INTRODUCTIONS

Mark Juergensmeyer: Welcome to this beautiful site for a continuing workshop that’s sponsored by the Henry Luce Foundation – a series of projects for which we’ve received funding, on the general topic of religion and global civil society. And we’ve carved global civil society into different areas of the world: the first year we looked at Latin America; the second year on South and Southeast Asia; this year on Africa and the Middle East. In each case, we’re looking at the intersection between the scholarly understanding of the transformations within these regions in which religion plays a role and the response of humanitarian and social service agencies within this general arena that we call global civil society that have to deal with these transformations. And so for the workshops – 2 a year, one in the region and one here at Santa Barbara (the regional conference this year was in Cairo a couple of months ago and now we’re here at Santa Barbara) – we’ve tried to bring together an interesting mix of people. And if you participants are wondering why you’re here and what you bring distinctive to the plate, it is because you are a little bit different from everybody else who is here. And you may think, “Oh, I’m different.” Well yes, you’re all different, that’s the point. It’s like putting together a really nice dinner party. You know, you try to think of an interesting bunch of people who have a lot to say to each other but who are not necessarily from the same field -- not necessarily from the same field in terms of discipline or ... even what you do professionally. In some cases, you are academics who do research and write books. In other cases, you are practitioners who are involved in social service and humanitarian organizations. In some cases, you’re a bit of both. And that’s deliberate. We want to have this interesting mix of people in order to engage in what we expect to be very fruitful conversation.

As I said, this is part of a larger project funded by the Henry Luce Foundation, some 10 or 20 million dollars which has gone into an attempt to try to bring the study of religion into the consciousness of schools that train people for work in international affairs – the so-called APSIA-related schools that are primarily for the training of diplomats, of businessmen, of journalists, of NGO leaders, like the Columbia School of International Affairs, the Kennedy School, the Princeton Woodrow Wilson School, all of which have projects relating to some aspect of religion and international affairs. There are also a couple of other projects on a national level, one of which I’ve been involved in at the Social Science Research Council, on religion and the changing global culture, and the focus of that project was on rethinking secularism. That project is completed and the book called Rethinking Secularism has just been published by Oxford University Press. Craig Calhoun and Jonathan Van Antwerpen and I edited that book with interesting essays by members of that workshop, which, like this one, convened regularly, including Charles Taylor, Talal Asad, Jose Casanova – a very interesting mix of people, all of whom are represented in this – I think – really interesting book.
So we’re part of that project. But we do things a little differently in our workshop. We’re also related to an on-going graduate program in International Affairs -- the one we established here at Santa Barbara, which is the only one in the country that is geared towards NGO leadership. Obviously not all of our students go into NGO leadership work. Others do a variety of things. They go into academics, they go into further graduate work. One of them – Paul Lynch, who’s standing there in the middle, has become a videographer, and a very good one, as you’ll see in some of the work that he’s going to show for us in just a few minutes. But he’s also taking your picture that will be a part of the video product of this workshop.

This workshop has two kinds of products. None of them involve lengthy, written papers. What we’ve discovered is not only do people not enjoy writing these, people don’t enjoy reading them. And as far as producing material for the classroom, often they’re not the most useful or productive thing. And certainly in teasing out the ideas that we think are important for us to become aware of, what we’ve discovered is that face to face, a colloquy, an interaction, and discussion is really much more productive...

Mark Juergensmeyer: And now I’d like to ask each of us to introduce ourselves... Let me give an example. I’m Mark Juergensmeyer. I’m Professor of Global Studies and Sociology at the University of California, Santa Barbara and Director of the Orfalea Center for Global and International Studies. Most of my field work has been in South Asia, in India, in the general area of religion and society. But after the rise of Punjabi activism, I began to be particularly interested in religion and violence of religion terrorism, which is a lot of what my work has been about in the last 20 years or so. I’ve been primarily an academic, although there was one shining year when I was quite young when I worked with the Sarvodaya Agency under Jayaprakash in India, doing relief work on the famine of Bihar... I had an NGO background hidden in my past. So you see what you can learn in these really brief introductions? ...

Paul Amar: My name is Paul Amar. I’m an Associate Professor here at the Global Studies program. I’m originally trained as a political scientist but now basically I identify with every other discipline but Political Science. I work on Egypt and Brazil in particular and in general on Middle East and Latin American militaries and police politics as they intersect with social movements around public morality, gender, race, and religion.

William Headley: Hi, I’m Bill Headley. Presently I’m the Dean of the Joan B. Kroc School of Peace Studies at the University of San Diego in San Diego. I’m a sociologist by training, also a Catholic priest and member of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit, very largely a missionary community. And while much of my experience has been in Africa, I’ve had the privilege, particularly with my work with Catholic Relief Services, to serve in a number of countries. I’m now moving out of the deanship very shortly and I hope to take up and consider in a very serious way the interface between religion and peace. Thank you.

Karel Zalenka: My name is Karel Zalenka. I’m working for Catholic Relief Services, or CRS. I’m currently based in South Africa, covering also Namibia, Botswana, and Swaziland. I have a variety of experiences with Catholic Relief Services, mostly development projects, but more recently trying to strengthen or build democratic systems in Africa and other countries. I’ve been with CRS [for] more than 25 years and over those years, I worked in Asia, Africa, Middle
East, Caribbean. So I have, I think, rich experience as a practitioner working for a faith-based organization ... in different contexts, facing different and a variety of challenges in terms of religions, in terms of governments, and also and perhaps more importantly, with staff that come from different ethnic, cultural backgrounds... I got my degree from the Fletcher School at Tufts University in Boston and my degree was in International Economics. Thank you.

Mark Juergensmeyer: We should say that Karel was supposed to join us two years ago when he was working in Haiti when we were focusing on global civil society in Latin America and the Caribbean. And just days before our conference, things erupted in Haiti that changed his life and the lives of that whole country. And if you want to know what it was like to be there during the earthquake, Karel has some chilling first-person reports to make. Since then, he’s moved to South Africa, so we had an opportunity to bring him back. So he’s going to join us after all. So this is the workshop you missed two years ago.

Laura Grillo: Good morning, my name is Laura Grillo. I’m a Professor at Pacifica Graduate Institute, which is just down the road just outside of Santa Barbara. I’m also one of the chairs of the African Religions Group of the American Academy of Religions. As a historian of religions, my area of specialization is West Africa... I’ve lived and worked in Côte d’Ivoire in particular, and that’s where I also based my field work. The questions that I’m bringing to the table have to do, then, with... indigenous African religions. How do they fit into this picture?

I also have a hidden background in [the] service and NGO world in that years ago, I lived in Kenya and worked for the All Africa Conference of Churches. Also, when I was a student at Union Theological Seminary in New York City, I worked for the National Conference of Churches, Office of Human Rights. In Nairobi, I was working as a consultant for programs of youth, women, and development. Of course, those were very different days. Those were the heady days of liberation theology in the churches and really the days before the religious scene was inflected with fundamentalism as it is today, and certainly not the kind of violence that is occurring now and that is shaping the world so prominently today.

Jeffrey Haynes: Thank you. Good morning, everybody. My name is Jeffrey Haynes and I’m at the London Metropolitan University, where I direct the Center for the Study of Religion, Conflict and Cooperation. I’ve been interested in the topic of, broadly and generically, religion and politics for about 20 years. I do have an interest in Africa and the Middle East but I can’t claim to have done extensive field work in either of those regions recently.

I guess I’m here because... I’m very interested in the topic of how religion moulds outcomes in broadly political contexts. My most recent book, which is due to come out shortly, is about religious transnational actors. So I’m also very interested in the International Relations side of things. I co-edit a journal called Democratization, so I have a sort of secular interest as well.

And I’m actually in the U.S. at the moment not just to come to this very esteemed gathering, but also I’m about to spend two weeks in Washington, D.C. where I’m going to be talking to various people but particularly from the I.M.F. and the World Bank about the role of religion and development, which is also one of my interests. And particularly, why religion seems to have fallen out of the picture a little bit when it comes to those organizations’ focus upon
development. Ten, twelve years ago, it was different. So I have... shall I say, a scattered background with lots of various issues [that] I’m interested in. But I’m very pleased to be here and I’d like to thank Mark for inviting me.

**Rosalind Hackett:** Thank you. Well good morning, everyone. Thank you so much for the invitation to come here, not just to a gathering on topics of deep interest to me, but to finally get me to Santa Barbara after all these years... My name is Rosalind Hackett and I’m currently Professor of Religious Studies and Head of the Department at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. As you can probably tell, I’m not from there. I was actually trained in Britain as a historian of religion, but had the wisdom to take off for Africa to do field work as a graduate student and that really changed my perspective. And I think by virtue of living in Nigeria for about 8 years, I developed a much more ethnographic, anthropological perspective on things. So that will inform my remarks today.

So I think I’m still very much involved with the academic study of religion, particularly – with Laura – promoting and developing the academic study of religion in Africa... I am the President of the International Association for the History of Religions, which is the worldwide body for the academic study of religions. So that takes me to different parts of the world for conferences and promoting the field. So I can say I have quite an internationalist perspective, while still remaining an Africanist.

But then... certain moments in life are major turning points, and I could say that my year at the University of Notre Dame at the Kroc Institute in 2003 and 2004 really got me thinking much more about the relevance of what I was doing and particularly pertaining to the relationship between religion and conflict and peace-building... And I will be talking today about a particular group that I became associated with following that visit in 2004.

I also... will mention... the small NGO that I created with the help of my students, called the Jazz for Justice Project, which promotes the use of music and the arts in peace-building in northern Uganda... As of last year, we now have a formal study and service abroad program to northern Uganda through the University of Tennessee, called the Gulu Study and Service Abroad Program. So as I have aged, I like to think I’ve matured and developed a much more activist side to my scholarship. Thank you.

**Fritz Lampe:** My name is Fritz Lampe. I teach at Northern Arizona University as an Adjunct. I’m also an ordained pastor with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. My connection to Africa goes through my graduate work at Syracuse University in the Maxwell School, where we... had access to the Kenyan National Archives from the colonial period. And so I spent a considerable amount of time looking at the historic record of contact and early development through the colonial eyes. And then did my work training in anthropology in western Kenya in an area that was opened up by the Church Missionaries Society just after the railroad went in to that region to open up Uganda to the coast...

I think the thing that brings me here is, when the economy tanked, I lost a tenure-track position in a very small school that wed theology and community development. And the students of that program were international church leaders, many from Africa, who came for a 2-year applied
master’s degree program to look at community development and empower them, using a theological lens to engage in community development. So we taught research methods, we taught analysis, and the whole bag so that they could provide a written record and proposal for future work in their areas... Teaching at Northern Arizona, I’m a part of a very applied, nationally recognized master’s degree program. Many of our students also go on to be leaders in NGOs because of their internships and their ethnographic work... That’s probably enough for now.

**Jacob Olupona:** Good morning. I’m Jacob Kehinde Olupona. I teach at Harvard University. I’m in two schools there – the School of Divinity and the Faculty of Arts and Sciences in the Department of African American and African Studies. This is my sixth year there... I was a professor at the University of California at Davis, where I spent 16 years. And before coming to Davis, I taught at the University of Ife – Ile-Ife in Nigeria. I did my first degree at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, and... my PhD at Boston University. A few years ago, I think in 1996, I was a visiting scholar here. I spent part of my Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship here. I was invited by my good friend and colleague, Claudine Michel, who is here. And Mark was also on board, and they almost stole me from UC Davis. I’m here because Mark asked me to come. I would not turn down any invitation from him to be part of the conversation.

Well, my field is religion in Africa. I’m mainly in indigenous African religion and Christianity. And I’m glad I think this conversation is started. Listening to Laura reminds me of a note I just made to myself 2 [or] 3 seconds ago, where I said, “I’m worried about the marginalization of indigenous religion and institutions and their refusal to see their role in civil society-building, especially in creating values and citizenship.” I think part of the problem has to do with monotheistic traditions in Africa, Islam and Christianity in particular - what I have referred to as “civil religion” in the past in my own research. How are we responding to this? I think this is one of the questions that I’m going to be taking up.

Well, I turned 60 last year and it was a good celebration for me, as a Nigerian and as a Yoruba myself. And I realized when I returned to Nigeria for my celebration, that people see us as scholars as those who have been well-placed to respond to the needs of the society. And for the first time, I felt... well, while I have been fairly successful in my own academic work, I have been lacking in the other side of it. What have I been able to give back to my own local communities? Because to see all those villagers come from, you know, Ute and over to Ife, just to celebrate my birthday, was quite...was shocking to me. I thought I didn’t deserve it. But then I said to myself, “This has to be a new beginning. What can I bring to the table? What can I do as a professor of religion? What can I do to help and alleviate the sufferings of millions of people, at least in Nigeria?” And I’m sure those of you who have been following the news will know fully well that we have a lot of work to do as scholars. Thank you.

**Robert Dowd:** Well good morning. I’m Bob Dowd and I’m in the Political Science Department at the University of Notre Dame and I also direct an International Development Studies program which we just launched there about three years ago. That program is called the Ford Family Program in Human Development Studies and Solidarity.
My research has focused largely on religion and politics in Africa, more specifically on Christianity and Islam and their impact on political actions and attitudes. That research has focused largely in Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria, and, to a lesser degree, in Senegal. So my research is really focused on the impact that religion has on attitudes like tolerance – tolerance towards people of different faith backgrounds, tolerance of differences of opinion. It’s also focused on the impact of religious involvement in political participation and civic engagement. The Ford Family Program... [is] devoted to integrating education, research, and community engagement at the grassroots level and... one research agenda we would like to focus on... is religion and its impact on development processes. There really hasn’t been a whole lot of really great research. A lot of the research that has been done is impressionistic in nature and anecdotal and what we would like to do is bring some rigorous research to assess the impact that religious institutions are having on education outcomes and health outcomes. There’s one research project that we’re working on right now that’s assessing the effectiveness of religious leaders as compared to local political leaders in waging public health campaigns in Uganda. The results should be pretty interesting. It’s probably going to take a while for those results to come in. But I’m really happy to be here and look forward to learning a lot from all of the participants. And I appreciate the invitation.

Waleed El Ansari: My name is Waleed El Ansari. I teach at Xavier University. I teach Islamic Studies in the Theology Department. And Xavier, of course, is a Catholic institution, so I like to joke I’m originally from Egypt and came when I was two years old to the United States and my first formal education was at a Catholic preschool, so I feel right at home at Xavier. Actually, I was originally interested in economics when I was young because we would go back to Egypt during the summers off with my family and I would see a lot of poverty there. I saw we obviously had a lot of Muslim doctors and engineers, but apparently, we didn’t have enough economists because otherwise we wouldn’t be having all these problems. And so I was interested in economics for a while and actually started out in economics but then I met Seyyed Hossain Nasr at George Washington University. He’s arguably the leading Islamic Studies scholar in the United States. My father was a professor at GW at the time and he attended his lecture to other professors at the university and he came home and I remember it very vividly. He said, “Waleed, I’ve met the most brilliant Muslim scholar I’ve ever seen in my life. You have to take classes with him.” And so the correct response in Arabic is “hadher,” which means “yes, sir.” And I did and it was the first time I heard there was such a thing as Islamic physics, not just Muslims who do physics. And that transformed, really, my whole life. That’s really why I got interested in Islamic Studies. And so my work is really on the intersection between religion, science, and economics, and what that implies for development – just and sustainable development solutions. And so on the one hand, my research focuses on the influence of religion, particularly Islam, on economics. But on the other hand, looking at violent forms of religious extremism through the lens of game theory and economics. So for example, I’ve written some things about modeling bin Laden and al Qaeda from a game theoretic point of view. So it’s interdisciplinary in that sense. I think the reason I’m here is also because I happen to be from Egypt and I’m familiar with what’s going on in the current background for the revolution and look forward also to learning from everybody here.

Mark Juergensmeyer: And of you look the last report, you’ll see a lovely picture with Omar and I when we were in Cairo. We got to visit with the Grand Mufti of Egypt and that
audience was made possible because of Waleed’s relationship with the Grand Mufti and thank you so much for helping us with that. Very interesting audience. Claudine, good to see you. Thank you so much for coming.

Claudine Michel: Thank you, Mark. Good morning, everybody. Welcome to UCSB. My name is Claudine Michel. I’m not an official panelist at this conversation, but glad to be here. I was part of this conversation a couple of years ago when we focused on the Caribbean, but since I was invited to join you here, I’ll say a few words about myself. I’m originally from Haiti and my training is in Comparative and International Education with a specialty in Francophone West Africa and the Caribbean. I did Family Studies in my education work and that’s what brought me to studying vodou in Haiti and I haven’t been able to put the project down for the past 18 years. So really looking at vodou and education values, vodou and society, vodou and citizenship...and I’m also a founding member of KOSANBA, a scholarly organization for the study of Haitian vodou and we’ve done quite a bit looking at vodou and politics, vodou and art, vodou and gender, vodou and economics, and so glad to be here. And let me mention that I have done some work with Direct Relief International with Thomas Tighe here, a couple of years ago after the earthquake in Haiti. And this was some of my most meaningful work, which reminds us as a scholar of Ethnic Studies – I’m a Professor of Black Studies here, been here 30 years – that really our work is about social and political transformation and change in society. We were able to work with some community grants and fund some projects – small cantinas, schools, educational programs. I also work with my colleague, Nadege Clitandre, with a small community library that she’s created in Haiti. So very glad to participate in the conversation.

Paul Flamm: My name is Paul Flamm. I’m here as an observer. I’m a member of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit. For the last 12 years now, I’ve worked in Tanzania and Burundi with refugees from Burundi and from Democratic Republic of Congo and I’ve been involved in some peace initiatives and cross-border exchanges. So I’m very happy, very grateful to have been given this opportunity to participate, or to observe at this workshop. Thank you.

Victor Faessel: I’ve been introduced already. I’ll just say my name is Victor Faessel. I’m the Program Director of the Orfalea Center. I’ve been watching this program roll along for the last three years and am sad to see it coming to an end, but it’s nice to see this happening with such an esteemed group of scholars and friends.

Thomas Tighe: Hi, I’m Thomas Tighe. I’m the President of the Goleta Chapter of the UCSB Global and International Studies Fan Club. I’m the West Coast Chapter of the Claudine Michel Fan Club. The Nadege Clitandre Fan Club. And the CEO of Direct Relief International. I previously served as the Chief Operating Officer of the Peace Corps during the Clinton administration, where...traditionally, a lot of the Peace Corps officers served in Africa – about a third. And when the embassies were bombed in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, we had hundreds of people in those two countries. So I think the sensitivity that the Peace Corps always prided itself on having about the cultural embeddedness of everything hadn’t really focused on the...how embedded religion was as part of that culture and that was a very sharp reminder, and still is. I think at Direct Relief, our organization is a support organization for locally run health projects all around the world in areas of poverty. So again, we tend to provide sometimes financial assistance, but often medical material assistance, to locally run people. And just doing
that right, I think, requires an acute sensitivity to their lives – what they care about, the health issues that we focus on now, and particularly women’s and children’s health, a lot of the issues around access to health services for women...some of the reasons relate to culture and religion that are really difficult for any American to unwind. We don’t try to. We just try to find someone there who’s involved who can help see how the resources we have available can be put to the most use. So I learn a lot coming here. I work in a warehouse about three miles from here. A lawyer by training. I worked in Washington as a lawyer in the Senate -- U.S. Senate -- as a policy lawyer. So it’s just been a privilege for me to participate for the last several years and meet some fantastic people. Thank you.

Nadege Clitandre: Good morning, everyone. My name is Nadege Clitandre. I’m an Assistant Professor in Global and International Studies. It’s my first year, so I’m glad to be a part of that department. My work focuses on issues of identity, migration, and transnationalism in the African Diaspora and the Caribbean. In particular, I focus on the role of Haiti in conceptions of the African Diaspora and in world history. I do have a non-profit background. When I was a graduate student at UC Berkeley, I started a modest non-profit organization that focuses on youth development and community development in Haiti, through the use of libraries and thinking about libraries as a way of developing community. I do have a relationship with DRI and I do want to acknowledge that the role Direct Relief International has played in the organization that I started, which is called Haiti Soleil. I also remember two years ago the conversation we had around Haiti during the workshop on the Caribbean and Latin America and we did mention that the library project that we worked so hard with...worked so hard on was destroyed around the time of the earthquake. My interest in religion actually began around the earthquake. I’ve been thinking more specifically about the role of religion in rebuilding Haiti and what that means in terms of how people are thinking about their traumatic experiences. For those of you who have been to Haiti and who have a relationship with what’s going on now, you will know that a lot of people are thinking about this idea around the end of the world and exactly what that means for them, spiritually and their spiritual connections. Also thinking about the place of vodou and how we are thinking about Haiti and conceptions of Haiti in general. Recently, someone submitted a film that is focusing on the National Cathedral, which was destroyed. So I’m really looking forward to this conversation so I can get a sense of how to think about what the National Cathedral means in Haiti and the destruction of that cathedral. Thank you.

Mae Cannon: Hi, my name is Mae. Mae Cannon. I am happy to be introduced to all of you and very thankful for the invitation. I’m very passionate about the opportunity to talk about religion in civil society and any opportunity that we have to work across disciplines and sectors, I think, is truly a great opportunity. So I’m thankful in that regard. I’m here representing World Vision, which is an international Christian humanitarian organization. I was recently hired to work on their behalf here in the United States, focused on the Middle East. So my position is the Senior Director of Advocacy and Outreach for the Middle East and my specific area of focus is the question of Christian engagement and the conflict in Israel and Palestine. I spent the last year working for an organization called Compassion International, living in Jerusalem and working with the Christian community in Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, and the Palestinian territories. And I’m thankful to have followed in the footsteps of Jacob, having been at the University of California at Davis, which is where my doctoral work is very soon to be completed, I hope. So I’m empathizing a bit with people on that side of the room, and I’m glad that you’re feeding me as
well. So thank you for that. My doctoral work is in American History, with a minor in Middle Eastern Studies and my dissertation is about the historical engagement of American Protestants in Israel and Palestine. I have three Master’s degrees in interdisciplinary subjects. That’s my love of working across different disciplines. But my primary vocation has been in pastoral ministry, so I’m ordained in the Evangelical Covenant Church and have worked domestically regarding social justice. I wrote a book about Evangelical engagement with social justice. And so that’s a bit of my background. But I’m very, very grateful to be here. Thank you.

**Steve Eskow:** My name is Steve Eskow. I’m happy to be here. I had a strange reaction to a casual comment of Jacob’s that derailed what I intend to say. He talked about “What do you bring to the table?” And what jumped to mind was that I bring to the table a background that begins with a father who never went to school a day in his life and a mother who had four years of schooling and a kind of fierce recollection of what it’s like to be poor and what it’s like to be supported by parents who are determined that life will be different for their children. I became...I moved out of the classroom early on and became an academic bureaucrat. I was a community college president for 20 years in New York State, part of the State University of New York, and concerned with internationalizing the community college. People who had been in a small community in upper New York State were being kept by the college – philosophically and practically – in that community with an ethos of community and not understanding globalization. Began to talk about and think about internationalizing the community college and that began the contacts with the church and the churches generally – a sharp break. For the last 15 years, I and my wife, who will be here later, have been engaged in a kind of ministry in Ghana, which has led to the formation of a new NGO which we will describe. And our organizational theme was generated by Katherine Marshall, who’s been here several times, who has written about development and faith extensively and who has a section in her book called “Scaling Up.” In that section, she points out that the church generally and almost always does work that is rich and important, but the work doesn’t scale up. So we have been exploring the notion that rather than beginning with the church partnership or with a particular project, you think about the 3,000 Presbyterian churches in Ghana and the 600,000 members as a network and we’re exploring the adaptation of Manuel Castells’ work in the Network Society to the possibility that these 3,000 churches that serve 600,000 people on a Sunday can become a scaled-up development network and we’ll be talking a bit about that when we do our presentation.

**Dwight Hopkins:** Good morning. My name is Dwight Hopkins and I’m Professor of Theology at the University of Chicago Divinity School and as my plane was leaving yesterday morning, I could see the blizzard coming. So I just got out...in was in the cards that I should be here. So I’m very happy to be here. I can feel the sun. I teach courses on Africa and also Comparative Asia, Africa, Latin America, and some other courses as well. And also teach Comparative Theologies. My interest in Africa – I was just thinking and I was in elementary school in 1965 and I had a brother who was at Duke University in Durham. One of his roommates was from Nigeria or Ghana. I’m not sure. It was either Nigeria or Ghana. And he came home to Richmond, Virginia where I’m from. And I was off in the kitchen listening to them debating these issues about decolonization and global stuff. You know, 1965 was a huge year. And since that time, I’ve been very much interested – passionately interested – in Africa. And so when I went away to school, to junior high and high school in Boston for five years, one of the things we focused on there, in addition to the so-called “normative curriculum,” was on
Africa. So we began to study Africa at a very young age. And then I went on to college and one of my emphases in undergraduate degree was on Africa and then after I graduated from college in Boston, I went to Harlem and was a community organizer for five years. Now until the President of the United States used the term “community organizer,” I’d never introduced myself as a community organizer. I said I worked in “service” in Harlem. But I was a community organizer. Old-school community organizer – not in the suburbs but you lived in the ghetto in Harlem, 122nd Street. During that time, our mission or focus was to link domestic issues of justice with Africa. So we weren’t...I guess technically we were an NGO but we never saw ourselves as an NGO. We saw ourselves as hardcore community organizers, supporting Africa and linking it to local domestic issues in Harlem in particular. And then I was called to the ministry and went to Union Theological Seminary and my PhD dissertation was on South Africa and the USA. So my study on Africa culminated in the PhD and then taught at Santa Clara University, “just up the road a piece,” as my father would say, for about eight years, and then went to University of Chicago Divinity School. And then I decided that I wanted to get some more punishment, so I have a second PhD from the University of Cape Town in South Africa and the focus is Interdisciplinary Studies. So I have a long history, passion, some writing on South Africa and Africa in general. And very glad to be here. I’ve also expanded my teaching to comparative cultures between China and the United States in an interesting way. That’s another way to come into Africa – studying China’s global relationship to Africa and that has many levels, from Confucius Institutes to the economic piece, to loans, to labor relationships – it’s a whole. So actually I go to China at least twice a year. We’re holding an international conference in Beijing in March this year. Just got back from Dalian for two weeks before Christmas, and Shanghai. So very much happy to be here, very much happy to be here. Thank you.

Mohammed Bamyeh: Good morning. My name is Mohammed Bamyeh. I am a sociologist at the University of Pittsburgh. I teach on social movements, politics, and culture, and cultural globalization in particular. My earlier work has been on the origins of Islam and the spread of Islam as a social movement. And I was interested after that in the questions of global spiritualities, comparatively speaking, and did some work on globalization afterwards, but more emphasizing the cultural aspects of globalization, rather than the economic aspects. And also, within that, the question of identities and solidarities and the role of spiritualities of various kinds and this world in which we live, also historically seen, and how that compares to the present. Out of that emerged another interest that is really at the core of my teaching and research, which is how civil society forms and kind of entrenches itself as alternative to the state. And that led me in various directions, including the study of anarchism, about which I just published a book. But not anarchism in the traditional sense of the word, but rather as kind of a namesake for the historical kind of autonomous self-organization of non-state kind of centers and nodes of social and political action in society, below and around the state level. And that kind of perspective seemed to me to be much more realistic than state-based conceptions of political history, and also of contemporary history, because the more and more I looked at the evolution of modern religious movements, the more I realized how they kind of respond to the total inappropriateness not just of dictatorship, but even of state form and its opposition on social life in general. So that is something that I hope we would be talking about throughout the day and I look forward to that. Last year, also I was...had the best year of my life. I had a sabbatical, which was good in itself, but I also happened to spend it in Egypt. Just before the revolution I moved there, not expecting anything to happen, of course. And then I had really a great, great, great experience
that I...part of it, of course, involved observing how people transform, how people...the role of religion but also the role of all kind of non-religious nodes of social and political life. And I was very moved by that. So I’d like to share some of that experience with you and also I look forward to learning from everyone who is participating here.

Mark Juergensmeyer: Thank you very much. We were also to have Muli Peleg, who is from Israel and currently on the East Coast of the United States and one of the founders of the One Voice Movement for Israeli/Palestinian dialogue. Unfortunately, we just got news yesterday that his father is seriously ill and Muli had to rush back to Israel so he won’t be with us after all. As I told you, our last workshop on this topic was in Cairo just a couple months ago. And rather than summarize it myself, I’d like Paul to show us a little video clip that summarizes in a few minutes some of what happened in Cairo when Paul and I and Paul Amar and Victor and Dinah were all there in what was a very enriching event. So Paul do you want to set this up while we pull down the blinds?

SESSION 1

Paul Amar: So it's great to be back at a LUCE workshop. We had a truly amazing workshop in Cairo that this film gives you a glimpse of and it was perfectly timed. It was an exciting moment in politics and the politics of religion, in that we were there at the moment when, basically, the revolution turned from being...basically the moment of youth, labor, and anti-police brutality movements... We were there the day of the first major mobilization against the military, in which you had the kind of split between those that were leading the revolution and the military. And of course,... then in the middle and always playing a complicated set of intermediary relations, were the Muslim Brotherhood, which had several trends and tendencies within it, many of them allied with youth. We also had huge mobilizations by Sufis, the guilds of Sufi leaders, we had protests and riots amongst imams that were striking against the state. Paul and I were swept up into a protest riot of imams against the state. And then large groups of Muslim Sisters that were breaking off from the Muslim Brotherhood and participating in the demonstrations that Paul was filming there. So the last workshop, we were right in the middle of really some exciting moments. As we were having our post-workshop drinks, we watched the large groups of Ultras – the masses of soccer fans that are kind of the militarized phalanx of the youth left in Egypt – pour across the bridges to Giza, where they attacked the Giza police stations, a video of which was mis-portrayed as the attack on the Israeli Embassy, which was non-violent, but the video of the youth attacking the police stations was used to show the attack on the Israeli Embassy. So anyway,... that was the conference last time. Unfortunately, you’re not going to see history changing all around you, but you’re going to see...

Mae Cannon: You never know, Paul.

Paul Amar: You never know what could happen. I mean, as you know, UC is in the middle of some very Tahrir-like uprisings, but not this campus today. Anyway, so to introduce this panel again, the idea here is to talk for just a few minutes, particularly about the topic at hand, which is the role of religion in recent socio-political transformations. Talk for a few minutes and then it’ll be an open discussion which I won’t interfere in at all. So the first speaker is Mohammed Bamyeh, who is a professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of
Pittsburgh. You’ve already introduced yourself, so I’ll just do the most minimal of introductions. Rosalind Hackett, a Professor and Chair in the Department of Religious Studies, University of Tennessee. Jeffrey Haynes from London Metropolitan University and Jacob Olupona from Harvard University in Cambridge. So, welcome.

Mark Juergensmeyer: We were hoping for about 5 minutes or so for each of them so we’re going to have to cut you short if you go on a little longer, so I’m sorry about that.

Mohammed Bamyeh: Okay, I have a lot to say, though, ...but we’ll start at the beginning, about 100 years ago. The past 100 years in particular has seen a profound transformation in the Middle East. I don’t have time to go through that, but briefly, one of the things I would like to mention about the earlier role of religious movements and the anti-colonial struggle, that was really the first time in our history where you begin to see the... political activation of religious movements in a big way. In Algeria, in particular, and Libya are the two early theaters where already existing Sufi order – kind of organizations, if you call them that – were the first sources of mobilization against Western colonialism in its earlier form. But since then, or after that, you have a very long time where basically you have the anti-colonial kind of project. It’s picked up by liberal secular forces and continued to be so until almost the end of the 20th century, where the religious dimensions of the anti-colonial project are picked up again. So I think when we talk about the role of religious movements, we have to have this historical perspective in mind and ask about what happened and at what point do religious organizations pick up a certain fight directly and at another point indirectly?

For much of the 20th century, much of religious mobilization in the Middle East has become conservative in the sense that for the organizers -- the Muslim Brotherhood being a model, one of the main models, although not the only model of that kind of mobilization – the main task was to preserve the cultural integrity of society. Part of that included [an instance] under colonialism, but not as early as a major or only point of focus. Part of it also involved contesting the state, but not always, not consistently. The focus was more general, rather, on social ethics, on mutual help on establishing institutions at the neighborhood level, and establishing all kinds of quasi-political or non-political kinds of sources of action on society. In the past 30 years in particular, we see the ramifications of that, where basically many societies in the Middle East – again Egypt is really a paradigmatic example here – become gradually Islamized. People, of course, as we heard in the video, are being described as being naturally conservative. That, again, depends on what you mean by conservatism, ultimately. What we see in the past three decades in particular, and especially since the Iranian Revolution and the beginning of the newest phase of mobilization of Islamic activism elsewhere, a gradual sort of re-Islamization of society and this Islamization of course takes new forms, the new kinds of ethics, and the new forms of solidarity also and new meanings of it become emphasized that are not – arguably – not necessarily a part of the historical character of Islam. But nonetheless, Islam becomes really the most effective as a slogan for mobilizing civil society, and for... those of you who are involved in Islamic Studies for the past quarter of a century have been told Islam was the only ideology that is capable of mobilizing people in large numbers in the Middle East... In 2011, last year, that proved to be in fact not entirely true. Although, of course, when you look at the recent elections, it was basically, whatever... post-revolution elections again, you have to think about what that actually means. But the revolutions themselves were not religious revolutions, ultimately. They expressed
grievances that both religious and non-religious forces could agree on and in fact, the religious movements joined the revolutions later, in most cases, although quickly enough. And some of them, like the Salafis, in fact, did not join at all until very late in the stages of the revolution. So as revolutionary activism is concerned, the religious movements seem to be caught off-guard by the [indistinct] just happened to respond late, partially because they already have something else to do in society. They are already rooted elsewhere. They have something to do in the civil society ordinarily. But... that is something they have been doing for so many years that prepares them very well to take up the question of political power later, much more prepared than other forces.

Now the political... this is the last [point]. I’m going to end on this point because I know the limit of time. The religion that takes over or may take over, of course, in a post-revolutionary situation like in Tunisia, Egypt, or Morocco perhaps – who knows what happens in Syria, eventually – is not the same religion that you see in the pre-revolutionary period. It is not the same ideology. One of the things that I’m absolutely confident of – and we can talk about that in detail afterwards – is that the Muslim Brotherhood, for example, of this year is not at all the Muslim Brotherhood of last year. There is a way for the political transformation that is happening... [to] also transform people themselves. It is impossible to argue that in such a high-tension and high-mobilization environment as a revolution that everyone will just stay with their own old ideas forever and not be influenced at all by the transformations that are happening. The ideological change, including the change of the meaning of religion and changing the meaning of the political concepts of religion, is part and parcel of the demands that are placed in a revolution – a new environment which is very different from the old environment, where the demands on religion were of a very different sort and did not involve the question of the state at all but involved something else that was closer to everyday life. So I will stop here and we can pick up that later, perhaps.

Rosalind Hackett: Thank you. Well hello again. I’m going to talk primarily about what I have learned working in northern Uganda for the last seven or eight years. And if you don’t mind, I’m going to do a bit of show and tell by passing around a recent book that I co-edited because the group that I’m talking about is actually featured on the cover and the conference that took place in Uganda that gave rise to this book. So it’s significant that the book goes around if you don’t mind. When I first went to northern Uganda in 2004, I was struck by the neglect, the national and international neglect and lack of interest in what was an extreme humanitarian and political crisis. That is to say, the conflict – and I’m more interested in conflict – between the Lord’s Resistance Army, an insurgent group, against the Ugandan government, led by President Museveni. But in the space of those seven or eight years, I find it amazing how this part of the world has now been catapulted onto the world scene, thanks largely to the agency of an inter-religious organization, the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative. So I’ve been involved with this group one way or another, not least just getting some of my students placed as interns. But it’s been very instructive for me to learn about how they formed themselves in response to the suffering of their communities, the Acholi, the Acholi peoples in the north of Uganda, and how they mobilized support, nationally and internationally. This flies in the face of how religious groups may often be – particularly locally generated religious groups – may be overlooked or misrepresented. In fact, some of the more secular oriented, critically minded scholars, some of whom have written on northern Uganda, tend to just give a passing reference to this group. And I
think they’re of comparative interest because if we look at the cases of Sierra Leone, Liberia, South Africa, and Nigeria to some extent, we see that religious coalitions – interreligious coalitions, interreligious councils – seem to be gaining momentum and also seem to be expanding their purview and their portfolios. This is certainly the case of the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative, which started out really just helping members of the mainly Anglican and Catholic communities but then... ironically gained permission from the President of Uganda to become legitimate agents in the peace process and... then they got more into advocacy, advocating for peace over justice, and then taking on the International Criminal Court for its uninformed and untimely intervention in northern Uganda. And now [they are] even taking on President Obama and the State Department for their overly militarized solutions and proposals with dealing with the Lord’s Resistance Army in the region of northern Uganda, South Sudan, and Congo. So I think it’s very important to use case studies that can be instructive, not just in terms of the local ecology and historical dynamics of peace-building and humanitarianism, but how such a group can from one month or year to the next be empowered or disempowered by the state or by international agents. So I find them to be a fascinating case study for illustrating the complexity and the evolving discourses and the vagaries of funding and then who’s in, who’s out, who collaborates with whom. There’s a segue to Jacob’s and Laura’s concern about the role of traditional leaders. Traditional leaders are involved in this interreligious initiative, but they aren’t named... They’re not listed in the title. I find that to be somewhat significant. As someone who’s very interested in Media Studies, I’m also interested in the framing – how the government, how this interreligious initiative plays the media to their advantage. So I would also argue that in this day and age, we have to pay attention to the labeling and the deviant labeling and the representations and the misrepresentations because those are really very empowering and disempowering. And I’m going to say I look forward to saying a little bit more later about the use of the term, “faith.” Thank you very much.

Jeffrey Haynes: Okay, thank you. I want to be provocative and so I’m going to be provocative as a way of establishing myself in the group. The title, “What is the role of religion in the recent socio-political transformations?” I think it is a really important starting point, but I was interested from the film, from Mohammed’s comments, and from Rosalind’s comments, we’ve heard about Sufis, imams, Muslim Brotherhood, Salafis, Muslim Sisters, soccer fans – are they secular religious followers? We didn’t hear anything about the Coptic Christians in Egypt, which is obviously a major issue when we think about socio-political transformations there. What would be the role of the 80 million strong minority there? The experts around the table are from Religious Studies, ...particularly interested in African traditional religions, Mohammed an expert in Islamic ideology, NGO people as well. I’m very concerned that we start off by understanding what we’re talking about here because the problem we’ve got, I think, is that implicitly, religion’s in one box, secularism is in another box and we’re talking about how those boxes interact and overlap and what the secular world of politics, let’s say, how that’s affected by the world of religion. The implicit thing there of course is that they are separate worlds and I certainly am coming from a background which understands that’s how the world is made up. Rosalind with her background in African traditional religions, I’m sure, would be much more skeptical about that kind of way of seeing the world.

So the first thing is, what are we talking about here? Can we compartmentalize these things in the way in which I tend to do? What makes a religion a religion? What makes it separate from a
secular organizing group? Is there a clear dividing line between religion and politics? I know these are obvious and, in many ways, simplistic questions, but I think they need to form a backdrop to what we’re talking about. In the Middle East, in sub-Saharan Africa, have we seen religious privatization? Of course in the West this is an established fact about how our societies have developed. Are we in the West in the context of post-secularism? Does that term mean anything to the communities of sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East? If so, what does it imply for our understanding of the world? Do we still implicitly or explicitly see a linear trajectory from tradition to modernity, which necessarily implies secularization? Some of the activists in the film seemed to me to be saying something like that – that religion would become less significant to how they did their lives because the issue is about jobs, welfare, education. It was secular issues, and religion should play a backseat role in those kinds of questions. I think I’m running out of time already. The Lord’s Resistance Army – now there’s an interesting label. What makes the Lord’s Resistance Army religious? What makes them something that we can identify as a religious organization? Rosalind talks about Acholi religious leaders. How do they see the world? How do Acholi traditional religious leaders see the world? Do they see the world divided up into a secular and a religious context? What aspects of their religion inform their peace-making? So for me, the issue is endlessly fascinating. I haven’t even gotten onto the topic of global civil society yet, which is another fascinating topic. So I’m very much interested in what my colleagues around the table have to say about these issues, but I would like us to be as far as possible concerned with terminology because it’s very easy – and I’m guilty of it – to talk about these issues as though everybody understands what we mean. And I think that if we’d gone around the table and asked everybody how would they define religion, how would they define socio-political transformation, then we’d probably get 20 different answers. So that’s my controversial starting point.

**Jacob Olupona:** Thank you very much. I’m now going to be provocative. But I’d like to raise one or two conceptual issues for our conversation here. The first has to do with the role of religion in civil society. Religion can be part and parcel of civil society like in other associations, organizations, human rights, and so on. Religion can also be a kind of an institution that is in opposition to civil society, not just the state but other members of civil society. I think it’s important for us to look at that. Why this has become so important in African situations is where you have the conflict between ethnicity and religion, especially when it comes to identity construction. We have seen that when ethnicity fails, or African political leaders fail to invoke ethnicity to support a program or to sell an idea, they often turn to conservative forms of religion to build their constituency. If you look at the history of West African countries, in most cases,... they turn to radical, radical forms of religion – radical evangelism, radical Islam, in opposition to the state. Quite often, they play this card. At times, we may not know which is which. You may not know whether or not the president, in talking about his [indistinct] constituency, he’s actually also talking about the Southern Christian group that has been in support of him... I mean Nigeria has been in support of his ambition. So it is important for us to sort out these terms and to sort out the issues concerned.

The third point I’d like to make relates to the situation in Nigeria. The theoretical issue there is this: on occasions and in situations where it is hard or where political leadership and religious leadership conflate, you have a serious crisis here... A classic example is the sultan. The Sultan of Sokoto was my guest a month ago at Harvard, who gave a well-endowed lecture there and had...
a lot to say about the Nigerian situation. So people are arguing that perhaps the silences that we are witnessing in Nigeria, from that part of the country, from northern Nigeria, mainly from northern Nigerian [indistinct], may relate to the fact that there’s a conflict between Christianity and Islam generally in that country, in terms of who controls the state. So as bad as these are, and as bad as the situation is in Nigeria, we are not too sure whether what we are seeing is political, is economic, or even is religious. So that becomes a problem.

Another point I’d like to make is, how do we relate to civil society or members of a civil society – institutions, including religious ones – who engage in a fight for justice but use violent means, especially in situations where they feel that they have not been successful in promoting peaceful transformation of the society? This may be a value judgment, but I think that it’s important. And why [indistinct] justify violence in the conduct of civil society? There is an issue that we need to deal with as scholars. How do we respond to that? To people who said, “Well, our vote doesn’t count. We have tried to vote. We have tried to change this government. We have tried to transform this society by peaceful means, but any time we vote, they rig the election and we are hopeless. We are hapless. So what do we now do?” I don’t want to deal with specific cases, as such. I think this will probably come up in the course of our conversation. But I’d like to sort of add one more thing and then I will stop. That in modern Africa, the question we should also be asking is, why is it that religion has become so central to civil society? Why is it that even the state in engaging the populace have found out that it is important to engage members of the religious organizations and associations? And I have an example I always give in Nigeria, that if the president of Nigeria calls a rally in Abuja – you know, “I want to meet with my people” – and the president...or the leaders of three evangelical Christian associations call for the same rally in the same place, what will happen? You will discover that very few people will go to the president’s rally and virtually the largest group will go to the rallies organized by the leaders of these evangelical Christian organizations. So what does this tell us about the political mobilization and what does it tell us about the role of religion in the society? Unfortunately, unlike the Middle East, where the religious organizations have really, really been able to find a way of engaging the state in serious conversation, this is not the case in most African countries. They have not...and perhaps it has to do with the nature of religious culture there and the society itself because it’s a highly pluralistic society. So the conflict between Christians and Muslims, for example, in countries like Nigeria... is a factor in how religion is mobilized in social transformation. Thank you.

Paul Amar: Thank you very much. So, we’ll move to open discussion. Anyone on the panel want to respond to a comment of any other panelist to start off with? We open it up.

Nadege Clitandre: I actually just have a general question for Professor Bamyeh. I wanted to know if you could elaborate a little bit on your discussion around the Muslim Brotherhood. You talk about transformations and changing ideologies. Is it because it is about the changes as Professor Haynes talks about - secular - everything becoming more secular or is it more complicated than that?

Mark Juergensmeyer: Why don’t we have a couple of comments before the panel responds. Get more people involved.
Mae Cannon: Well I would just follow up with that. I was intrigued by the comment about Islam being the most significant force to be able to mobilize popular movements. Specifically, my question has to do with the 1979 revolution in Iran because my understanding was that it was a popular revolution that then became very religious afterwards. And so, just as a follow-up to your question, I’d be interested to hear about that.

Thomas Tighe: I was just hoping Jeffrey was going to answer all the questions he posed because I thought they were great. Also, Jacob, your comments made me think of the element of trust as it relates to political leaders versus religious institutions, versus other institutions and if the erosion of trust in political leaders we see in a lot of places, if there’s kind of a zero-sum-ness to where that trust can be vested. And if it’s in older institutions that fail, whether they be religious or political, you see the newness emerge and the desire to follow something. And I was just curious... Whether it’s religious in nature, secular or whatever, there’s this element of desiring leadership and trusting that they’re going to have a path forward that you all seem to have a bit of a different take on in one way or another with the organizations, religious institutions, and political leaders that you mentioned.

Paul Amar: Just have this last question here and we’ll answer.

Karel Zelenka: Thank you. First, thank you for very impressive presentations. I have a couple of questions or comments. First, it seems although the movie and your visit was only two months ago, based on my limited knowledge mostly from the media, I understand that the Egyptian revolution is sort of settling down into basically or is now involving two protagonists – the military and the Muslim Brotherhood, that the promises of multi-party system that would be a precursor of democracy is more or less recent history... The struggle now is between the Muslim Brotherhood and the military and... that there may be actually some collusion in terms of sharing power. And second, I understand that the significant vote that the Muslim Brotherhood has obtained was coming mostly from the countryside, that they tend to concentrate on the capital city, on Cairo, which is ... maybe 20% of the population of Egypt. I read some analysis why it is that the vote was so strongly in favor of the Muslim Brotherhood was that people in villages that had hardly any access to media or to basically any updates... voted because they knew people in the village, in the communities, regardless what their program was, what their platform would be... They just voted for them because they knew them as neighbors, as people who have been doing something in their communities, regardless of the sophisticated urban analysis and social versus religious and so forth. Thank you.

Mohammed Bamyeh: Mark, you had a question?

Mark Juergensmeyer: Oh, yes, it’s partially for you. You had this very intriguing phrase in your comments where you talked about the political transformations had led to a transformation of the people. And then you made reference specifically with regard to the Muslim Brotherhood and I was wondering quite what you meant by that. Did you mean a greater sense of citizenship? A greater civic responsibility? Or did you mean something darker than that?

Mohammed Bamyeh: Okay, I mean this is a very rich discussion. First of all, let me just go back to the Iranian Revolution because... I did not mean to imply that it was an Islamic
revolution. It assumed an Islamic character later... There is a lot of literature about that by this point, which shows that basically the revolution took up an Islamic character, largely because of other factors that got activated later on, became important later on, such as the mobilizing capacity of the clergy, for example, such as the search for unified leadership and so on. And religious characters were in a better position to provide those elements of the revolution. But the revolution did not start because of Islam. It did not start because people wanted to establish an Islamic theocracy. But rather, basically, revolutions don’t always arrive at their destination, so to speak. They get eventually somewhere else, depending on a large mix of factors. But the important thing about the Iran revolution is that it served as a lesson for future movements... In fact, I just wrote an article precisely about this point – the relationship of the Iran revolution to the learning process that resulted in the Arab revolution that’s right now. Because you see many elements that are missing in these revolutions in the world that had been part of the Iran revolution. For example, the resistance. Often [indistinct] resistance to the idea of unified leadership. Even though you have a messianic type of atmosphere, you do not have any serious messianic type of leader. There is an idea of peoplehood – the people as the ultimate source of legitimacy but there’s no demand for any entity to represent this abstraction, which is peoplehood, ultimately.

And these elements are really strange, especially if you see them in the context of the history of revolutions in general. One of the approaches that help us when we try to explain and answer any of these questions is to understand religious movements like any other movements as experimental movements, ultimately. That is, as movements that learn the art of politics, the language of politics by just doing it. And what they learn depends on how much the theater is open or closed to them. The question, for example, of the Islamic state in Egypt was not at all discussed seriously. [Indistinct], when he denounced political Islam for being underdeveloped, that it had no theater of politics, he was right. But he was not actually talking about anything that was significant because nothing really depended on the absence of the political ideology... No state was being offered up to the Islamists to take over, therefore there was no need to develop a political ideology. Only now is this demand there and this is how you see, for example, the evolution of this political ideology. One of its key elements, strangely, is the idea of the civic state, which is a concept that in some sense theoretically may appear to be old but very, very quickly has become familiar just last year. And the first time I saw it in Tahrir Square, it was explained in a very particular way. A civic state was something that contested two other types of states. A religious state was one of them and the military state was the other. So it was neither military nor religious. These were other alternatives. And the surprising thing that I saw immediately almost afterwards is that the Muslim Brotherhood members – youth members in particular, themselves – were chanting for a civic state. And then someone from Al Azhar stood up and defended the idea of the civic state by citing Mohammed as being the first person in history to establish a civic state, rather than a religious state. I’m not saying these things just to say that these are the ideals that are going to be applied, but just to show how basically there is a very dynamic scene that we have and there is an experimentation.

One of the things that we know from European history that is worth learning about is the evolution of social democracy in Europe – the Christian social democracy in Europe. The ruling party in Germany is called the Christian Democratic Party. In Italy likewise and so on. In my earlier work on globalization, comparative cultures of globalization, political globalization, one
of the things that I tried to argue is that Christian social democratic parties in the West became what they are precisely because of the political openness, relatively open political theater that caused the transformation and adaptation of their earlier kind of ideology and cultural traditions into suitable political language. That path was not available to Islamic movements until now. So whenever it was open, you saw a similar process of transformation of political ideology, and Islam in particular, in the direction of social democracy. The first... will talk about the Iran Revolution, but not as much about Turkey, for example. The transformation of the Islamic movements in Turkey into something that, because of different dynamics, were evolved in the direction of social democratic traditional conservatism. And this seems to be also the process that may be happening as far as we see in Egypt. If we have time, later perhaps, I’d like to discuss at some point other experiences like, for example, Hamas and Hezbollah as different types...but similar, in fact, in unsuspected ways to what I’m describing now. But that’s a long discussion.

Rosalind Hackett: Yes, I’d just like to add a comment or two in relation to Jeff and Jacob’s comments. Jeff, the Ugandan case is instructive because the various parties or sets of actors are constantly challenging and negotiating territory and authority. There’s a fraught history in Uganda, a very tense relationship between religion and the state, church/state. But now it’s become religion as a state with Muslims, the Muslim minority challenging what they perceive to be a Christian-dominated state, particularly via the Born Agains and the Pentecostals over a domestic relations bill. So that’s the backdrop. But with the newly empowered authority of the Acholi religious leaders, they now will prepare to criticize the government on moral issues such as corruption and bad governance and then the president says, “Stop meddling. Go back to looking after your flock.” But every single politician is a member of the flock. So I think if you just would monitor how they go back and forth, you’ve got a very good example of the everyday problematizing of where religion and politics ends and begins. And with regard to the question of ethnicity, again it’s interesting how the religious leaders have negotiated the ethnic trope because the war, which was technically over in 2006, is about ethnicity and marginalization. But at the same time, they are trying to protect their people, the Acholi. So it’s a tightrope. And then we come to September the 11th and you add into that a global terrorist trope that President Museveni manipulates to his advantage in terms of raising international funds and lots of American money for military support. So again, this takes a very local conflict, catapults it onto the national and international stage. I feel like I’m very much in the shadow of Egypt here and Nigeria. I could’ve spoken on Nigeria because I’ve published a lot on that, but I chose to talk about northern Uganda precisely because... it’s pretty stunning the way it went from being unknown and neglected to having Hollywood films being made about it and everything. So I find that rather fascinating and then of course some of you may be familiar with the role of a California-based set of students, filmmakers,... Invisible Children... who have intervened in a way which many would see as very problematic in the way they represented this war, favoring the child soldiers and abductees, when the issues and causes were much more complex and much more economic and political. Anyways, there’s more I could say on that. Thank you.

Jacob Olupona: Well I agree with your question, that erosion of trust. It’s at the root of some of these problems. There’s always the desire to look for new things and new ways of solving these problems. What makes this very problematic in the Nigerian case is that it’s religious plurality. I didn’t say pluralism. Nigeria’s 150 million. If Nigeria had been a totally Muslim state or country, there would have been a revolution long ago. But this whole conflation
between ethnicity and religion makes it quite difficult.

I’d like to respond to Mark’s comment on... citizenship and so on. What problem that I think we see in the African state is that at the time of independence in 1960, they were all concerned with dealing with ethnicity. How do we create a new nation-state that would make us move from this whole dependence on the ethnic basis of most of these leaders to a nation that will be very pluralistic and so on? They took religion for granted. They didn’t pay any attention to it. Now by the way, the whole issue of civil society is an issue of using a new term to describe old concepts and ideas. There has always been civil society and most of the missionaries who came to begin their work on the continent also came from civil institutions and civil organizations and established schools and hospitals and responded to social welfare issues as they go about missionizing and converting people. But the nation-state didn’t have a solid experiment in nation building... I spent part of my earlier research in the 70s and 80s on civil religion, when I was influenced by Peter Berger. I was one of his students. And I raised this issue. I found it very, very interesting that the basic concept that any functioning society must have sets of myths and rituals and symbols that will galvanize the people together, irrespective of the situation. And I think I did an article with Rosalind on this issue. Religion becomes science in our hearts if we know precisely what we’re doing. I was able to pinpoint particularly the point when Nigeria failed in this whole experiment. And I showed in Civil Rights of Passage when the whole thing was overturned. So that failure of our leaders to be visionaries, ... because Nyerere’s Ujamaa policy failed, should not make us condemn that. At least he had something. Nkrumah had something that he placed on the table. And Nkrumah used just metaphors and symbols to talk about nation building. That has stopped. Unfortunately, the military came and hijacked that experiment from most of the African states and that is what is one of the things that we have not been able to respond to. And in the so-called democratization process that came after the end of the Cold War hasn’t really been very successful. Because what we have... are still the old political, military leaders who just exchange their suits for the khakis that they used to wear. It hasn’t changed. The same military that is still in charge in Nigeria. Thank you.

Claudine Michel: Jacob, I would like to ask you about the role of indigenous religions involved in this movement.

Jacob Olupona: Well I deliberately didn’t talk about it because I’d like to leave that to Laura to discuss... What is unfortunate about the Nigerian situation is that they have fizzled it out of the equation. In most state ceremonies, at the national level, indigenous religion is not mentioned. The president will call on an imam to pray and the Christian to pray and that is it.

[portion removed from transcript, at Professor Olupona’s request]

And this has been the situation. In 1960, at the beginning of this state called Nigeria, indigenous religion was taken seriously. In fact most of the chairs in African universities – Uganda, Nigeria – and so the first chairs in religions were established to teach indigenous religion. Mbiti will tell you I was not trained in African religion, but I was asked to teach it in [indistinct] University. That was the golden era of religious academic study and discourse in Nigeria. And because they have virtually removed it in Nigeria as an official part of the religious organizations and institutions recognized by the state, the battle has become very clear. The battle between Islam
and Christianity – this is part of the problem.

**Dwight Hopkins:** Thank you for the panel and sharing. Actually, the question I had picks up from Jacob’s. We’re talking about the role of religion in the recent social and political transformations and so my question is when we look at the first part – the role of religion or religions – what is the relationship between the indigenous religions or traditional religions and the missionized religions in this question of the role? Has it been progressive or not? And maybe there’s a coming together of some new form of religion, but I wanted to make a distinction between...not a sharp distinction, but can we sort out the distinction between indigenous religions and missionized religions? And on the other side of the phrase, “the recent social/political transformations” – are these recent social/political transformations... intentionally toward some type of Western modern transformation or are they trying to advance something else like ujamaa or Nkrumah’s peace or maybe in Uganda or maybe even some indigenous Egyptian peace? So basically what is the relationship between the indigenous and new forms from the West (if we can make that distinction) on the religion part, and the goals of the social transformation part?

**Laura Grillo:** I was also picking up on this point about ethnicity and traditional religion. I was intrigued by your initial observation, Jacob... Nigeria is of course a famously ethnically heterogeneous country. But now increasingly the divide is between north and south, Christian and Muslim. Just wanted to note the irony that these so-called “global religions” are the ones that are fostering an increased fractured situation of division and in-fighting. But I was also picking up on something that Rosalind mentioned about the media, wondering to what degree the media informs the situation. I’m playing on the double sense of “informing,” both informing people about how this in-fighting gets played out, but also by reporting on it in those ways, actually fostering and creating such a situation. I’m anticipating this may be the case because I see that has been the case in Côte d’Ivoire – that oftentimes, especially the foreign press represents the civil war as an issue of north/south, Muslim/Christian, when that isn’t necessarily what’s going on. Or that’s certainly not the whole story.

**Paul Amar:** Mark, do you want to have the last question and then we’ll have our responses?

**Mark Juergensmeyer:** Okay, Mohammed Bamyeh made a parallel between Muslim Brotherhood and Hezbollah and Hamas in terms of “it’s beginning to become more moderate or become integrated into the political process.” On a totally different level, the Boko Haram and the Lord’s Resistance Army are at the other extreme of movements that are religious, political...Are there parallels between those two movements, even though one is Christian, one is Muslim, of course? But... is there a kind of anti-authoritarian, prey upon the implicit anarchy of the two countries that produced these kinds of religio-political phenomena and the – at least currently – inability of the regimes of those countries to really effectively deal with them? Most tragically, of course, an incident yesterday where 100 people were killed in northern Nigeria by an attack of the Boko Haram.

**Paul Amar:** So we’ll sneak in a little question from Marguerite then we really do have to...

**Marguerita Bouraad Nash:** I actually would like to make a comment and get the reaction of the panelists. Looking at Iran and at the Egyptian situation now and the successes and
also at Hezbollah and Lebanon, it seems to me that there is a common denominator – that all of these groups were very successful in getting to power and keeping the power because of their grassroots connection to the population and their ability to provide the population with services that normally are provided in the Western world by governments. But [they are] services that are not available there, and therefore they have reached the people. And the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, from Al Banna to the present, has been engaged in this social welfare. Hezbollah definitely has been engaged in the social welfare, that every time Lebanon got invaded – of course it’s the south that gets it – Hezbollah is the one –not the government – Hezbollah is the one that sends the bulldozers to clear the rubble, that helps with the building, that also, through all that, engages in the education. And isn’t that really sort of common to an awful lot of these organizations? I didn’t want to include Hamas because there are some other issues with regard to Hamas, but those three seem to have a common denominator of social services that are coupled with education that endears them to the common people all over.

Paul Amar: So we have to conclude in 5 minutes, so let’s start at this end of the table this time, Jacob?

Jacob Olupona: Okay, very quickly, I will probably say that at the local level, the chiefs, the priests, the indigenous leaders are... still agents of social transformation. They still control that, very similar to the point you made in Egypt – that what happens in the villages at the local level is very different from maybe what is going on in the city. So on one hand, there is that. However, the evangelical Christian associations, institutions, and Islamic groups... they are virtually targeting them. The last two chapters of my new book, which was based on Ilé-Ifẹ, the city of the Yorubas, sort of focused on that – how the leaders themselves at the local level are undergoing the kinds of cognitive dissonance in terms of where do they go. But part of it has to do with transformation constructed along the Western models also. So there’s a lot of influence coming from outside Nigeria, coming from evangelical groups outside Nigeria that is gradually, gradually changing the face of the nation. The Pentecostal charismatic movement... is the largest in Africa, if not in the world. So we’re dealing with a very, very serious issue here. Boko Haram is a terrorist group... Boko Haram is not as organized as these other groups that we are referring to. It’s an invisible group that... is in quarrel with the state. And part of it has to do with the fact that Boko Haram was created by the political elite as talks during national elections to protect them. Now they have become something that they can not control anymore. And a lot of desperate groups have joined Boko Haram to fight the state. And this is precisely what is happening. I do not know what is going on in Nigeria right now, but I think the very fact that yesterday they targeted the police stations is an indication that they want to send a message to Nigeria that they are probably not... after the Christians. Because the Christmas bombing was – there they targeted the Christian church. And people say, “Well, this is a religious war now that we’re fighting.” They’ve always been saying that they have issues with the state. However, there are some sections of Boko Haram who would like to see the sharia instituted, who would like to see an Islamic state installed in Nigeria. If you ask the state, “What is going on now? Who are members of this Boko Haram?” they can’t tell you because it’s a diffuse group that is just coming under the pretext of wanting to fight Nigeria and wanting to fight corruption and so forth...

Jeffrey Haynes: I’ll just comment very briefly. Boko Haram...I mean one thing that seems
to categorize them or characterize them as distinct from other extremist groups that can be characterized as religious in Africa is their willingness to use suicide bombing and terrorist tactics. It may be that if we’re talking about global civil society, we could sort of bend that term to include the kind of Al Qaeda-inspired way of doing politics or way of doing activism, but I don’t know. The Lord’s Resistance Army, I think, is a group which is more about ethnicity than religion. I think the title “Lord’s Resistance Army” is a bit of a red herring, really. Going back to what I was saying earlier, I’d be very interested to know what, precisely, inspires them religiously, as distinct from an ethnic focus. Iran, Egypt, Hezbollah, and Lebanon – I don’t think there’s very much similarity between what occurred in Iran 30-odd years ago and the other two cases, largely because the revolution in Iran was not about building on grassroots movements that were religiously inspired, to my understanding. It was rather that there was a state imposed upon a revolution by a group of people who managed to capture the state. My understanding is that it wasn’t built on a grassroots issue. The Muslim Brotherhood I think is distinct from Hezbollah largely because Hezbollah is seen primarily as a nationalist movement, rather than a religious movement. There are links to Iran. We could make that link because, of course, the Iranian government is one of the key backers of Hezbollah. But whether that’s due to religion or whether it’s due to the fact that Hezbollah is a group which stands up or seeks to defend – if that’s the right word – against Israel. It’s interesting. I do come back in my own mind to this issue of categorization with a lot of this stuff. And finally Muslim Brotherhood, as everyone in the room knows, they’ve been around since 1928. They’ve suffered a great deal of persecution by the state. And it seems to me to be classic sensible tactics – when the state persecutes you, you build at the grassroots. I think the comment about the Muslim Brotherhood’s support being...I won’t say “largely,” but significant in rural areas and the fact that the rural areas were very often absolutely disengaged from the revolution, this is...my understanding from many thousands of miles away, this is an intellectually led effort in Egypt. So I think the three are very different and I think the fact that we would all characterize them as religious and Muslim doesn’t tie them together in any profound ways.

Rosalind Hackett: Thank you. Well Dwight, you were pretty rigorous in trying to tie up... what we were talking about in relation to this particular panel. But it allows me to say this about my case study. What I found revealing about the Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative is that it’s clearly been easier for them. In fact, one of the two most influential religious actors – retired Anglican Bishop Ochola -- at times sounds more traditional in terms of invoking traditional cultural reconciliation mechanisms than a lot of traditional leaders, and his cultural knowledge is unsurpassed. So the areas of non-inclusion of other religious leaders would be in terms of the Born Again or the Pentecostals. They... were reluctant to come up from the capital from the south, the capital Kampala, to even intervene. They only came up after the war ended. But now, just in the last few months, the Born Again Federation has actually joined forces with the – as have the Seventh Day Adventists – with the Acholi Religious Leaders.

And I think if we look at Nigeria, we could see similar evolution. That the Pentecostals -- and in Ghana, too -- sort of kept out, didn’t want to be associated with the mainstream organizations, but there’s been more of a coming together now and... especially through the Christian Association of Nigeria in trying to create a united Christian front against a perceived... Islamization. So those dynamics, I think, are interesting and important in terms of how they operate.
You’re absolutely right, Laura. The media are not innocent in all of this... I don’t really want to speak so much for those involved in the NGO world, but certainly as a scholar, we have been remiss in not paying more critical attention to the role of the media in making or breaking conflict situations. I think that that is changing now. And, as to whether the Lord’s Resistance Army are religious or political or are they Christian or Muslim – it’s all of the above. I mean I heard several local leaders and scholars challenge Western academics for playing down the religious beliefs and practices of the Lord’s Resistance Army, which are Muslim, Christian, and traditional. You have to understand that the local cultural environment there is very much predicated on spirit possession. And this is a rebel movement which is driven by strong beliefs about spirit possession. So we won’t really know so much about this until Joseph Kony ever gets caught and if he’s caught alive... much of this will start to come out. But certainly what we know so far is that one of the reasons why the security forces, the local army detachments have not been effective in tracking down this rebel group is because they’re afraid of them and they’re afraid of their spiritual powers. So to downplay that is to introduce a very secularist perception. Thank you.

Paul Amar: Alright, final word from the panel.

Mohammed Bamyeh: [Indistinct] at the local level is very important, I think, in the prospects of many of the movements that we are talking about. But also, as we discussed, [indistinct] for a very complicated approach to localism and radicalism and that’s an issue that comes up when we discuss Hezbollah, for example. Just briefly, Hamas spends 85 to 90% of its budget on social services. Similar things can be said about Hezbollah because the U.N. organization that studied the Hezbollah services as mentioned. They were more efficient than both of the [indistinct] governments, less corrupt, also, that’s very important. So the absence of corruption is very important. In fact, Hamas is...in the [indistinct] of campaign, the one that won in 2005, the issue of corruption was the most important issue – combating corruption in the government. So the presence of local authorities, trustworthiness, basically, comparativity of that to the corruption of the highest levels of governments, is actually very important in the prospects of those movements.

Also, when we keep in mind we have to have another factor that we need to pay attention to and namely, when do these groups become militant? When social service engagement at the local level eventually morphs into a militant kind of struggle at a macro level. Hamas – its origins can be traced to 1971 but it becomes a militant, real fighting organization in 1987. Hezbollah had a similar history -- 1974, early origins so to speak, although the name as not used. And then in the early 80s it becomes a sort of militant movement that we hear about. These in Nigeria, likewise – you can have earlier origins of mobilization at the local level and the organization does not exist by that name, but the networks that form out of this local mobilization to take care of pressing local issues eventually becomes the tools for a militant organization that fight... at the higher level. So I can say, “Why does this happen?” Does this have to do with religion itself? Or does it have to do with the fact that radicalism is actually produced by the states, by the authorities that these movements themselves combat? This is clear, for example, in the case of Israel. I mean the conditions of the occupation themselves, of course, radicalize the movements that originally, for example, simply wanted to take care of a society that nobody else was there to take care of. Lebanon, likewise -- the situation of occupation, civil war, and so on and so forth.
so on. So a common denominator that can be observed is basically society comes together to take care of itself at the local level. Not religion, so to speak, in that society. But it takes up a religious language because it’s a familiar language to a lot of people, and then the networks that emerge out of that local mobilization take on eventually – maybe or maybe not, depending on the local situation – a radical or militant form later on, simply because of the fact that the larger powers that had created the problems which those movements themselves originated to combat have been producing, actually, the kinds of problems that they had produced, so to speak, (if you want to go back to Foucault) produce the criminality that is fighting them.

Paul Amar: Thank you very much.

SECOND SESSION

Nadege Clitandre: The question we are answering in this session is “What role do religious institutions play in supporting humanitarian activity?” And this question actually takes us back to the first set of questions in the first session, specifically the question that Jeffery Haynes brought up. And that is, “Is there a clear divide between religious and secular activities.” So the assumption in the question is that humanitarian activities do not have religious and political agendas. So I'm very excited about this particular panel because I have been thinking about this very question within the context of Haiti post-January 12 and, in particular, the plethora of humanitarian aid organizations who indeed have political and religious agendas in their approach.

We have four panelists, and I will introduce them briefly. William Headley, who is the Dean of the Joan Krok School of Peace Studies at the University of San Diego, Mae Cannon who is Senior Director of Advocacy and Outreach for Worldvision, and Dwight Hopkins who is both professor at the divinity school at the University of Chicago and founder of International Association for Black Religions and Spiritualities, and finally Karel Zalenka who is the country representative for South Africa at Catholic Relief Services. So we will start with Mae Cannon.

Mae Cannon: Well, I'm happy to jump in ... My name is Mae Cannon. I'm here on behalf of Worldvision, which is the world's largest Christian humanitarian organization. We work in one hundred countries around the world, and my work focuses primarily in the Middle East. This question of what is the role of religious institutions in supporting humanitarian activities … is a very important one. I work for a Christian institution, and I also work for a humanitarian organization. So I hope the answer to this question is that they're absolutely necessary and that they play a very important role.

I have three primary points in the few minutes that we have about this question of the role of religious institutions. One is as a Christian organization, and I think this is true regardless of the faith of a religious institution, our theology undergirds our work. So our theology provides the foundation for why we do what we do. It helps shape what we do, and it also shapes how we do it. From a Christian perspective, our theology is based on the scriptures and what the Bible has to say about God's concern for the world, God's care for the poor. And I would call attention to passages such as Matthew 25 in which Jesus says, “whatever you do unto the least of these you do unto me” or Isaiah 58 … that talks about God's heart for justice. So as a religious institution
our theology plays a significant role in shaping the work that we do. I also think it's vitally important that we partner with religious institutions, particularly indigenous ones in the regions where we work. These institutions play a significant role in identifying the need. They also play an important role in mutual accountability, and they help shape the way that we do the work in different contexts around the world. And this model of partnership is vital for us to be successful and to not continue mechanisms of Western imperialism or colonialism where the developing countries are doing work on the ground without taking direction and guidance from the indigenous community in terms of how that work is done. And then also... humanitarian activities need support and financial undergirding, and one of the main roles that religious institutions play is by providing that support mechanism. So for Worldvision, for example, our primary constituents are the American church. We work with 15,000 churches across the US. And that work, we hope, promotes an idea of holistic engagement, spiritual formation, and relationship building with partners that we have around the world. But then of course there's this financial component where they are the primary supports for the work that we do.

My last two comments in this regard in terms of the importance of religious institutions – I think one of the great, great benefits of religious institutions engaging in humanitarian work is the fact that there is great conviction and motivation for the work that we do – that the work that we do is not just a vocation or a job, it's what we believe is the heart of our purpose in the world. And so we are passionate about what we do. That can be for good and for naught, but we have great conviction in the work which I think is a great strength. And that could mobilize people to engage in responding to needs and to engage in activities of justice. One of the challenges that I would encourage us to consider as a possible pitfall is what I would call this notion of theological imperialism, where sometimes our religious beliefs and convictions can get in the way and can cause mechanisms that are not the most effective in terms of our work on the ground. And so I certainly think that that's something that I'm sure we'll discuss as we further engage in this conversation. Thank you

William Headley: Thanks very much. I'm really a hangover from the previous question, namely the broader one, “transformation of the role religious institutions played in civil society.” The December 3rd, 2011 edition of the Economist carried a briefing entitled, “Africa's hopeful economics.” A fairly reliable repository of economic information, the magazine gave an upbeat, if cautionary, picture of Africa's growth. And buried beneath this in the article itself is a sheepish apologetic note for labeling Africa “a hopeless continent.” I'd like to go to a second point, which is basically that ... despite the predictions of its demise, religion has experienced a phenomenal growth in the South, more specifically in Africa in the last forty years. I'd like then to turn to the Catholic Church. Here is a notable example of this – borrowing from the work of Toft's *God's Century*, I further note that political theology, that's a refinement of Mae's remark about theology, is a set of ideas that a religious community holds about political authority and justice of a certain religious body as well as its religious independence – that is, where religion and state enjoy substantially separate spheres of authority for a given government, enabling it to become a transformative religious actor. Toft calls this “militant for peace and justice.” I turn to the Catholic Church and rely on the work of John Allen in his work “Future Church” to trace some of the characteristics of the emerging Catholic Church in the future to suggest that it will in fact be possibly one of those transformative groups. And there's three characteristics, and they all address the question of the role of religion in the recent socio-economic political transformation.
First of all, the Catholic Church – and I could think that things could be said of other Christian churches – is morally conservative and politically liberal. That liberal/conservative taxonomy is a shift in our normal understanding of those. Southern Catholics, that is to say Africans, typically hold conservative attitudes on questions such as abortion, homosexuality, and the family. And yet when you enter into the realm of economics, politics, and military they are remarkably liberal. To be very specific, they would be liberal on such questions as being skeptical of capitalist and globalization, wary about the global influence of the US, they would be more pro-Palestinian and by implications somewhat critical of Israel and so on it goes. The second point that I would make in these characteristics is Catholicism – again this could be said of Christianity – plays a strongly political role. In non-Western societies, religious bodies sometimes are the only meaningful expressions of the discontents of civil society. With it and through it, protest can take shape. Concern for the common good can be articulated. And finally, the third characteristic I'd like to draw attention to is that the African Catholic Church's concern for the ad-intra is moving to the ad-extra, that is to say, the ad-intra refers in this instance to the internal life of the church, ad-extra means engagement with the broader social questions of concern to civil society. It's argued that the Southern, that is to say the African Church in this context, is more focused on the ad-extra issues. Peter Fen, an Asian theologian at Georgetown University, captures this transition well, even though he's speaking about Asia, it applies to … other areas of the South. He says conspicuous absence on the part of these theologians on the Western theological preoccupations – such as papal primacy and fallibility of the Roman curia, Episcopal collegiality – he said they're not concerned about any of that. What they're really focused on is the kind of things that concern them – the alleviation of poverty and the relationship with Islam. Finally, Peter Berger says that no important social phenomenon ever has just a single cause. I will follow his advice and not try to argue, as I'm not here, one-to-one or cause-effect relationship to the phenomenal growth of religion or the Catholic Church in Africa and its transformation. But I do note that … as the church has grown and religion has grown in Africa, so also have the schools and universities, clinics and hospitals, as well as religious training centers [indistinct 2 or 3 words.] I look forward to a sabbatical where I'll be able to look into this more carefully.

Dwight Hopkins: Thank you. We're going to talk about the role of religious institutions in supporting humanitarian activities. I didn't mention, but I'm a founder of something called “the International Association of Black Religions and Spiritualities” which is comprised of 14 countries, Australia, the aboriginal Australians, Dahlites in India, Burackamin in Japan, Native Hawaiians (we consider Hawaii an oppressed, colonized nation), Fiji, Brazil, Afro-Brazilians, Jamaicans, Afro-Cubans, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Ghana, the USA, and blacks in England. So we pretty much have Africa, Asia, Latin America, Caribbean, and Western Europe, and are looking to expand beyond those regions and even those countries. The theme of the group “Another World Is Possible.” What we have done is to create a network of networks, it's not an organization. So we have two delegates from each country and every level of the group – committees, chair, coordinators [are] half men and half women. So we don't go by quorum. We say, do we have half men and half women, and then we can proceed.

The programmatic work of the group focuses on two things, primarily youth/student exchanges. So we take youth and students from the network countries and fly them to other countries so that they can see that another world is possible. So we may take Dahlites from India, and they'll go to
visit native Hawaiians. Or we make take Ghana or Botswana youth and students and have them go to Fiji or UK. We've had people come from Zimbabwe – students who had never left their country – and come to the US. We want to focus on young people ages 18 to 30, and students and youth because they're the future of their countries, and they're the future of what a positive globalization could be about. And so the question of religious institutions would primarily be religious/spiritualities because we both include those who are Christian, Islam, but also the various indigenous forms of spirituality in their countries, for instance Dahlit spirituality, aboriginal sp, African traditional sp, etc. So it's “both/and” that is both spirituality and organized religious institutions. In supporting humanitarian activities, the primary ways to focus it, there are lots of ways to do it, and we are all doing good stuff around the table as we've heard. And I'm sure we'll hear more of. But we are specifically focusing on youth and students, education broadly construed, both in terms of taking classes in the countries they go to, more specifically letting them be young people in another context. For example, … the youth student delegation has to be youth and student, male and female that go to other countries. So we've hosted, for example in Chicago, the male and female youth/student [delegation] from Zimbabwe. They attended classes, they went to different institutions, they went to the Bulls games, they went to see a state representative from Springfield, they went to the only hip-hop church I know in the US, at least in Illinois. It's called “the house.” It's literally a hip-hop church. And the pastor is ordained, and they meet and it's a hell of a way to do church. It's another way of doing church. But the point is, we let them be young people. So we also have serious engagement where they can share their experiences with young people from the US, what does it mean to be youth and student in Zimbabwe. And what happen is we are networking networks on top of networks. Again, we are not an organization per se, but we're a network of networks. So this one concrete example that we've developed to show how religious institutions … support humanitarian activities. …

The second focus is women's advocacy. So we've have women from Botswana go to Brazil and Jamaica and do advocacy on the part of women. We've found in dealing with the different leaders who are part of the 14 country network that particularly in the South, but also in the North – the USA and UK – that when they touch the woman, they touch the whole culture in the society. And so we felt we need to lift up and highlight, along with youth and students who are the future leaders of the globe, network them together, but also talk about the level of culture in the entire society that many women play in these countries. So for example, we had a woman from Botswana who focuses on HIV/AIDS. She went to our two countries in Jamaica and Brazil, and she did workshops. She met with national leaders... health leaders ... women’s groups ... youth and students. She taught class, did media, etc. And in Brazil, similar pattern. And … as a result of her meeting there in Brazil, a lot of the Afro Brazilian women [started] a group, a network of their own because they could see another world is possible... So those are some concrete examples of what we're talking about.

Basically what we are trying to do is to build another world by laying the seeds primarily through youth and students, but also with women's advocacy. And, again, we see a lot of different international organizations doing great work, that's why we wanted a network, not an organization. You have the World council of Churches and various other bodies like the World Alliance of Reformed Churches which has changed its name … We have the … Council and Parliament of World Religions whose global criteria for membership is to give a gift. We have
ecumenical associations that are all theologians, such as Liberation group. We can go on and on. Rosalind is the chair of an international academic group. So we didn't want to start an organization. We wanted to say everybody's doing great work. Keep doing what we're doing. … But how do we network the existing network, not to reinvent the wheel, but how do we put people together, provide some resources, particularly on another world is possible and let the youth and students see this and also give some extra support to women. We are funded by the Ford Foundation, and we … founded the group in January … I was doing work before then, but we founded the group in January 2006 in Capetown South Africa. So we are a new network and still doing fundraising as you can imagine.

We have produced a book. The book is called “Another World Is Possible,” and it's co-edited by myself and Margie Lewis who is the first … woman president of the United Theological College of the West Indies in Jamaica… And we are working on a second book now called, “New Missions, New Arrival.” That is, how do people go to another country and not bring their religion, but learn from the people that already exist there. Obviously in the real world it's a both/and, but we want to make the point that is it possible for us to go to different places and not bring religion and see if we can be missionized or be influenced by the local people there. So we will see what happens with that. That book is being coedited by Ann Pattel Grave, an Australian aboriginal, and Dr. James Massie who is a Dahlit from India. Thank you.

Karel Zalenka: Thank you. You've heard the presentation of Mae and she has mentioned many things that are applicable to most religious institutions, but particularly faith-based organizations. She mentioned the motivation that is based on the foundations of the individual organizations' religious institutions. In other words, it's the gospel, at least for us Christians. It's the gospel of Jesus. She mentioned the trust the faith-based organizations enjoy in terms of their work, motivation, and in a way fund raising efforts. And the ecumenical cooperation that exists across a number of the faith-based organizations. So I'd like to concentrate more on practical aspects of the support of religious institutions for humanitarian activities, and let me define at least the way I understand humanitarian activities. They are basically emergency response as opposed to long-term development and strengthening of partners and so forth.

So what are the … pluses of faith-based organizations that are basically arms of individual religions? I would mention the most important one, and let's start with the local communities where the emergency situation occurs. The religious institutions, and in this case I will talk particularly about [the] Catholic Church, they have a more or less global presence. So what it implies is that they understand the local environment. They understand the local leaders. They are familiar with the most vulnerable people. And so it's much easier to support them in responding, and this is a key. In other words, it's the community participation and response. It's not really coming from outside. It is their effort that is supported by the mostly-international faith-based organizations. What it also means if you are local [is] that you are very much interested in a longer term impact of the assistance, and this is I would say in contrast to most so-called NGOs or secular NGOs who basically are parachuted into conflict or disaster situations, as long as there is funding. But they have no local roots. They very often do not understand the local situation, but the religious institutions that have been present before … work during the emergency and they will live in those communities after these emergency situations. They are very much interested in sustainability of these efforts. And they are very much interested in
what's normally called “do no harm” behavior. In other words, not to exacerbate potential conflict arising from the emergencies, and there may be a great variety of them in both man-made and natural disasters. So … that's the local situation.

The second great feature of religious institutions is that most of them are transnational, and some of them are global. And so in case of a major emergency – and major emergency's definition … is that it's a situation with which the local population, the local organizations or even the government, cannot cope and they need outside assistance. So in this situation the transnational organizations have a big advantage of drawing on resources from the whole network, from the whole international system. And in the case of [the] Catholic Church, which is often called [a] universal Church, it's a huge advantage because the assistance can be, or the resources (not only financial and material, but also human resources), are drawn from the whole church or from the universal church all the way up to the Vatican. And you might have heard about the popes’, the holy fathers', response to major emergencies. It's invariably … financial contribution, but there is always a message of solidarity and expression of interest and sympathy. So that's the transnational character of the religious institutions intervening in humanitarian responses. And then there is another advantage in fund raising, and that relates to the respect and trust that the faith-based organization enjoys because they, by definition, because of their perceived moral principles they are also more trusted in terms of accountability and doing a good job. In other words, using the resources to the purposes that have been stated.

Now I would also like to mention … some of the negative aspects of religion playing a role in emergency response. And the number one issue that I have encountered on many occasions is access. If you are in a man-made disaster – in other words, conflict, war, civil wars – that can be a problem because [it] depends on what side of the conflict you stand... That can be an issue, and I could quote the example of the break-up of Yugoslavia where there were tremendous problems because basically it broke down into three religions. Well, I should say two, but the Christians were divided into Orthodox and Catholic. And Muslims, or Bosnians. In a way it was a misnomer because … [changes topic] the religious institutions providing assistance may encounter difficulties in terms of access. And then there is a question of their motivation. Why would they be assisting the parties to the conflict regardless of their creed? For example, CRS would be assisting Orthodox Serbs or the Muslims on the Bosnian side. So there's a lot of questioning and explanation. And in some countries, at least based on my experience, even if you present very strong arguments why you assist people on the basis of need and not creed you don't succeed. It depends on the level of sophistication and level of education of your counterparts, but sometimes it's very difficult. And I can give you an example from West Darfur where I actually, in early 2005, set up the CRS emergency operation and dealing with the famous humanitarian assistance department or hut in Khartoum. Just to get permits to work in Darfur was an enormous task – explanation after explanation because motivation like helping people based on your personal convictions, helping basically your brothers and sisters in need, doesn't count. So that would be one – the access issue that is very closely linked particularly in countries where [the] Islamic population is proselytization.

Then it's an issue of inclusiveness. And it relates to the … motivation by certain types of religions would be trying to help another needy people from another religion. Then there is a competition for resources. And that applies not only for faith-based organizations, but also for
the secular organizations. The competition is becoming much more difficult because the resources are declining. Well in a number of others [points] – subsidiarity is a big issue in humanitarian assistance. And then the most important ... for particularly the graduate students is to remember that the ultimate objective is to strengthen local partners. Always try to strengthen, whether they are secular or religious, so that they can respond better and in a more timely manner than the ... international organizations that come more or less as implants for certain period of time. And when they leave it's the local organizations that carry the burden and should be strengthened by us. Thank you.

Nadege Clitandre: So we'll open it up for questions and comments.

Mark Juergensmeyer: Mae Cannon talked about the theological imperialism and then Dwight closed his comments talking about the need to be open to other religious perspectives. Isn't really hard to do, particularly if you have an evangelical background. How do you even recognize when you're doing it? And how do you train people for such a task?

Rosalind Hackett: I had a question to the panel, but Dwight and Karel have really answered it. So let me just ask Mae to say more about it. And that is talking more about how you create agency among local partners (sustainability) rather than dependency... In the Case of Northern Uganda, at the peak of the war, there were more international agencies there ... per square mile than anywhere else in the world. And a recent book by Adam Branch is very critical and very revealing of the failure of many of these interventions and the resentment on the part of the local people, local actors. So can you say something about the ... self-critiques that you have and whether those have evolved over time?

Jeffrey Haynes: I'd like to address Karel briefly and [indistinct] something that Mae said. This issue of access, I think is really crucial. And it's a useful word in a sense because if you want to give humanitarian assistance or indeed development assistance as a wider, more lengthy process, you need to get to people that ... have a need which you can fulfill. I think it's very interesting when you mention about the context of the Balkans and the conflict there in the 90's, and the way that people would not have chiefly a concern with need as you say creed was a ... So my question is a simple one – how do you get over that? Is it possible? And is it highly problematic? And link that specifically to what [indistinct] does because if you're linked to a Christian or a Muslim or another faith explicitly, how do you get to the others that need your assistance? How do you overcome their suspicion, and so on? For both of you. Thank you.

Jacob Olupona: My comment is for Dwight. First of all let me thank you that you have found very creative ways of using your time, [indistinct]... The association is called International Association for Black Religion and Spirituality. Yet I am so happy that you have reached out to different kinds of countries and places and people. How do they define their own identity vis-a-vis your label? I'm very much interested in that. One of the fascinating things about your project is (unfortunately that I have to come here to learn about it, and I thank Mark for that) that you have created a forum for having a conversation that ... is not just scholarly (part of it is very scholarly) but very practical. Our seminarians today are challenged to create students who are doing all these degree programs but who have to make sure that they are able to relate it the larger issues out there – without naturally going to, say, business school or [indistinct school].
Robert Dowd: Thank you... I'll make this very quick. One thing that I've just been thinking about concerns what we might call a moral hazard, and this may concern something that might be more appropriately called development assistance than humanitarian assistance. But it's a question – “Do we think that religious institutions and faith-based organizations are subject less to a moral hazard than secular NGOs in achieving outcomes?” … Whether the outcomes concern health … or the promotion of democracy or human rights, if an organization is founded especially to achieve a certain end, there's a moral hazard, right? They exist because this problem exists. It seems to me that one of the distinguishing characteristics of a faith-based organization or a religious institution is that they exist for reasons that transcend a particular problem – they exist … to achieve certain spiritual ends or religious ends. But they might also be devoted to achieving human rights or to … promote democracy or to achieve certain health outcomes. So I guess I'm just wondering whether we think that faith-based organizations or religious institutions might be more effective at achieving those outcomes because they exist for a reason that transcends achieving those outcomes.

Mae Cannon: So I'll try to be concise in responding to just a couple of these questions. One, to the question of isn't that hard to do – this notion of theological imperialism and how our religious beliefs can sometimes limit our ability to be effective on the ground. I think several quick points in that regard – I think two things are critically important for religious organizations that are doing development work. One is this aspect of theology which I discussed and this other component is this idea of a historical understanding. So a lot of my work has focused on domestic social reform and the role of the Christian community in the civil rights movement. And I've had the great privilege of partnering on the ground here in the US following this notion which is an African notion of “sankofa” which is this idea in history that we look at the past in order to be able to move forward into the future. And so if we have an understanding of ways that we have not worked effectively in the past, an appropriate relationship and wrestling with that … helps our ability to be able to check the way that we're moving forward into the future. And that can express itself in terms of our spiritual connection with God and the process of spiritual formation. My most recent book is on spiritual formation and the integration of our relationship with God in justice oriented movements. I think that that needs to express itself in humility – that we have a lot to learn and often we don't get this right. So that also leads to the notion of repentance – that when we don't do it well[that] as a Christian organization specifically, we want to have a posture of being able to ask for forgiveness and to seek to correct the things that we have not done effectively.

In terms of the second question about creating agency … and sustainability rather than dependence, I think that's a critical and very important question. Worldvision shifted our models in 1999. Prior to that, we were funding local, indigenous communities, and we found that we were really creating a culture of dependence. And so we shifted toward what we would consider a more holistic model called area development programs or projects ADPs which are short-term. So they have a very strict time-line associated with them and the whole purpose is to empower the community to be sustainable through five aspects of development. We work with water and
health and education. We do economic development … [and food.] And so that's certainly a question that we ask ourselves regularly about how to not create a culture of dependency. And the third question about overcoming suspicions – my work focuses specifically in Israel and the Palestinian territories. We've been at work there since 1975 and interestingly, the recipients of our work on the ground, the vast majority are Muslim. And when we shifted to the ADP model, one of our core tenets is, wherever there is the most need is where we would be engaged the most significantly. And so only one of our 15 ADPs in that region are in a Christian community. So we work … very closely with the Islamic community. And they have asked us why we are not doing ore for the Christian community in Palestine. So we have found that the issue of building trust at least in that context […] we've been there a long time. We've partnered with the indigenous community and we really work collaboratively in an interfaith way on the ground in that specific region.

Dwight Hopkins: In terms of the question of how to be open to other religions, in our case we're not denominationally-based or spiritually-based in a particular institution, but what holds us together is the vision. So it's the question of the larger vision. And so whoever comes from any specific religion or spirituality or self-cultivation practice that has transcendence to that self-cultivation practice can buy into the vision. Obviously there are Christians involved, but there are other types of indigenous spiritualities and also Islam. So again, what's the vision? The vision is that we … believe that another world is possible. That's really the basic driving motivation. And then, how do we draw on the particularities and strengths – noticing the challenges of our own religions, spiritualities, and self-cultivation practices. So we don't debate doctrine or creed. We don't debate them, but people talk about them in our meeting in the work they do. But as far as our network goes, it's the vision. So anybody in the world who feels another world is possible. Who feel that youth and students are key to this, who support women's equality and 50% representation – women hold up half the sky – at least those two basic thing are open to do it. We've had discussion on how to talk about doctrines, but it's … sort of a secondary move in our network because … we may have worship, we may not have worship or anything like that. And it holds together well.

The other thing about how to be open to other religion, I hand chose each of the representatives from the countries – people I've known since probably … 1981. So they're people I've brought into the group who I knew, and we trusted each other. And for us, the issues of doctrine and debates and institutions were never the key issues. It's always about justice and love and compassion throughout the last 20 or 30 years. And that's gone into … from my own perspectives, I'm ordained Protestant Christian, but my overall view is … G O D is B I G. So that's what I believe, basically. And no one has a purchase on that B I G of the G O D. And so sort of live that lifestyle in this network, and I think people are very comfortable with that. So far we started January 2006, and we haven't had any big fractures o debates over doctrines or anything like that. So people are excited about the vision. And then they can talk about how their particularities of religions and spirituality feed into that. That's the question. If we're going to talk about Jesus, we're gonna talk about Muhammad, we're going to talk about Tao, we're gonna talk about various spiritualities – Hawaiian, Dahlits', aboriginal – how do … all these things feed into the vision?
Just quickly on Jacob’s question – basically I use this “black” to get funding from Ford... And I basically built … an initial foundation proposal to visit all the countries. So I spent two to three weeks in all the countries. It was a heck of an educational process, in mainly the rural areas of all these countries. And so I said I’ll go talk to people. And I thought two major people who might struggle against “black” – because I wanted to change it. It was just a way to get the money initially – would be the Australian aboriginals and the Dahlits in India, but they were the two strongest to keep it. And it was very interesting. When I was in Australia, at least in the rural areas, they say black all the time, like “black mob” … and some of these people look Italian and Greek and … they were black aboriginals. In the US they would be Italian or Greek. And so to in India they said, domestically caste, but globally we go with race. For example, we went to the conference in Durbin. So actually … we just had a global meeting in May at the University of Chicago Divinity School in 2011. And I again raised changing the name, but I got voted down...

William Headley: I know we're rushing. I'll try to address Jeff's question about access a little bit. Just one simple strategy sometimes is to get closer to what the objection is and to get more precise about that. An example illustrates that. During ... the tsunami, we were having resistance from the Islamic schools that we know had absorbed lots of orphan children. They would not accept CRS food at that stage. We got a little closer to it, just talked calmly on the side – had some tea together. We realized what they didn't like is CRS trucks rolling up with the big “Catholic Relief Service” sign on the outside and taking the food out of the truck for them. But if you came at night without the signs, they certainly needed the food and that worked fine. I shouldn't tell this, but CRS is not paying my salary anymore so I can tell it. In that same context, we were driving past a mosque which they had just repaired, very contrary to what they typically do. And one of their gleeful employees said we're going to put up a big sign that says “rebuilt by Catholic Relief Services.” I said, I don't think you want to do that.

I want to address Bob's question just briefly about the moral hazard. I thought it was really good. I think Karel gave a bit of an answer to that when he said they're on the ground ... They have to be very much involved in the Catholic Church, to just give one example. Which is to say that they're all involved with the cultic, the creed, the code part of all that. I think the problem comes out on the other side of that. Which is to say, they can become so embedded that they can't hear the problem when it comes along. This happens in many denominations where they're so engrossed and involved sometimes, in bed if you will, with the local government that they cannot hear the problem when it comes. We see that more in justice questions, perhaps, than in peace questions.

Karel Zelenka: I will also talk about access because of the question. Yes, it's an extremely important question, particularly man-made conflicts. In the Ache tsunami, it's different. It's a natural disaster, so it's easier to negotiate. In man-made conflicts, sometimes you don't succeed. And I'll give you three examples ... from my experience. One from Bosnia-Herzegovina. The other is from the other side, from ... Serbia... and then Sudan.

In Bosnia, the issues were religious, although you will hear and read in various books and media about the origins of the conflict or roots of the conflict as being political, economic. Yes, some of it. But basically it broke down into three distinct religious groups. And they were fighting each other. And the ethnic cleansing had nothing to do with economy or power. It had to do with
ethnicity... I'm sorry to say that, although I work for CRS, the biggest resistance came to us from Catholics in Bosnia-Herzegovina when we were trying to supply the besieged Sarajevo. We had to have convoys coming from Croatia, which is Catholic, but across the parts of Herzegovina which is very conservative part of the country. And it’s heavily Catholic, exclusively Catholic. And they were the ones who objected most to our transiting the convoys. So despite negotiations … well the negotiations resulted basically 50-50 – you give us 50% of what you bring up. And since our reliefs supplies came from the US government, we simply could not do this kind of a deal. So there was no deal whatsoever.

Second, in terms of Sarajevo and also sorry to say that the UN that were a big player in the whole war theater were not helpful and basically went along with the Serbs who had a dominant position in that particular time. And whatever you would bring on an airlift to Sarajevo, 50% was immediately taken to the Serb side, regardless the population's size. And on top of that, the organizations like CRS and others … who operated in the area in that time... had to submit detailed distribution plans for all the relief supplies while the Serb side did not have to supply anything. In other words, there was no certainty that the relief material didn't go to the military. But that's unfortunately … beyond our control, and it was in the realm of the United Nations. So what I want to say, sometimes you succeed, sometimes not. Or, when you have private supplies like we had on the airlifts to Sarajevo, you take a loss and you prefer to deliver at least half of it at least something rather than nothing. In the case of Yugoslavia which was related there were Catholic communities that were stuck in the middle of Serbia during the conflict. And obviously they were subject to a lot of abuse. And so we worked closely with the International Orthodox [Christian] Charities NGO. And basically it was a mutual agreement that we would … provide items to IOCC, and they would deliver them within Serbia while CRS would then take care of the pockets of Serbs in Croatia.

In [the] case of Sudan … I mentioned the Darfur situation, and we had real problems. And there are absolutely no Catholics in Sudan. It's a sharia state. There is a Catholic Church, and we work through them. There is a bishop's conference. There is caritas. But there are no … Christians. But we … set up operation, and in terms of access we had difficulties going to certain communities. You might have heard about Janjaweeds, which basically translates into “devil on a horse,” and they were the ones who basically were limiting the access. And so as we were more-or-less stuck, and we knew that there was [a] really starving population. So what I did one day when they were - I should not say attacking - but the local population, whenever they [janjaweed] would be approaching – and you saw them because they were on horses - the local population absolutely no horses. So I was waiting for them, although the local population disappeared because they were scared to death. So we negotiated with them, and they turn out to be quite … they had a reason. They said … “you come and see our villages, our communities. We have absolutely nothing.” So I actually went with them and look[ed]. And I asked to see what they had. And they were right. They had absolutely nothing – nothing to eat, nothing basically to live on. So what we did then was the agreement of USAID. We then decided to, on the way, we would always drop off [a] certain amount of supplies to them. And access was negotiated. So that's basically … every situation is different in a man-made disaster. And you have to really go … basically you have to negotiate each case separately, and it differs from the previous one. Thanks
Steve Eskow: Several of the recent comments suggest the question and a comment to you, Karel. You spoke about emergencies and external humanitarian organizations somewhat negatively – that they don't understand the local situation – they're parachuted in and so on. Might the reverse be true? Might the fact that the institutionalized churches have become so familiar with the local milieu and the local issues and so accepting of them that they need new insights, new partnerships, with the USAID or with secular organizations that might bring information about the new technologies, for example, and how they might make a difference in the African economy? Is there another side to the business of the relationship of the secular humanitarian organizations to the religious organizations that are established in those local communities?

Thomas Tighe: Thank you. I guess one of the questions that I had for you … it's framed as “what role do religious institutions play in supporting humanitarian activities?” And I think the flip-side is true too, what role do humanitarian organizations play in supporting or advancing religious activities, whether witting or unwitting? And why? Because I think there's, for some … achieving humanitarian objective is the end unto itself, like our organization which is either all faith or secular depending on how you characterize it. We work with everybody. But that's good enough. But the dilemma … that arises is that if the Catholics are the best fundraisers, but the Muslims are actually the best providers of the humanitarian objectives, would you ever just give the money directly to a local group? And the answer is obviously “no.” … But they don't do that. So I think there is another driving element beyond the stated humanitarian objectives because you see this all the time. And I think therein the tension arises – what's the end? And what's for some … it's at least perceived or logically a means to a larger end. And I think therein the dilemma arises.

Karel Zelenka: Maybe I can take this question first. Actually, it's maybe a misunderstanding or lack of information, but I can tell you that CRS works very closely with a number of Islamic organizations and there is a direct transfer of money both ways. I can quote Islamic Relief from the UK which is very famous and CRS has been working [with] them in many countries of the world, and there are cash transfers. I personally have worked with a number of organizations in the Middle East, Islamic organizations, and we've never had a problem transferring resources to them. Particularly, again, in situations where CRS would not have access or … CRS is operation[al] in very few countries of the world. Our main role is to … work through local partners. And although [the] Catholic Church partner would be considered … as number one or key strategic partner, it's not exclusive. And I can tell you, we have a number of partners in most countries because … also in the South, if you look at the globe, most countries where CRS operates are where Catholics are … sometimes a tiny minority. So we could not really address the needs working exclusively with them. So it is mutual, and it depends on trust relations with these organizations. So, no, we've never had a problem of this [indistinct.] Now, the capacity of them is a different story. If I know and can verify the capacity of the organization, it doesn't matter to me whether they are Orthodox … [or] Muslim … [or] Hindu as long as they deliver and they can account for the resources.

The second question was … I don't know if that sort of is but that really is the way and I am sure that the other faith based organizations operate in the same way. I've worked very closely with
so-called ACT. It's basically Protestant churches working together and it's Action by Churches Together. Maybe you've heard that abbreviation ACT. And I worked with them in Sudan. We worked together in Yugoslavia, and again it's very much [an] open, inclusive environment.

In terms of the inclusiveness of non-secular organizations, again I feel that … there is a lack of … up-to-date information, but particularly in Africa the church organizations like caritas or … the other faith based organizations are very much open … 360 degrees. They try to get as much information, knowledge, and use the latest, particularly IT, technology as much as they can. So it's not that they would be closed or that the only channel of information would be coming, so to speak, from the Vatican. That may be the old days, but I think these days, and particularly South Africa you have basically four or five major religions. You have Christians, Muslims, Hindus, you have Jews, and you also have a lot of traditional African religions. And when you go to a meeting, you need basically all representatives. And they are all treated equally. So it's very much open, at least as far as I'm concerned.

**Mae Cannon:** I think the question of how humanitarian organizations shape religious objectives is a very important one. And I think one of the things that we do is we provide the opportunity to address what the root causes are of some of the problems we see around the world. And so advocacy being advocacy in responding to social justice are things that the local church, at least from a Christian perspective … and you had asked, Mark, about the whole evangelical engagement with this conversation. Justice, at least in the 20th century, from an evangelical perspective is a challenging word. And so I think humanitarian organizations can play the role of raising awareness, but providing opportunity to see the needs around the world. The opportunity to demonstrate what we would believe is God's unconditional love for all people. And so as the church seeks to understand the gospel, humanitarian organizations can provide the opportunity for the gospel to be lived out in the world, which is certainly our hope as a Christian organization.

**SESSION 3**

**Juan Campo:** The question that we're pursuing for this session is how the changing political climate influences the work of humanitarian organizations. And this is a kind of mirror I see as to the first session which dealt with how religion was involved with political … transformations. So let's begin with Sarah Blackmun-Eskow ...

**Sarah Blackmun-Eskow:** My work is mainly in Ghana, as you might have gathered, with some awareness of what goes on in West Africa in general. And because I'm a doctoral candidate and writing my dissertation, I don't have time to pay any attention to the rest of the world, to be frank with you. But I can say a couple things about Ghana... The political climate in Ghana, as many of you know, is so far steady, unruled by wars or ethnic controversies. I always say that with crossed fingers because you never know. Ghana was fraught with ethnic and other controversies until 1992 when they got the new constitution, and presidents actually started to leave office when they were supposed to, which I understand in Africa is quite unusual. I think what's happening now in Ghana is a little disturbing politically and otherwise, and that is that Ghana has the fastest growing economy in the world. It's growing at a rate of seven or eight percent of gross national product, and it's a little scary thinking about what will happen to a
country with 25 million citizens in the size of the state of Oregon when suddenly there's money everywhere. Part of the reason for money, maybe the main reason for money, is the oil find in the Gulf of Guinea and the drilling and pumping that started... The actual getting of oil started last December and you have to wonder how the politicians and the elite are going to handle this … it could be a curse, as we all know. The mineral curse in Africa is too well known to even really talk about too much. But here's a lovely country that could become like the next Nigeria if the politicians don't handle the situation gracefully. They're more likely to be graceful there than a lot of other places in the world.

Now, I just wanted to mention something that's happening with the churches in Ghana that maybe is happening elsewhere in Africa. The Churches have founded an organization that is specifically made to put pressure on the government to handle the resources of the country in a just and thoughtful and prudent way, which is certainly not happened in Nigeria and some other places. Somebody that I know, Emmanuel Marty, who is a pretty well-known theologian here and there, is the chair of this new organization, and I know that he's really committed to getting churches, his own and others, to press the government for transparency and honesty and especially justice to the poorest people in Ghana which touches me because the poorest people are women – women in the countryside who have very few avenues to get out of what Jeffrey Sax has called the poverty trap...

**Robert Dowd:** … Thanks Sarah for getting us off to a great start … [restates question] … I've interpreted the question to mean faith based humanitarian organizations or religious institutions. And of course the answer depends on what we mean by the political climate. What about the political climate is changing? Do we mean a change from an authoritarian regime to a more democratic regime? Do we mean a political change in a sense that the state is strengthened? Those are important questions.

In … many countries of sub-Saharan Africa, faith based institutions have played a key role in service delivery. Someone's already mentioned here that religious institutions have provided in sub-Saharan Africa what the State typically provides in the West, anyway, and in parts of Europe and in North America. And to a large extent that continues to be true where religious institutions are providing health and education services. And the State, as a State strengthens, the big question is, will the State displace these institutions? And … what impact will that have on the delivery of health and education in these countries? I think that, as we move forward, that's going to be a really important question.

When it comes to democratization, we know that there's been a certain degree of democratization in certain countries of sub-Saharan Africa. And the question is, how will this affect the role that faith based actors play in politics? In the country that I'm familiar with, Kenya, Christian churches played, and Islamic institutions played, a very important role in promoting democratic change in Kenya. But now that there has been some degree of democratization, we find that these religious institutions are backing away from openly engaging in political activities. One Catholic bishop told me, “Now there are political parties. We don’t need to be as involved as we once were. It's the role of political parties to influence government, and it's the role of political parties to mobilize people. And we can back out of that and devote ourselves to more explicitly religious affairs.” So it's kind of interesting that this Catholic bishop was actually seeing a distinction
between religious affairs and political affairs, or at least overtly political affairs. On the other hand there was a referendum recently in Kenya on a new constitution that was passed. And many Christian leaders came out against that constitution. Why did they come out against that constitution? Because of a couple of elements in it. One having to do with abortion. They considered the language to be too open to interpretations that might lead to the legalization of abortion. And so they came out against the constitution. Another reason they came out against the constitution was because it recognized throughout the country Islamic courts which had been recognized for sometime especially along the coast of Kenya which is about 95% Muslim within about 25 miles of Kenya's coast. But the new constitution recognized these courts throughout the country and provided some governmental support for these courts. So Christian leaders came out against the new constitution because of those two key dimensions. They considered them to be key dimensions. But the constitution also called for decentralization of political power in Kenya. It called for local elections where there had been none before. It was very popular, and Christian leaders put their own credibility on the line when they came out very openly and very vocally against the constitution. So it's kind of interesting because it revealed that people aren't just taking orders from their religious leaders in Kenya, and it's interesting that this political change in Kenya we see religious leaders beginning to try to influence politics in a different way, in a new way. And of course the big concern in Kenya is that the way that Christian leaders chose to state their position might create tensions between Christians and Muslims in Kenya. So we see that a changing political climate is affecting the behavior of religious, leaders, religious actors which in turn can affect interreligious relations. I think I'll just leave it there for now and we'll turn it over to …

Richard Falk: Thank you... I wanted to start by just quoting from the beginning of an article in Foreign Affairs called “On Humanitarianism” written by Michael Walzer, distinguished political theorist. And he starts what I found a rather remarkable sentence, two sentences actually, “Humanitarianism is probably the most important 'ism' in the world today given the collapse of communism, the discrediting of neoliberalism, and the general distrust of large-scale political ideologies. Its activists often claim to escape or transcend partisan politics.” I don't agree with that, but it's a provocative suggestion that I think does touch very centrally the core of this question of the changing climate because humanitarianism has become so important in part because it's been appropriated for post-Cold War geopolitics. And that has made it very much intertwined with some of both the humanitarian catastrophes that have been occurring in the Middle East and Africa, but also it embodies the mixed motives that are associated with any situation in which there is an important geopolitical dimension. And so humanitarianism provides a cover for the exercise of hard power diplomacy. The Iraq war in 2003 was supposed to liberate the people of Iraq. The same was more recently the case with regard to Libya. And I want to quote one more sentence or two from Michael Walzer's article. And he's talking here about the Libyan intervention. He says, “The intervention seems to have prolonged rather than stopped the killing which is neither charitable nor just. I doubt that the United States and NATO intended to dominate Libya for the sake of its oil, say, which was readily available before the intervention. Their motives were and are humanitarian, but not sufficiently shaped by considerations of prudence and justice.” Now, I wonder … I would just raise this question about the claim to changing climate, is it ever the case that the motives of large states are sufficiently pure that one can say that they are just humanitarian? … It may be true in some disaster relief contexts, but in the context where one's addressing a situation where there is conflict on the
ground and where the foreign policy of major actors, particularly the US, is at stake, if has an interest in the outcome of what is taking place internally, in these societies. So I think that the changing climate is partly characterized by this developing interplay between what I would call genuine humanitarianism and geopolitical humanitarianism. Humanitarian assistance activities have to take place in that interstitial space between these two kinds of realities.

And this situation, I think, is accentuated in the Middle East by a series of other developments. One of them is the post-colonial reality that makes societies more and more reluctant to have their internal problems solved by outsiders. In other words, I don't think we fully absorb what it means to be dealing with a world of independent, sovereign states in the true sense – not just formal independence, but existential, essential independence.

A second development … that's very important in this changing climate is [that] the end of the Cold War created a situation where governments and outside forces were not as disposed to create strategic alliances based on a bi-polar world setting. They wanted more political independence. Turkey is a very good example that was clearly willing to subjugate its foreign policy and internal politics to the Cold War dynamics of being on the West. Now that there is not Cold War, it's much more interested in being an independent political actor in the region pursuing its own goals.

A third crucial development was the Iranian Revolution and its aftermath, which brought to the center of both foreign policy objectives of the US (and in a sense of Europe) and the dynamics of self-determination the issue of “is it compatible with Western interests and values to allow an Islamicly oriented movement and government to emerge as dominant?” And the US never has been able to come to terms with the Iranian Revolution and is now at the precipice of something worse than the kind of tension that existed all those years. But this plays into the whole attitude toward what self-determination means for the societies in the region. And this, of course, was accentuated by the 9/11 attacks on the US that's made, to some extent, the region a war-zone in the war against terror. Drones attack people in Yemen. So it makes the issue of the role of power in relation to these humanitarian issues very prominent.

And then one has the final … decisive climate-changing development, the Arab Spring itself, and the degree to which the sequel to the Arab Spring shows the unexpected strength of Islamic internal force partly because they did so well addressing the humanitarian agenda that the authoritarian, Western-oriented governments had failed to do. And this brings up the tension between foreign policy objective in the region (one sees it in relation to Egypt) which are much better served if the military stays in power, versus the support for democratic development [and] human rights which are better served by respecting the outcome of elections. This tension was tested in Gaza when Hamas won the elections... and proposed a ceasefire in the conflict, but are continued to be called a terrorist organization because of these wider political developments. I could say more, but I am conscious of my minder to my right.

**Juan Campo:** I'm sure there will be more time for conversation.

**Fritz Lampe:** Thank you... My focus as an anthropologist in my research in Kenya is on the edges. The community I spend time with is in an area where one mission society made
choices about who they would evangelize and carved the region so that another mission society
would evangelize – who could go to the high school? Who could not? Where the borders for
what became provinces sliced right through the middle of this community. So in my work and
what I continue to probe are the edges of cosmologies – what does it mean to be human in
relation to something beyond human in the spirit world? What does it mean to be male? To be
female? What is status in this changing time and place? …

In terms of the question … I like to focus on the local, the specific, the micro. But in terms of the
question, I'm going to focus very broadly. … When we think about political climate, we have to
take seriously the local. We've been talking about geopolitical quite a bit, or regional. … We
have to think about the local as well as the regional, national, and international. And when we
think about the local, and the political of the local, much as in the same way as the place where I
spend time, we think about the role that education plays in changing, shaping, reshaping the
local. Who gets educated? How? When? We think about gender and what it means to raise up
one gender over another or to bring in a notion of what gender is and formulate that. And as a
third example – the youth – what it means to raise up, build capacity for youth in a society …
where youth are not always the political leaders of the area. So I think that those are important.
That's … the context of what I want to think about just for a minute. I think we have to pay
attention to Jacob's comments about the local agents and religious leaders broadly construed.
Where I spend time, we have the public leaders and we have the private leaders. We have the
diviners and the prophets. We have the priests and then we have those who dispense the herbal
medications to women whose children are going to die if they don't receive them because of
witchcraft...

Jeffrey's questions are still laying out there for all of us to think about, “Can we separate religion
from the rest of life?” And in the world that I spend time in, the answer is “no.” They're very
much wound up in each other. So how does the political climate influence the work of
humanitarian organizations? It's embodied in that question of “What is religion? And what does
it mean to be political in those spaces?” Anthropology today is moving in an interesting direction
in terms of these questions. In the anthropology of Christianity, where I write, there's a move
towards engaging the theoretical frameworks of various belief systems of those who come and
those who embody the faith that's passed on to them. In the same way, people who are doing
work on the anthropology of development … are also saying “let's look at the organizations and
institutions that are coming, providing relief, providing development resources. What is their
motif? What is their motive? What is it that brings them and carries them forward?” Some of the
things we talked about in the last session.

In all of this, finally, as we think about local and global, and we think about political climate, one
of the questions that I struggle with, and perhaps some of you do, is the question of human rights
and universal human rights. Can those of us from the West have a sense of what should be
developed and in what way and by whom? And in doing so are we reflecting something of our
own cultural bias instead of starting with folk in the local arena. So those are some question …
some observations, and I look forward to the conversation.

**Thomas Tighe:** Thank you. How the changing political climate influences work of
humanitarian organizations? I'm sensitive to what Fritz just said that looking to the macro, my
thought is always macro is a bunch of micros stitched together. Santa Barbara's an example. It's never been better for philanthropy. We just had a 700 million dollar hospital open. For some people it's never been worse in 35 years for the local neighborhood clinics where the poor go. That's here, within 10 miles. So these cleavages that you see around the world, I think, reflect to me an answer to the question and … I think governments are contracting, not expanding … for a number of reasons. So I think that the social services and humanitarian functions, if you will, the combinations of either governments of churches, religious institutions used to provide are going to have to be provided by someone differently. And by someone different and differently than they have been because the resources are contracting … It's a dilemma as an NGO to step into a gap that you see not being addressed by governments because of their inability or unwillingness to do it.

And businesses, which have really attracted talent and gotten better … at eking out profitability in a global market … they have no business reason to engage in deeply poor areas. You can't make a business case for it. If you could, they'd do it and deliver services cheaply and efficiently for all those virtues of capitalism. But we look at places and we think “where government is contracting and where business is punting, that's where NGO's are probably going to have to be because who else is going to be there?” So I think the big challenge looking forward is whether organizations (NGOs), whether they have religious motivation and character or not, can perform the humanitarian functions that they inspire to do. And it's an open question.

One of the things, I think, … the other dimension's not so much a political trend but a general trend is that this notion of getting to scale. And it doesn't matter if you're in government, business, pitching a venture capital. And you see it as an NGO – that sounds like a great program. How are you going to take it to scale? And one of the problems with going to scale is that you scale problems fast and big too … It's good. Scaling something up is good if it's good. Scaling something up is really bad if it's bad, or if it's got an unknown problem that you don't see until you get to becoming the sole provider for what makes seemingly perfect business case -- everyone's specialized, do your thing. You make bread. I'll bottle water. You do that. If one of you messes up you've got everyone who has a problem when previously it was distributed... Those … are not necessarily political versus humanitarian organizations' challenges, but I think they're really global challenges …

In a way there's states, the official functions of government. There's businesses. There's religious institutions, traditionally. And there's new-fangled NGOs in a sense. And there's competition among them and there's competition with any government – governments compete for different things, businesses compete, NGOs compete. Although we love to invoke the word partnership and we're all Kumbaya, the fact is that we compete for resources. And I think that religious institutions, whether we choose to acknowledge it or not, they do compete with each other for their followers. That is embedded within a lot of the religious beliefs. So I think those trends are something that as a non-sectarian NGO that works with both the largest Muslim civic organization … and American Jewish world service and our colleague in the same association including WorldVision. It's a really interesting time… I'm still waiting for Jeffrey to answer his own questions, and I obviously cannot answer the one's I just presented. But I do think that some of those influences are interesting to be figured out as we move along and at this point largely unresolved. Thank you.
Juan Campo: So we welcome questions and comments from those in attendance...

Dwight Hopkins: Thank you for another exhilarating and provocative panel. I had two questions, one around the human rights issue, and one around humanitarian aid and foreign policy of countries. Have you run across, or how do you deal with your constituencies that might have a different perspective on what we in the West call human rights? And if they do, how do you deal with that? ... And two, it seems to me that Professor Falk mentioned the issue about humanitarian aid linked to foreign policies of countries, and I wondered if somebody else could pick up on that because I think it can't be disinterested, right? It definitely was not disinterested during the Cold War, those of us who remember that period. And maybe it's magically changed now. Those are two questions – the question of human rights ... and the second question, are humanitarian initiatives linked to (directly/indirectly) to foreign ... policies?

William Headley: I don't want to gang up on Richard, but my question is directed at him also ... You applied the nice distinction between a genuine and a geopolitical humanitarianism with regard to the State. Could we not apply the same principle to faith-based organizations? For example, do I not, if I'm a Catholic or a Protestant aid agency going into an area where our co-religionists are and I want to advocate, I do that with an understanding that maybe they'll be sensitive to that. Or if I'm a Catholic organization ... while I'm trying to be very even-handed in distribution of goods, if Mother Theresa's group is running an HIV/AIDS program there they might get a little more food than others. Isn't that true? And are you really saying anything more than, when things are all considered, we don't do things for single motives? Are you saying any more than that?

Laura Grillo: I'm still sort of formulating my question. It stems off something that you said, Richard Falk. If I understood you correctly, you were suggesting that in this post-Cold War situation [that] we're dealing with a new kind of challenge of the non-alignment and respecting sovereignty of nations in a different way that have to address their needs in different ways and recognize that they are addressing their own needs differently. But I've been thinking about the context that I know best in West Africa where I don't think that in this post-Cold War situation ... I think that these non-aligned, independent nations are now becoming subject to a recolonization effort. Not that their sovereignty is not being respected, and that this recolonization effort is really following the interests of the global economy and the global market, especially the hunger for raw material – gold and coffee and cocoa and oil and land... So, I'm not sure where the question is. I guess I wondered, is the situation so different in the Middle East ... and Africa or how would you parse that situation?

Mark Juergensmeyer: This is prompted by Falk's comment, but it's a question for everybody. You raised the question of whether governments are really capable of humanitarian aspirations, and I'm enough of a student of Reinhold Niebuhr to say “absolutely not.” They are collectivities, so they are governed by self-interest. But that's also true of humanitarian organizations. Humanitarian organizations are on the one hand channels for genuine humanitarian impulses of individuals, but as organizations they're organizations, which means they act out of self-interest. And they act out of aggrandizement. And they act to promote, at least the ego, if not the profits of those who are involved in them. And they want to enlarge their capacity in the way that all
organizations want to enlarge their capacity. So in that sense isn't there a real need for a kind of
government regulation and a kind of public media scrutiny that brings to accountability any kind
of organization? And if the changing political climate makes it more difficult for international
NGOs to do anything they want to within a particular region, is that necessarily a bad thing? Isn't
it time for them to be held more accountable within the countries in which they work?

Richard Falk: I'm grateful for the questions because I think they do touch upon some of the
ambiguities of my initial statement. What I was trying to express by this emphasis on the
connectedness of humanitarianism with geopolitics, in this historic period, particularly in the
Middle East, is that they've become more fused in certain critical situations. And particularly in
situations where ... earlier motivations are no longer acceptable. So that is what I meant by post-
colonial and post-Cold War. You can't talk about pursuing resources for their own sake ... You
can't substitute anti-Islam for anti-communist or anti-Marxist. So one of the things that becomes
very acceptable, very legitimizing in this period is the humanitarian discourse. And that's why I
think we need to have a certain degree of critical skepticism when that's used in conflict
situations. And the UN has developed this norm of responsibility to protect, to in a sense
obscure, the interventionary aspects of the undertaking. So I think that from the perspective of
the NGOs, what's important is to do their best in this changing climate to project an image of
autonomy. In other words, not to be seen, to the extent possible, as the agent of geopolitical
forces. And the UN, for instance, made a great mistake in Iraq by seeming to be part of the
enterprise of American occupation. And it may have been surprising to people here and in the
West that the UN headquarters were blown up, but there's also something to learn from that. So
that's why I think it's important to think about these contextual factors.

And it goes to the other part of your question about “Is this anything different... There's always
mixed motive.” And of course that's true. What I wanted to try to convey was that these mixed
motives are somewhat more disguised in this historical setting because there's no acceptable
ideological way of talking about them, and therefore this recourse to the humanitarian discourse
is very misleading or can be very misleading. It's not necessarily misleading. It can be
misleading. I think there is a very important distinction between the situation in Africa and the
situation in the Middle East. And it was very different in the Cold War. And you raise a very
important set of questions about how the end of the Cold War affected sub-Saharan Africa versus
the way it affected the Middle East. And I'm not prepared to talk about it at the moment, but it's a
dramatically different setting. And part of the difference, I believe, is the strategic centrality of
oil politics in the Middle East. And if one wants to make a skeptical comment on recent
geopolitical behavior, it's notable that all the interventions in the Middle East of any consequence
– Libya, Iraq, and possibly in the future Iran – are all major oil-producing countries. And what's
the difference between Syria and Libya so far as the humanitarian dimension is concerned? See, I
don't think you have to be a Marxist to say that oil is important in explaining where intervention
takes place and where it doesn't. I think the other part of what you said is extremely important,
especially in sub-Saharan Africa, that there is going on what one might call an informal
recolonization process involving non-Western actors as well as Western actors. China is one of
the principle culprits, I would argue, in sub-Saharan Africa. And so you have a different cast of
characters involved in this recolonization. If one wants to call it that, of Africa. Again, very
complex subject that deserves a lot more attention than I can provide.
Mark's question is one that I agree with the implications of the question. In other words, certainly as NGOs play this role that Tom defined in a very conceptually helpful way, accountability becomes more and more important. So the trust is a part of what makes people confident that this is a good way to use their own resources, and it creates more confidence in civil society solutions to big problems. I would still maintain, though, in a maybe quasi-Niebuhrian way, that one needs to worry more about the accountability of States. And that just because States are not playing the direct role, they have still an incredibly powerful set of instruments that can manipulate what happens on the ground, and they are incredibly non-accountable under international law because international law is only effective for weak States. It's practically irrelevant to the behavior of strong states. And until that can be overcome, it is a fantasy to talk about the rule of law in connection with the way in which world politics operates.

**Mark Juergensmeyer**: The States have more power unless you're WorldVision.

**Mae Cannon**: I'll respond to that point later.

**Thomas Tighe**: I think a couple things that the linkage of humanitarian aid to... at least in my own background experience as a US government official and having worked on the Hill knowing that absolutely as a matter of law when funds are appropriated from the US Treasury and provided even for humanitarian purposes it's conditional – absolutely conditional. And as I've mentioned, Direct Relief does not take government aid. And we thought about it, but burdened with my own background the fact is if you get it and there's conditions that are enacted in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 in annual appropriation bills, they follow the money. So if it goes to a country that fails to pay its arrears to the lending institutions, sponsors terrorism, [or] the country is seen as trafficking narcotics, it's illegal to spend the money and it puts NGOs in an awful position because typically those who receive government money, they don't read that stuff. They say, with that money, I can do my mission that's pure. And this is a way to finance my mission. Unfortunately, as a matter of law, technically when it's provided it's not – the government cannot provide any US government money to an organization for the purposes of doing that organization's mission. It's illegal to do that with appropriated dollars. By law, any time the US government spends a federal dollar; it is by definition only for the purposes of advancing US government interests. And it's conditioned upon those interests if it's withdrawn. So I think for those reasons, we've chosen not to make that bargain. Although, in foregoing the money, you also know you're also foregoing the opportunity to help a lot more people who could be. As we see with the PEPFR funding that Karel mentioned, it was a big investment by the Bush administration and largely perceived to be a humanitarian gesture and a correct one for a crisis. You see now the pendulum swinging as the US government has very little influence in the States that have undergone the Arab Spring, recognizing that soft power approaches are sometimes better and at least a good compliment to hard power approaches. And they've now got influence, so they've got to cobble together resources at the governmental level to exert soft power or some influence in the events and it's got to come from a shrinking pot that has largely been devoted disproportionately to Africa and particular diseases in Africa. It's going to be a tough situation.

And as to mark's point, I think that we tried to show transparency. I worked in government. Every email I sent was a public record for twelve years. So it's shocking to me that what is considered transparency for an NGO in the US is that you file one form a year. We call it a 990
form, and three months after your fiscal year ends (and you can get an automatic three months extension and no one understands it if you publish it.) In business there's quarterly earnings calls. There's an industry that's looking at every investment, every personnel move. It's a little opaque even at University of California. And I think that's coming much more aggressively towards NGOs and properly so, because you can get a lot of money as an NGO by selling someone on the mission and the purpose without actually … on behalf of people in Africa, give me money. Now the person in Africa, on whose behalf you're asking money, doesn't know you just asked and doesn't know you just got. So your accountability is to whom? It's certainly to the person who gave you the money... but as long as you can give them an uplifting, fulfilling report back to the person who gave you money, you'll get another round. But that, ultimately, is not answering the question, “Was value for that money obtained by the person for whose benefit it was given?” And that is an unanswered question. We report what we do, but, like in government, whether it's UC saying “we need more money,” I think a lot of people these days said “can't you do it differently than you're doing it now, but why more? I've had to do it differently and lower costs.” and I think all those things come from the detail being exposed and the pressure certainly is there.

Fritz Lampe: About human rights, it's a dilemma that I, at least as a white male, face every time I step off the plane somewhere in the world. So I don't have a good answer to your question except I'll give a conversation. Ms. Cherie Moogle had a conversation about female circumcision in the central highlands of Kenya which is her home territory. And... she praised those who attempted to “complexify” the issue and lamented those who came in from the outside to tell Kenyan women and communities what to do. And [she] said ultimately this is a decision that the people of this area have to wrestle with and work with. And I don't know if that's a cop-out, but that was the guidance and counsel I got from someone who was deeply connected to something that still is very much in the news.

Sarah Blackmun-Eskow: I was taken by Bill saying we don't do anything for a simple motive, because that's my whole life experience I think. Mark raised a couple of questions. He asked whether the governments are capable of humanitarian actions. I don't know the answer to that. I think that some might be and most are not.

But I wanted to bring out for you what I experience in Africa as a kind of profound ambiguity between the fear of being recolonized and the passionate desire to be modernized and Westernized. The educated elite in the cities want to be modernized and westernized. And they, because of the way African societies often work, they carry that desire to the rural areas, and suddenly everybody wants to be modernized, and if there's a little bit of neo-colonialism in it maybe they can handle that as long as they can still cherish their cultural and religious values. There are eight million cell phones in Ghana alone, which means that the market is saturated in terms of families. But lots of people have two or three. So they're really westernized.

The other piece of it that I wondered about is … he asked “can the churches be humanitarian?” He didn't ask that, I'm asking that. Do they have the will and the skill to do an effective job say in development which is my greatest interest. Can a church organization, say at the grassroots, be able to do development work in the community? Do they have time? Some of you who've worked in Africa know that everyone is scratching for a living and nobody has time to do
anything extra. The humanitarian or philanthropic motive does not, in my judgment, exist in Africa (the parts I know) the way it does here. People don't leave their job to do something charitable or humanitarian. So I really... and what we're trying to find out now is whether churches can take on a task of helping the development that requires both will and skill. And where is the skill going to come from is a key question for us. And I want to observe that I don't think anyone has mentioned the World Bank yet as the most overwhelmingly powerful, and the regional banks, force in the world of development, impinging on a lot, not as much as used to be but a tremendous amount of policy and programs that are funded through the bank.

**Robert Dowd:** Thanks. Just very briefly... First of all I think that really important question has been raised by Tom. And I think that sometimes faith-based organizations get sort of a free ride. The people give to them assuming that they're more effective than other types of organizations. Well, they mean well. One thing that we need to work towards is really measuring the impact to the extent we possibly can of faith-based organizations as well as other NGOs. Right now, we're in a conversation that is Notre Dame's in a conversation with CRS in Uganda to develop ways of working together to assess the impact the work of CRS in certain areas. A lot of organizations do their own monitoring and evaluation, and there obviously is a moral hazard there. So I think there's a lot of work to be done in assessing, monitoring and evaluating the impact of organizations, especially faith-based organizations for which I have a ton of respect.

Trying to bring Mark's question down to the micro, micro level about interests and the incentives of governmental leaders ... versus religious leaders when it comes to humanitarian activities. Right now, we're conducting a randomized field experiment in Uganda, and we're assessing the effectiveness of religious leaders versus local political leaders and encouraging people to purify their water at the household level and actually go out and purchase a chlorine based water purification tablet. And we've given the religious leaders and the local governmental leaders (and these are in different villages) we've given them coupons to distribute to whoever they wish. So we're keeping track of who they're distributing the coupons to. And the question is, are the religious leaders more likely to give then to people in need than the local political leaders. And in some of the villages, there are going to be local level elections for the first time in twenty years. So we're interested to know how the local elections are going to affect the way local governmental leaders distribute the coupons, if at all. That's just an example of research. We've got a lot to learn, and the methodology is far from perfect. But I think it's an example of the kind of research that we need to do to try to assess the difference that religion is actually making in delivery of humanitarian assistance, if you will. Or this is probably more like development assistance. And also the impact that the political climate has on how governmental leaders deliver such assistance.

**Juan Campo:** We have time for about three more questions. Rosalind?

**Rosalind Hackett:** Thank you. I have two quick questions for Bob and for Sarah. Bob, could you give us an update on the aftermath in Kenya of the referendum? Have the Muslim/Christian relations settled down given the tensions? And Sarah, I thought there was a little disconnect between what you were saying about Ghana's economic successes and the way you represented this in your website. If I remember rightly, you had as the subheading of your network “In poor
nations.” And I wondered if any Ghanaians with their modernizing, progressive impulse commented on that. Perhaps you mean in poor regions rather than poor nations?

**Mae Cannon:** I do not yet have the luxury that William does. I do still work for WorldVision. So before I respond, you should know that. And they're going to ask me when I go back “how did things go in Santa Barbara?” And I'm going to say “oh the weather was beautiful, and the people were great. And Mark says that non-profits act out of aggrandizement, self-interest, and increasing their capacity globally. But other than that, the people were wonderful.”

I do greatly appreciate this conversation, particularly the point that humanitarian discourse can become a legitimizing means... and I also appreciate the distinction between governments versus humanitarian organizations, even though Mark also said that WorldVision at least has the capacity of a small government, if you will. But that being said... (now maybe this is a bit idealistic, and at worst, maybe it's naïve) I do believe there is this increasing focus ... I can speak on WorldVision's behalf ... that we're moving simply developmental and humanitarian work, and we're starting to look at “what are root causes of needs around the world?” And we are attempting to really listen and learn from and partner with the indigenous communities, and the great effect of that is that if we do our justice oriented work well, guess what? Sometimes we lose donors. Sometimes we're standing up on behalf of an issue that we believe is right and so it's not about these things of emerging capacity and things like that. It's based on this theological belief of what it means to stand beside people who are suffering from injustice and to work in partnership with them. I hope I'm not speaking prophetically, because my focus is on the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, and my position is a brand-new position. It was created only three months ago. And one of the things it's saying is WorldVision US is no longer going to ignore this issue. Our work in the region since 1975 has been developmental, but my position is in the advocacy department, and I'm very purposely based on Capitol Hill. And being strategic and learning from others who've gone ahead of us will be critical. We'll just partner with CRS and let them go ahead of us in the game. I hope William will become my friend [laughs]. But I think perhaps that's overly idealistic, but I think that's one of the things that encourages me about the direction of faith-based non-profits, particularly WorldVision.

**Jacob Olupona:** I'd like to follow-up on Thomas's last comment about accountability and US government's double standard in monitoring NGOs and government activities [indistinct]. Some of us in America, Africans who are in the diaspora, we often don't call ourselves Americans because we've heard that we have no relevance in terms of what is going on here. Nigerians in America, we have among us some of the richest in this country in the medical professions, in academics, Nigerians are all over the place. But we are not involved in what is happening at home because Americans and the American government does not regard us as Americans. In other words, if we're Americans we'll at least be listened to we'll be able to make our own contribution to the involvement in African affairs because we know the place in and out. But because it's not likely that we are going to be giving the kinds of information that they want and they would like to have... it's become a serious crisis, a serious problem. Some of us, for example, took the time to look at USAID in Nigeria, and the reference to PEPFAR, some time ago in the talk... there have been total mismanagement of these [indistinct] precisely because they have refused to in fact engage some of the Nigerian professionals who are in the position to give them good advice. And then when people come back to say that we have failed in Nigeria,
Nigeria is corrupt, we ask the question “who are the people you are involved with? Who are the people you have been talking to?” Including ministers and so on and so forth... And I don't know the solution to this problem, but I'd like to raise it. India has used its diaspora very well. Other countries have invited them to come, but when it comes to the African situation it is a different story. And we don't know what to do. So unfortunately for us, we are betwixt and between because when we enter the country [Nigeria], we are called Americans. And I say “why do you call me American?” They say “Of course you are Americans. That's where you live.” Thank you.

Juan Campo: "I saw a hand up in the back..."

Eddie Saade (observer): My question is actually about politically motivated faith-based organizations that use humanitarianism as a means to an end. That end being governance. My name is Eddie Saade. I got a Masters in global studies three years ago. I studied the Middle East a lot. What interests me about that question, and the reason I'm asking is, I have difficulty placing those types of organizations on... specifically because we talk about the fact that motive plays a lot into humanitarianism, or are organizations or humanitarian organizations truly altruistic and what are the motives behind them? So how would a humanitarian organization deal with a politically motivated faith-based organization that wants to end up in governance?

Juan Campo: Time for the panelists to respond.

Robert Dowd: I don't know that much about the aftermath. I could tell you my impressions. Rosalind asked about the aftermath of the referendum - the new constitution that passed. Just to refresh your memory, the vast majority of Christian leaders came out very vocally in opposition to the new draft constitution, and essentially the Christian religious leaders have made their peace with it. They're recognized the results. The Catholic bishops have said “we recognize the will of the people, and we're ready to move on. And we recognize that there's a lot of good that is in that Constitution. And in the meantime, I think they're working behind the scenes with regard to the language they find problematic in the new constitution concerning abortion. The (kati) courts issue, I don't know much about that, and it's something worth finding out. The great concern was that the positions of Christian leaders in Kenya would sour relations between Christians and Muslims in Kenya. I think that there have been real serious attempts for leaders at the national level, Christian and Muslim leaders, not all Christian leaders, but some Christian leaders, to come together with Muslim leaders in Kenya to make sure that the run-up, the campaigns being wages in the run-up to the referendum on the constitution did not damage relations between Christians and Muslims, which have historically in Kenya been very good. It's really only in the last ten or fifteen years that there has been some tension between Christians and Muslims. I know there have been some attempts at the elite level, the leader level, to make sure that relations between Christians and Muslims don't go sour.

Sarah Blackmun-Eskow: Rosalind also asked something about our website that says something about “the poorer nations.” And I had said that Ghana... actually Ghana has been declared a lower-middle class country, but that doesn't tell you where the money is going. It's still a society the elite get most of the money and the poor get almost none of it. And the split is urban and rural, as it is in many parts of Africa and other parts of the world. It also depends on how you understand gross national product. A few years ago, about half of Ghana's GNP was
remittances from the West, from Europe and the US, not produced in the country – although a lot of the benefits do go to people who live in the country.

I wanted to ask a question without answering it, just for your thoughtful consideration. Talking about justice for people who have less power or no power in African societies, what do you think about the position of gay men and lesbians in Uganda, Ghana, Kenya where the violence against them, the rhetoric and the physical violence is escalating? I understand something about that, but I'm still concerned (and I think a lot of Americans are concerned) that maybe this is a place where we need to put our oar in the water. But I'd just like to know whether any of you have any observations for that phenomenon.

Juan Campo: Any other panelists like to also add their comments?

Richard Falk: Just a very short comment along the same lines as Sarah's comment, and it relates to what was said about justice advocacy. It seems to me that there's a difference between the advocacy role within the US, let's say, and within the countries that one's dealing with. I'm not sure that outside political actors or outside humanitarian organizations should be instructing internal political forces what constitutes justice. I think it's integral to the dynamics of self-determination to work out what justice means within a given cultural space. And it's very difficult to avoid the impression of colonial arrogance, particularly if one claim it has a scriptural foundation because that sort of preempts discussion and disagreement and alternate points of view. [It] seems to me very hard to exhibit humility, which seem the appropriate way to relate to the struggle for human rights and things such as what Sarah raised. I think there are universal norms that can be addressed, but when one tries to tell another society what is just that seems to me dangerous territory. Whereas, if you’re telling Congress what’s just about the Israel/Palestine conflict, I think it’s the kind of territory [that]… may be dangerous, but it needs to be walked upon.

Sarah Blackmun-Eskow: I think about the gay and lesbian justice issue along the lines that people thought about female genital mutilation a few years ago, maybe ten years ago. That we didn’t like it, but we didn’t know whether we should intervene. But we did. We made our views known, and now it’s illegal in a lot of African countries, which doesn’t mean it doesn’t happen. But at least there has been some change in my mind for the good in Africa.

Mark Juergensmeyer: [no mic, indistinct, but something like] Richard, were you saying that we should be concerned about these issues in other countries?

Richard Falk: I understood advocacy to mean something that one would try to reshape dialogue in other countries through the authority of the presence of an NGO that was dispensing funds and doing other things. It seems to me… that there is a missionary problem that is embedded in that undertaking.

Thomas Tighe: With respect to advocacy, which a lot of groups do very well, who are you to advocate? Do you know you’re advocating for them? There’s a self-appointed nature that NGOs can run a risk of. “So on behalf of people that don’t know I’m speaking for them, let me tell you exactly what needs to be done. And, by the way, give me money so I can do more of it.”
And if you’re compelling to the audience who is the funding audience, you can get a lot of money. A lot of people did it on behalf of people in Haiti who experienced an unimaginable tragedy. A lot of people did it in Sri Lanka and Thailand and made gobs of money never having done a thing there. So if you get money on behalf of someone else who needs it, there’s a high obligation. So accountability is really important. And I think it’s much easier in a way for a group that doesn’t have to answer to theological issues, like ours. I went to enough Catholic school, so I feel guilty enough. [laughter] So I think it’s a really important question of legitimacy because NGOs are unelected. If you subject yourself to a truly democratic process… right or wrong, up or down, you hope, however the majority of the election shakes out. NGOs come in sole on the basis of the compelling nature of their marketing. So you could do horrible work for the people, and do excellent work for the donating public, and win every time against an organization that does great work for the people that no one knows about. It doesn’t happen in business because if you spend four dollars for a cup of coffee and people don’t like it, they’re never going to buy it again. The nature of NGOs is that it disconnects the buyer from the consumer of the service. So if you convince me (I’m the Ford Foundation) I’m going to give five dollars for the coffee for the program… the coffee is going to be drunk by someone, not me. I’m going to make that judgment based on the report that Dwight gives back to me. So the legitimacy to speak on behalf of people … creates a deep obligation. I think the level of transparency, accountability and legitimacy is coming [indistinct]. Because right now, as a group that does almost no marketing, no fundraising, we’re beat every time by groups that do it better. I think on the merits, on the outcomes, on what we can do, I think we’d win if they were looking for value, and on behalf of the people served. But that’s an interesting thing, and I think business can teach us. If people aren’t buying it, you’re going to fail. And the same thing with politicians – there’s a natural desire, good or bad, to serve the people so you’ll get re-elected. And I think religious based NGOs that deliver services, like Hamas, that’s why they won. They delivered for the people. Whatever – they’re still a terrorist organization – but if you want value for the money in delivered services, you can’t complain when the people who don’t think like you do it [deliver services.]

Karel Zelenka: Maybe [this is] an afterthought to this discussion, and it cuts across practically all NGOs, whether faith-based or secular organizations. There is one issue that is at the root of the discussion, and it’s been around for years and years. And that’s the issue of standards.

In Kosovo, when the Serbs started this massacre in Kosovo, suddenly there were over 200 registered NGOs working in Kosovo competing for funds. The names of these NGOs were just a pure fantasy, sheer fantasy. And most of them worked in the same sectors: shelter, water, sanitation, health, gender, you name it. But how do donors, how does anybody, distinguish among them? Whom to support and whom not? And the NGOs themselves have steadfastly resisted efforts to come up with standards. Tom talks about business. Of course. If you have a car company, you have certain prescribed performance standards that you have to meet, and they are measurable. And people can look them up, and they can test it. But NGOs? You tell me, Sarah, that you do this for the people, but how do I know how good you are? What’s the result? No way [would they do that.] And the same for WorldVision. Why would I give to them rather than MercyCorp or Direct Relief? How do I know? Oh, they tell me they have this distribution, but in the final analysis there is zero in terms of measuring performance. We just don’t know. So we
offer all sorts of arguments, all sorts of results that we think are good, but it’s all relative. And that’s what I wanted to say – if the academic community could come up with a way to measure the performance because it varies. But I would say there are six or seven sectors that are the critical sectors for humanitarian assistance.

**Waleed El Ansary:** One quick comment, Sarah, regarding female genital mutilation. There’s a position in Islamic law, the grand mufti of Egypt for example has come out and said that that’s anti-Islamic… So the theological arguments that would be brought to bear in that argument are really completely different from the arguments that would come to bear on issues such as homosexuality. So the traditional Islamic position on that is really a “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy. And we can go into the theological basis for that…

**Sarah Blackmun-Eskow:** There is the issue, and this is a very un-Protestant, un-Reformed thing to say, whether a person has a right to enjoy his or her sexuality because female genital mutilation pretty much takes that opportunity away from the woman.

**SESSION 4**

**Kathleen Moore:** I appreciate Mark inviting me to join you today. But the last question that we want to consider formally here today is, “How does the work of humanitarian organizations influence the political climate?” – sort of the flip side of the question that was considered before the break. And I think there are many ways you could take a cut at that question but I want to suggest there are a couple of things maybe we could ask our panelists and our experts here today to consider. One is when you think about the work of humanitarian organizations and how it influences politics, you might ask the question, “How do we minimize the negative tendencies and influences blurring the lines between religion and politics?” and questions about partnering between faith-based organizations or religious organizations and officials in their official capacity or with corporate capital raise many of these issues about how to maximize the benefits and the accountability of coalitions and networking, and at the same time minimize the negative influence of blurring that line between religion and politics.

So this afternoon we have four esteemed panelists and we are going to go in the order from your right to left, speaking first and going alphabetically, by the way, beginning with Professor Waleed El Ansary. And please try to take five minutes each and we may have to cut you off. I apologize in advance for my rudeness.

**Waleed El Ansary:** Well there’s a wonderful quote here on this blurring of the line that Juan Campo had gathered from his latest trip with Mark to Egypt and I’ll just begin with this quote. He says, “I heard in Alexandria about a man who led a profligate life as a drug addict and abusive father and husband. He developed a serious problem with diabetes and had to have both legs amputated. Who paid for the operation? The Muslim Brotherhood. Then they offered him and his family a monthly stipend of £1,000 – something like that – and gave him money to buy new furnishings for his apartment, including a television set. The requirement was that if he was going to watch television, he could only watch religious programs. And of course the expectation was that he and his family would now vote for the Muslim Brotherhood candidates when and if
the election should occur.” And so this is very much an example. Talk about mixed motives and
blurring the line.

And today – I don’t know if you had a chance to check the news, but the government actually
made the official announcement for the preceding Parliamentary election. The Muslim
Brotherhood came in with 42.5%. The Salafis, which are even further right to the Brotherhood –
and we’ll talk more about them in a moment – came in with 32%. The Liberals came in with
16.5% and that leaves only 10% -- less than 10% -- for everybody else. So that kind of gives you
an idea that really the Islamists have a 75% -- about 75% -- of the Parliament now. And so what I
want to talk about -- and Jeffrey raised the question about the relationship between religion and
politics and how we should address these and I think he’s being very much like the Daoist sage
who’s remaining silent. He knows more than he’s saying. Really, this campaign tactic that the
Muslim Brotherhood has used has come under criticism from the scholars at Al Azhar
University.

Al Azhar University is kind of like the Oxford/Cambridge of the Islamic world. It was founded
in Cairo in 971. It’s even older than Oxford and Cambridge and it really represents the
intellectual capital, so to speak, of at least the Sunni Islamic world. And so the scholars at Al
Azhar have distinguished between an approach to religion and politics that takes the whole of the
community – the interests of the whole of the community into account, the common good – and
party politics. And they would say that this type of example that we just read is just an insult to
religion. It compromises the spiritual integrity of charity on one hand, and it really demeans
religion on the other. This is completely inappropriate. The Salafi groups have even said – and
the Salafi approach to Islam is really not even an indigenous Egyptian understanding of Islam.
Indigenous Egyptian understanding is represented by the scholars at Al Azhar University. The
Salafis kind of represent this foreign import of interpretation of Islam from Saudi Arabia. It’s a
very truncated understanding of the tradition that eliminated basically the philosophical,
thecological, intellectual dimension of the tradition, as well as the mystical dimension of the
tradition, and on top of all of that, it really has a kind of very compromised view of even the
legal dimension of the tradition, and we’ll get into that. But the Salafis have even gone so far as
to say in their campaigning that it’s acceptable for you to cheat in the election, to falsify the
election result, to basically vote more than once by paying these poor women in certain parts of
Egypt for their identity cards and then go in with the niqab so that you’re not really recognized.
And then one of the monitors at the station, he thought, “I think I’ve seen this woman before.
She walked in exactly the same way!” And they found out that she had voted, like, ten times.
And so, you know, I’m not so convinced that that 32% number is all that legitimate. So they
were really using the mosque as a place to bring people in, to gather the Muslim community, and
basically tell them that if you don’t vote for the Salafis, then you’re committing a sin. And that’s
completely unacceptable. And so Sheikh Ali Gomaa, the Grand Mufti of Egypt, who is also a
professor at Al Azhar, has distinguished very clearly between the role of religion and politics to
inform, provide a vision of the common good and that’s completely acceptable. And this type of
party politics that is just despicable, it’s really a disgrace. This is why the scholars at Al Azhar,
the Sheikh Al Azhar, for example, and the Grand Mufti of Egypt are completely forbidden from
being tied to any political party. The mosques are not supposed to be used for these types of
purposes. And so what we see in the Muslim Brotherhood and the Salafis are really elements of
very anti-Islamic approaches.
Now, that being the case, what is being done about this? Fortunately, we have the institution of Al Azhar University, which really represents the source of spiritual and intellectual guidance for the Egyptian people. The Muslim Brotherhood doesn’t really do that. Yes, they’re very good at providing orphanages and hospitals and things like these public services that Tom has brought up. But when it comes to spiritual and intellectual guidance, the Muslim community in Egypt doesn’t really look to them for that. And then of course the Salafis – that’s really a very truncated interpretation of Islam. So they look to the scholars at Al Azhar University to really provide that.

And just a couple of statistics in terms of how unfortunately the role of Al Azhar is not really brought out as it should be in the press or in the media, at least within the West. And so just a couple of statistics on how important Al Azhar is. First of all, the number of undergraduate students at Al Azhar University is 500,000. That’s 500,000 students at Al Azhar University. In their elementary school and junior high and high school, they have 1.5 million students. They provide the imams for 80% of the mosques in Egypt. They provide the imams, the religious scholars who lead the prayers and so forth, for 110,000 mosques in Egypt. So that represents over 80% of the total. And the number of alumni of Al Azhar University is 10 million. So you can imagine the political force that Al Azhar University has. When Al Azhar University gets behind a particular position, that changes the political landscape completely... When we talk about religion and politics and so forth, rather than talking about the Muslim Brotherhood and the Salafis getting all the attention, really the institution that deserves the attention is Al Azhar University and the scholars at Al Azhar University because that represents really a very moderate understanding of Islam that’s well-rooted in the tradition and that really provides guidance for the way forward. And in July of 2011, Al Azhar... issued a set of guidelines for the new constitution, indicating that of course all houses of worship of the Abrahamic traditions have to be respected and that the minority communities would have complete freedom of worship, minority rights of Copts and women, freedom of religion and opinion, and so forth and so on – freedom of expression within the...common decency, no slandering of other religious traditions as part of the guidelines, building strong relationships with surrounding countries in Africa. That relates to some of the other things that we’ve talked about. A very, very important point is the fiqh of priorities to achieve development goals. There’s a branch in Islamic law that’s really the law of establishing priorities that established certain norms like prevention of harm takes precedence or priority over pursuit of benefits and avoidance of harms to the poor takes precedence over avoidance of harm to the wealthy, and so forth and so on. That has tremendous implications for kind of policy implications, as things go forward. So I think, quite frankly, that Al Azhar University is going to play a very critical role in helping – a necessary role – in establishing a smooth transition. Unfortunately, it’s not a sufficient role, given the rise in crime and the unrealistic expectations of the economic turmoil that Egypt is undergoing. But at least that is a very, very critical role for a religiously oriented group within Egypt.

Kathleen Moore: Okay, thank you very much. Next we have Hilal Elver, who is the founding legal advisor of the Ministry of Environment in Turkey, Research Professor in Global and International Studies here at UC Santa Barbara.

Hilal Elver: Thank you very much. My position as a founding legal advisor was twenty five years ago, and I was surprised [that] I still I am carrying this. Now, as you can understand, my
example is related to Turkey and the Turkish internal politics much more international politics than how humanitarian, human rights organizations suddenly became international players in the region, while Turkey’s role is becoming more and more important. Many of you must know from the international media in May 30, 2010,... in the relation to Free Gaza Movement, there was a freedom flotilla started from Istanbul [that] ...tried to go to Gaza in order to interfere [with the] blockage of the Gaza and in relation to the Free Gaza Movement. The Israeli forces stopped this trip, and then they killed nine Turkish citizens. And this created an international, chaotic problem between Israel and Turkey. There was a long time of cooperative states in the Middle East, which is an unusual friendship. If you look at what was the reason, who did this, behind this organization, there was a Turkish NGO which is – maybe you know – Humanitarian Relief Foundation, which it was... established in 1990 as a human rights organization but more Islamic-oriented association. In this period, in the 1990s, we had very secular political government. Because of this reason, for quite a long time, this organization really suffered,... and did not get enough attention, did not get any kind of influence in political environment. But what they did during this period, they were in Bosnia, they were in Chechnya, they were in some [other] places. They did make a lot of humanitarian help inside and outside of Turkey. It was almost the earlier period that the Islamic-oriented human rights organizations not only working internally, but they are taking over their job internationally in relation to countries that Islam is an important religion or part of the Islamic culture – Middle East or Central Asia. But after 2002, the government changed and AKP – The Justice and Development Party – became the governing party. Then they, in power, become much more important and they were able to influence politics internally and internationally. And then they were also coordinated with some kind of humanitarian organization in the Middle East. This freedom flotilla was part of this kind of friendship coordination and organization.

After this incident, there were three international commissions started. Turkey started their own commission, Israelis started their own commission to understand what is going on, and the United Nations Secretary General established one commission and the United Nations Human Rights Council also looked at their own investigation, whether or not this was illegal action by the Turks or illegal use of force by the Israeli government. As you can imagine, each government tried to defend the case from their own perspective. Reports were very much misleading and Israelis directly connected this organization with terror. They went too far. For instance, there was a 2000 plot at LAX airport, which never happened. They claimed that this organization was part of this plot and they were part of the Hamas organization, they were part of the Muslim Brotherhood, and they really made this organization worse than it is.

At the same time, this gives us a kind of example how [it’s] possible [that] a national, humanitarian, religious-friendly organization became part of international politics. And the Turkish government right now, their relationship is frozen with Israel. There was a lot of negative international reputation caused to Turks and the Israelis equally and at the same time, what happened to Gazans...maybe there was a kind of PR which many people that didn’t know anything that’s happening in Gaza, after this event they learned... there was a serious humanitarian catastrophe going on, but at the same time, did not really change that much. Only Israelis [will] easily will beat Gaza blockage, but nothing was significantly better. But then they stopped a further kind of activity in relation to Freedom Gaza Movement because the Turkish government was very reluctant to do it again. They had been doing before – not only Turkish
government, but international NGOs and also what Turkish government claimed they had no relationship whatsoever. This organization is completely NGO, they can’t interfere with anything, they can not really make any kind of political influence over them. Partly true, but not completely true. The Turkish government would have had even stopped this maybe, but they did not, but at least after this first serious problem, they decided not to make anymore controversial attacks, but... the controversial attack wouldn’t be completely controversial if the Israeli government wouldn’t have used excessive violence. What I am trying to say, as you said – minimizing influence of the humanitarian NGOs, especially in relation to religion, is extremely important, but when there’s a serious problem in the region and there’s a strong clash between secularists and non-secularists internationally and nationally, it’s absolutely impossible to minimize that kind of negative impact of such organizations. I think I should stop here.

Kathleen Moore: Okay, and now we have the other half of the Sarah Blackmun-Eskow couple, Dr. Steve Eskow, who is the Chair of the Board of the Pangaea Network and Director of External Affairs at Ghana Telecom University College.

Steve Eskow: Our topic is to deal with the influence of humanitarian organizations on political climate. I’d like to tell you 2 stories – one trivial and one large scale. Sarah spoke earlier about the lesbian and gay issue. We and the Presbyterian Church of the U.S. are passionately committed to support and equal, full citizenship for lesbians and gays. That position is visible internationally and very visible to the Presbyterian churches of Africa. Recently, John Adam Mills, President of Ghana, old friend and supporter of ours, announced in response to this argument, that he would withdraw personally from any organization that supported lesbian and gay rights. He would work to withdraw funding. That’s the first episode. The question is, “Are we influencing the political climate as a humanitarian organization? Or are we in danger of being seriously influenced by the political climate?” We are interested, as we’ve been talking about, in working with the 3,000 Presbyterian congregations of Ghana. Some years ago, we signed a memorandum of understanding with the then-moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana. The present moderator, Dr. Emmanuel Martey, whom some of you know or know of, a graduate of Union Theological Seminary, a brilliant scholar, author, excellent administrator, has pronounced anathema on lesbian and gay relationships and has proposed breaking off relations with the Presbyterian Church of the U.S. because of its position. What do we, as a humanitarian organization, depending for our mission, our commitment to scale, to these churches? How do we cope with this? Let me put that aside. I think the point that I’m trying to illustrate is that when they’re high-level, abstract discussions about influence one way or another, the conversation takes a turn that I have difficulty with as a practitioner. In the world in which some of us live and try to get things done, realities of the kind I’ve just described intrude.

Different story about a different episode: in 1997, Lord Carey of Clifton, then-Archbishop of Canterbury, received a telephone call from Jim Wolfensohn, James Wolfensohn, who was then-Head of the World Bank. Jim Wolfensohn, an observant Jew and a very nice man, had just learned, apparently, that churches in places like Tanzania and Ghana, are heavily involved in development work and he wanted to meet with Lord Carey and the leadership of the church to discuss faith and development. And Katherine Marshall, who was one of his chief allies in that venture which generated millions of dollars and did much good work around Africa and around the world, was one of his main tools. Is the World Bank a humanitarian organization? Ought we
to cultivate relations with the World Bank? Ought we to try to get support for the World Bank? And if the World Bank – influential as it is – is committed to privatization...some of you know about the so-called Washington Consensus and how the World Bank uses its influence in Africa to remove the state and its activities from social development work and to privatize business and industry. What I’m really suggesting here is that the relationship between humanitarian organizations of the kind that we represent and sponsors and backers are intricate and complex and raise ethical issues that go well beyond what some of us are able to cope with. USAID has been mentioned here. USAID has a faith in development program that gives millions of dollars to faith-based organizations doing work around the world. Is USAID a humanitarian organization? Should we cultivate USAID? Or is it part of the problem? How do humanitarian organizations, non-profits such as we are, relate productively to universities who are concerned with globalization, concerned with international education, that have internship programs that want to bring graduate students and undergraduate students into useful internships around the world? Can we cooperate usefully with such university programs? What I’m hoping to get from...to abstract from the proceedings of this conference – information, insights, and possibilities that we can really use in our attempts to connect with the issues and the people of Africa in new and productive ways.

Kathleen Moore: Thank you very much. Next we’ll hear from Laura Grillo, who is Professor of History of Religions at Pacifica Graduate Institute.

Laura Grillo: So I have the unenviable position of being the last speaker of the day before cocktail hour and I’m counting on holding your attention by delivering a very sexy talk, quite literally. My topic is female genital power in ritual and politics in Côte d’Ivoire. I want to talk about the violation of female genitals and the deployment of female genital power as an act of global civil society. Also, I think it’s appropriate that I’m going to turn us back to the first question of the day that really more appropriately fits the comments that I have to offer, which is not so much about humanitarian organizations and how they influence the political climate, but rather, “What’s the role of religion in the recent socio-political transformations before us?” So let me tell you the story of the social, political situation in Côte d’Ivoire.

In November of 2010, after 8 years of repeated delays, Côte d’Ivoire held its most recent presidential election. Alassane Ouattara narrowly won the majority, but the incumbent, Laurent Gbagbo, contested the results and he refused to cede power. So after 5 months of a standoff that ensued, the barely dormant civil war was reignited. Now even before the post-election turmoil in Côte d’Ivoire, from the time of the eruption of the coup d’état, -- the first coup d’état in 2002 – and through this almost decade-long turbulent period that’s called “No Peace, No War,” women were the victims of violent, brutal, horrific sexual violence – violence so heinous that it defies contemplation. Both sides of the political divide were perpetrators of the assault on the civilian population in general, but they especially targeted women. Maybe that’s always the case in times of war. Despite the fact that highly reputable humanitarian institutions such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch documented this widespread sexual violence, including rape of children, forced incest, sexual slavery, and other forms of horrific torture, the international community rallying supposedly for democratic elections and “non-violent transitional government,” tolerated this impunity. And the news media largely ignored the
atrocities as well. Ironically, it was the killing of seven women, gunned down during the march held on International Women’s Day, a march held to demand an end to the post-election violence, that finally grabbed international headlines. The event was filmed by participants and circulated widely on YouTube and finally grabbed the headlines.

One of the points I want to make is that women haven’t been only victims, though, because women have been at the forefront of stands for peace and justice and consistently spearheading the most visible demonstrations of protest against abuses of power and calls for basic human rights. The Ivorian press actually recognize this. They’ve recognized the historic roots of women’s uprisings. When women took to the streets in 2008, just before the elections to protest the sharp rise in food prices, the Ivorian press likened that – their uprising – to a now-celebrated women’s uprising in Côte d’Ivoire in 1949. At that time, there was a multi-ethnic coalition of 2,000 women – multi-ethnic coalition of 2,000 women – who made a 60-kilometer trek from Abidjan to Grand Bassam, which is a colonial stronghold, to protest the arrests of African Liberation leaders who had been arrested by the French colonial authorities. But what the local journalists referenced only obliquely – and the foreign press really completely neglected – was to make reference to the powerful ritual rhetoric that the demonstrators, these women demonstrators, regularly make appeal. Because women appear smeared in white kaolin clay. They’re wielding branches and they strip naked. Now that gets ignored. Failing to interpret these cultural expressions, these religious expressions, offers a merely political reading of their protests and misconstrues their real significance – the religious significance.

I just want to give you a little background on this. Historical record that dates back centuries shows that throughout West Africa, from Senegal all the way to Cameroon, the generative power of the female sex is understood to be potent and dangerous in the religious view. As the living embodiment of the ancestors, women are guardians of the moral order. So they can ritually deploy their genital power for blessing or for curses. Traditionally, women are the source of life. So traditionally, they had to sanctify rulers in order for those rulers to enjoy legitimacy. For example, from Mali all the way to Nigeria, when traditional kings took to the throne, they had to be ritually invested with qualities – the female qualities. And in some cases, this went so far as castration.

Now today, in the context of African indigenous religion, women still perform paradigmatic ceremonies that draw on the power of their sex. They get naked and smeared in kaolin. These elderly women dance, chant, and use waters with which they’ve washed their genitals and sometimes waters mixed with other bodily effluvia, for libation. And with their well-worn pestles, they pound the ground and they cross the village square or the prominent places to curse any of those who would breach ethical mandates. Women are aware of the ritual potency of their nudity and this conjuration of their sex. And they use it also to intercede in calamitous political situations. In Côte d’Ivoire, their political activism has, therefore, appeal to this strong rhetorical form. As I alluded to earlier, in 1949, when the women went down to Grand Bassam, once they arrived in front of the jail, they also stripped naked and danced and gyrated until the French, not really understanding what to do with them, dispersed them with fire hoses. But more recently, in 2002, just after the coup d’état at the beginning of the uprising, at the urging of the Young Patriots to resist the attack that ignited the civil war, Nana Kouayotano (?), a female chief of the Baoule village ... organized five elderly women to execute the adjanou dance. This they call a
“mystical dance” and it’s performed in the nude and they performed this dance for 7 days to ward off this political cataclysm. Ultimately, though, the rebel soldiers got wind of what they were doing. They invaded the village, they abducted the women, and all the women were killed, save this one chief who escaped. The following year in 2003, the French intervened to broker a coalition government. At that time, naked women blocked the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dominique de Villepin, from exiting the French Ivorian Presidential Palace. And furthermore, they urinated on the wheels of his car. That’s genital power.

In February of 2011, just last year, several dozen adjanou dancers appeared in Treichville in downtown Abidjan to protest what they called their children’s arbitrary abduction by Gbagbo’s republican guard. And they brandished their kodjo, their underwear, to thrash the enemy. That same month in Yamoussoukro, in the center of the country, the political capital, hundreds of kaolin-smeread women occupied the late president Houphouët-Boigny’s residence to perform adjanou continuously to protest the deplorable state of affairs and what they considered the occupation of a sacred site by the political forces, the military. According to the organizers, theirs was a spiritual combat, conducted in a domain in which, “the strength and the power belonged to women.” So this religious principle, this indigenous religious principle behind these acts extends beyond any one particular ethnic group, beyond nationality. It’s not germane to Côte d’Ivoire or to the Baoule... It’s a pan-African idea, at least on the forest belt of West Africa. That is that peace and justice requires spiritual jurisdiction and moral authority and political power requires the exercise of both these things. And the common source for all these is women. So the ritual performance of women in the political sphere has been a history-making act of civil society, I contend. I think they are eloquently condemning political power left unchecked by spiritual and moral authority. Their effort to call on female genital power in order to restore the moral underpinnings of the state shows, I think, really brilliantly highlights the state’s widespread sexual violation of women and shows it to be even more reprehensible than the act itself is and even sets in high relief the government’s critical missing ingredient. So it’s in light of this situation that I raised the kinds of questions that I did to try and bring the discussion of global civil society in Africa to the case of African indigenous religions. What role do indigenous religions play? How can we make appeal to powerful moral, spiritual ideas that still have great currency in Africa and bring them into the discussion? How might the organizations of which we are a part make use of them, give them leverage and relevance in this changing political situation? Thanks.

**Kathleen Moore:** Thank you very much. That was excellent. We continue to be provocative here, don’t we? So now we open this for discussion and we’d like to take questions and we’ll collect three or four before the panelists can respond. So who’s got the microphone?

**Mohammed Bamyeh:** Thank you. I really very much enjoyed the session and I have maybe a lot of questions for each one but I know that time is limited. So I’ll just restrict myself to a couple key questions. One is for Waleed first. About Al Azhar in particular, and I think the rise of the Salafis – while I agree with you, it is not indigenous to Egypt and it comes from outside and all that – but there is one factor that you don’t mention, which is part of the appeal of the Salafis in the past 20 years or so may have something to do with the declining legitimacy of Al Azhar itself, right? And it is not -- in spite of the statistics that you mentioned which are impressive – one of the things that we know is that since 1961 at least, Al Azhar had become a
state institution and that in itself actually caused a decline in its moral authority. Not only that, but also its historical endowments were taken away so that actually its economic independence has been also sort of undermined, just like so many other institutions of Islamic higher learning historically. In Egypt, some of the estimates that I have read – about one-third to one-quarter of the land was held as endowment for the purposes of benefitting religious institutions historically. In Nigeria in fact, half of the land in the [indistinct] period was actually held as such... and Turkey likewise. You had really a very similar situation, so that religious kind of communities were historically very independent from the state. And also the charitable activities as such, were independent, and therefore also their moral authority in society was stronger and people listened to them. One of the things that happens in the modern period is that as these endowments are confiscated and these institutions become state institutions, people don’t believe in them anymore, at least not in the same way as before. And thus Salafis, extremists, all that, arise because there’s no competition or the competition at least is not credible enough. So I’d like you to comment on that a little bit if you can and whether this is likely to change in the post-revolutionary period. And just a question for clarification, if you can just say briefly something about the avoidance of harm, if you could describe its genealogy. I’ve been very interested in that as well.

I have a question for Dr. Eskow about the question in particular of what makes a human rights issue particularly resonant in a local area in particular. The example you give is really very compelling but one thing I wonder is whether, for example, when we go to another area and promote, say, gay and lesbian rights, whether that stand may do more harm than good. If there isn’t really a local organization or movement that is actually calling for those kinds of rights and if this demand appears to be coming from outside, which of course opens up to appear as a colonial ploy, even though, obviously we understand that it involves an emancipatory kind of claims and demands that are legitimate in all other kinds of ways. But whether, basically, it is kind of reasonable to just promote rights in the absence of... a credible enough force from the local culture that actually speak the same language about those rights.

Kathleen Moore: And Mark, you had a question?

Mark Juergensmeyer: Yeah, I was also going to ask Waleed about the Al Azhar and its influence along the line that Mohammed Bamyeh said and also wondering what happened to the Sufis – where their vote went and whether they went to the Muslim Brotherhood and the 30% Salafi... there can’t be that many Wahhabis. This is an indigenous vote and where does it come from and how is it going to shape out in terms of a coalition government? Is it automatically going to be a Salafi/Muslim Brotherhood government or does the Muslim Brotherhood look elsewhere for its coalition strength?

Kathleen Moore: Any other comments or questions?

Sarah Blackmun-Eskow: Laura, I was fascinated. That is quite a revelation. I think it’s very hard for Westerners to break through and be able to see what indigenous religion means to people in Africa and then when you do, you find out that it’s not like 9% of Africans practice indigenous religions. It’s like 99% do. Are you an anthropologist? Sounds like you might be. Okay. You got it.
Voice in crowd: Are you beating her up for that?

Sarah Blackmun-Eskow: No, I’m happy with that. I’m happy with that. My soul is of an anthropologist. How do the appointed or elected authorities in Côte d’Ivoire take this demonstration of female genital power? How is this handled or received in the culture, which I assume is at least nominally, Roman Catholic?

Kathleen Moore: And I think, Jeff, you had a question over here.

Jeffrey Haynes: Thank you very much. I wanted to ask Steve about his comments about the World Bank. Okay. You mentioned that the dialogue in the World Bank began...or the dialogue from the World Bank to Archbishop Carey began in 1997 and you kind of implied to my hearing that because the World Bank was heavily engaged in...let’s call in neo-liberal economic manipulation of economy, that it couldn’t also be a humanitarian organization, let’s say. So the question I want to ask you is what would a World Bank that was a humanitarian organization look like?

And the second comment is we heard from Thomas Tighe about the U.S. government and I think he made it very plain that in a way the U.S. government can’t be humanitarian unless there are clear national concerns that can also be added to that. Is not the World Bank similar, in the sense that its statutes will dictate that it can only use the money which it gains from member states for, let’s call it rational economic purposes or something of that nature? So I wonder whether to call the World Bank or to imply that the World Bank’s not humanitarian is in a sense not the right issue because in a sense the World Bank can’t be humanitarian, perhaps?

Waleed El Ansary: Sure. I’ll start with Mark’s question and then move to Dr. Mohammed’s question. As far as “where did the Salafis... get 32%?” I mean, well, part of it was cheating, as we talked about before. It’s really the influx of all the money that’s coming from the Gulf. I mean it’s unbelievable the amount of money that’s coming from Saudi Arabia and other places in the Gulf that kind of gets used to co-opt popular imams and so forth and so on and so you have this element there. I think this is one of the other roles that Al Azhar is really stepping up to play and that is the importance of education. 45% of the people in Egypt are basically illiterate and especially in the countrysides where you have approximately 5,000 villages in Egypt. I think about 20% of them do not even have a school. And so in that type of environment, the money of the Salafis – they are the ones who really have the majority of that 20% of the mosques in Egypt that are not under the scholars from Al Azhar. And so they use that as a platform, given the external funding that they’re getting, to develop this kind of political influence and unfortunately because many of the people in these areas are not educated, they can’t read, they use the length of a person’s beard as a proxy for piety. So really what the fact that the Salafis got 32% of the vote does not mean that 32% of the Egyptian population is Salafi. It means that that 32% is deeply religious and they’re just being informed this is what they should do. This is why the educational campaign...and quite frankly democracy can not operate that way. Democracy presupposes that you have a reasonably sized middle class that’s fairly well-educated about the issues. When you have 45% of the people illiterate, you have the poor segments of the population can be bought off from...or manipulated, let’s put it this way. Not
bought off directly in that way, but they can be manipulated in all kinds of directions. And that’s a really great danger and so really the political crisis in Egypt is really reflecting a very deep educational crisis in the country that…it’s been neglected for many, many years.

As far as where did the Sufis go, I’m not sure what the surveys show about what percentage...whom they voted for, but I’m sure they didn’t vote for the Salafis, that’s for sure. And there are approximately 8 million Sufis in Egypt, by the way, so they represent a huge political force in and of themselves. And many of the scholars at Al Azhar are of course related to that. So there’s really an educational campaign that Al Azhar is really stepping up to the plate to combat this non-indigenous interpretation of Islam and a very truncated one at that, that represents a great danger to the Copts of Egypt as well. So this is really in everybody’s interest to make sure that that gets dealt with properly.

Now as far as your question, Dr. Mohammed, it’s an excellent question. There has been, in a sense, as far as the economic independence of Al Azhar goes, you’re right that those endowments were taken away, but quite frankly, those endowments... no longer generate anywhere near the income that’s necessary to support Al Azhar University. If you took all those endowments back, I believe the statistics are that they would generate less than 10% of the revenue that’s necessary for Al Azhar to operate. So at this point, there’s no question, from a financial point of view, that Al Azhar University needs government support in order to continue functioning. That being said, the last Article that they had suggested in their July...this last July about the kind of guidelines for the constitution, they said that although we need the financial support from the government, we need to be completely independent from them, precisely to address some of these legitimacy issues. Now as far as the people go, as far as the mosques, the imams in the mosques and so forth, this is really a question where they are still looking to these Azhari imams for their spiritual and intellectual guidance. So although you might have at certain levels the perception that, oh, well, you know, this is [indistinct] the scholars of the sultan, or of the ruler,... you do have some of that for... certain figures. When it comes to the broader base imams in the [indistinct] and so forth, it really isn’t that situation and many of the scholars – the top level scholars like Sheikh Ali Gomaa, the Grand Mufti of Egypt – enjoy incredible popularity. Even before he was appointed as Grand Mufti of Egypt he enjoyed tremendous popularity. That’s one thing in the Islamic world – imams...religious scholars still have a little bit of a role like celebrities, almost. So people like him enjoy tremendous popularity and influence, regardless of what their appointments may be. And they’re not tied to any political party, as I mentioned before. But that’s an excellent question and Al Azhar is seeking to kind of restore all of that in the post-revolutionary period.

Kathleen Moore: Professor Grillo, did you want to respond to the question about how government structures respond to female agency?

Laura Grillo: Well... let me answer it this way, your question: authorities who recognize these acts for what they are, the cultural acts that they are, respond with sobriety and even fear, trepidation, respect. In fact, the first time I heard the account of the story about de Villepin was from a former government minister, Madame Bro-Gebe, who I was interviewing about women’s power in political situations...and the violence that had been perpetrated upon women and what was being done about it, who was being held accountable. So they’re aware. They’re a part of the
They’re doing their own reading. Another recent, similar account that happened in Cameroon I read reports about. The soldiers who were confronted with the mothers who were doing this ritual act actually fled in fear of rousing the ire of their mothers. So it has considerable cultural efficacy as a ritual act, as a political act. To the degree that the ritual acts then can be or are ignored by the politicians, they do so out of self-interest. That’s what I’m suggesting and in this regard,... the fact that the international press overlooks these acts -- doesn’t account for them, ignores them – does serve the interests of the state because the state of course wants to represent itself as some kind of legitimate representative of the people and this is a very powerful rhetorical way that people have to speak loudly in performative protest. So the state is representing itself to the outside world as, you said, nominally Christian or nominally Muslim...

In other words, they continue to misrepresent themselves as representatives of a people that are something more than just Christian, just Muslim, or a modernizing state on the Western model. They’re continually marginalizing indigenous religious values and ethics. And it’s for this reason that I’m trying to bring this back, front and center -- indigenous realities – front and center to this conversation and our consideration of the global civil society and religion in global civil society. So the third dimension of this question and my answer to it is my own worry and fear that there is a new generation that does not read – even the indigenous population – that does not read these events for what they are and they themselves ignore their meaning. Those are people, especially the young generation born in the city of mixed ethnicity, no more roots to village life, no longer even speaking their own languages -- that don’t really understand such acts and have bought into that idea that these are kind of backward superstitions and they don’t really understand them. I see, insofar as that is true for them, especially young women are being systematically disenfranchised of a mighty power that is their heritage.

Kathleen Moore: And let’s see, Steve, did you want to respond to Jeffrey’s issue about is humanitarianism really the right question to ask when we look at the...is that really the right issue when we talk about the World Bank and its involvement in development?

Steve Eskow: As Jeffrey Haynes knows well, there are at least two principal views of the World Bank and its motives. One is that it’s an extension and an agent of the colonial powers, that it’s dominated by the U.S. and U.S. interests, that it’s imposing on the poor countries of the world a new kind of dependency. The other position is that even the self-interests of the rich countries would be better served if poverty was lessened or eliminated in Africa and if Africa, as a result of World Bank and other administrations of that kind, was able to remove or lessen its poverty. So you do your own reading. My own hunch is that the World Bank saw in Africa an opportunity to minimize or eliminate serious dependencies, serious poverty, and extend capitalism in a productive and useful way. That’s minority opinion. As I say, the majority opinion is that the World Bank has been part of the apparatus of neo-colonialism and that its motives are extending and enriching the already rich nations. So you take your pick.

Paul Lynch (observer/videographer): I had a question for Waleed El Ansary about Al Azhar’s view and sort of mandate, talking about the respect of the 3 Abrahamic religions and how the Bahá’ís fit into that and also if you could comment a little bit more on the constitutional reformation, dealing specifically with Article 2, post-revolution and how some of those factors come into play.
**Richard Falk:** Yes, my question is also for Professor El Ansary. I was in Egypt about ten months ago and spoke to a wide variety of people and not one of them anticipated the Salafi strength. And now people come with very convincing explanations of why they’re so strong. So how do you explain this? And this included religious...people that were in touch with religious movement. And the other question is, given this very interesting presentation on the absence of a broader political and cultural perspective on the part of the Muslim Brotherhood, if they do in fact... enter government in a prominent way, are they likely to look to Al Azhar for the kind of guidance that you say is so prevalent in the society and how would that alter their political profile?

**Jacob Olupona:** Thank you very much. I’d like to go back to the statement made my Waleed El Ansary, not when you give your lecture relating to the “don’t ask, don’t tell” dictum as deposited in the Quran. Very important question in view of the conversation relating to gay/lesbian issue in Africa. I ask that because when this problem started in England, with the Church of England, that was the position of the Anglican Church in Nigeria – “don’t let us go near it.” And they cited an earlier case in the Lambeth Conference. When polygamy was the issue and Africa was the victim, the bishops themselves said, “Don’t let us go near it. We know it’s going to disappear.” And that was the solution. But this time around, the American Church insisted that we must discuss it and take a vote. That was the beginning of the crisis. So the “don’t ask, don’t tell” reference – and I’m interested in that – seems to me the Anglican position... So I’m interested in that because that may be a solution to a number of problems... I don’t want Sarah to go home without, at least, having some of us discuss our thoughts on this. We have also become victims because we have been there to talk to the Anglican bishops and say, “Let us solve this problem.” Let me tell you now what they say. Within the country itself, within Nigeria or Uganda itself, there are dissensions. There are Anglican bishops who do not like what is going on. Who would like to be [indistinct] connected with the global Anglican communion? And they are very sad that they can not...the young bishops can’t go to Lambeth but they will expect that this should be discussed internally first. We have not learned our lessons. This is what is going on. When it was a shari’a conversation, one of the reasons why it was so difficult to solve in Nigeria was that the moment the NGOs there and people started writing letters to these imams in northern Nigeria, then they were so emboldened to say, “Aha! We’re going to fight them. We don’t want just to hear from that.” So there is a sense in which foreign intervention is very detrimental to the conversation, be it shari’a, be it gay/lesbian crisis. But there are all kinds of things going on in Nigeria. They found out there is a gay church in Nigeria – a gay church in Nigeria. So these things were going on quietly and people were saying “Aha, what’s going on here?” But the moment it became an international issue, including Obama’s statement a few weeks ago, I mean a few months ago that he was issuing an Executive Order. I don’t know if you know about this. The Executive Order given by the President. I was shocked to hear that – that United States aid would not be given to any African country that doesn’t support same-sex marriage. These things are detrimental to our foreign policy.

**Sarah Blackmun-Eskow:** I think he said that we wouldn’t give any aid to countries that have executed gays, which seems reasonable. Isn’t it so that there are a lot of very conservative Anglicans from the U.S. and England in Uganda, kind of stoking the fire?
Jacob Olupona: They are everywhere, that is true. I remember when one Anglican bishop asked us in a conversation, “What is your response to this theologically?” I said, “Look, my duty towards my neighbor and my duty towards my God. If I love God and hate my neighbors, what do I do? My neighbors are going to be gay/lesbians. I live in America. Shall I hate them?” So in other words, they are already thinking about this. It’s important to allow an international conversation to go on first before we take a stand on that. This is my point.

Kathleen Moore: Rebecca wanted to ask a question. I’m sorry. Rosalind. And then we’ll have responses from panelists.

Rosalind Hackett: Okay. Well I’m sorry to shift from sex and sexuality to terminology, but...it seems very flat and boring but it’s something that I’m passionate about and I’m going to throw this out. Maybe nobody wants to take this up. Perhaps...I hope that perhaps Laura and Jacob might support me on this. And there’s no easy solution but I’m bothered by the f-word and by the f-word I mean “faith.” The way that “faith” is being bandied around in international circles even as if it existed in international human rights documents, which I don’t think it does instead of “religion.” Now we know that “religion” isn’t the best term, but at least it doesn’t sound so Western and so Christian. And you didn’t call your program “Faith in Global Civil Society.” At least you called it “religion.” But going back to the World Bank, I don’t think they’re the primary agents of the sort of globalization of the “faith” word. I’m told that it’s really journalists to blame because... they didn’t think that “spirituality” had a serious ring to it so they were looking for... a synonym for religion and ended up with “faith.” But the problem is for those of us that work in Africa, “faith” does not work very well in terms of either a descriptor or as a sort of operational term in conversations with indigenous religions. Now Dwight, I don’t know what you feel about this – whether the “faith” word comes up with your group – but to talk about, Jacob, “Yoruba faith”... or “Navajo faith traditions” just doesn’t work very well. So I’m just interested...I mean to me, words matter. I think to many women words matter, whether you feel included or not by the labels that can be used to try to bring people together and mobilize people. So that’s my little spiel on the f-word.

Marie [question]: This might be boring as well. This is an observation, a question for Dr. Eskow. A little louder? I became aware that World Vision was administering USAID funds and I was curious about it and how it happened and why. And I had a chance to ask Rich Stearns, who is President of World Vision U.S. how that happens. And he told me that after the budget is set and they decide which countries they’re going to send money to, they come up with programs and so they have an RFP situation and so World Vision looks at that and they decide which of these programs they are uniquely qualified... to administer. And so they handle the RFP situation and get oftentimes – because they are uniquely qualified to do that in a lot of cases – they are awarded that proposal. I’m wondering if you think that’s a valid system.

Steve Eskow: Are you talking to me?

Kathleen Moore: Okay, yeah, let’s take these questions. If we can go back to the beginning, I think if we refresh our memory, Waleed, you were asked to explain the Bahá’ís, the Ahmadiyyas, and the Salafis all in about 90 seconds.
Waleed El Ansary: Well, I’ll try to be very quick. Regarding the Bahá’ís, the Egyptian government’s official policy, at the very beginning, was to recognize them as a religious minority. That was the official government position. What led to a difficulty from the government’s point of view with the Bahá’ís was the national security issue, in relation to Israel and the fact that the headquarters are there and then there were incidents of alleged spying and so forth. So what complicated the relationship was not this government discrimination as such, as it was a national security issue. Regarding Article 2, which states that Islam is the official religion of the state and a source of legislation and that Arabic is the national language of Egypt, how do we balance that with Article 7, for example, that states that all Egyptian citizens regardless of race, religion, creed, are equal citizens before the law and how do you balance that out? And, at least from the point of view of the scholars at Al Azhar, and really what the guidelines that Al Azhar recommended for the new constitution going forward, is to respect all of the rights of the minority communities. Islamic law is very clear about that. And I’ll give you just one incidence. When the prophet of Islam had met the delegation of Christians from Nazran in Medina, the Christians of Nazran – it came for their time to pray.... When it came time for them to pray, they were about to pray in the masjid of the prophet himself and then some of the companions of the prophet interrupted and said, “What are you doing?” And then the prophet himself said, “Let them pray.” And the scholars of Islamic law said that it’s perfectly acceptable not only for the Christians to have their own houses of worship, but for Christians to pray inside masjid. And so that’s just the kind of example...and scholars at Al Azhar will bring tons of examples of incidents like that, that groups like the Salafis, with a very truncated understanding of the tradition, ignore and misunderstand. And so how to balance those two articles – it is possible, according to the scholars at Al Azhar.

Regarding Dr. Falk’s wonderful questions about how do we explain the Salafi’s strength on one hand and will the Muslim Brotherhood look to Al Azhar on the other and modify their political profile accordingly, the Salafi strength is really about economic influence – where the money goes. That’s really where it’s at. If they did not have the financial resources behind them, coming from Saudi Arabia, there’s no way they could’ve gotten any of this kind of results.

Richard Falk: Why did no one notice that?

Waleed El Ansary: Oh yes. You know, I think that people were expecting perhaps the Salafis to come in at 10% or something around those lines. So you’re right. They came out much greater than that, and really, I do sincerely believe some of that is just fraudulent. I think that’s election cheating. I think that some of it is, I don’t want to make any jokes, but...part of that is that [cheating] and that was a surprise to many analysts. But I think when you look back at it, it’s possible to account for that. But I really expect for that role to decrease significantly going forward. I think this is a one-time thing and that as Al Azhar gets more involved in the picture,...that influence will decline.

Regarding the Muslim Brotherhood and looking to Al Azhar, quite frankly, the Muslim Brotherhood is not going to have a choice. Once Al Azhar takes a position, that’s it. That changes the whole political landscape. So whether or not the Muslim Brotherhood wants to listen to Al Azhar, they are really not going to have a choice. Al Azhar is really the elephant in the
room and if it throws its weight one way or another, even the military has to deal with that. So it’s a huge influence, so I don’t think they’ll have a choice.

Finally, regarding the collaboration with the Anglican Church Archbishop Williams was visiting with Sheikh Ali Gomaa I think during the summer so I don’t know whether they exchanged notes on this particular issue, but let me just summarize very briefly the Islamic position on this from a theological point of view, and I’ll use an Eastern analogy for this. If we think of the dao, the dao... of course has the yin and the yang that are complements to one another but the yin has an element of yang in it and vice versa. And so in the divine order, from an Islamic theological point of view, God’s names and attributes are divided into names of majesty on one hand — the rigor, God is the judge, the giver of death and so forth — and names of mercy or beauty on the other — such as God is the infinitely merciful, the ever-beautiful, and so forth. And in creation itself, the Quran says that God creates all things in pairs, as it does in the Bible and so forth, and that these pairs in the human state, manifests itself in terms of the male state has both the yin and the yang within it, as does the female state, but the male state has more of the yang than the yin and the female state has more of the yin than the yang. Now the fact that the yin and yang... attract one another, in the sense of attraction, that represents the attraction between the sexes and that is the basis, ontologically, from an Islamic theological point of view, for marriage. The fact that, however, we contain within ourselves both the yin and the yang, and therefore we can achieve spiritual realization independent and outside of marriage, is the principle of monasticism, as we have in Catholicism, for example. And so, therefore you can achieve spiritual realization either through marriage or outside of marriage, but to have yin-yin and yang-yang is not being dao-like. And therefore, that introduces a source of disequilibrium within the person themselves and also cosmically. And so that explains the Chinese opposition to this, of the Confucian and Daoist traditions, the Hindu tradition, the Buddhist tradition, you name it, across the board. And so I think that Dr. Mohammed is absolutely right — that if we try to insert this as part of our political agenda and foreign policy, that just spells disaster, because it’s going to be looked upon as a colonial type of imposition.

Kathleen Moore: Thanks, I think if I’m not skipping anything, we have two more questions on the table — the question from Rosalind about problematizing religion and the problem with “faith” as a term, that when we use that, what do we make of that with respect to indigenous...?

Laura Grillo: Okay, so I say to that, “Amen!” Amen, let’s not talk about faith. Let’s talk about religion. You know, it’s worth stating overtly — that for a long time, African religions were not considered religion, were not represented as such in the academy, certainly not by the missions that taught Africans that “religion” represented faith and a doctrine, and that faith speaks more to orthodoxies to which one concedes rationally and spiritually. African religions are praxis-based religions. They’re orthopraxis, not orthodoxy. You know, because Africans themselves have been taught that their own ethnic traditions and the spiritual beliefs and values and practices are not religion, this has a great deal to do with the very skewed kind of self-reporting about, “What is your religion?” Well, people report their religion is one of the two possibilities — Christian or Muslim — but they’re not reporting... Statistically there’s not an accurate, therefore, representation of what the practice truly is about and what the beliefs really are and the myriad ways and the complex ways that they are practiced simultaneously and synchronistically, synthetically, etc. This... confusion about faith and religion is another reason,
as I’ve been suggesting and many of us have been suggesting all day, that the indigenous traditions get marginalized in these wider conversations, and considering the role of religions and African religions in the global situation, even though African religions are now very much world religions, if for no other reason, because of the worldwide African Diaspora. And that the African Diaspora on the continent, given the wars, the upheavals, the displacements, the refugee situations that have caused populations to move en masse. We have, back and forth, so much more commerce, not only in terms of transportation of peoples back and forth from Brazil to Nigeria, for example, sharing...getting indoctrinated and re-indoctrinated and initiated and re-initiated in traditions, but also widespread internet of these oral traditions and praxis-based religions. So we have to consider that also – ...really a re-conception of what religion is and how it’s practiced and what its implications are on the ground and in the wider political sphere. And then finally, in terms of the disenfranchisement of women that I spoke about in Côte d’Ivoire, I think women are being disenfranchised by both the state and by religion, to the degree that both the state and religion are seizing upon these Western forms that are patriarchal and that privilege men in so many ways.

**Kathleen Moore:** Thank you. Let me know if I’m overlooking anyone. The final question for Dr. Eskow about government aid, about USAID money and budgetary decisions that are made, if I understand this, that when the budget is determined and RFPs are issued and organizations like World Vision respond to the RFP and apply to gain government contracts. That was your question and what was his take on that? Do you understand what I’m saying?

**Steve Eskow:** Is the question how do I feel about that process?

**Marie:** When you mentioned it earlier, it sounded like you didn’t approve of that.

**Steve Eskow:** I sounded like I didn’t think it was a valid process?

**Marie:** That’s the way I heard it.

**Steve Eskow:** I have a feeling I really don’t understand the nuances of the question. Faith-based organizations apply to USAID for support.

**Marie:** All kinds of organizations. Not for support. For contracts for specific programs that the government, the U.S. government has already decided need to be done for a specific country.

**Steve Eskow:** And do I think the pattern of support that USAID offers is legitimate and valid, is that what you’re asking? I’m having trouble with the question.

**Mark Juergensmeyer:** Let’s continue this discussion later then. Anything else you’d like to say to wrap up the panel?

**Kathleen Moore:** Only to thank you very much to our host and fearless leader. Thank you all.

**WRAP-UP/REFLECTION SESSION**
Mark Juergensmeyer: We’re not going to take a break right now because I assume you would like to get out a little bit early and what we usually do at this particular point in our workshop is have a couple minutes to reflect on a question that was first given to me by my third grade teacher. I think her name was Miss Davis, as I recall, and at the end of the class everyday she would look around the room and she’d say, “Alright, kids.” She’d say, “What have we learned today?” And each of us would have to tell Miss Davis at least one thing that they learned today.

So I’ll give you a couple minutes to think about this, but since I’m asking the question, I’ve had a couple minutes to think about it. And I think what I’ve learned today...a couple things. I’ve learned that certainly sub-Saharan Africa is different from northern Africa and the Middle East in so many different ways, not the least of which is the prevalence of oil and the presence of Islam. But I think the enduring thing that I’ve learned today is how hard it is to do good. The kind of complications that we’ve raised in our conversation – whether we’re talking about state collusion with NGOs, whether we’re talking about state and NGO competition, where NGOs move into places like Haiti, for example, with enormous power and influence and the government has very little power or influence to wield back, to the kind of open, almost “wild west” possibilities of particularly large American-funded NGOs in different parts of the world. But not without insensitivity on their parts, not without insensitivity to their influence but also to their accountability as Thomas Tighe was saying – the concern for accountability, the way in which organizations are open in terms of the way in which they operate. The degree to which they are organizations, as I said, and organizations tend to want to promote themselves. You know, there is a kind of expansionist character to organizations. And then that business that Mae raised that still resonates in my head – the idea of theological imperialism. But it could be ideological or cultural imperialism also, the kinds of assumptions about what is good and what is important and whether that resonates in the same way.

Are there some things – female genital mutilation, for example – that is just...that’s a universal give, you’re against that? There should be no question about it. Issues of rights for everybody regardless of their sexuality – is that just a given regardless of what other else you think about it? Well, maybe. I remember years ago when we had a project. At this case it was my previous institution, the University of California at Berkeley and the Graduate Theological Union. We had a joint project with the Harvard Divinity School on... values in a comparative perspective. And there was one heated moment when the area specialists among us were arguing for what sounded to others as a kind of ethical relativism about what is right and what standards are correct. The issue had focused on sati, the practice in India... where widows throw themselves on the funeral pyre and they become goddesses in the process and are venerated within Indian society. But of course the British looked in horror at this practice. And we were discussing that and... Hindu scholars tried to defend it. I remember Peter Berger, a sociologist, getting up and saying, “Well I don’t care about all of this talk. I don’t care what you say and what position you’re in. If there was a funeral pyre piled in the middle of this floor and it was ignited and a woman started climbing on it for whatever reason, what person here wouldn’t climb up there and yank her down to save her life?” So I think that’s one of the issues that’s being raised. I mean there are things about which we feel enormously strongly, we feel that’s universal, even though there is also the sense that maybe that isn’t entirely right and maybe... cultural sensitivities should make us pause at least in the way in which we engage with other cultures about this issue, if not about the primacy of our own concern about the matter. How hard it is to do good, that’s what I learned.
Sarah Blackmun-Eskow: Don’t you have to know a lot to answer the question about sati? Like what happens to Indian widows?

Mark Juergensmeyer: But even when you do know a lot – and the area specialists all knew an awful lot – even after it’s all said and done, wasn’t Peter Berger right? That there wasn’t a single one of us who wouldn’t climb up there and pull her back down? Well, the floor is open for others to join in. Yes? Was that a stretch or was that to make a point?

Dwight Hopkins: Both-and.

Mark Juergensmeyer: Dwight, what did you learn today?

Dwight Hopkins: I learned a great deal, but just a couple things: one, I learned that it’s a beautiful thing to have people who have so many differences in one room and have a civil conversation, and two, the necessity for this conversation to continue. The other thing I learned was that it’s important for us, who have so many different perspectives, to have, at some point, some venue, some time, to talk more about what motivates us in what we do. And so to sort of get past the words that we use, whether they’re “secular,” or “faith” or “religion” or “self-cultivation.” And the other thing I learned, I guess the third thing I learned is that from my perspective, how everything we do, whatever we label, is very human, very, very human.

Mark Juergensmeyer: Shall I start calling on people?

Jeffrey Haynes: Let me get it over with. The first thing I’ve learned is that the term “the ambivalence of the sacred” doesn’t do justice to the array of complex positions that people in groups acting apparently for religious motivations have. And the second thing I’ve learned is that the very term “religion” doesn’t do justice to what we’ve been talking about today. This isn’t really a comment on the issue about “faith” or “religion” or other terms. It’s really that... [while] we’ve had many, many different conversations today about many, many different things which have all come under the rubric of the overall topic of religion in global civil society, we haven’t really talked about the “global,” however. Our conversations have been much more about the local, which surprised me. And I guess it confirms once again that we can talk about globalization, but when it comes to activities and actors that we label “religious,” it’s really much more about what goes on at the local level and the world faiths, whether we like that term or not, aren’t a very good starting or ending point for this kind of discussion. It’s much more about the indigenous, cultural, historical, and other traditions which feed into something like modernity, which becomes highly important. So I’ve learned a lot. Well I think I’ve learned a lot. I shall go away much more confused than I was this morning, but I don’t know whether that’s a good thing or a bad thing.

Robert Dowd: I think one thing that I learned is that there’s a lot that we don’t know and I think that just along the lines of what Jeff just mentioned, I think there’s a bit of constructive destruction here that needs to take place first. And just the relationship between traditional religions and these African traditional religions and world religions – is there a difference, right? And Laura raises that. But I’m just thinking of the reference to the women of Côte d’Ivoire as
nominally Christian – would they define themselves as nominally Christian? Maybe they would but odds are they would see themselves as truly Christian, many of them, and many of them as truly traditional at the same time. And so the world is very, very complicated out there and I think that religious identities are very, very complex and nuanced. I think that also builds on what Jeff just mentioned...

I talked a lot about measuring impact and trying to assess the impact of religious institutions. I think that it’s extremely important for people who are working on those kinds of questions to also be working with people who... have a greater knowledge of the cultural complexities that are a part of the equation, so the anthropologists working together with the political scientists and the economists and the sociologists. I think interdisciplinary work is called for here and too much of the work has been stove-piped along disciplinary lines and so I think one thing that I’ve learned here is the importance of interdisciplinary research. So thank you.

Jacob Olupona: Thank you very much. I have learned quite a lot. One, that there are no easy answers to these questions we have raised, and that it is important for us to continue to debate them and to see to what extent our positions can change from the views we hold onto very deeply. The second part of it is that we have been exposed to what are probably called the intersections within intellectual academic work and the practical applications of those theories and ideas, without necessarily thinking that the debate has been less vigorous than what we normally and often are on the take in academic intellectual context in the classroom. And so that issues of poverty, consumption, HIV/AIDS, development issues have been discussed.

It then, for me, leads to another issue – that those of us who find ourselves in schools of divinity, schools of theology, will have to re-think the way we do business, that it is no point just studying New Testament and Old Testament without thinking about the relevance of these subjects and this academic pursuit to the life of people and the kinds of things we deal with. One of the things I discovered in the Divinity School, Harvard Divinity School, is that students want to relate whatever they are doing to all these issues of development, of health, and economic growth, poverty, corruption, but they don’t know how. Now quite often they have to go to another school, like the Kennedy School or Public Health, to find professors to work with. And then they are left with the idea that, well, the world is so polarized. These subjects, academic pursuits, are so divided and there’s no connection between them. I think in the 21st century, the schools of divinity and colleges of theology should really begin to re-think how they do business. Somehow, most of them should be involved in what we are fond of calling “social engagement,” even if it’s a question of doing a project at the end of their take.

And finally, I think the conversation has served me to re-think the importance of civil society. At times, you have this feeling that has been so overused, but it’s so interesting to see it in context and to see how it has become even more important than what it used to be in the 90s. So even in the late-90s and in the early century. When I got this invitation, I almost said, “Civil society again?” I thought we had finished with that. But this has been very, very helpful for me. It has been a learning process, too. Thank you.

Claudine Michel: I told Mark during the break that this was difficult for me because I come from Haiti, republic of 11,000 NGOs, but I’m grateful to mentor, colleague, friend, Jacob, who
first mentioned this conversation to me and Mark for inviting me. I learned a lot today. I also learned that I wasn’t off in some of my thinking because I don’t do NGOs, you know, in terms of my own specialty. I also learned there’s a big difference between humanitarian help and all these convictions and motivations that pushes us to do well, but also the institutionalization of those NGOs in poor countries like Haiti and other parts of the world, where the local population is displaced, where you have a foreign doctor getting paid $1,000 a day and the local doctor gets paid $1,000 a month. So those are very complex issues that we’re grappling with in the case of Haiti, and it’s a disaster of a magnitude that can not even be described. A 7-point earthquake should not be killing 300,000 people and displacing a third of the population and us having a million people still living in tents and unsanitary conditions with 200, 300 people sharing one latrine. So it’s a very complex situation, but there are people who originally came there to help but there’s this institutionalization of that help that really needs to be re-thought and it’s help that re-shapes and re-colonizes in some ways. We have to pause and think about that.

I would say that a lot of points were brought home about NGOs needing to have some kind of oversight and timeframe and accountability and those things are not there. I wrote this poem for a little girl. Her older sister was raped and the last line of the poem is “How many cups of revolution will it take for little Fela to throw away her whistle and dream of a new Haiti?” And those whistles were given to those little girls to try to prevent rapes in those tents. I would say, how many more conversations will it take for us as academics to really dream of this new world where our intellectual powers will help re-shape the world and make a difference in people’s life and be relevant, as Jacob mentioned? So I’m very grateful to all of you for that conversation and all the work that you are doing. The commitment is real, I felt it. So thank you very much.

Fritz Lampe: I echo much of what’s been said. Of the things that I will lift up, one is the need for interdisciplinary conversation, that’s critical. The second is... when I teach Introduction to Cultural Anthropology, talk about culture is something that... is this amorphous thing that is dynamic. It’s changing. It’s in motion. It has all kinds of parts and parcels that people are actors in and in some ways, the conversation we’ve had today has been a conversation about changing culture – cultures in terms of NGOs thinking about different ways. What is our primary purpose - - and perhaps stepping out with new language and new ways of being in the world and academics as well. There’s hope, I guess, in that. So that’s...yeah.

Rosalind Hackett: Thank you. I’ve appreciated being at an event where the mix of academics and practitioners...some of us in the academic study of religion can get nervous about being put with religious practitioners because we may have been talking at odds, but I felt that we were often not talking at odds, so I’ve learned a lot, particularly from the practitioners. In particular, I’d like to say that I will take away the encouraging knowledge that there is actually more humanitarian cooperation across religious lines than I thought there was. So I’ve learned that particularly from Tom and Karel. So that will stick in my mind. Finally, I’ve learned that Mark Juergensmeyer needs to be cloned.

Thomas Tighe: Well thank you all. I’ve learned from a previous meeting never to attempt to speak after Claudine, so I’m applying that learning today. And really, I leave with a lot of questions – all the ones that Jeffrey posed at the beginning and just the conversation about what
is humanitarianism, what is religion. And I think the conversation for me, talking about
indigenous religions versus [others]... I was thinking, “Well all the big ones are kind of exports,
right?” They start up in a relatively constrained area. So the legitimacy at one point is kind of the
market share you gain. And I hadn’t really thought about it like that – why I was raised Catholic,
knowing where it started and growing up where I did, it doesn’t make any particular sense if you
think about it. So I don’t know really where to file that, except that it’s given me a lot to think
about. And also I think I was struck by how easy it is to confuse function with purpose. So you
can look at someone who’s doing something for a governmental purpose that looks exactly – and
is exactly, at a functional level (distributing food or providing healthcare) – the same function for
a completely different purpose by someone motivated... [by] their religious belief in this world.
And so it’s very hard to dissect. If you look at two different people doing identical things – one
motivated for some other purpose – it doesn’t make any difference at all. Again, I don’t know
what the answer is, but I think at a policy level, what role government plays, how much they
should involve themselves in that purpose when it’s religious, and not focus on the function --
it’s left me more confused than when I came in and I’m thankful for that. So thank you all.

Mae Cannon: Well I was not disappointed. I’m very thankful to be around the table and
am taking away things from each of you. I look forward to going home and musing a bit and
reflecting on the different points of discussion that we’ve had but a few immediate take-aways: I
do still believe that NGOs do some good. Yes, I hope so. But I do take to heart some of the
conversation about what it means to have measurements and to have tools to evaluate
effectiveness and also the whole idea that humanitarianism can be used to legitimize actions that
are not good. I think that was a very helpful discussion for me personally. I’m also thankful to
Waleed and Mohammed because a lot of my work is in the Arab world. I’m going to Egypt in a
week and will be working with some of the community in rural upper Egypt in a little village
called Deir Abu Hennes and the population I work with in Egypt is the 1% or the less than 1%
that would be the Protestant or Evangelical Christian community there. And so to have a greater
context of the revolutions and the post-revolution and that, from an Islamic perspective, was
very, very helpful to me. And then I’ll leave with the exhortation of Richard Falk and hope that
I’m not leaving with this air of colonial arrogance. His terminology was quite striking so I will
reflect on that quite a bit as I depart from this place.

Sarah Blackmun-Eskow: I wrote down a lot of questions that I would like to look into,
which, to me, is the best kind of response to what went on there today, if I am stimulated. My
husband doesn’t think so. He just wants me to finish my dissertation and get on with it, whatever
it is. I did also cull several names of people who might be my outside reader so don’t be
surprised if you get an email proposing that. Thank you.

Laura Grillo: Well, first, I just want to acknowledge how deeply honored I felt to have
been included among you all. I’ve been so profoundly impressed by the work that people are
doing and the commitment and the depth of reflection and the heart that they bring to their work.
So it’s been a real privilege to be part of this conversation. Also, I have to say I think I would
like to get back to Jeffrey’s call earlier this morning to get back to terms because just to prepare
for participating in this conversation, I started asking myself, “Well do I even know really what
global civil society is?” and started reading about it. What does it mean now? What is the
conversation out there? How are these terms being used? What’s the conversation going to be
like? And I think it’s an intimidatingly contentious arena. But I guess I’ve learned to value even more than ever what you’re doing here at UCSB by... elevating the conversation and making sure that you are training people to think globally because we are realizing how we can not rely on statehood, nationhood. The ways that the world has been cut and divided before, it’s a new game and we all have to change our way of going about our business. That includes people like me in the academic world. So thank you so much.

Mohammed Bamyeh: I don’t know where to start. There is a lot that can be said. I think of this event as a continuing conversation because I did catch many threads that I think we never actually got a chance to finish, and I think that’s typical. But one of those ideas that is worth talking about a little bit more – and I have become much more convinced of it after this meeting – is the idea of civil society itself. What does it mean?... There is a traditional way of thinking about civil society and I think most of us also subscribe to it. But there are other ways to think about it, I think. One of the things that I have learned, again, last week...I’m teaching a new graduate seminar on revolutions. So I decided to start it last week with Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, for social revolutions. Then I remembered something that I had learned already but I had forgot in the meantime, which is that one of the things that Thomas Kuhn says is that the function of the paradigm is to make us not see reality, which could be right in front of us for centuries. It allows us to get our work done but it also gives us a sense that our work has to be defined in a particular kind of way so that it can be done. But that happens at the expense of not seeing the rest of reality that could be just in front of us. And I think civil society, seen in a particular way, makes us feel that there’s nothing out there. If you think of it from the point of view of European history, which is where we have the bourgeois European experience that gives us a certain definition of what civil society is, or look elsewhere in the world, you get disappointed because you don’t see as much of it. On the other hand, if you define civil society in a very different kind of way that’s appropriate to a notion of autonomous, self-organized kind of societies, then you see it as a very rich human experience throughout history and non-bourgeois kind of environments, pre-capitalist perhaps, if that’s an appropriate term, and even in conditions that are never typically assumed to be identified with what we call “civic culture,” such as, for example, tribalism. So this is, for me, part of a conversation that is to be continued and I understand much more the significance of that potential conversation after today. I got exposed to a lot of material that I was not aware of, of course about the traditional African religions, of course, genital power, very interesting. But all kinds of things. And there is a certain richness to the idea of thinking about what local religions, so to speak, also kind of thinking about, say, the Black experience, for example, in a way that goes beyond kind of a typical understanding of what Black is, and so on. So I feel enlivened, overall. Also, I think, this is an invitation to continue this conversation and deepen it further.

Kathleen Moore: At first I wanted to say a couple of things. I don’t think I’ve ever heard Islamic jurisprudence talked about in Daoist terms, so I’m going to take that away with me. I really appreciate that. Thank you very much, Waleed. And I think this is a case of what the Prophet in his own land...I’m right here in my own neighborhood. I’ve stumbled upon -- thanks to Mark for inviting me – such a rich conversation going on about things that we all really need to know more about – how non-profit sector operates. Thomas, I’ve never met you before though we must be neighbors. I live in Goleta where your organization operates. The terms that you use have been fresh for me, not having any MBA background, but when you talk about can NGOs
perform the functions that they aspire to do and “getting to scale” and so forth, I think, “This is...wow. I don’t even know what that means. I’d love to know...” Let’s have another conversation about all this. So that’s great. I’m going to take away also Laura’s term about how this has all brought to sharper relief the critical absence when government provides these services and who is it...I think Tom also alludes to who is it that steps up when government no longer serves the functions that we have come to rely on about...in a resource-rich world, how do we distribute what we have? So I thank you for that.

Mark Juergensmeyer: Karel?

Karel Zelenka: Well I’m really humbled by the -- and I mean it – by the academic standing, the articulation of issues. And it’s for me an extremely refreshing experience because when I go to meetings where I am based or in most countries where I work, it’s very concrete, very practical. If anything, it’s more or less prediction of future, but again, more in terms of needs and responses. And here, I enjoyed the analysis, the thinking that goes with it. What I’d like to say is, again on that same note, it’s for me amazing to see how many people of very high academic standing are what appears genuinely interested in the fates and lives of people to whom they are not related in any way, in any personal way. And it’s also refreshing for me because from where I sit, normally, it’s quite depressing. I would say depressing despite all the resources and the wealth that exists in most of these countries. The greed that has been unfortunately spreading and increasing, and corruption that goes with it. They kill the future, in a way, and so it’s refreshing to hear about civil society that, in my opinion, is... a bridge to a better future. Why I’m saying that is that democracy that most countries at least in Africa are trying to build and to strengthen, is in a way a guarantee of better resources, distribution. Also, that can lead to reduction in the number of NGOs because if you have a functioning democracy that guarantees proper transparent and fair distribution of resources and taxation, etc., that relieves the NGOs of their task. In other words, there is no room for them because the government takes care of the basic function, such as healthcare, for example... For example, PEPFAR has been designed to basically fill that gap because the governments do not take care of their citizens. So I’ve learned many, many things... I will look forward to the transcripts because it was so rich and so diverse.

Last but not least, I’d like to mention that perhaps you should go more often to the field and spend a longer time in the field to have what I would call “the reality check.” Because your language – very sophisticated, very elegant – really doesn’t match the reality on the ground. It will be very difficult for you to communicate with the reality on the ground and to reflect it. So I would say it would be very helpful. I know it’s costly, time-consuming, but certainly worthwhile -- sort of the realpolitik, to understand. And sometimes the naïveté that exists outside the area...and what I mean by that...for me personally it’s fascinating. I never hear this kind of discussion among my African colleagues or other nationalities’ colleagues. In other words, the sophistication, the looking for roots for why is it? Why do we do all this? In other words, it’s very often taken for granted and what’s interesting is that the new generation of masters in Africa, that is to say Chinese, who are abundant and proliferating in great numbers with a lot of cash, they never get to discussing humanitarian aspects of their presence – strictly business. Very shrewd and very, I would say, almost merciless business.

Mark Juergensmeyer: Next year we’ll go to Beijing, maybe.
Karel Zelenka: Right. Thanks.

Mark Juergensmeyer: Steve and Bill and Waleed, just briefly, what did you learn today?

Steve Eskow: I learned that I need new hearing aids. That was the painful learning. I also learned that I’m ambivalent about what Derrida called the “metaphysics of presence” – the argument that education is rich only when people like us are able to be assembled for face-to-face connection and collaboration and conversation. If the films that Paul and others will make of this encounter can become a piece of curriculum that we can take to Africa and use in the universities in Ghana and in the schools and in the churches, we will get full value for what we’ve done here, which so far is confined to the lucky group of us.

Mark Juergensmeyer: Very good. Bill?

William Headley: I’d like to go last, if I could.

Mark Juergensmeyer: Sure. Waleed?

Waleed El Ansary: Thank you. I’d like to echo everything that we’ve heard earlier. It’s really humbling. I learned a great deal from Karel. I didn’t know about the Muslim-Catholic interaction to that degree, in terms of cash transfers and so much of the applied issues...I’m just echoing everything that was said before and I guess I’ll just say that E.F. Schumacher said that one of the objectives of the division of labor is so that we can cooperate in service to – cooperate with and in service to – others to break down our own egocentricity. And the division of labor that I find among us is...I mean I just find it really humbling and beautiful. So it’s also increased my reading list exponentially.

William Headley: Thank you, and I will be quick. I find that I use general language and labels all the time and that’s a shorthand for what I know. It also hides and covers things that I don’t know, and today lifted some of those covers off, if you will. Development is an example. I think I know it fairly well. I’ve lived it and worked it a little bit. I’ve been in the fields that he talks about, though not the same ways as my colleague here. But I’ve heard others learning about things in that field, but I have, too. World Vision into advocacy, moral hazard and what that all means, accountability from Tom. Islam fascinates me today, I guess as many of us do, and I just learned so much about that today – religion and secularism. I just really liked Richard’s pulling apart humanism, as he did in a very special way. So there was lots there for me to learn. But I wanted to close on a special note and that’s why I held off last. I have the distinction that none of you others have. I am the senior partner of this effort. I’ve been here at every event. So I think it’s only right that I have the last word from our side. Obviously I’m very young, but that’s another question. I did say in my presentation – it wasn’t picked up by anybody -- but some of the material I’ve been reading suggests that religion has had an arising in the last 40 years. And we can expect it in the future. Madeline Albright’s candid conversation in her own book, saying that she came into her field not very aware of religion, in fact trying to avoid it. She now says out of a Georgetown stance, that she can no longer do that. I think we’re all going to find that in the future. And I think we thank very much Mark, this kind of event, LUCE, whoever else it is, and
all the people who have been involved in this. The names are there for us to see, pictures and photos done in this particular way. And so Mark, I think in a special way, there’s no flowers, but there’s a really big thanks and maybe we could all share that somehow.

**Mark Juergensmeyer:** Thank you very much, Bill. And thank you everyone for giving this wonderful summary of what we’ve been talking about. I see by the clock we are on time, under budget, and how seldom can we say that about the organizations we’re associated with?

[END OF TRANSCRIPT]