



الجمع الأمريكي  
لدراسة  
الاجتمعات الاسلامية

***American Council for the Study of  
Islamic Societies  
(ACSIS)***

***32nd Annual Conference***

***"Religion, Tradition and Inter-faith Relations  
in the Muslim World"***

Garey Hall Room 10A  
Villanova University  
Villanova, PA. 19085  
April 17-18, 2015

# **American Council for the Study of Islamic Societies**

(ACSIS)

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## **Program**

**Friday, April 17, 2015**

**8:30-9:15 am--Bagels and Coffee.**

**9:15 Welcome**

**Dr. Robert Hazan, President, ACSIS, Metropolitan State University of Denver**

**9:30-10:25 Session 1. Islamic Law in Muslim Societies (20 minutes each max. plus 15 for Q/A)**

**Panel Chair: Dr. Robert Hazan, Metropolitan State University of Denver**

**“Contesting and Redefining ‘Tradition’: New Landscapes of Islamic Law in the West”**

**Dr. Sohaira Siddiqui, Georgetown School of Foreign Service, Qatar\***

**“Islamic Notion of Conflict of Laws”**

**Bandar Ghaleb Bakhshwin, JD, LLM, Emory University**

**10:30-10:45 Break.**

**10:45-12:00 Session 2 Interfaith Relations in the Muslim World**

**Panel Chair: Dr. Michael Bishku, Georgia Regents University**

**“The Politics and Theology of Interfaith Dialogue in the Muslim World”**

**Dr. Turan Kayaoglu, University of Washington\***

**“From King Hassan II to King Mohammed VI: Interfaith Relations and Political Traditions in Modern Morocco”**

**Dr. Robert Hazan, Metropolitan State University of Denver**

**“American Muslims and Interfaith Partnerships in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”**

**Celene Ayat Ibrahim-Lizzio, Hebrew College and Andover Newton Theological School**

**12:00-1:30— Lunch Break**

**1:30-3:05 Session 3. Islam, Identity and Nationalism**

**Panel Chair: Dr. Gisela Webb, Seton Hall University**

**“Divided We Fall: Muslims of Mumbai, the Struggle for Power and Identity in Contemporary Urban India”**

**Vahit Fahri Kutluer, India Institute, King’s College, London**

**“The Crisis of National and Religious Identity in Contemporary Afghanistan”**

**Dr. Sayed Hassan Akhlaq Hussaini, George Washington University**

**“Sino-Islamic Identities: Interstate Relations between China and the Muslim Ethnic Minorities”**

**Chiara Olivieri, Universidad de Granada**

**“Kemal Ataturk and Habib Bourguiba: Brothers from Different Mothers”**

**Dr. Michael Bishku, Georgia Regents University**

**3:05-3:15 Break**

**3:15 – 4:30 Session 4. Islam and Identity**

**Panel Chair: Dr. Theodore Wright, Professor Emeritus, State University of New York, Albany**

**“Sportswear, Lingerie and Accessories: The Islamic Way”**

**Dr. Faegheh Shirazi, University of Texas at Austin**

**“Conversion to and from Islam in South Asia”**

**Dr. Theodore Wright, Professor Emeritus, State University of New York, Albany**

**“Secularism is not the Solution: Why Muslim Women and Catholic Women Need to be in Dialogue”**

**Kate Mroz, Boston College**

**4:30-5:00 Session 5 The Arab Spring and its Aftermath**

**Panel Chair: Dr. James Sowerwine, Kutztown University**

**"Egypt's Economic Development and Challenges post Arab spring"**

**Dr. Mohammed Akacem, Metropolitan State University of Denver**

**Dr. Dennis Miller, Baldwin Wallace University**

**Dinner by individual arrangement.**

**5:15-6:15 ACSIS Board Meeting**

**Saturday, April 18, 2015**

**8:00-8:30 Bagels and Coffee**

**9:00- 10:35 Session 6 Religion and Authority in Muslim –Minority/Majority Societies**

**Panel Chair: Dr. Tamara Sonn, Georgetown University**

**“Migrating South: American-Sponsored Christian Settlements in Mindanao”**

**Marybeth Acac, Temple University**

**“The Flock of a Shepherd or the Sovereign Citizen: Ayatollah Montazeri on the Role of the People”**

**Dr. Sussan Siavoshi, Trinity University, San Antonio**

**“How Jurisprudence and Mysticism Met: the Role of Religion in the State Foundation of Post-Revolutionary Iran”**

**Leila Chamankhah, University of Exeter, UK**

**10:35-10:45 Break**

**10:45-12:20 Session 7 Religion and Authority in Muslim Societies II**  
**Panel Chair: Dr. Vivienne SM. Angeles, La Salle University**

**“A Wahhabi Ethic in Saudi Arabia: Power, Authority, and Religion in a Muslim Society”**  
**Dr. Abdullah F. Alrebh, Michigan State University**

**“Islamism, State Policy and Social Resilience in Indonesia”**  
**Maufur, Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies (ICRS)/State Institute for Islamic Studies (STAIN)**

**“Minoritization and Criminalization of Shia Islam in Indonesia”**  
**Dr. Dicky Sofjan, Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies (ICRS)**

**“Contesting Religious Authority and State Legitimacy in Pakistan”**  
**Dr. Mashal Saif, Clemson University**

**12:20 Closing Remarks: Dr. Hafeez Malik, Founding Director, ACSIS, Villanova University**

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## **Abstracts**

### **Session 1: Islamic Law in Muslim Societies**

**Contesting and Redefining ‘Tradition:’ New Landscapes of Islamic Law in the West**  
Sohaira Siddiqui, Georgetown University School of Foreign Service, Qatar

Perhaps more than any other discipline within Islamic intellectual thought, Islamic law has become the locus of reform for contemporary Muslims, especially those living in North America and Europe. Scholars of Islam living in these areas argue for a legal logic which is centered upon deriving ethical norms from both textual and extra-textual sources. This paper will explore how the legal reform projects of two prominent scholars, Dr. Khaled Abou Fadel, and Dr. Tariq Ramadan, understand and employ the concept of tradition within their reform arguments. Tradition for both scholars is discursive and its vitality necessitates the presence of willful individuals who will engage, interpret and reformulate it alongside the changing contours of Muslim societies. To this extent, multiple Islamic traditions can exist in parallel, and the presence of these oftentimes conflicting traditions in tandem with a forum for legal engagement and ethical consideration will facilitate both the vitality, continuity and applicability of the Islamic legal tradition in the modern world. Beyond exploring their understandings of tradition, this paper will also analyze whether these two reform projects are able to balance between the competing needs of evolution and stability within the Islamic legal tradition.

**Islamic Notion of Conflict of Laws**  
Bandar Ghaleb Bakhshwin, Emory University

With the rise of the nation-state, nationality and international law, the role of religion in legislation, if any, has generally decreased. However, while most of the world today is shifting toward secularism in regulating family law, religion still considered a source, or the source, for family law in many Arab and Muslim countries.

This paper deals specifically with the Islamic notion of Conflict of Laws, particularly in Family Law. As early as the eighth century, classical Muslim scholars from different schools of thought developed an Islamic system of Public and Private International Law, known as “Al-Siyar”, to regulate the relation between Muslims and non-Muslims. They used religious affiliation as a “connecting factor”, rather than nationality or domicile, to determine the

jurisdiction and choice of law in Conflict of Laws. I will illustrate those classical rules in general, however, my focus is on family law conflict rules related to the jurisdiction and application of Islamic law to Muslims and non-Muslims, whether citizens or foreigners, in Muslim and non-Muslim territory.

Islamic conflict rules still have an impact on Muslims in the West and on contemporary Arab countries influenced by Islamic Law. Though most Arab countries, following Egypt, have adopted a civil law system based on French law, they have maintained an “Islamic interreligious law” for family law in which non-Muslim minorities are governed by their own laws. I will briefly discuss the application of these rules in today’s Arab countries and what impact it may have on Muslim minorities in the West.

## **Session 2 : Interfaith Relations in the Muslim World**

### **The Politics and Theology of Interfaith Dialogue in the Muslim World**

Turan Kayaoglu, University of Washington, Tacoma

In the last two decades, several Muslim states and civil society groups have embraced interfaith dialogue as a means of engagement with non-Muslims, especially with Christians. Why do these actors initiate interfaith dialogue? Why do they follow different interfaith dialogue strategies? This paper argues that Islamic actors initiate interfaith dialogue to signal their moderate stance to powerful others who are concerned with Islamic radicalization and violence. The actors engaged in interfaith dialogue follow different strategies because of their interfaith theology (ideas about the legitimacy of religious others) and the nature of state-religion interaction (secular versus religious states) in their home countries. Groups with a Sufi orientation will have the most accommodationist interfaith theology; those with a Salafi orientation will have the least. In secular settings, interfaith dialogue will be carried out by non-state actors; in places where religious and political authorities are integrated, the state will control interfaith dialogue. To support its argument, this paper examines three Muslim interfaith initiatives: the Gülen Movement in Turkey and beyond (Sunni-Sufi, a civil society-led project), Jordan’s ‘A common word’ initiative (Sunni-traditional, a semi-governmental project), and Saudi Arabia’s interfaith initiative (Sunni-Salafi, a state-led project).

### **From King Hasan II to King Mohammed VI: Interfaith Relations and Political Traditions in Modern Morocco.**

Robert Hazan, Metropolitan State University of Denver, CO

In the aftermath of the Arab Spring in 2010, Morocco endured a sweeping liberalization process. The country reaffirmed its loyalty to King Mohammed VI proclaiming that "the King's person is inviolable and sacred" and that the King of Morocco is the Supreme Commander of the military and the highest authority in religious affairs. This paper explores inter-faith traditions and socio-political transitions in modern Morocco, from King Hasan II, 1961-1999, to the current King of Morocco, King Mohammed VI. It examines the ideas and events that shaped the evolution of the Kingdom of Morocco as a stable constitutional monarchy since its independence in 1956. Finally, this study proposes a socio-political analysis of 21<sup>st</sup> century Morocco and its future, as it weaves through the intrinsic complexities of Moroccan economy, culture, history, politics, religion and society.

### **American Muslims and Interfaith Partnerships in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

Celene Ayat Ibrahim-Lizzio, Hebrew College & Andover Newton Theological School

This paper surveys the American landscape to point out the horizons and trajectories of interfaith partnerships involving American Muslim religious leaders, scholars, and civic organizations. Attention is given to the politics of communal representation, to trends in institutional and foundational funding for such initiatives, and to the best practices that are emerging among leading centers in the field. I also give attention to the role of academic initiatives and interdisciplinary programs in shaping the emerging interdisciplinary field of “interfaith studies,” and the role of Muslim scholars in that movement. Finally, I investigate the stakes and risks involved for American Muslims in working through intra-faith dynamics to form inter-faith partnerships. While my case studies are drawn from the American context, the paper invites a conversation about how the socio-economic and political situation of Muslim minorities in other contexts impacts inter-faith initiatives.

### **Session 3: Islam, Identity and Nationalism**

#### **Muslims of Mumbai: The Struggle for Power and Identity in Contemporary Urban Setting**

Vahit Fahri Kutluer, India Institute, King's College, London

Mumbai is a city often referred to as 'Chhota Hindusthan' (Small India) due to its hyper-diversity and cosmopolitanism. Nevertheless, the Muslim community of the city, which is divided by religious, ethnic and socio-economic lines, presents a case study of urban marginality. This study focuses on the lives of the Muslim community in contemporary Mumbai. It elaborates their problems with regard to multidimensional social exclusion as well as the clash between religion and national identity (Muslim vs. Indian) in an urban setting. First, the paper will present to what extent the Muslims of Mumbai are mirror represented in various echelons of power. The percentage of the Muslim community in Mumbai is 22 per cent (Census of India, 2001); nevertheless, their presence in sites of power, e.g. political, economic, education, media, civil society and judiciary spheres, falls much behind their percentage of population. Secondly, the paper will analyze to what extent the secular and non-secular social actors within the Muslim community in the city, such as the Muslim politicians, the Ulama, the elites and the civil society actors (both NGOs and FBOs-Faith Based Organizations) are capable of working for the community descriptively and synergistically. Finally, the community perceptions regarding their marginalization as well as the role and performance of these social actors will be presented.

#### **The Crisis of National and Religious Identity in Contemporary Afghanistan**

Sayed Hassan "Akhlaq" Hussaini, Visiting Scholar, George Washington University and Catholic University of America

Backed by thousands of years of history and having experienced various traditions, Afghanistan takes its name as a country in 1923 through a constitution written at the time of Amanullah Khan, a reformist king who wanted to rapidly modernize Afghanistan along Western lines. The notion of Afghani nationality emerged while the above-mentioned reform failed. From 642 to 870, all parts of current Afghanistan were dominated by Arabic Muslims and in the last five centuries most Afghans converted to Islam. Islam has made major contributions to shariah, theology, Sufism, philosophy, exact sciences, literature, and art in Afghanistan. The process of modernization in Afghanistan, through a politicized approach, confronted tribal and Islamic traditions as well as regional differences which in turn prohibited the formation of a national identity.

This paper attempts to explain how Islamism and jihad, in the last three decades: (1) developed within a crisis in Afghani Islam; and, (2) how, recently, it has failed because of the trend towards tribal rather than national identity. My argument consists of three parts: (a) lack of national identity; (b) the features of Afghani Islam; and (c) jihad and Taliban with regard to Afghani Islam. The lack of a clear national identity and connection to historical Islam in Afghanistan provided new extremist Islam with fertile ground to emerge.

#### **Sino-Islamic Identities: Interstate Relations between China and the Muslim Ethnic Minorities.**

Chiara Olivieri, Universidad de Granada, Spain

Briefly going through the stages of history of Islam in China, the essay will analyze the actual position of the Islamic communities in this country, and point out their differences according to their ethnic group and their geographical position. The essay will deal with the study of the problems of the minorities in China, their connections with the controlling Han ethnic group and the state. It will highlight the importance of their national-religious identities and also their impact on the Chinese government, their politics and their joint vision of the dispute. On the basis of an analysis of the general essays on decolonial epistemic perspectives, and applying those theories to the case of ethnic Chinese minorities, specifically to ethnic groups and Islamic identities officially recognized by the Central Government, our purpose is to enter the ethno-political debate about ethnicity and nationality in China, revealing what processes and ideologies have influenced the formation of the concept of

Chinese nation, emphasizing and denouncing how those have led to the establishment of tense and unbalanced inter-ethnic relations.

**Kemal Atatürk and Habib Bourguiba: Brothers from Different Mothers**

Michael B. Bishku, Georgia Regents University

For many years, scholars have been comparing in a very superficial manner various Middle Eastern leaders to the founder of the Republic of Turkey, Kemal Atatürk, especially when the subject of charisma was in vogue a few decades ago. Since then, academics have continued on and off to compare Habib Bourguiba, who led Tunisia to independence from France, with the Turkish leader in a somewhat similar fashion. This paper will provide an in-depth comparative study of the late-Turkish and Tunisian leaders' respective lives and legacies. While they obviously shared similar leadership styles, their approaches to issues of secularism and national identity were somewhat different due to the respective historical, economic and social characteristics of their native countries and the changing political environments during which they ruled. The paper will provide profiles of Atatürk and Bourguiba discuss and analyze the reforms of the respective leaders and evaluate how these leaders have shaped the characters of their respective countries. These legacies are very important in light of the past decade of AK (Justice and Development) Party rule in Turkey with its Islamist agenda and the recent election of an avowed "Bourguibist" as president in Tunisia following the Arab Spring revolt which took place in that country.

**Session 4: Islam and Identity**

**Sportswear, Lingerie and Accessories: The Islamic Way**

Faegheh Shirazi, University of Texas at Austin

Only recently have devout Muslim women been able to participate fully in athletic competition. This is largely due to the fact that they now have access to Islamically sanctioned sportswear. Designed and marketed to insure modesty as well as performance, this 'halal/religiously permissible' attire includes bathing suits, tracksuits, and a host of other sport-related outfits deemed both practical and Islamically correct. New materials and innovative designs are attracting Muslim female athletes whose religious and moral values, and in some cases their respected government demand a modest presentation.

Similarly, well-educated young professional Muslim women are buying into the notion of sexy 'halal' lingerie and other intimate apparel for enjoyment in the privacy of their homes. As one might imagine, this segment of Islamic commodification (intimate apparel) is enjoying particular success in the market. When it comes to sexy yet religiously approved undergarment, there can be no underestimating interest and demand.

Finally, the halal-conscious consumer is paying impressively high prices for fashionably chic handbags, leather belts, and footwear. Of the clothing categories mentioned above, the category that actually supports Muslim women's success, and creates equality between Muslim female athletes and their non-Muslim "sisters", is sportswear.

To summarize, this proposal discusses 1)halal approved sports apparel for Muslim women 2) the marketing and sale of Islamically acceptable intimate wear 3) halal accessories produced for the devout yet discerning consumer 4) halal/haram debates concerning the marketing of aforementioned goods, and 5) challenges merchants face in advertising and displaying such goods—especially in religiously conservative (Islamic) environments.

### **Conversion to and From Islam in Southeast Asia**

Theodore Wright, State University of New York, Albany

Since the BJP came to power in India last year, there has been a concerted campaign “ghar wapsi” to bring Muslim and Christian converts back into the Hindu community. One cabinet minister even set the goal of an entirely Hindu India by 2018. This is a longtime political issue going back at least to the 1920s Shuddhi movement and was most recently surfaced in 1981 when a village of Harijans in Tamilnadu converted to Islam resulting in a revival of the Hindu Parishad in the North. The panel will examine both contemporary issues such as Jenkins’ on state and national laws prohibiting “forced or induced” conversions and Omar’s on Islamic theological views on conversion including a case study of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan’s conciliatory activities in al-Risala.

The outcome of centuries of such disputes has been that British India had only 24% Muslims amidst an overwhelming Hindu majority despite Mughal rule over most of the subcontinent, whereas Indonesia, much further from the Middle East center of Islam has over 90% Muslim population. Wright’s paper will attempt to explain this anomaly using Richard Eaton’s recent analysis.

### **Secularism is Not the Solution: Why Muslims Women and Catholic Women Need To Be in Dialogue**

Kate Mroz, Boston College

Muslim women and Western Christian women are often assumed to be in opposition, leading to the dangerous notion that one group must “save” the other. However, patriarchy is manifest in both Islam and Western Christianity, and in particular, Roman Catholicism. According to Paul Heck, a Roman Catholic who has studied Islam for over two decades, “despite varied understanding of the way in which God’s word is revealed, Christians and Muslims alike recognize the word of God as the highest priority, preferring it over their own will.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, for many Muslim women and Catholic women, bracketing one’s faith in the public realm, as has been suggested by political theorists such as John Rawls and Jürgen Habermas, is not possible, neither is accepting the notion that feminism must be a purely secular endeavor. This poses an interesting conundrum: How can Muslim women and Catholic women retain devotion to their respective faith traditions, while recognizing that dialogue with one another is crucial? Jesus, although not considered divine, is acknowledged in the Quran and by Muslim thinkers as a laudable prophet. Catholics, in the spirit of the Second Vatican Council, are called to recognize God in new places and changing contexts, and in the words of Catholic philosopher Jean Louis Chretien, see that “any human face can become theophanic.”<sup>2</sup> Therefore, Catholic and Muslim women can listen to and learn from one another without giving up their unique religious beliefs. Together, they can offer a more powerful response to the suffering and oppression of women that occurs, albeit in different ways, across cultures and religious traditions.

## **Session 5 The Arab Spring and its Aftermath**

### **Egypt’s Economic Development and Challenges post Arab Spring**

Mohammed Akacem, Metropolitan State University of Denver

Dennis Miller, Baldwin Wallace University

The paper will be a political economy approach to Egypt’s future development. It will look at the state of the economy and analyze the critical areas and constraints to future economic growth.

Moreover, it will also examine the aborted transition to democracy in the post Arab spring era and examine the impact, if any, to future foreign direct investment that the country needs to alleviate its reliance on external debt and avoid having to approach the IMF. The GCC’s aid to Egypt and its implication will be also be examined.

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<sup>1</sup>Paul Heck, *Common Ground: Islam, Christianity, and Religious Pluralism* (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2009), 53.

<sup>2</sup>Jean-Louis Chretien, *The Ark of Speech*, Trans. Andrew Brown (New York: Routledge, 2004), 109.

## **Session 6: Religion and Authority in Muslim Societies I**

**Migrating South: American Sponsored Christian Settlements in Mindanao**  
Marybeth T. Acac, Temple University

This paper addresses early American views of Moros and the determination of the United States to create a unified Philippine Republic via the conferral of land ownership, sponsored settlements, and civil authority to Christian Filipinos in Mindanao. This paper takes an historical approach by retracing key political and economic policies enacted between 1898 and 1916, when the United States first assumed control over the Philippines until the Jones Law<sup>3</sup> was authorized. In piecing together policies that encouraged migration southward and *eventually to the formation* of an integrated Philippines, this paper illustrates fundamental historical narratives shared today by many “Filipino” Muslims, both in the Philippines and abroad.

**The Flock of a Shepherd or the Sovereign Citizen: Ayatollah Montazeri on the Role of the People**  
Sussan Siavoshi, Trinity University, San Antonio, TX

For more than half of his life the Grand Ayatollah Hossein Ali Montazeri, a onetime heir apparent to Ayatollah Khomeini the supreme leader of the Islamic Republic, promoted the idea of the people as the obedient followers of a wise and pious shepherd. He thought that such a submission to the judgment of the leader will not only protect people in this world but would prepare them for the next. His experience with the actual behavior of the leaders of the Islamic Republic forced him to rethink his position. By the end of his life in 2009 Montazeri’s idea of the role of the people was drastically different from his earlier years. He now considered people citizens with agency and labelled them as the ultimate sovereign of the temporal state. How and why this change happened is the focus of this paper.

**How Jurisprudence and Mysticism Met: The Role of Religion in the State Foundation in Post-Revolutionary Iran**  
Leila Chamankhah, University of Exeter, UK

The Islamic Revolution of 1979 was unusual, not only because it lacked many of the common causes of revolutions such as defeat at war, financial crisis, peasant rebellion, or a disgruntled military, but also because it happened in a society which was enjoying a relatively good material wealth and prosperity. More bizarre was the theory of the guardianship of the jurist which had been invented by the leader of the revolution when he was in exile in Iraq. In accordance with Ayatollah Khomeini’s ideals, Shii jurists were to take direct political roles in the establishment of Islamic government. The jurist, unlike the past, should not only be involved in the daily issues of believers, but in the ambitions of a statesman who claimed to rule on behalf of God and the Imam. Moreover, this theory put an end to the problem of relationship between state and religion. Despite being two separate realms, the relationship between the faith of Shiism and monarchy was one of cooperation, rivalry, or animosity, but now for the first time in the entire history of the Shiism, jurists were challenged with the appealing offer of taking direct political role. Ayatollah Khomeini’s ideal, however, was rooted in the intellectual developments of 19<sup>th</sup> century Persia and should be regarded as the fruit of the marriage between political jurisprudence and political theology.

In this paper, I will develop an argument for the conception of political jurisprudence and political theology. Then I will discuss intellectual developments of eighteenth and nineteenth century Persia. Finally, I will examine some key texts of the late Ayatollah Khomeini in which he came to anticipate the formation of the Islamic government and defend the political role of Shii jurist.

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<sup>3</sup> The Jones Law was formally entitled “*An Act to Declare the Purpose of the People of the United States as to the Future Political Status of the People of the Philippines Islands, and to Provide a more Autonomous Government for Those Islands*” (Gowing, 1983, 268)

## **Session 7: Religion and Authority in Muslim Societies II**

### **A Wahhabi Ethic in Saudi Arabia : *Power, Authority, and Religion in a Muslim Society***

Abdullah F. Alrebh, Michigan State University

This paper incorporates Weberian insights about religion, power, and bureaucratic authority to discuss a Wahhabi ethic in Saudi Arabia. The discussion considers similarities and differences between Saudi Wahhabism and this-worldly Protestantism, focusing on how religious idea systems contributed to the transformation of social, political, and economic institutions in their respective societies. A parallel is drawn between Calvinist Protestantism in the West and Wahhabism in Saudi Arabia. Just as Calvinist Protestantism encouraged its adherents to structure their lives in accord with their religious beliefs, Wahabbism in Saudi Arabia aimed to bring society back to God and God back to society through the enforcement of Divine law (Sharia). The paper presents a discussion of the rise of the Saud family and the propagation of religious teachings which served to legitimate the power and authority of the Saud regime.

### **Islamism, State Policy and Social Resilience in Indonesia**

Maufur, Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies (ICRS) Yogyakarta/  
State Institute for Islamic Studies (STAIN) Kediri

Islamism or the so-called political Islam is conceptualized as a socio-political, rather than a solely religious phenomenon. Inherently characterized by a singularly defined religious concept of purity and a clear-cut distinction between “we” and “them”, it manifests into a various form of activities where “terrorism” is the most violent one. Following a series of terrorist attacks in the country, the Indonesian government through The National Counter-Terrorism Agency (*BNPT*) launched a de-radicalization program that aims to restrain and combat religious radicalism and “terrorism”, particularly through its “stick and carrot” approach. Despite its success story in pacifying some terrorist activities in the country, the program is severely criticized for not dealing with the root causes of terrorism. It is also considered counter-productive as it creates resistance and hatred toward the state for specifically targeting Islam and, therefore, it provides incentives for religious radicalism and terrorism. The research conducted in Yogyakarta Province found that that Islamism spreads and gains acceptance in the certain sections in public through certain social channels and agencies. However, this paper argues that the existing cultural virtues and local wisdom could create social resilience against such radicalization process.

### **Minoritization and Criminalization of Shia Islam in Indonesia**

Dr. Dicky Sofjan, Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies (ICRS)

Most adherents of Islam in Southeast Asia, including Indonesian Muslims (who by far are the largest Muslim country in the world), claim to be followers of *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah* (Sunni) school of thought. However, unlike popular belief, Shia Islam has been around in the region much longer than the birth of the region’s modern, post-colonial nation-states, even prior to the establishment of the Indonesia’s two most influential and powerful socio-religious anchors Muhammadiyah (1912) and Nahdatul Ulama (1926). In fact, scholars have argued that Shia Islam has been an integral part of Southeast Asian history, and that its influence goes way back before the 1978/79 Islamic Revolution of Iran (see Jamil 1968, Acheh 1977, Hasymi 1983, Marcinkowski 2005, Zulkifli 2009, Sofjan 2013). Shia Islam’s influence in Indonesia extends beyond religiosity, rituals and intellectual tradition, but also historical artifacts, material culture, language and literature. Ironically, despite the ongoing democratization process, Shia Muslims continue to struggle for their existence, social acceptance and political recognition. Their presence in Indonesia have been challenged lately by some Islamic religious authorities, backed by Sunni Salafi/Wahhabi antagonists, who seek to monopolize the definition of Islam, and impose its narrow interpretations, dogma, and restrict certain religious practices. This paper thus attempts to analyze ‘the Shia threat’ by examining the increasing intolerance and persecution against Shia Muslims by way of minoritization and criminalization, while deploying

public discourse on religious mutiny, blasphemy and apostasy.

**Contesting Religious Authority and State Legitimacy in Pakistan**

Mashal Saif, Clemson University

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan and Pakistani ‘ulama are often viewed as competing religious authorities. Challenging this prevailing characterization, this paper argues for a more nuanced approach to the ‘ulama-state relationship that takes into account the ‘ulama’s desire for an Islamic state. I contend that while Pakistani ‘ulama contest their state’s religious authority they simultaneously and paradoxically help constitute it as a potentially competing religious actor by cultivating its Islamic identity.

Through making this broader assertion regarding the ‘ulama-state relationship, I propose a radical rethinking of the Council of Islamic Ideology (CII). The CII is a constitutional body that makes recommendations to the Parliament and the Provincial Assemblies about how to Islamize the state. Contrary to this official narrative of the CII’s functioning, I assert that the CII during the 2006-2009 period is best understood as a body that *indirectly* Islamized the state. It did so, I argue, by issuing recommendations that generated debates in the public sphere despite being mostly disregarded by state functionaries. ‘Ulama of various sects with no official positions in the state apparatus, participated in these debates and pressured state functionaries to acquiesce to their demands instead of the CII’s recommendations. These demands presented the ‘ulama’s views on how the religious identity of the state should be practically cultivated through changes in the structure and functioning of the state and its legislation. Thus, while highlighting the CII’s role in *indirectly* Islamizing the state, I also emphasize the power of non-state ‘ulamato practically Islamize the state.

***The American Council for the Study of Islamic Societies extends its  
thanks and appreciation to the participants of the conference and to  
Villanova University***

*Established in 1983, the American Council for the Study of Islamic Societies is a private, non-profit, non-political organization of scholars and others interested in the study of Muslim societies from religious, cultural, economic, social and political perspectives. Its objectives are to promote high standards of scholarship and instruction, to facilitate communication among scholars and the public through conferences and publications, and to promote cooperation among persons and organizations, both in the United States and abroad, concerned with the scholarly study of Muslim societies.*

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