

Islamophobia Production and Re-Defining Global "Security" Agenda for the 21st Century

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~~ SPEAKER BIOS ~~

Rabab Abdulhadi is Associate Professor of Ethnic Studies, Associate Professor of Race and Resistance Studies, and Senior Scholar, Arab and Muslim Ethnicities and Diasporas Initiative at San Francisco State University. She is a long-time feminist activist and scholar who has contributed to the struggle for Palestinian self-determination and the well-being of Palestinian women. From 1982 to 1988, she was the Director of Political and International Relations at the Middle East Research Center in New York.

Sirin Adlbi Sibai (Spain) is a researcher in the Mediterranean Studies Workshop in the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid. She has been a visiting scholar in the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) at University of London, in the Hassan II University, Ain Chock in Casablanca, Morocco. She is working on a book manuscript entitled *Coloniality, Women and Islam: Constructing and Deconstruction of Muslim Woman*.

<http://sites.google.com/site/teimproject/-quienes-somos/sirin-adlbi>

Sumbul Ali-Karamali grew up in Southern California, answering questions about Islam. She holds a B.A. from Stanford University, a J.D. from the University of California at Davis, and a graduate degree in Islamic law from the University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies. She has served as a teaching assistant in Islamic Law at SOAS and a research associate at the Centre of Islamic and Middle Eastern Law in London. Her book, "The Muslim Next Door: the Qur'an, the Media, and that Veil Thing," is an academically reliable introduction to what Muslims believe and practice, but one written in the personal, anecdotal, everyday context of growing up Muslim in America. <http://www.muslimnextdoor.com>

Nihad Awad is the Executive Director and co-founder of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the largest non-profit Muslim civil rights and advocacy organization in the United States. In 1997, Mr. Awad served on Vice President Al Gore's Civil Rights Advisory Panel to the White House Commission on Aviation Safety and Security. In 2004 he was named one of National Journal's more than 100 Most Influential People in the US, whose ideas will help shape the debate over public policy issues for the next decade.

Mr. Awad is a regular participant in the U.S. Department of State's "International Visitors Program" which welcomes foreign dignitaries, journalists and academics who are currently visiting the President of the United States. Mr. Awad has testified before both houses of the U.S. Congress on matters involving Muslims in America. He is a member of the United States Institute of Peace's Advisory Committee on US-Muslim Relations and currently enjoys the position of U.S. Representative of the Vatican-affiliated International Committee on Muslim-Christian (Catholic) Dialogue.

For the 2000, 2004 and 2008 presidential elections, Mr. Awad was a key figure in the American Muslim Political Coordinating Committee (AMPCC) and, subsequently, the American Muslim Taskforce on Civil Rights and Elections, an umbrella organization of the largest American Muslim organizations, which helped to create the first Muslim voting bloc for a presidential election.

He has also spoken at prestigious educational institutions, including Harvard, Stanford, Yale and Johns Hopkins Universities. He was also a featured speaker at the 2002 Reuters Forum on global cooperation at Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism. In addition, he actively works with local and national interfaith leaders and organizations in the interest of promoting positive relations among people of diverse faith communities.

Mr. Awad spoke at the 2005 International Islamic Conference hosted by King Abdullah II in Amman, Jordan. Mr. Awad spearheaded the “Not in the Name of Islam” anti-terrorism fatwa (religious ruling) issued by the Fiqh Council of North America and endorsed by the 300 largest mosques and Islamic centers in the United States, a crucial milestone in the history of the American Muslim community.

He has been frequently interviewed on national and international media such as CNN, BBC World Service, PBS, C-SPAN, National Public Radio, The New York Times, Washington Post, Voice of America and Al-Jazeera. CAIR news releases are disseminated to hundreds of thousands of people worldwide on a daily basis. After the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995, Mr. Awad flew to Oklahoma to aid in the relief effort. He personally met with Governor Frank Keating and gave the governor a sizable donation for the relief effort and victims’ fund on behalf of the American Muslim community.

Mr. Awad has also personally met with Presidents William Clinton and George W. Bush, as well as former Secretaries of State Madeline Albright and Colin L. Powell, to discuss the needs of Muslim community. Numerous law enforcement agencies, organizations and Fortune 500 companies—including Nike and DKNY—have benefited from CAIR educational seminars on Islamic traditions and culture. In addition to resolving employment discrimination issues involving American Muslims, Mr. Awad has also conducted over 100 public relations and media training seminars in the US.A

A few days after September 11, 2001, Mr. Awad was one of the few American Muslim leaders invited by the White House to join President Bush in a press conference at the Islamic Center of Washington, the oldest mosque in Washington, DC.

Mr. Awad is the author of the paper, “Muslim-Americans in Mainstream America,” published in the Feb/Mar. 2000 edition of “The Link” magazine.

Zahra Billoo, Programs and Outreach Director, [Council on American Islamic Relations](#) (SF Bay Area office)

Zahra Billoo is the Programs and Outreach Director of the Council on American Islamic Relations, San Francisco Bay Area office, a national American Muslim civil rights advocacy organization. While in college, Zahra was a student leader serving as an Executive Officer for the California State Student Association and Muslim Student Association (MSA) West. She has been a devoted labor rights advocate for years and started as an intern for a local chapter of the California Faculty Association, a labor union for California State University (CSU) faculty members. She later worked as Field Organizer for the Service Employees International Union, and was awarded the Peggy Browning Fund Fellowship to work with the National Employment Law Project. Zahra graduated Cum Laude from California State University, Long Beach with a B.S. in Human Resources Management and B.A. in Political Science. She completed her law degree at the University of California, Hastings College of Law, and was recently admitted to the California Bar. http://ca.cair.com/sfba/news/zahra_billoo_interviewed_at_mca_on_kalw

Max Blumenthal is an award-winning journalist and bestselling author whose articles and video documentaries have appeared in The New York Times, The Los Angeles Times, The Daily Beast, The Nation, The Guardian, The Independent Film Channel, The Huffington Post, Salon.com, Al Jazeera English and many other publications. He is a writing fellow for the Nation Institute. His book, Republican Gomorrah: Inside The Movement That Shattered The Party, is a New York Times and Los Angeles Times bestseller. <http://maxblumenthal.com/>

Ms. Houria Bouteldja is the spokesperson of Mouvement des Indigènes de la République (MIR), one of the most progressive and interesting political movements in France today. Her critique of the critical theory and ethics of the European left from a decolonial perspective constitutes a crucial contribution to a future postcolonial horizon. In her talks, Ms. Bouteldja will address the articulation of Islam and feminism in France today, the possibility of an alliance between decolonial struggles and anti-capitalist movements, and MIR’s involvement in transnational

politics. Apart from her role in MIR, Ms. Bouteldja teaches at the Centro de Estudios para el Dialogo Intercultural in Spain, which organizes the Critical Islamic Thought Summer School in Granada.

<http://www.indigenes-republique.fr/bloghouria>

Thomas Cincotta (project director) heads PRA's nationwide investigation of regional counterintelligence strategies. A criminal defense lawyer, he led the Denver chapter of the National Lawyers Guild (NLG) in support of peace groups and others during the 2008 Democratic National Convention, and connected progressive lawyers with other community efforts around sentencing reform, immigrant rights, and police misconduct. He also represented migrant farm workers and served on the board of El Centro Humanitario, Denver's first day laborer center. He currently serves on the NLG's national board and international committee. Before becoming a lawyer, Cincotta worked as a labor representative for UNITE HERE Local 217 in Providence, Rhode Island.

<http://www.publiceye.org/aboutpra/prapeople.html>

Veena B. Dubal is a Staff Attorney at the Asian Law Caucus. Veena joined the Caucus as a Berkeley Law Foundation Fellow in 2008 when she began a taxi project to help address and remediate the labor conditions in San Francisco's largely immigrant taxi driver community. Currently, she also focuses on issues of civil rights in the context of national security, including racial profiling at the border, local law enforcement profiling, and FBI surveillance. Veena received the Northern California South Asian Bar Association Public Interest Attorney of the Year Award in 2009, and she currently serves as the Co-Chair of Civil Rights for the South Asian Bar Association of Northern California.

Prior to coming to the Caucus, Veena was on a Fulbright Scholarship in India where she completed Ph.D. research on access to justice and the legal aftermath of the anti-minority violence that swept the state of Gujarat in 2002. While in law school at the University of California Berkeley, Veena served as a community activist working on issues of racism, imperialism and war through her capacity as volunteer coordinator at the Alliance of South Asians Taking Action. During the tenure of her joint J.D./PH.D. program at Berkeley, she was awarded the Jurisprudence Award in Law and Middle Eastern Societies, the Critical Language Study Award for Hindi study, the Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship, the South Asian Law Student Association Scholarship for Community Organizing, the Adams Scholarship, and was Associate Editor of the Asian Law Journal. Her community publications include, "The FBI Witch-hunt in Lodi," (co-written) and "Hum Kar Sakte Hain?" Veena received her B.A. with honors from Stanford University in International Relations with a minor in Feminist Studies.

<http://www.asianlawcaucus.org/alc/about/staff/veena-dubal/>

Marianne Farina, CSC, PhD is a religious sister of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Cross, Notre Dame, Indiana. She is an assistant professor at the Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology in Berkeley, California. Sister Marianne teaches courses that focus on subjects such as Social Ethics, Virtue, Sexual Ethics, Philosophical Ethics, Islamic Philosophy, Human Rights, Faith Formation, and Muslim-Christian Dialogue. She received a Master of Arts in Pastoral Theology from Santa Clara University and a PhD in Theological Ethics from Boston College. Sister Marianne worked for 11 years in Bangladesh as a teacher, pastoral assistant and school supervisor. While in Bangladesh she ministered with Muslim, Christian, Hindu, Buddhist and Tribal families and communities. With more than 25 years of experience in education and pastoral ministry, Sister Marianne has worked in education and social development projects that promote social justice and interfaith dialogue. Over the last three years, she has traveled in Africa and Indonesia as a delegate and teacher covering topics such as "Religion and Democracy," "Methods for Cross-Cultural Understanding," "Interfaith Dialogue," and "Human Rights."

Sr. Marianne inspires students to engage in theological/philosophical study and discourse on the critical topics facing today's global communities. She guides them to find resources for further explorations and to develop the skills necessary to share knowledge with others. Her teaching style includes lectures and seminar discussion.

<http://www.dspt.edu/197810611143931273/blank/browse.asp?a=383&BMDRN=2000&BCOB=0&c=55389>

Keith P. Feldman is Assistant Professor of Comparative Ethnic Studies at UC Berkeley. He received his doctorate in English Literature at the University of Washington in 2008. His research and teaching focuses on the intertwined histories of the African, Arab, and Jewish Diasporas; 19th and 20th century U.S. popular culture; theories of race and ethnicity; and critical theory. He has published in a variety of scholarly venues, including *CR: New Centennial*, *MELUS*, *ALIF: Journal of Comparative Poetics*, and *Theory and Event*, and is currently at work on his first book manuscript, titled "Special Relationships: Israel, Palestine, and U.S. Imperial Culture."

Ramón Grosfoguel is an associate professor in Chicano/Latino Studies at UC Berkeley. ***Selected publications:***

- 2009 - *Geopolitics and Trajectories of Development: The Cases of Korean, Japan, Taiwan, Germany and Puerto Rico*. Co-edited with Sungho Kang. Forthcoming from the Institute of East Asian Studies, UC Press.
- 2009 - "Caribbean Migration to Western Europe and the United States" (with Anna Margarita Cervantes-Rodriguez and Brice Mielants), in *Caribbean Migration to Western Europe and the United States: Essays on Incorporation, Identity and Citizenship*, co-edited with Eric Mileants and Margarita Cervantes-Rodriguez.
- 2008 - "Latinos and Decolonization of the US Empire in the 21st Century." *Social Science Information* 47(4):605-22.
- 2008 - "World-System Analysis and Postcolonial Studies: A Call for Dialogue from the 'Coloniality of Power' Approach", in Revathi Krishnaswamy and John C. Hawley, eds., *The Postcolonial and the Global*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 94-104.
- 2007 - "The Epistemic Decolonial Turn: Beyond Political Economy Paradigms." *Cultural Studies* 21(2-3):211-23.
- 2006 - "The Long-Durée: Entanglement Between Islamophobia and Racism in the Modern-Colonial Capitalist/Patriarchal World-System." *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge* V(1):Fall.
- 2003 - *Colonial Subjects: Puerto Rican Subjects in a Global Perspective*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- 2002 - *The Modern/Colonial/Capitalist World-System in the Twentieth Century: Global Processes, Antisystemic Movements, and the Geopolitics of Knowledge*. Edited with Ana Margarita Cervantes-Rodriguez. New York: Praeger.

Dr. Dina Ibrahim is an Associate Professor in the Broadcast and Electronic Communication Arts department at San Francisco State University, where she teaches Radio and Television News Production courses. She is also a co-producer of the radio show Arab Talk on KPOO 89.5 FM in San Francisco. She has reported for the BBC World Service Radio in London, CNN in Atlanta and Cairo, NPR in Austin, Texas, UPI in Cairo and Arab News newspaper in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. Her research interests are in the area of American television news representation of Arabs and Muslims. Her B.A. and M.A. are from the American University in Cairo and her Ph.D. is from the University of Texas at Austin.

<http://bss.sfsu.edu/meis/Faculty/dibrahim.html>

Munir Jiwa is the founding director of the Center for Islamic Studies and Assistant Professor of Islamic Studies at the Graduate Theological Union. He holds a Ph.D. and M.Phil. in Anthropology from Columbia University and an M.T.S. in World Religions from Harvard Divinity School. His research interests include Islam and Muslims in the West, media, aesthetics, religious pluralism and interfaith dialogue.

<http://www.gtu.edu/academics/faculty-directory/g-i/munir-jiwa>

Suad Joseph is Professor of Anthropology and Women and Gender Studies at the University of California, Davis and Director of the Middle East/South Asia Studies Program. Her research has focused on her native Lebanon, on the politicization of religion, on women in local communities, on women, family and state, and on questions of self, citizenship, and rights. Her current research is a long-term longitudinal study on how children in a village of Lebanon learn their notions of rights, responsibilities and citizenship in the aftermath of the Civil War.

She is founder and facilitator of the Arab Families Working Group (AFWG), a group of 15 scholars undertaking comparative, interdisciplinary research on Arab families in Palestine, Lebanon, Egypt and the United States. AFWG is completing Volume I of the AFWG edited series with Syracuse University Press. She is founder of the Association for Middle East Women's Studies (AMEWS) and co-founder of AMEW's Journal for Middle East Women's Studies (JMEWS) published by Indiana University Press. She is also founder and facilitator for the American University of Beirut, the American University in Cairo, the Lebanese American University, the University of California and Bir Zeit University Collaborative Initiative. She is General Editor of the *Encyclopedia of Women and Islamic Cultures*. Her edited books include *Gender and Citizenship in the Middle East* (Syracuse, 2000), *Intimate Selving in Arab Families* (Syracuse, 1999). Her co-edited books include: *Building Citizenship in Lebanon* (Lebanese American University, 1999); *Women and Citizenship in Lebanon* (1999) and *Women and Power in the Middle East* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001). http://sioseph.ucdavis.edu/ewic/bios/Suad_bio.htm

Maxwell Leung is an assistant professor in the Critical Studies Program. His research explores the relationship between the representation and expression of state power and its regulation of subjectivity, agency, and culture. His primary research interests are hate violence studies, law and society, critical race theory, intersectionality, and poststructuralist theory. His secondary research interests include visual sociology, popular culture, Asian American Studies, and comparative Ethnic Studies.

Leung's dissertation, "Governmentalizing Hate Violence," examines the construction of race, gender, and sexual orientation as objects of knowledge of and for governance in federal hate-crimes legislation. He contends this process, called "governmentalizing identity," becomes the primary way through which state power is rationally exercised across a large scale of population. Thus, federal legislative and judicial responses to hate violence are less about preventing various bias-motivated crimes, and more of a political rationality that produces and legitimates domains of state intervention. He is currently revising his dissertation for publication. In 2010, Leung was appointed Associate Researcher to the Islamophobia Research and Documentation Project at UC Berkeley. Leung's project with the Center is called, "Visualizing Islamophobia: A Visual Ethnography of Arab and Muslim American Identity," that asks how Arab and Muslim Americans are making sense of their identities in the United States today, where they are marked and represented as disloyal, unassimilable, and dangerous to national security. How have their everyday experiences altered their self-perceptions, and more importantly, the American ideals of full participation, inclusion, and multiculturalism? This interdisciplinary visual, sociological, and ethnographic project is designed to discover the ways in which Arab and Muslim American identity is impacted by and negotiated in an acute period of Islamophobia in the United States. I define Islamophobia as racialized terror constructed through the intersections of xenophobia, anti-Islamic sentiments, and the discourse of the War on Terror. The central concerns of this project are the nature of Arab and Muslim American personal narratives in a time of intense racial and xenophobic anxieties, and how Arab and Muslim Americans make sense of their identity and place in American culture. While this project properly falls under the ethnographic tradition, I make the case for a visual ethnographic approach, specifically using photography as a robust research method for recording and comparing changes in identity over time, documenting what these changes look like, and providing an invaluable body of knowledge that complements already existing scholarship on racial identity, community studies, and ethnic studies of the Arab and Muslim American experience.

Prior to his appointment at CCA, Leung was a visiting assistant professor in the Sociology Department and the Program in American Studies at Grinnell College in Iowa. He has also taught at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia, Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, CA, and many other institutions. He has won numerous teaching awards for his creative pedagogical approaches to teaching the social sciences.

Leung was born and raised in San Francisco, and is fond of the local colloquialism, "Hella." He has demonstrated skilled proficiency in its use as only a true native of San Francisco can. For example, "It's hella foggy today," "Foucault is hella deep," "The Niners are hella awesome!" and, most important of all, "I hella hate the Dodgers." <http://www.cca.edu/academics/faculty/mleung>

Arzu Merali is Director of Research for the Islamic Human Rights Commission (UK). Arzu Merali is a writer and activist based in northwest London, UK.

Nadine Naber received her Ph.D. in Socio-Cultural Anthropology from the University of California, Davis. Her research and teaching contribute to the field, Arab American Studies, by incorporating the methods and theories of Women of Color, Transnational, and Post-Colonial Feminist Studies. Her work utilizes ethnographic methods that allow for theorizing from lived experience. She has contributed a diasporic Arab feminist critique that approaches Arab American concepts of gender and sexuality at the nexus of a dynamic interplay between immigration, assimilation, racialization, and U.S. imperial formations. She has also developed feminist analyses of the changing realities of race, gender, and religion among Arab Americans before and after September 11th. Her current research focuses on the significance of family, gender, and sexuality to practices of diasporic nationalism among Arab Americans in the context of homeland wars. Nadine Naber is co-founder of the Arab Women's Solidarity Association, North America (cyber AWSA); Arab Movement of Women arising for Justice (AMWAJ) and Arab Women's Activist Network (AWAN) and actively engaged in INCITE! Women of Color against Violence. <http://www.lsa.umich.edu/women/faculty/facbio.asp?ID=42>

Publications:

- (Forthcoming) *Articulating Arabness: Gender and Cultural Identity in the Diaspora*. New York University Press.
- (Forthcoming) *Arab and Arab American Feminisms*. Syracuse University Press. Rabab Abdulhadi, Evelyn Alsultany, and Nadine Naber, eds.
- (2009) "Transnational Families Under Siege: Lebanese Shi'a in Dearborn, Michigan and the 2006 war on Lebanon." *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies*. 5(3): 145-174).
- (2008) *Race and Arab Americans Before and After 9/11: From Invisible Citizens to Visible Subjects*, Amaney Jamal and Nadine Naber, eds.
- (2006) "Arab American Femininities: Beyond Arab Virgin/American(ized) Whore." *Journal of Feminist Studies*. 32(1).
- (2005) *MIT Journal of Middle East Studies. Special Issue on Arab American Feminisms*. (Nadine Naber, Rabab Abdullhadi, and Evelyn Alsultany, eds.)
- (2005) "Muslim First-Arab Second: A Strategic Politics of Race and Gender." *The Muslim World*. 95(4): 479-496
- (2000) "Ambiguous Insiders, An Investigation of Arab American Invisibility." *Journal of Ethnic and Racial Studies*. 23(1): 37-61.

Dr. Kwame NIMAKO (MA, Sociology; PhD Economics, University of Amsterdam) teaches International Relations at the *Graduate School of Social Sciences* (GSSS)(www.graduateschoolsocialsciences.nl) Universiteit van Amsterdam. He worked as a *Tinbergen Fellow* at the Department of Agricultural and Development Economics (Tinbergen Institute, 1989-1991) and Lecturer in Race and Ethnic Relations and Development Studies at the *Centre for Race and Ethnic Studies* (CRES, 1986-1991) at the same university. Dr. Nimako is also President of **OBEE Consultancy**, which he founded in 1992, and has consulted for several private and public institutions. He has consulted for the Amsterdam Municipal Council and the Dutch Ministry of Home Affairs (The Hague) on Urban Renewal projects and Ethnic Minorities/Immigrants Policy. In 1995 and 1996 he was a *rapporteur* on the evaluation of Social Renewal Projects in five cities (Amsterdam, Deventer, Nijmegen, Rotterdam, and Utrecht) in the Netherlands.

He was (1996-1997) the Principal Research Consultant for Focus Consultancy Ltd (UK) on the ACP and ODT* Migrants in Europe Project commissioned by the General-Secretariat of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States (in Brussels). Specifically, the ACP Migrants in Europe project recorded a number of significant issues which affect the everyday life of African, Caribbean and Pacific diaspora in the European Union; these included problems which rotate around citizenship and mobility, 'human rights', and 'racism' and 'xenophobia'. In his capacity as Principal Research Consultant he produced 1) **Demographic Survey Report** and 2) **Status and Legality Survey Report** on ACP and ODT

Migrants in the European Union (EU), and co-authored four **Guide Books** for the 70 African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States. *Overseas Departments and Territories

Dr. Nimako is the author/co-author of some 30 books, reports and guide books on economic development, ethnic relations, social policy, urban renewal, and migration. Among his works are:

1. **The Dutch Atlantic: Slavery, Abolition and Emancipation** (co-written with Glenn Willemsen) (forthcoming, London, Pluto Press, Spring, 2011)
2. *Nkrumah, African Awakening and Neo-colonialism: How Black America awakened Nkrumah and Nkrumah awakened Black America*, In: **The Black Scholar**, (The Free Library, June 2010)
3. *Theorizing Black Europe and African Diaspora: Implications for Citizenship, Nativism and Xenophobia* (with Stephen Small) In: **Black Europe and the African Diaspora**: ed. D. C. Hine, T. D. Keaton & S. Small (University of Illinois Press, 2009)
4. *African Regional Groupings and Emerging Chinese Conglomerates* in **Big Business and Economic Development: Conglomerates and Economic Groups in Developing Countries and Transition Economies under Globalization**, ed. Barbara Hogenboom and Alex E. Fernandez Jilberto (Routledge, London. 2007)
5. *Designs and (Co)-incidents: Cultures of Scholarship and Public Policy on Immigrants/Minorities in the Netherlands* (with Philomena Essed), **International Journal of Comparative Sociology** (2006, vol. 47: 281-312)
6. *Labour and Ghana's Debt Burden: The Democratization of Dependency* In: **Labour Relations in Development**, ed. Alex E. Fernandez Jilberto et.al (Routledge, London 2002)
7. *Repositioning Social Policy: North-South dialogue in the context of donor-recipient relation*, In: *Bridging the Gaps: Essays on economic, social and cultural opportunities at global and local levels* (**NIZW International Centre, Utrecht, 2002**)
8. *The struggle for social and physical space* (In: **De Bijlmer Vernieuwt** (Rooilijn, nummer 6, juni 2002, Amsterdam, in Dutch)
9. **Beyond Multiculturalisation: Amsterdam Southeast as Strategic Location** (Rotterdam: Gramo de Combinatie, 1998, in Dutch),
10. **Economic Change and Political Conflict in Ghana, 1600-1990** (Thesis Publishers, Amsterdam, 1991),

He is also a contributor to a book on **Liberalization in the Developing World: Institutional and economic changes in Latin America, Africa and Asia** (Routledge, London, 1996) edited by Alex E. Fernández Jilberto and André Mommen. <http://www.dialogoglobal.com/barcelona/people.php>

Abdulkader H. Sinno - I was born in Beirut, Lebanon to wonderful and loving parents who instilled in me a passion for learning. I was three years old when the Lebanese Civil War started, and I emigrated to the United States in its last year. I was eighteen, and decided I had enough. I began by studying aerospace engineering in the US, but soon discovered I had a greater passion for the humanities and social sciences. I switched to an interdisciplinary major (Jewish studies) and wrote an honors thesis on religious gatherings to honor saints in Israel.

Growing up in a country torn by civil war left many from my cohort feeling powerless and vulnerable. The events that shaped our lives seemed too overwhelming and unfathomable. Some tried to make sense of them through conspiracy theories or elaborate explanations. Others fatalistically gave up on understanding what drove the behavior of belligerents. I decided to learn more, and spent my years as a graduate student at UCLA, a fellow at CISAC (Stanford) and a faculty member at IU studying conflict processes. My book *Organizations at War* distills my understanding of the processes that govern the evolution and outcomes of civil wars.

I am very lucky for doing what I love to do. I once erroneously thought of academia as a career, but in fact it is a passion and a calling. I enjoy performing original research at the cutting edge of knowledge to solve great puzzles of collective human behavior. I experience real happiness when I teach my students to think rigorously and to feel the urge to learn. And I believe, now more than ever, in the need for academics to influence the public

discourse through reasoned and informed arguments. Academics are uniquely positioned to be the voice of reason in a public sphere increasingly dominated by hatred, partisanship, discrimination, intolerance and fear. This is why academic freedom (shielding scholars from the influence of ideologues and politicians) is so important, and why ideologues are trying to subvert it. One of my major concerns is the increased readiness of some politicians, religious leaders, and ideologically-motivated organizations to restrict civil rights in our society, undermine the integrity of academic freedom, and marginalize Muslim Americans. All three concerns overlap. My recent edited volume, Muslims in Western Politics, presents policy recommendations by fifteen experts on these topics to help protect the rights of this vulnerable minority, consolidating liberal democracy in the West, and increasing security for all.

Causes dear to me:

Academic freedom...support the American Association of University Professors

Civil rights & liberties in the USA...support the ACLU

Civil rights around the world...support Amnesty International & Human Rights Watch

Civil rights of the Arab and Muslim communities in America...support CAIR and ADC

http://www.sinno.com/more_on_me.htm

Nargis Virani is Assistant Professor of Arabic at The New School, University Liberal Studies. She received her MA in 1991 and her PhD in 1999 in Arabic and Islamic Studies from Harvard University, and also holds a Post-Graduate Diploma in Education from London University and a Bachelor of Commerce from Bombay University. During the course of her Arabic Studies she studied at many prestigious institutions in the Muslim world such as the University of Jordan in Amman, the Bourguiba Institute in Tunis, and al-Azhar mosque in Cairo. At al-Azhar she studied the Qur'an with the Shaykh of al-Azhar and holds a *shahadah* (certificate) and an *ijazah* (permission to teach the Qur'an). Her areas of specialization are Arabic Language and Literature, Persian Language and Literature, Islamic Intellectual Thought, and Sufism. Her doctoral dissertation entitled 'I am the Nightingale of the Merciful Macaronic or Upside Down?' analyzed the *Mulamma'at*, the mixed-language poems, in Rumi's *Diwan*. In this work she proposes that 'speaking in many tongues' be looked at as a brilliant linguistic strategy employed by the mystic to fashion an imaginative form of apophatic discourse. She is currently converting her dissertation into a book which will also include a translation into English of all of Rumi's multilingual verses in Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Greek, and Armenian. Dr Virani's second book project is tentatively entitled, 'Qur'an in Muslim Literary Memory'. She hopes to analyze the use of the Qur'an by a variety of 'litterateurs' from secular, religious, and mystical backgrounds. ViraniN@newschool.edu

<http://www.newschool.edu/nssr/subpage.aspx?id=18926>

Ling-Chi Wang helped establish Asian American Studies and taught its first course in 1969. He is a founder of Chinese For Affirmative Action and the recipient of the Association for Asian American Studies Lifetime Achievement Award. Before his retirement in 2006, Professor Wang headed the program and the Ethnic Studies Department several times. He helped create the Ethnic Studies graduate program as well as the campus American Cultures requirement. Professor Wang co-founded the International Society for the Study of Chinese Overseas (ISSCO) in 1992, which has since been sponsoring conferences at sites around the world where Chinese diaspora communities are located. From the 1960s to the present, he led community struggles against Republic of China (Taiwan) control of Chinese American community politics. He has been at the forefront of language education rights advocacy for more than four decades, advocating for language immersion programs, inclusion of Asian languages by the Educational Testing Services and, most recently, the building of a San Francisco community college branch in San Francisco Chinatown, where Chinatown restaurant and garment workers might take ESL classes in and near the communities where they work and live. <http://aaads.berkeley.edu/faculty/ling-chi-wang/>