

Asma Barlas

Center for the Study of Culture, Race, and Ethnicity
Ithaca College, Ithaca, NY 14850
(607) 274-3557
email: abarlas@ithaca.edu
webpages: <http://faculty.ithaca.edu/abarlas/>
<http://www.asmabarlas.com>

Education

Ph.D. International Studies; Graduate School of International Studies (GSIS),
University of Denver, Colorado, 1990.
M.A. International Studies, GSIS, University of Denver, 1986.
M.A. Journalism; University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan, 1971.
B.A. English Literature and Philosophy; Kinnaird College for Women, Lahore,
Pakistan, 1969.

Work History

Professor, Department of Politics, Ithaca College, 2004 (associate professor, 1997-
2004; assistant professor, 1991-1997).
Director, Center for the Study of Culture, Race, and Ethnicity, Ithaca College;
June 2006- (Founding Director, 1999-2002).
Spinoza Chair, Department of Philosophy, University of Amsterdam, the
Netherlands, Spring, 2008.
Chair, Department of Politics, Ithaca College; 1998-2004.
Instructor, Graduate School of International Studies, University of Denver; 1985-
1991.
Research Assistant, Graduate School of International Studies, Denver; 1985-1990
Assistant Editor and columnist, *The Muslim* (newspaper) Pakistan; 1982-1983.
Section Officer, (UNIII), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Pakistan; 1976-1982.

Dissertation

"State, Class and Democracy: A Comparative Analysis of Politics in Hindu and
Muslim Society in Colonial India, 1885-1947," Graduate School of International
Studies, University of Denver, 1990.

Research/Teaching Areas and Interests

Comparative and International Politics (South Asia, Middle East, Third World);
Women and Gender, Islam and Qur'anic Hermeneutics.

Courses

Intro to Global Studies
Intro to International Relations
Political Economy of the Middle East
Politics of Identity: Culture, Race, and Ethnicity
Colonialism
Development Theories
Third World Politics
Re-Understanding Islam

Honors, Fellowships, Grants

Spinoza Chair, University of Amsterdam, Spring, 2008.
Fellow, Oxford Roundtable, "The Role of the State in Religion," Oxford, England, August 5-12, 2005.
Visiting Fellow, International Center for Islam and Pluralism (ICIP), Jakarta, Indonesia, June 16-July 3, 2005.
Fellow, Salzburg Seminar, "Strengthening Democracy and Governance: Women and Political Power," Salzburg, Austria, 26 April- 3 May, 2004.
"Believing Women" in Islam nominated for Grawemeyer Award in Religion, 2005.
Woman of Distinction Award, New York State Senate, District: John R. Kuhl, Jr., 2003.
American Institute of Pakistan Studies (AIPS) Post-doctoral Fellowship, 1998-99.
Ithaca College Summer Research Grants: 2005, 2003, 2001, 1997, 1995, 1993 and Small Grants: 2001-1995; 1993-92.
American Association of University Women (AAUW) International Fellowship for Ph.D. research/writing, 1989.
Teaching Grant from Ford Foundation on Superpower Intervention, University of Denver, 1988.
Ben Cherrington Fellowship, University of Denver, 1985-86.
Robert Anderson Fellowship, University of Denver, 1984.
UN Department of Public Information Fellowship for Journalists, UN, New York, Fall, 1983.
Department of Journalism Fellowship, Punjab, Pakistan, 1969-71.

Academic Achievements

Dissertation passed with distinction; nominated for Gabriel Almond Award of the American Political Science Association in Comparative Politics, 1990.
Graduated with a GPA of 4.0, GSIS, University of Denver, 1986.
First Position, Seventh Foreign Service Officers Training Course in International Relations and Diplomacy, Administrative Staff College, Pakistan, 1976.
First Class, Masters in Journalism, University of the Punjab, Pakistan, 1971.

Publications

Books

Islam, Muslims, and the U.S.: Essays on Religion and Politics (New Delhi, India: Global Media Publications, 2004).

"*Believing Women*" in *Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur'an* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2002). Published in Indonesian as *Cara Quran Membebaskan Perempuan* (Jakarta, Serambi, 2005).

Democracy, Nationalism and Communalism: The Colonial Legacy in South Asia (Boulder, CO.: Westview Press, 1995).

Monograph

Re-Understanding Islam: A double critique, Spinoza Lectures presented by the University of Amsterdam (Amsterdam: Van Gorcum, 2008).

Book Chapters

"Holding Fast by the Best in the Precepts: the Qur'an and method," in Kari Vogt et al. (eds.), *New Directions in Islamic Thought: Exploring Reform and Tradition* (I.B. Tauris, 2008).

"Women's and Feminist Readings of the Qur'an," in Jane McAuliffe (ed.), *Cambridge Companion to the Qur'an* (Cambridge University Press, 2006).

"Reviving Islamic Universalism: East/s, West/s, and Coexistence," in Abdul Said et. al (eds.), *Contemporary Islam: Dynamic, Not Static* (Routledge, 2006).

"Globalizing Equality: Muslim Women, Theology, and Feminisms," in Fera Simone (ed.), *On Shifting Ground: Muslim Women in the Global Era* (NY: Feminist Press, 2005).

"Amina Wadud's Hermeneutics of the Qur'an: Women Rereading Sacred Texts," in Suha Taji-Faruqi (ed.), *Contemporary Muslim Intellectuals and the Quran: Modernist and Post-Modernist Approaches* (Oxford University, 2004).

"Texts, Sex, and States: A Critique of North African Discourse on Islam," in Kevin Lacey and Ralph Coury (eds.), *The Arab-African and Islamic Worlds: Interdisciplinary Studies* (Peter Lang, 2000).

Journal articles and Papers

"Still Quarrelling over the Qur'an: Five Interventions," *ISIM Review* (Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World), Autumn, 2007.

"Teaching about Islam and Women: on pedagogy and the personal," *Intercultural Education*, Special Issue, Vol. 18, November 2007.

- "Women in Islam: Facts and Perceptions," in Memoona Hasnain (ed.), *Patient-centered Health Care for Muslim Women in the United States*, conference proceedings, University of Illinois at Chicago Press, 2007.
- "Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur'an: Beyond the binaries of tradition and modernity," *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, Vol. 24, No. 2, 2007.
- "Qur'anic Hermeneutics and Sexual Politics," *Cardozo Law Review*, Vol. 28, No. 1, October, 2006.
- "A Requiem for Voicelessness: Pakistanis and Muslims in the U.S." *Wagadu*, Vol 1, No. 1, Spring, 2004. <http://web.cortland.edu/wagadu/>
- "Jihad=Holy War=Terrorism: The Politics of Conflation and Denial," *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, Vol. 20, No.1, Winter, 2003.
- "Muslim Women and Sexual Oppression: Reading Liberation from the Quran," *Macalester International*, Vol. 10, Spring, 2001.
- "The Quran and Hermeneutics: Reading the Quran's Opposition to Patriarchy," *The Journal of Quranic Studies*, University of London, Vol. III, No. 2, 2001.

Book Reviews

- "The Antinomies of 'Feminism' and 'Islam:' the Limits of a Marxist Analysis," review of *Feminism and Islamic Fundamentalism: the Limits of Postmodern Analysis*, Haideh Moghissi (London: Zed Books, 1999), in *Middle East Women's Studies Review*, Vol xviii, Nos. 1-2, Spring/Summer, 2003.
- "The Uses and Abuses of Muslim History in Explaining Islam," review of *Empire and Elites after the Muslim Conquest: The Transformation of Northern Mesopotamia*, Chase F. Robinson (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002); in *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, Vol. 20: 1, 2003.
- "Islam and Equality;" review of *Islam and Equality: Debating the Future of Women's and Minority Rights in the Middle East*, Lawyers Committee for Human Rights (eds.), Canada, 1999; in *Middle East Women's Studies Review*, Vol. xv, Nos. 1-2, Spring/ Summer, 2000.

Popular

200+ articles, op-ed pieces, short stories and poems in Pakistani and U.S. papers.

In Press

- "Does the Qur'an Support Gender Equality? Or, do I have the autonomy to answer this question?" in Marjo Buitelaar and Monique Bernards (eds.), *Autonomy and Islam*, Leuven, the Netherlands: Peeters, forthcoming.

Lectures and Presentations

2008

- “Believing Women in Islam: Between secular and religious politics and theology,”
Spinoza Lecture 1, University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands, May 8, 2008.
- “Would Spinoza Understand Me? Europe, Islam, and the Mirror of Difference.” Spinoza
Lecture 2, University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands, June 5, 2008. (Also
presented at the University of Nijmegen, the Netherlands, June 17, 2008.)
- Re-understanding Islam: A double critique,” Commemorative Lecture on the
40th anniversary of the Islamic Community of Lisbon, Portugal, June 22,
2008.

2007

- “Can We Speak of Women’s Rights in Islam?” Fall Focus: Human Rights, Human
Responsibilities, Saginaw Valley State University, October 22, 2007.
- “Engaging Islamic Feminism: Provincializing feminism as a master narrative,”
Workshop on Islamic Feminism, Tampere, Finland, August 31, 2007.
- “Still Quarrelling over the Qur’an: Five theses on interpretation and authority.”
Conference on Redefining Boundaries: Muslim Women and Religious
Authority in Practice. Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern
World, Amsterdam, June 24, 2007.
- “Lost in Translation: (Muslim) Women and (Films on) Islam,” Keynote Address,
“Women and Islam” film series, National Film Board of Canada, Toronto,
May 22, 2007.
- “On Islamic and Muslim Feminisms,” St. Mary’s College, April 16, 2007.
- “Gender, Islam, and the War on Terror,” College Lecture, Bates, March 14, 2007.
- “Women in Islam: Between Oppression and (Self-) Empowerment,” Conference
hosted by Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Cologne, Germany, March 9, 2007.
- “A Collective Purpose: Crossing Cultural Boundaries,” Emmie Baine Lecture,
Women’s Symposium, SMU, Dallas, March 1, 2007.

2006

- “Does the Qur’an Support Gender Equality?” University of Groningen, the
Netherlands, November 23, 2006.
- “Women’s Self-Emancipation through the Qur’an,” University of Amsterdam,
the Netherlands, November 21, 2006.
- “Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur’an: beyond the binaries of
tradition and modernity,” keynote address, Islam: Tradition and
Modernity, regional conference of the Association of Muslim Social
Scientists, November 4, 2006, Toronto, Canada.

- "Four Stages of Denial, or, My On-Again, Off-Again, Affair with Feminism: Response to Margot Badran," Discussion Series, "Global Fury/ Global Fear: Engaging Muslims," Ithaca College, October 23, 2006.
- "The Pleasure of Our Texts: reading the Qur'an," Women in Religion in the 21st Century, conference, Interchurch Center, New York, October 17-19, 2006.
- "Reading the Qur'an: Challenges and Possibilities for Muslim Women," Workshop convener, Symposium on Gender, Race, Islam, and the "War on Terror," Simon Fraser University, Canada, May 11-13, 2006.
- "The Qur'an and Gender: Sexuality and Women's Status in Islam," two-day class, St. Bartholomew's Church, New York City, April 24-25, 2006.
- "*Believing Women*" in Islam, lecture, Swarthmore College, April 14, 2006.
- "Women, Politics, and Islam: Rereading Islamic Sources," lecture, Middlebury College, April 6, 2006.
- "Sacred Knowledge and Women's Rights in Islam," lecture, Columbia University, March 29, 2006.
- "Women in Islam: Rethinking texts, traditions, and reason," University lecture, University of Oregon, March 2, 2006.

2005

- "Qur'anic Hermeneutics and Muslim Women's Liberation," International Congress on Islamic Feminism, Barcelona, Spain, October 29, 2005.
- "Women Encountering the Qur'an: Authority, Reading, Scripture," George Mason University, September 19, 2005.
- Lecture Series on Islam, Visiting Fellow, Center for Islam and Pluralism, Jakarta, Indonesia, June-July, 2005.
- "'Hold(ing) Fast by the Best in the Precepts:' The Qur'an and Method," Conference on the Changeable and Unchangeable in Islamic Thought and Practice, Oslo Coalition on Freedom of Religion or Belief and Faculty of Islamic Studies, Sarajevo, May 7-9, 2005 (read by Christian Moe).
- "Women's and Feminist Readings of the Qur'an," lecture, "Islam in the West Series," Center for Middle East Studies, Harvard University, March 22, 2005. "
- "Women in Islam: Facts and Perceptions," keynote address, conference, Muslim Women's Health Needs, University of Illinois at Chicago, March 4, 2005.

2004

- "Mainstreaming Extremism," plenary address to the Muslim Public Affairs Council, Fourth Annual Convention, Long Beach, CA, Dec. 18, 2004.
- "Christian and Muslim Women in Conversation About Scripture," Hartford Seminary, Dec. 3, 2004.
- "Gender Inequality and Scriptural Interpretation in Islam," Stanford University, November, 22, 2004.

- "Teaching about Women and Islam," AMEWS Roundtable, Middle East Studies Association Annual Meeting, San Francisco, November 21, 2004.
- "Text, Tradition, and Reason: The Qur'an and Sexual Politics," Cardozo Law School, Yeshiva University, October 10-14, 2004.
- "Islam, Gender, and Reproductive Health," Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, D.C., October 4, 2004.
- "Towards a Theory of Gender Democracy in Muslim Societies," Fifth Annual Conference of the Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy, Washington, D.C., May 29, 2004.
- "Muslim Women, the Qur'an, and Male Power," lecture, Swarthmore College, April 23, 2004.
- "Globalizing Equality: Muslim Women, Theology, and Feminisms," lecture in the series Muslim Women in the Era of Global Communication, Library of Congress, March 26, 2004.
- "Women and Religion," lecture, Presidential Symposium, Auburn University, Alabama, March 16, 2004.
- "The Excesses of Moderation," presentation, "Moderation in Islam" Colloquium, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, February 21-22, 2004.
- "The Qur'an, Sexual Equality, and Feminism," University of Toronto, January 12, 2004.

2003

- "Reviving Islamic Universalism: East/s, West/s, and Coexistence," invited paper, conference on Contemporary Islamic Synthesis, Alexandria, Egypt, October 3-5, 2003.
- "A Requiem for Voicelessness: Pakistanis and Muslims in the US," Cornell University, April 12, 2003.
- "Islam, Equality, and Women: Reading the Qur'an for Liberation," Keynote address, Ithaca College, March 19, 2003.
- "Determining Islamic Authority in North America," presentation at the "Islam in America, 2003" conference, Harvard Divinity School, March 8, 2003.

2002

- Panelist, "Religious Authorities in Middle Eastern Islam," Institut für Islamwissenschaft, Free University of Berlin, Germany, December 5-8, 2002.
- Anderberg Lecture, "Challenging Patriarchal Interpretations of Islam," University of Nebraska, Omaha, Nebraska, November 7, 2002.
- "Tradition and Modern Life: the Changing Role of Women," US Embassy, New Delhi, India, August 13, 2002 (via digital video).
- "Islam, Feminism, and Women," Robert L. Bernstein Symposium on Fundamentalism and Modernity, Yale University, April 12-13, 2002.

- "Jihad=Holy War=Terrorism: The Politics of Conflation and Denial," Conference on Pakistan: Islam and Civil Society at the Dawn of the 21st Century, American University, April 8, 2002.
- "Can African Women Learn from East and Southeast Asia? Response to Amiya Kumar Bagchi," Women and Higher Education in Africa: Engendering Human Capital and Upgrading Human Right to Schooling, CEPARRED, Cornell University, March 28-30, 2002.
- "Will the 'Real' Islam Please Stand Up?" Master's Tea Presentation at Silliman College, Yale University, February 21, 2002.

2001-1999

- "Jihad vs. Terrorism: Interpretive Confusion or Exceptionalism?" Seminar on "Terrorism: A New Challenge to the World of Islam," Karachi, Pakistan, December 20-21, 2001.
- "Globalization and Religion," discussant; International Studies Association, Chicago, February 24, 2001.
- "Muslim Women and Sexual Oppression: Reading Liberation from the Qur'an," invited paper, Macalester College Roundtable, Minnesota, October, 2000.
- "Reading Scriptures, Constructing Meaning: Understanding Islam's Position on Women," lecture, Transylvania University, Kentucky, April, 2000.
- "The Qur'an and Hermeneutics: Reading the Qur'an's Opposition to Patriarchy," Conference on Qur'an and Hermeneutics, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, October, 1999.

Miscellaneous papers, talks, and conferences

- "Muslims in the West," public debate with Tariq Ramadan, Erasmus University, Rotterdam, the Netherlands, June 13, 2008.
- "Hearing the Word, as a Muslim: Thirteen passages of the Qur'an and Religious Diversity," Vespers Service, Sage Chapel, Cornell University, November 4, 2007.
- "Women and Islam," lecture, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, August 24, 2007.
- "Challenges of Reading/ Interpreting the Qur'an," Master's class, University of Leiden. Organized by the Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World, Leiden, the Netherlands, June 25, 2007.
- "*Believing Women*" in Islam, interview/discussion, Dutch Muslim Broadcasting Network (NMO), Hilversum, the Netherlands, June 25, 2006.
- "One Father, Three Dysfunctional Families: On the 'Problematic' Aspects of Monotheism," Snowstar Institute for Religion, Toronto, Canada, June 4, 2006.
- "Istanbul II: Empowering Women in Public Life in Middle East and North Africa," conference, Istanbul, Turkey, February 6-7, 2006.

- "Women and the Word," Wilshire Boulevard Temple, Los Angeles, November, 2005.
- "Reading and Interpreting the Qur'an," and "Family and Marriage in Islam," Muslims in the 21st Century, Los Angeles Latino Muslim Association, April 16, 2005.
- "Media Reflections: Ignorance of a Hegemonic Imagination," Occupied Spaces Symposium, Ithaca College, April 8, 2005.
- "Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur'an," Independent Muslim Women's Alliance, Detroit, Michigan, October 11, 2003.
- "Muslims in the U.S." Strategic Research Forum, California, May 24, 2003.
- "Religion and our Response to Violence," Cornell University, February 13, 2003.
- "9/11, the Academy, and Renewal," Ithaca College, September 12, 2002.
- "Recontextualizing Martin Luther King, Jr.," Ithaca College, January 21, 2002.
- "On Interpretation and Exceptionalism," Ithaca College, October 29, 2001.
- "Why do They Hate Us?," Ithaca Community meeting, September, 23, 2001.
- "American Foreign Policy Towards the Muslim World," Concerned Citizens for Peace and Understanding, October 17, 2000.
- "(Re)coding Islam: Feminists, Stereotyping, and Liberation," Park School of Communications, Discussion Series on Islam, 2000.
- "The Qur'an and Women's Rights: Rereading Scripture," Ithaca College, Discussion Series on Islam, 1999.
- "Sex/Gender and Patriarchy in the Qur'an: Retheorizing Muslim Women's Rights," South Asia Seminar Series, Cornell University, 1999.
- "Texts, Sex, and States: A Critique of North African Discourse on Islam," Conference on Contemporary North Africa: Islamic Assertion, Ethnic Diversity, Democracy, and the State, SUNY, Binghamton, April 3-5, 1998.
- "Women and Muslim Law," keynote address, Women and the Law Conference, South Asian American Women's Association, Corning, NY, 1998.

College Service and Committees

- Founding Director, Center for the Study of Culture, Race, and Ethnicity (1999-2002).
- Chair, Steering Committee for B.A. in International Studies Major (2000-).
- Chair, H&S Dean's Committee on Ethnic Studies (1998-1999).
- Chair of several search committees, Department of Politics (1998-2004).
- Faculty Advisor, African-Latino Society (2001-2002); Asia Society (1994-2002); and Muslim Students Association (1999-2000; 2002).
- Member, Diversity Awareness Committee.

Memberships (present and past)

- American Association of Higher Education (AAHE).
- American Institute of Pakistan Studies (AIPS).

American Political Science Association (APSA).
Association of Middle Eastern Women's Studies (AMEWS).
Association of Muslim Social Scientists (AMSS)
Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy, Board of Directors (CSID) 2003-06.
Editorial Board, *Journal of Middle Eastern and North African Intellectual and Cultural Studies*.
International Voluntary Services, Board of Directors (IVS) 1993-98.