1:

THE COMPATIBILITY OF ISLAM AND DEMOCRACY

Asma Afsaruddin is associate professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies at the University of Notre Dame and chair of the Board of Directors of the Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy. Her research focuses on the religious and political thought of Islam, Qur'anic hermeneutics, pluralist and democratic trends within Islam, Islamic intellectual history, and gender. She is the author and/or editor of four books, including *The First Muslims: History and Memory* (Oxford: OneWorld Publications, 2008) and *Excellence and Precedence: Medieval Islamic Discourse on Legitimate Leadership* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2002). She has also written numerous research articles, book chapters, and encyclopedia entries on various aspects of Islamic thought and has lectured widely in the US, Europe, and the Middle East. Afsaruddin has been a visiting scholar at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London, and a fellow at the American Research Center of Egypt in Cairo. Among her current research projects is a specially commissioned monograph on contemporary issues in Islam and a book manuscript about competing perspectives on *jihad* and martyrdom in pre-modern and modern Islamic thought. Her research has won funding from the American Research Institute of Turkey, the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation, and the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

Elizabeth F. Thompson is a historian of the late colonial period in the Middle East. She studies how nation-building under foreign occupation set the stage for Arab political development after independence. She also seeks lessons from the colonial era for efforts at nation-building today. Her first book, *Colonial Citizens*, studied how French rule in Syria and Lebanon from 1920 to 1945 laid basic structures of state power and citizens' rights. She found that French rule rolled back progress toward democracy and state formation, and discouraged efforts of women's and workers' movements to obtain equal political and social rights. She also found that women's second-class citizenship in these and other Arab countries today has more to do with men's reaction to foreign occupation than with essential values of Islam. *Colonial Citizens* won two women's history awards in 2000, from the American Historical Association and the Berkshire Conference of Women Historians. Dr. Thompson is currently writing *Seeking Justice in the Middle East*, about popular movements for justice since the 19th century. Thompson is associate professor of history at the University of Virginia, currently on leave as a fellow at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, DC.

Elora Shehabuddin is Assistant Professor of Humanities and Political Science at Rice University and teaches primarily in the Center for the Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality, and the Center for Asian Studies. She received her PhD in Politics from Princeton University and AB in Social Studies from Harvard University. Her dissertation, "Encounters with the State: Gender and Islam in Rural Bangladesh," was awarded the American Political Science Association's Aaron Wildavsky Dissertation Award for best dissertation in Religion and Politics in 2002. She has held fellowships from the American Association of University Women, the Carnegie Corporation, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Social Science Research Council, the US Institute of Peace, and the Woodrow Wilson Foundation. She spent 2004-5 as a Research Associate in the Women's Studies in Religion Program at the Divinity School at Harvard University. Her publications include articles in the journals *Signs*, *Modern Asian Studies*, *Journal of Women's History*, and *Asian Survey*; chapters in the edited volumes *Eye to Eye: Women Practicing Development Across Cultures* and *Gender, Politics, and Islam*, and two books, *Empowering Rural Women: The Impact of Grameen Bank in Bangladesh* (1992) and *Reshaping the Holy: Democracy, Development, and Muslim Women in Bangladesh* (2008).

D. PANEL 2:

EUROPEAN POLICIES AND ATTITUDES ON ISLAM

John Bowen is the Dunbar-Van Cleve Professor in Arts & Sciences at Washington University in St. Louis. He studies problems of pluralism, law, and religion, and in particular contemporary efforts to rethink Islamic norms and law in Asia, Europe, and North America. His most recent book on Asia is *Islam, Law and Equality in Indonesia: An Anthropology of Public Reasoning* (Cambridge, 2003), and his *Why the French Don't Like Headscarves* (Princeton, 2007) concerns current debates in France on Islam and laïcité. Forthcoming are *Can Islam be French?* (Princeton), on Muslim debates and institutions in France, and the overview work *The New Anthropology of Islam* (Cambridge). His three current research projects concern (1) the interplay of civil law and religious norms on family in England and France, (2) comparing Islamic judicial practices across a global country sample, and (3) examining variation in operant models of difference across Europe.

Susan Moeller is the director of the International Center for Media and the Public Agenda (ICMPA) at the University of Maryland, College Park. She is an associate professor of media and international affairs in the Philip Merrill College of Journalism and an affiliated faculty member at the School of Public Policy. Prior to coming to Maryland, Moeller was a senior fellow in the International Security Program at the Kennedy School. Moeller has also taught at Brandeis and Princeton, and was a Fulbright professor in Pakistan and Thailand. Ms. Moeller's book, *Packaging Terrorism: Co-opting the News for Politics and Profit*, was recently published in the UK and in the US. She is the author of several other books, including *Compassion Fatigue: How the Media Sell Disease, Famine, War and Death*. In 2008, Moeller was named a Carnegie Scholar for her work on media coverage of Islam, and the Maryland Board of Regents, the governing body of the public university system, named her as one of its top teachers of the year. Moeller received her AM and PhD from Harvard University and her BA from Yale University. Prior to her graduate work, Moeller was a journalist in Washington, DC.

E. PANEL 3: INTERPRETATIONS OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND REALITIES FOR MUSLIM WOMEN

Lila Abu-Lughod is the William B. Ransford Professor of Anthropology and Gender Studies at Columbia University. An anthropologist who has done extensive fieldwork in Egypt on women, Islam and gender politics, and expressive culture (from poetry to television dramas), she is the author of three award-winning ethnographies: *Veiled Sentiments: Honor and Poetry in a Bedouin Society*; *Writing Women's Worlds: Bedouin Stories*; and *Dramas of Nationhood: The Politics of Television in Egypt*. She has also edited several important volumes including *Remaking Women: Feminism and Modernity in the Middle East*.

Madhavi Sunder is a Visiting Professor at the University of Chicago Law School. She teaches and writes on intellectual property law, as well as on women's rights in the Muslim world. In 2006, she was named a Carnegie Scholar. She is a professor at the University of California–Davis, and in spring 2008 was a Visiting Professor at Yale Law School. She has published extensively in leading law journals, including the *Yale Law Journal*, the *Stanford Law Review*, and the *California Law Review*. Her scholarship has received the Honorable Mention in the Association of American Law Schools Scholarly Paper competition and has been selected for presentation at the Stanford/Yale Junior Faculty Forum. Sunder earned her B.A. *magna cum laude* from Harvard College in 1992 and her J.D. from Stanford Law School in 1997. At Stanford, she was an Articles Editor for the *Stanford Law Review* and winner of the Irving H. Hellman Jr. Award for Outstanding Law Review Note and the Steven M. Block Civil Liberties Award for Exceptional Scholarship in Furtherance of Personal Freedom. She clerked for Judge Harry Pregerson of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals and practiced law in New York City with the firm of Cleary, Gottlieb, Steen & Hamilton.

Farzaneh Milani completed her graduate studies in Comparative Literature in 1979 at UCLA. Her dissertation, "Forugh Farrokhzad: A Feminist Perspective" was a critical study of the poetry of a pioneering Iranian poet. Past president of the Association of Middle Eastern Women Studies in America, Milani was the recipient of the Alumni Teaching Award in 1998 and nominated for Virginia Faculty of the Year in 1999. She is the author of *Veils*

and Words: The Emerging Voice of Iranian Women Writers and *A Cup of Sin: Selected Poems of Simin Behbahani* (with Kaveh Safa). She has published over 100 articles, epilogues, forewords, and afterwards in Persian and in English. She has written for *The New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *Ms. Magazine*, *Readers Digest*, *USA Today*, and NPR's All Things Considered. She has presented more than 150 lectures nationally and internationally. She is the former Director of Studies in Women and Gender and Professor of Persian Literature and Women Studies at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, and was a Carnegie Fellow, 2006-2007.

F. PANEL MODERATORS

Gail Leftwich Kitch (Panel 1 Moderator) is Executive Director of By the People, an initiative of MacNeil/Lehrer Productions (M/LP) which uses public television to encourage and support informed non-contentious citizen dialogue around policy issues. Prior to joining M/LP, Kitch served as President of the Federation of State Humanities Councils, the national membership organization of the state affiliates of the National Endowment for the Humanities, following service as Director of Cambridge Forum, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and principal of Strategic Business Consultants, an international business consulting organization. A lawyer by training, Kitch practiced for a number of years with large firms in Washington, DC and Boston, MA. Among other activities, Kitch currently serves as a member of the Executive Committee of the Boards of the Women's Foreign Policy Group and National History Day and is a member of the board of the Cosmos Club, Washington, DC and the National Advisory Board of The State of the USA.

Shireen Hunter (Panel 2 Moderator) is a visiting professor at the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding of the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University and a Distinguished Scholar at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). Her career has included positions as Deputy Director, then Director, of the Middle East Program at CSIS, the editor of *Islam, Politics and Society*, Visiting Senior Fellow at the Center for European Policy Studies (CEPS) in Brussels, and Director of CEPS' Mediterranean program. She has authored seven books and four monographs and has edited and contributed to numerous publications including books, monographs, chapters, journal articles, and opinion pieces. Dr. Hunter's recent publications include: *Reformist Voices of Islam: Mediating Islam and Modernity* (editor/contributor) M.E. Sharpe, 2008; *Islam and Human Rights: Towards a US-Muslim Dialogue* (editor) CSIS Press, 2005; and *Modernization, Democracy And Islam* (coeditor/contributor) Praeger 2005. Some of her books have been translated into Arabic, Persian and Bosnian, and are widely used in major universities in the US and abroad. Her latest journal article is: "The US Approach toward Islamic Militancy: Current Policies in Historical Perspective" *The International Spectator*, vo.42, no.2, December 2007.

Patricia Ellis (Panel 3 Moderator) is the President and Co-Founder of the Women's Foreign Policy Group. Ellis previously covered foreign affairs for the MacNeil/Lehrer Newshour and Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. She also previously did research at the US Mission to the United Nations and the Center for International Studies at MIT. She was a fellow at Harvard's Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy, and taught at American University, specializing in foreign affairs news coverage. She participated in the European Community Visitor's Program and received the Netherlands Universities' Foundation for International Cooperation Scholarship for graduate study at the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague. She is a founding member of the International Women's Media Foundation and member of the Council on Foreign Relations. Ellis frequently moderates programs and speaks on the media and foreign policy, and international affairs careers. She has moderated all of the WFPG Carnegie Scholars Programs.

V. PARTICIPANTS LIST

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