

VIRTUAL CONFERENCE ON MYTHS AND REALITIES ABOUT THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE CHANGING ROLE AND STATUS OF WOMEN



FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2023 – 8:45 A. M.- 4 P. M. EASTERN TIME

ORGANIZED BY

THE INTERNATIONAL STUDIES CONSORTIUM OF GEORGIA (ISCOG)*/CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF SERVICE

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THE MIDDLE EAST INSTITUTE (MEI), COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

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 **Reinhardt University**

DRAFT AGENDA

- 8:45 a. m. **WELCOME AND GREETINGS**
Dr. Angela W. Peters?
- 9:00 **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**
Rajgopal Sashti, Consortium Founding/Executive Director, Reinhardt University, Waleska, Georgia.
- 9:15 **TEACHING ABOUT THE MIDDLE EAST IN 10 QUIZ QUESTIONS**
Dr. Charles Kurzman, Philip Stadter Distinguished Professor of Sociology & Consortium Director, Center for Middle East and Islamic Studies, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina.
- 10:15 **QUESTION AND ANSWER – PARTICIPANTS**
- 10:45 **Break**
- 11:00 **MUSLIM WOMEN: DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN LIVED REALITIES AND RELIGIOUS TEXTS**
Dr. Hadia Mubarak, Assistant Professor of Religion, Department of Philosophy and Religion
Queens University of Charlotte, North Carolina.
- 11:45 **QUESTON AND ANSWER – PARTICIPANTS**
- 12:10 **LUNCH**
- 1:00 **MUSLIM WOMEN: MYTHS, IDEALS AND REALITIES**
Dr. Mona Hassan, Director, Islamic Studies Certificate/Associate Professor of Religious Studies & History
and International Comparative Studies and Gender, Sexuality, and Feminist Studies, Duke University,
Durham, North Carolina.
- 2:00 **QUESTION AND ANSWER – PARTICIPANTS**
- 2:20 **Break**
- 2:30 **MISPERCEPTIONS AND STEREOTYPES WESTERNERS HOLD ABOUT ISLAM AND THE MIDDLE
EAST AND VICE VERSA**
Dr. Michalle L. Browsers, Professor and Chair, Department of Politics and International Affairs, Wake
Forest University, Winston-Salem, North Carolina.
- 3:30 **QUESTION AND ANSWER – PARTICIPANTS**
- 3:50 **CLOSING REMARKS AND ADJOURNMENT**
Rajgopal Sashti, Consortium/Founding Executive Director, Reinhardt University
- 4:00 **ADJOURNMENT**

***Consortium Universities and Colleges:** Reinhardt University, Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, Albany State University, Alcorn State University (MS), Andrew College, Clayton State University, Columbus State University, Dalton State College, Edward Waters College (FL), Fort Valley State University, Georgia Highlands College, Gordon State College, Jacksonville State University (AL), Middle Georgia State University, South Georgia State College, Tennessee State University and the University of North Georgia.

Bios of Presenters and Hosts:

Dr. Charles Kurzman is a Professor of Sociology and Co-director of the [Center for Middle East and Islamic Studies](#) at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He is author of [The Missing Martyrs](#) (first edition, 2011; second edition, 2019), [Democracy Denied, 1905-1915](#) (2008), and [The Unthinkable Revolution in Iran](#) (2004), and editor of the anthologies [Liberal Islam](#) (1998) and [Modernist Islam, 1840-1940](#) (2002). **Education:** Ph.D., University of California at Berkeley, Department of Sociology, 1992.M.A., University of California at Berkeley, Department of Sociology, 1987. B.A., Harvard University, Committee on Social Studies, 1986. <https://kurzman.unc.edu/cv/>

Dr. Hadia Mubarak is an Assistant Professor of Religion at Queens University of Charlotte. She previously served as Assistant Professor of Religious Studies at Guilford College and as a Research Fellow at New York University-Abu Dhabi (NYUAD). Her forthcoming book, *Rebellious Wives, Neglectful Husbands: Controversies in Modern Qur'anic Commentaries* (Oxford University Press, March 2020), explores significant shifts in modern Qur'anic commentaries on the subject of women against the backdrop of broader historical, intellectual and political developments in the early twentieth century.

Mubarak's publications include, among others, "Women's Contemporary Readings of the Qur'an" in *The Routledge Companion to the Qur'an* (Routledge, 2021), ed. George Archer, Maria M. Dakake, Daniel A. Madigan; "Violent, Oppressed and Un-American: Muslim Women in the American Imagination" in *The Personal is Political*, ed. Christine Davis and Jon Crane (Brill, 2020); "Gender and Qur'anic Exegesis" in *The Routledge Handbook of Islam and Gender*, ed. Justine Howe (Brill, 2020); "Change Through Continuity: A Case Study of Q. 4:34 in Ibn 'Ashūr's Al-Taḥrīr wa-l-Tanwīr" (*Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 20.1, February 2018); among others.

Mubarak completed her Ph.D. in Islamic Studies from Georgetown University, where she specialized in modern and classical Qur'anic exegesis, Islamic feminism, and gender reform in the modern Muslim world. She currently serves as a scholar-in-residence with the Muslim Community Center of Charlotte (MCC) and a scholar with the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding (ISPU).

Dr. Mona Hassan is Associate Professor of Islamic Studies & History at Duke University in the departments of History and Religious Studies and the program of International Comparative Studies. She obtained her Ph.D. from Princeton University and specializes in global Islamic history. Dr. Hassan's research and publications analyze the intersections of religion, culture, gender, and politics. Her first book *Longing for the Lost Caliphate: A Transregional History* (Princeton University Press, 2017) received the American Academy of Religion's 2017 Award for Excellence in the Study of Religion in the category of Historical Studies. It examines Muslim engagement with the notion of an Islamic caliphate following its loss in the thirteenth and twentieth centuries and explores how poignant memories of the lost caliphate have percolated through Muslim culture, law, and politics across Afro-Eurasia. She has also researched and published on the shifting contours of women's Islamic legal scholarship from the emergence of the Muslim community in the seventh century to the secular interventions of modern nation-states in the present.

Michaëlle Browsers is Professor and Chair of the Department of Politics and International Affairs at Wake Forest University. She is author of *Political Ideology in the Arab World: Accommodation and Transformation* (Cambridge University Press, 2009) and *Democracy and Civil Society in Arab Political Thought: Transcultural Possibilities* (Syracuse University Press, 2006), and has edited (with Charles Kurzman) a book, entitled *An Islamic Reformation* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2003). Her articles have appeared in the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies*, *Journal of Political Ideologies*, *Critical Review of Social and Political Philosophy*, *Theory and Event*, and *Third World Quarterly*. Her presentation will draw from over a decade and half of teaching various topics related to politics using joint sessions conducted online as dialogues between her classes and students at two universities in the Arab region, her time directing study abroad programs for undergraduate students in Morocco and Egypt, and her work with WFU's chapter of Every Campus a Refuge.

Dr. Angela Peters, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, has over 25 years of higher education experience. Before joining Albany State University, Peters served as Vice Provost for Academic Programs at Claflin University in Orangeburg, South Carolina since 2013. Additionally, she has served as a professor and department chairperson for the Department of Chemistry at Claflin College. She has also served as executive director of the Louis Stokes South Carolina Alliance for Minority Participation and statewide coordinator for the Southeastern Consortium for Minorities (SECME), both at the University of South Carolina.

Director Raj Sashti. Before joining Reinhardt University, Raj was an Associate Professor and in academic administration at half-dozen public universities and colleges in Georgia including the Georgia Institute of Technology – Sam Nunn School of International Affairs. During his 50+ years of service to higher education, he has been awarded more than \$5,000,000 grants by the U.S. Department of Education, Council for the International Exchange of Scholars and other organizations. Over the years, Raj has also received three Fulbright Specialist grants and three Fulbright Fellowships to study and travel

in Germany, Japan, and Brazil. In addition to serving as an advisor to several major research universities across the U.S., he has traveled around the globe directing Fulbright funded faculty development programs in more than two dozen countries of Europe, Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America. Raj has two M. A. degrees in Geography, one from the University of Akron, Ohio, and the other from Osmania University, Hyderabad, India.