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Islam, Constitutions and Durable Democracy: The Cases of Iraq and Afghanistan

On September 11, 2007, the sixth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, the Berkley Center convened a symposium on a subject of major import in light of those attacks: the progress of democracy in Iraq and Afghanistan. For years, the American people have debated the wisdom and folly of US policies in those two countries. Although the war has garnered much of our attention in recent years, it is important to remember that Iraq and Afghanistan are nascent democracies. Both have governments elected by levels of voter participation, including large numbers of women, that put most American elections to shame. Both have active legislative bodies and independent judiciaries, although how active and how independent remain lively issues. Both have democratic constitutions, brokered with the assistance of the United States, although the role of American assistance is controversial. If the Iraqi and Afghan democratic experiments are to succeed, their respective constitutions must play an important role. They form, in a real sense, the blueprints for democratic institutions and habits.

A major question engaged by the symposium was the extent to which constitutions can encourage a democratic political culture, and do it under the difficult conditions that exist today in Iraq and Afghanistan. It is perhaps obvious that constitutions cannot solve all problems. They cannot rebuild the associations of civil society destroyed by Saddam or the Taliban, although they can help create the rights and freedoms necessary to its rebuilding. By the same token, constitutions cannot prevent civil or religious wars, or stop them once they have begun. Even the American constitution could not prevent our own civil war. Nor is the American constitution, for that matter, entirely a source of comity and sweetness. One need only ponder vigorous contemporary disputes over the meaning of the no-establishment and free exercise clauses of the First Amendment to understand that fine words alone do not a consensus make. Even fine constitutional phrases need help from good judges, sound legislation, and solid policy.
But it is also true that democracies, even peaceful ones, are unlikely to endure without constitutions that allocate powers and protect rights and freedoms in ways that are not only democratic, but are also sustainable. Do the Iraqi and Afghan constitutions have the potential to meet such expectations? We asked our panelists to consider the importance of constitutions in general, and these two constitutions in particular, especially their provisions on Islam, religious freedom, and the role of the judiciary.

Core questions addressed:

To what extent can democratic constitutions mold liberal democratic political cultures in societies like Iraq and Afghanistan that are fractured along ethnic and religious lines?

Robert George, Princeton University

Written documents cannot guarantee civil order, much less good government. Statesmanship is an indispensable ingredient. But even the most gifted statesmen cannot succeed, especially where nations are fractured along ethnic and religious lines, without decent constitutional structures. So constitutions matter. If liberal democracy is to have any hope in nations such as Afghanistan and Iraq, these nations will need constitutions that establish, and are perceived by the people to establish, fair terms of social and political engagement for all groups and, indeed, all citizens.

Intisar Rabb, Princeton University

In constitutional theory, there is increasingly a healthy amount of skepticism as to whether constitutions determine or mold liberal democratic political cultures or whether other factors must first align to make liberal democratic political cultures possible in support of or in spite of a written constitution. The central idea is that constitutions cannot create the ingredients for such cultures; but they can help provide ground rules and support for a down-up organic process that emerges in
that vein. Iraq and Afghanistan are two particularly interesting specimens for considering this question, because the form of liberal democratic constitutionalism in each country was made in the United States’ own image, and thus has been called “imposed constitutionalism.” This is not particularly different from what happened in Egypt, the Levant, and other Arab and Muslim-majority countries whose constitutions emerged out of the experience of colonialism—except that this phenomenon is more recent and follows different impetuses. Because of the similarities, perspectives on those other examples and current realities in those countries (the extent to which they are democratic or not) are instructive.

The real answer to the question as to whether democratic constitutions can mold liberal democratic political cultures in Iraq and Afghanistan involve only somewhat the cultural and religious history of the people; it involves more the motives and means of the leaders, and maybe most significantly the outside influences and construction of legal institutions on one hand and civil society (the fostering of its institutions as one of the most important and highly neglected needs) on the other. All of this of course presupposes physical and economic security—both of which have been lacking in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Afghanistan Constitutional Provisions

A new constitution figured prominently among the goals outlined in the Bonn Agreement for the post-invasion reconstruction of Afghanistan. This mandate led to the creation of an Afghan Constitution Commission, a group of 35 men and women who consulted with the Afghan public to draft a democratic constitution. On January 4th, 2004, the new constitution became law. The new government features a strong executive, a bicameral legislature, and a separate judiciary.

For the most part, the ratified constitution guarantees a liberal set of civil liberties and human rights, including the right to life, liberty, privacy, peaceful assembly, freedom of speech and expression, and freedom from torture. It explicitly provides for the right to due process, and includes a presumption of innocence. Its provisions for religious freedom, however, are weak.

Moreover, ambiguities in the constitution provide an opportunity for illiberal restrictions on civil liberties and human rights. Article 3 provides that “no law can be contrary to the beliefs and provisions of the sacred religion of Islam.” Because the standards evoked in this clause are not specified, its application is left to judges who may be free to apply them in an arbitrary fashion. This problem has arisen with respect to blasphemy charges against government officials and journalists seeking to discuss Islam in the public square, and in apostasy charges against citizens seeking to change their religion. Women’s rights advocates have expressed deep concern about the prospect that certain tenets of Islam may be used to undermine their equal treatment before the law.

**Article Three Ch. 1, Art. 3**

In Afghanistan, no law can be contrary to the beliefs and provisions of the sacred religion of Islam.
William Saunders, Family Research Council

The task is very difficult in such countries, particularly, it seems, in Iraq where the divisions are very deep and there is a recent history of violence in dealing with those differences. I think it is a fair question whether such societies are ready for democratic constitutional governance. It is surely true that constitutions cannot force democratic governance on people—if they do not want it, it will not happen. Still, constitutions provide a framework—and hopefully “breathing space”—in which people can recognize their mutual equality as human beings and, consequently, the need for shaping, by fair rules, their life together. It is also true that constitutions can set a framework for a mutually respectful exchange of views, which hopefully leads to religious reconciliation (or at least peaceful coexistence). Certainly, in the two cases mentioned, American diplomacy should encourage exchanges between leaders of religious groups in order to find common ground. This, however, does not appear to have been its emphasis.

Muqtader Khan, University of Delaware

Democratic constitutions are able to provide some degree of cohesion in non-homogenous societies like those in India, Bangladesh, and Malaysia. Different ethnic and religious groups have succeeded in achieving mutually acceptable or tolerable levels of power sharing in such places and have also succeeded in establishing a durable degree of confidence in each other’s commitment to the social contract and hence are enjoying the fruits of stability. The understanding between Malays and Chinese [Muslims and Buddhists] in Malaysia is the best example of power sharing in the Muslim world. The situation in Iraq and Afghanistan is compounded by the additional factor of US occupation and illiberal and undemocratic demands by the US—such as acceptance of US interests (locally and in the region). Often the US is willing to compromise democracy to advance its own interests even as it seeks to promote democracy. Democratic constitutions—as long as they are genuinely authentic (a product of local social dialogue resulting in a social contract which all parties are willing to abide by and defend since their interests are invested in it)—can work anywhere, including in Iraq and Afghanistan. But they will fail if the US imposes its interests and manipulates local balances of power. When constitutions fail to advance the interests of the people who are expected to live by it they become dysfunctional.

Neither the Iraqi (IC) nor Afghan constitutions (AC) mention “shari’a”. Both, however, have clauses that prohibit any law from being contrary to “the established provisions of Islam” (article 2, IC) or “the sacred religion of Islam (article 3, AC”). To what extent are these prohibitions, in the context of other constitutional provisions, a barrier to liberal, consolidated democracy?

Robert George

Of course, everything depends on how these clauses are interpreted. And that probably depends on who is doing the interpreting. Plainly the prohibitions set forth in the clauses represent a danger, since they can be used as pretexts by those exercising central power to
trample honorable freedoms, including liberties that are essential to the sound functioning of democratic institutions. I am not saying that the clauses certainly will be used in that way. I am saying that they create a substantial risk.

Intisar Rabb

The constitutional clauses that incorporate Islamic law (which of course encompasses more than the term *shari’a*) must be read alongside the other key clauses of these constitutions. Together, these clauses set up the basic tensions with which each of these Islamic constitutions must grapple. In the Iraqi constitution, for example, there are three types of provisions that must work in tandem with each other: provisions that (1) govern the role of religion and Islamic law directly, (2) specify certain rights and freedoms, and (3) outline the form and scope of democratic processes. The principal clauses are as follows:

- **Religion and Islamic law**
  Article 2.1(a). Islam is the official religion of the state and a basic source of legislation. No law can be passed that contradicts settled Islamic [legal] rules (*thawābit ahkām al-Islām*).

- **Rights and freedoms**
  Article 2.1(c). No law can be passed that contradicts the basic rights and freedoms outlined in this constitution.
  Article 14. Iraqis are equal before the law without discrimination on the basis of gender, ethnicity, nationality, origin, color, religion, sect, legal school (*madhhab*), belief, opinion, or social and economic status.

- **Democratic processes**
  Article 2.1(b). No law can be passed that contradicts the principles of democracy.
  Article 5. The law is sovereign and the people are the sources of power and their legitimacy

Predictably, the Iraqi constitution’s clauses on religion stand in some tension to the clauses on rights and democratic processes. In part, this tension is a regular feature even of “old” constitutions that both recognize a role for religion and prohibit religious discrimination through a liberal democratic promise of equality. For example, European Union-Member nations Finland, Greece, and the United Kingdom each establish some form of Christianity as the official state religion. At the same time, the constitutions or laws of each country also contain provisions for the equality and rights of their citizens, regardless of religious affiliation. In these countries, the state must ensure that the established religion does not impinge on the freedoms of any of its citizens and that religion will never impede fair democratic processes. The United States handles the religion-state problem with the First Amendment’s twin Establishment and Free Exercise clauses. Our government must ensure that our commitment to church-state separation does not impinge on the freedoms of Americans to practice their respective religions or lack thereof. In sum, these countries all seek to balance religion with democratic norms. This balancing act stands in stark contrast to the path that Turkey has chosen, based on the French principle of laïcité, which subordinates religion to state. Article 2 of the Turkish constitution (ratified in 1982) actually establishes secularism as the primary character
of the state, and democratic norms such as equality or religious freedom are permitted so long as they do not impinge on the public secularism. Thus, Turkey—like France—has a ban on headscarves in public institutions, extending even to students in universities.

So Iraq faces the challenge of what to do with religion in the face of democracy. It has chosen not to adopt the French-Turkish model of laïcité (thereby establishing the primacy of secularism over and above religion), but at least structurally is more akin to the other aforementioned Western countries that seek to balance religious freedoms with liberal democratic norms. To be sure, Iraq has an added challenge in that its constitution not only establishes a state religion, but it incorporates a legal system of religious origin as a source of state law.

On October 15th, 2005, the Iraqi people went to the polls to ratify the permanent Iraqi constitution, which replaced the interim Law of Administration for the State of Iraq for the Transitional Period. The constitution provides for a loose federation of provinces and a weak central government, as well as a separate judiciary. Its protections for human rights, and for religious freedom, are more expansive than those provided by other constitutions in the Middle East, but significant problems remain.

Article 2 establishes Islam as the official religion of Iraq and declares that no law may contradict “the established provisions of Islam, ...the principles of democracy, [or]...the rights and basic freedoms stipulated in this constitution.” While the latter two requirements strengthen the possibility that human rights will be protected, and are therefore superior to the provisions of article 3 of the Afghan constitution, the lack of specificity about “the established provisions of Islam” means that judges will define those provisions, not legislatures.

Article 2 also “guarantees the Islamic identity of the majority of the Iraqi people and guarantees the full religious rights to freedom of religious belief and practice of all individuals such as Christians, Yazidis, and Mandean Sabeans.” A more fruitful construction would be a guarantee of religious freedom for all citizens of Iraq.

**Article 2:**

**FIRST:** Islam is the official religion of the State and it is a fundamental source of legislation:

A. No law that contradicts the established provisions of Islam may be established.

B. No law that contradicts the principles of democracy may be established.

C. No law that contradicts the rights and basic freedoms stipulated in this constitution may be established.

**SECOND:** This Constitution guarantees the Islamic identity of the majority of the Iraqi people and guarantees the full religious rights of all individuals to freedom of religious belief and practice such as Christians, Yazidis, and Mandi Sabeans.
William Saunders

There seems to be nothing wrong, in principle, with a constitution acknowledging either that the vast majority of a country holds particular religious views or that a particular religion has been particularly influential in shaping the culture. As an analogy, Catholicism has recognized that there can be (at least on the typical European model) an “established” religion, but, crucially, only if individuals are not coerced as a result. The question for the Iraqi and Afghan constitutions is whether they protect the right of the individual not to be coerced in matters of religion. This right to be free of coercion is also a principle recognized in international legal instruments. Whether the Afghan and Iraqi constitutions provide such protection is explored below.

Muqtader Khan

This question assumes constitutions to be deterministic of political reality. I am not comfortable with it. Many Western, so-called secular liberal states routinely finance, fund, and maintain religious institutions using taxpayer resources and respect the cultural/normative wishes of their people. Recent changes in the abortion law in the US are one example. The refusal of Germany to recognize Islam while recognizing Judaism and Christianity is another. The British polity does not have a constitutional separation of Church and state, it actually is a merger. Most European states masquerade low religiosity as secularism. The constitutional architecture of these states shows a merger of state and religion rather than separation. I can cite many more examples such as the required display of crucifixes in Italian courts.

If you read the Iraqi constitution, you will realize that it is not a well thought out document. Look at Article 2 (First). If the constitution considers Islam and Democracy compatible then A and C are redundant. If Islam and Democracy are not considered as compatible, then A and B are contradictory and so are provisions A and C. Moreover, Article 2 makes Iraq a non-secular Islamic state.

Also Article 14, which guarantees religious equality and gender equality has fundamental contradictions with Article 2 (A) and one does not know how it will resolve this contradiction. I think the constitution is setting Iraq for a lot of contradictory legislations. Similar conditions prevail in the Afghan constitution. These Constitutions should have asserted that there are no contradictions between Islam and democracy.
Both constitutions provide for some level of religious freedom. How effective are the respective guarantees, and how important is the issue of religious freedom for the consolidation of democracy in both Iraq and Afghanistan?

Robert George

The issue of religious freedom is critical. Religious pluralism minus religious freedom does not equal democracy. History suggests that it may be possible to have religious freedom without democracy, but it is not possible to have democracy without religious freedom. As for the effectiveness of the constitutional guarantees, that depends on statesmanship—both political and judicial. The principles are good, but they are not self-executing. Flesh and blood human beings exercising political and judicial power either make them effective or decline (or fail) to do so. My prayer for Afghanistan and Iraq is that these nations will be blessed by capable and courageous leaders who will transform the “parchment guarantees” of the constitutions into living principles of political life.

Intisar Rabb

Religious freedom is extremely important to the issue of consolidation of democracy, given the diversity of religious affiliation in both countries (Sunnis, Shi’a, Salafis, secular individuals, and—especially in Iraq—members of Christian and Jewish communities) and the notion that no political or legal stability in a unified nation can emerge without communal solidarity and physical security.

The term “equal protection,” perhaps denotes a uniquely American notion applied to—among other things—religious freedom; it is used in our Constitution’s Fourteenth Amendment to express an ideal of equality among all persons. It, of course, arose out of the long history of unequal protection of the laws for Black Americans, emerging from institutional slavery. Similarly, in a quest for justice, any legal system—including an Islamic constitutional scheme—will view the notion of equality (and challenges thereto) in terms of its own socio-historical context. The particular challenge to most modern Muslim countries has to do with the treatment of religious minorities. (Here I stress that this is true for modern Muslim countries, because it was not always a problem in Muslim communities historically, as in Andalusia, nor is it necessarily an inevitable or per se problem intrinsic to Islamic religious or legal thought.)

In the 17th century, with the emergence of the nation-state, citizenship replaced religion as a basis for membership in society and as a method of determining legal rights and imposing legal obligations. Islamic law, however, predated this phenomenon. Under Islamic law’s substantive rules, Muslims as full citizens had a privileged place or experience at least different treatment than non-Muslims. Were such discriminatory rules to be transplanted as-is from a pre-modern context through Islamic constitutionalism, they would undoubt-edly clash with provisions of equality in democratic constitutions. In my view, this means that “Islamic law,” as incorporated in constitutions like those of Iraq and Afghanistan, cannot mean simply a classical Islamic law.
transplant. To be workable, particularly with respect to a crucial aspect of religious freedom, the incorporation of “Islamic law” must contemplate a dynamic sort of incorporation, that is, a living law that permits interpretations faithful to both the Islamic and democratic traditions mentioned in the constitution.

This all begs a more direct and prior question: what is Islamic law? Simply put, Islamic law is law that is either embodied in or derives from Islam’s foundational legal sources. The distinction is important. As articulated by most classical Muslim jurists, the law embodied in the sources is shari’a proper—God’s divine law as articulated in Islam’s legal sources in general, principled terms. The law derived from the sources is fiqh—the human attempt to understand and articulate God’s divine law with respect to particular circumstances of individual and social life. In broader and more precise terms, Islamic law refers both to the existing body of precendential substantive law of fiqh and the processes through which jurists interpret or update the law in attempts to better approximate shari’a. This conception of Islamic law might be compared to the sense of “law” in American constitutional law—a confusing collection of doctrines and rules, based on a foundational text, and subject to clarification or refinement by qualified jurists endowed with the authority to say what the law is. Thus, Islamic constitutionalism seems to contemplate a dynamic form of Islamic law to be workable given the crucial question of religious freedom and other core areas where mainstream classical rules of Islam present a challenge to new democratic paradigms.

William Saunders
I think religious freedom is the most important question for the consolidation of democracy in these countries. Religion is a human good. Human beings cannot flourish if they are denied the freedom to seek God. Of course, seeking by diverse persons results in diverse conclusions. But these varying religious beliefs must be respected; again, coercion must be avoided. Thus, since democracy’s fundamental premise is equality, if the religious freedom of some is suppressed, democracy will wither. The corollary is also true—where religious freedom is permitted (this includes the freedom not only to worship but to take religiously-informed opinions into the public square), citizens are likely to understand that respect for democratic values and institutions is essential to the common good. Tensions will erupt, but democratic procedures provide ways of resolving them.

It does not appear to me that the constitutions of either country effectively protect this right. Afghanistan’s constitution is particularly restrictive, guaranteeing only that “followers of other faiths [than Islam] shall be free within the bounds of law in the exercise and performance of their religious rituals.” But Iraq’s is also inadequate, in my opinion, for the reasons given below.

Muqtader Khan
Do Muslims in these countries have the freedom to establish caliphates if they overwhelmingly chose to do so? Do Muslims have the freedom to choose Islam? If the answer is yes, then there is religious freedom and if the answer is no, then there is no religious freedom. Religious
freedoms will be guarded if Afghans chose to guard them, not if we force constitutions down their throats.

They are under occupation, they have no political freedom. Can religious freedoms be established without political independence? Religious freedom means freedom from states to practice religion, not pressure from foreign forces using shock and awe tactics to establish puppet governments that will advance foreign interests and cultures. I do not consider the current Iraqi and Afghan polities as legitimate. The constitutions of these states are synthetic, not authentic.

Constitutions do not have agency, people do. Constitutions either enjoy consent and desire by populations to uphold them or they do not. The US constitution did not prevent the application of numerous unconstitutional measures by the Bush administration. Public willingness to compromise the constitution (fear of another 9/11 was the prime cause for this) enabled the Congress to legislate about the ‘Patriot Act,’ torture, and wire tapping, etc. When an overwhelming majority of Americans decide that they need to remove these new regulations because they are hurting America, their unconstitutionality will be used to remove them, until then they stay regardless of what the good document says.

Are the respective judiciary powers created in these constitutions a source of democratic stability, or are they a potential liability for the consolidation of democracy?

Robert George
Again, everything depends on statesmanship. We in the United States know all too well that judicial power, like power of every sort, can be used for good or for evil. If judges are to play a constructive role in the struggle for democratic stability, they must be unflinching in enforcing legal guarantees. At the same time, they must be self-disciplined in resisting the temptation to usurp the power of other political officials. If judges do engage in usurpation, it is critical that elected leaders resist their unconstitutional acts, as Lincoln resisted the unconstitutional actions of the Supreme Court of the United States in the case of Dred Scott v. Sandford.

Intisar Rabb
The Iraqi constitution is a bit stingy in laying out judicial structures and judiciary powers, particularly as it relates to Islamic law. Article 87 lays out the structure...
of the judiciary: “The federal judiciary will include the Supreme Judiciary Council, the Supreme Federal Court, the Federal Cassation Court, the Prosecutor’s Office, the Judiciary Inspection Department, and other federal courts that are organized by law.” Articles 88 through 99 specify the details of the general powers of appointment and review for each court. Articles 19, 46, and 85 establish the principle of separation of powers and judicial independence. The only clause that really touches upon the question of the workings of Islamic law (and even this is tangential) is Article 91—which authorizes the Supreme Federal Court to assess the constitutionality of the laws. And remember that Article 2 had the “repugnancy clause,” which made any contradiction of “settled Islamic [legal] rules” unconstitutional.

What is most striking to me about all this is the absence of indications as to how this will play out. It is striking but unsurprising. No constitution of which I am aware dictates how a constitutional court, such as the Supreme Federal Court in Iraq, will do its work. More pointedly, it was probably impossible to even begin down that road because there is likely no agreement on what role Islamic law can or will play. Nevertheless, I think that any constitutional incorporation of Islamic law necessarily contemplates some relationship between the government—which was democratically elected—and the jurists—who are widely seen in Muslim populations as the traditional interpreters of Islamic law because they have the institutional expertise or competence and the historical legitimacy to do so. Thus, the absence of any discussion on just who will do the interpreting (beyond the Supreme Federal Court, with no details as to the composition of its Members) is indeed striking.

The precise form of Iraq or Afghanistan’s Islamic constitutionalism will depend upon the relationship that each country develops between the government and the jurists. In brief, I want to advance three reasons why jurists matter, and why they might even be considered as a sort of “fourth branch” of Islamic constitutional governments. First, as mentioned, Islamic constitutionalism inevitably contemplates some role for the jurists, as historically, jurists have enjoyed the epistemic authority and training that grants them legitimacy and competence to interpret Islamic law or approve Islamic legal interpretations. Second, jurists are individual or corporate members of a democratic polity whose voices play a role in democratic participation. Jurists themselves often assert the right to play a role in or at least monitor Islamic legal interpretation. Finally, the juristic class is often a central component to Islamic law and practice (including possibilities for reform) because of a significant amount of popular legitimacy that Islamic law holds and because of the lack of expertise in state judicial tribunals useful in engendering flexibility in the law. All of these factors means that Islamic constitutional government must figure out what relationship they or the judiciary will have with the jurists, if any, i.e., whether they formally include them in the Islamic legal interpretive decisions, whether they will formally exclude them, whether there will be some informal hybrid of behind-the-scenes consultation, and what the consequences of any of these options might be.
William Saunders

The judiciary should be the bulwark of a democracy. However, in each case here, it appears that members of high judicial courts may be selected who lack training in civil law. If this is combined, as it is in these two constitutions, with broad clauses guaranteeing that laws may not be repugnant to Islam, as discussed above, it opens the possibility of an interpretation of constitutional provisions at variance with basic human rights and contrary to the good of human persons and communities. In other words, it opens a way for coercion to be exercised upon religious minorities, and, even, of course, upon Muslims who do not subscribe to every tenet of Islam, as happened in Afghanistan in 2002, when the new women’s affairs minister, Sima Samar, was formally charged with the crime of blasphemy.

If members of society, including, of course, Muslims themselves, cannot speak freely about how to translate Islamic principles into everyday rules of governance, it seems democracy simply cannot take root. It is true, of course, that limits may be placed on religious matters, as Catholicism puts it, if they threaten public order. But such restrictions must be understood narrowly and must be clearly stated. In other words, the emphasis should be on religious freedom, which contributes mightily to the common good for all members of a society.

Muqtader Khan

I think you are taking these constitutions more seriously than even the Bush administration that wrote them or the governments whose job it is to apply them. These states do not have sovereignty. Have you heard of governments allowing foreign governments to come and negotiate with kidnappers and make secret deals inside their countries? Will the Afghan government prosecute the Taliban for kidnapping/diplomacy with a foreign government? People in Washington are demanding the removal of Maliki, if we find one more capable of advancing our interests in Iraq; will there be constitutional barriers for the US to replace Maliki? One definition of sovereignty is constitutional independence. Constitutions of non-sovereign entities are meaningless. The US has made a mockery of political theory. In Iraq and Afghanistan, we support governments which enjoy neither de jure nor de facto sovereignty and in Gaza we oppose one that has both!
About the Luce/SFS Program on Religion and International Affairs

Religion is a critical but neglected factor in world affairs. The Henry R. Luce Initiative on Religion and International Affairs, announced in 2005, seeks to deepen American understanding of religion as a factor in international policy issues. The Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University is the recipient of a two-year grant that funds the Luce/SFS Program on Religion and International Affairs, implemented in collaboration with the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs at Georgetown University.

The Luce/SFS Program focuses on two thematic areas: religion and global development and the religious sources of foreign policy. Luce Foundation support enables innovative teaching, research, and outreach activities in both areas, as well as innovative publications and web-based knowledge resources.

Below: Professor Thomas Banchoff, Berkley Center Director; Right: Professor Thomas F. Farr, Georgetown University School of Foreign Service

**PROJECT DIRECTOR**

**Thomas F. Farr**, Visiting Professor, Georgetown University School of Foreign Service, and Senior Fellow, Berkley Center

In August 2007, Thomas Farr joined the Berkley Center and the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service as a Visiting Associate Professor within the Luce/SFS Program on Religion and International Affairs. Farr is one of the world’s leading experts on the global politics of religious freedom. He served as the first Director of the State Department’s Office of International Religious Freedom from 1999–2003, and is now completing a book, *World of Faith and Freedom: Why Religious Liberty is Vital to American National Security in the 21st Century*, to be published by Oxford University Press. Farr teaches a range of courses on the politics of international religious freedom and the religious sources of US foreign policy, and he coordinates several seminars and symposia for faculty, students, policymakers, and the wider public.

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THE EDMUND A. WALSH SCHOOL OF FOREIGN SERVICE

Founded in 1919 to educate students and prepare them for leadership roles in international affairs, the School of Foreign Service conducts an undergraduate program for over 1300 students and graduate programs to the Master’s level for some 750 students. Under the leadership of Dean Robert Gallucci, the School houses sixteen regional and functional centers and programs, most of which offer courses, conduct research, host events, and contribute to the intellectual development of the field of international affairs. A 2007 survey of over 1,000 faculty in the US and Canada featured in Foreign Policy magazine ranked Georgetown University as having the #1 Master’s and #4 undergraduate programs in international relations.

THE BERKLEY CENTER

The Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs, created within the Office of the President in March 2006, is part of a university-wide effort to build knowledge about religion’s role in world affairs and promote interreligious understanding in the service of peace. Through research, teaching, and outreach activities, the Center explores the intersection of religion with four global challenges: diplomacy and transnational relations, democracy and human rights, global development, and interreligious dialogue. Thomas Banchoff, Associate Professor in the Department of Government and the School of Foreign Service, is the Center’s first director.

MORTARA CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

The Mortara Center for International Studies is a critical partner in the implementation of the Luce/SFS Program on Religion and International Affairs. Located within the School of Foreign Service, the Center is at the heart of campus-wide activities centered on foreign policy and international relations, one of Georgetown’s research and teaching strengths. Center Director Carol Lancaster is a leading expert on development policy and its links back to domestic US politics. She is author, most recently, of Foreign Aid: Diplomacy, Development, Domestic Politics (University of Chicago Press, 2006).
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This paper is part of a series of reports that addresses the impact of religion on the foreign policies of key states around the world. These reports explore emergent issues, such as the mobilization of religious groups around foreign policy, the intersection between religion, migration, and foreign policy, and the politics of international religious freedom.

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