



Invitation

Friday, 23 May 2008, 7 pm

Venue

BBAW
Einsteinsaal
Jägerstr. 22/23

10117 Berlin

Old Shaykhs, Young Women, and the Internet: The Rewriting of Women's Political Rights in Islam

**Lecture by Prof. Dr. Barbara Stowasser (Georgetown
University)**

This lecture deals with a new phenomenon in the Muslim modernization discourse on Islam and gender. Until the late 1980's, the ideological lines on women's political rights were fairly clearly drawn between traditionalist religious experts, the 'ulama (who denied them) and modernist non-clerical, usually secularist intellectuals (who supported them by virtue of human rights arguments). On this issue, Islamist groups have largely sided with the traditionalist camp. Lately, some „new 'ulama“ of theological training (and even some former Islamist credentials) have begun to employ indigenous methods of law finding to prove that Islam does, indeed, grant Muslim women political rights. The best-known protagonist of this new trend is Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradawi (graduate of al-Azhar University in Cairo and member of the Muslim Brotherhood) who for the last almost fifty years has been an increasingly influential voice in interpreting Qur'an and Sunna in a „middle-of-the-road“ manner that eschews both the too rigid and the too liberal. Al-Qaradawi's modernism is grounded in scripture and the classical jurisprudential method, but is also focused on reform and renewal, and is propagated world-wide by way of the new media.

Prof. Barbara Stowasser is Professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies at Georgetown University, as well as a member of the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies (CCAS) core faculty. Dr. Stowasser holds a Ph.D. in Comparative Semitic and Islamic Studies from the University of Münster, Germany. Her publications include *Islamic Law and the Challenges of Modernity*, co-edited with Yvonne Haddad (AltaMira Press 2004), a study on *Women in the Qur'an, Traditions and Interpretation* (Oxford University Press 1994), an edited volume entitled *The Islamic Impulse* (CCAS 1987, reprinted 1989) and articles published in American, German, Arabic and Turkish journals and periodicals. At present, Dr. Stowasser is working on a book on *Gender Discourses in the Tafsir and Fatwa Literatures*, a textbook on Islamic Tafsir, and a book on *Islam and Time*.

Weitere Informationen: <http://explore.georgetown.edu/people/stowassb/>

Jahresthema
2007|08

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