

## A NEW WAY FORWARD: ENCOURAGING GREATER CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT WITH MUSLIM COMMUNITIES

Cynthia P. Schneider

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During his inaugural address and his recent speech in Cairo, President Obama advocated, “a new way forward, based on mutual interest and mutual respect”<sup>i</sup> in America’s relationship with Muslims around the world. This paper presents recommendations for the use of cultural engagement as a strategy to advance the President’s aspiration for better relations with Muslims around the world. The recommendations reflect the views of arts and culture leaders from the Muslim world and the United States who participated in the Arts and Culture Leaders Workshop held at the U.S.-Islamic World Forum in Doha, Qatar, and others who belong to the Brookings Creative Network (names listed in Appendix).<sup>ii</sup>

*“Civilizations don’t clash;  
they interact.”*

Gamal Al Ghitany (Egyptian author), Arabesque: Arts of the Arab World, The Kennedy Center, March 8, 2009

flesh out his vision for this new relationship. He underlined the common ground between America and Islam, quoting frequently from the Koran. He spoke frankly about democracy, the empowerment of women, and government accountability, as well as about how to address a number of specific conflicts, from Pakistan to Palestine. In addition, the President enumerated multiple project ideas to strengthen connections between Americans and Muslims around the world through educational exchanges, internships, online learning, and online social networking – “so a young person in Kansas can communicate instantly with a young person in Cairo.”<sup>iii</sup> The arts in general – and several project ideas developed in the 2009 Arts and Culture Leaders Workshop in particular – offer possibilities to give concrete form to the lofty goals articulated in the speech.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF ARTS AND CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT NOW

“I’ve come here to Cairo to seek a new beginning between the United States and Muslims around the world...one based upon the truth that America and Islam...share common principles – principles of justice and progress; tolerance and dignity of all human beings.”  
*President Barack Obama, Cairo, June 4th, 2009*

Beginning with his inaugural address, President Barack Obama has sought to build a new relationship between the United States and the Muslim world, founded on “mutual interest and mutual respect.” On June 4<sup>th</sup>, in an address to Muslims around the world, President Obama began to

President Obama’s speeches have provided an opening for a re-definition of the relationship between the U.S. and the Muslim world. While much of the follow through will be accomplished through political channels, arts, culture, and media can make significant inroads in fostering mutual engagement and understanding, as well as the common principles of “justice and progress; tolerance and dignity” advocated by the President.

At this time of great complexity and sudden change, with politics and politicians from Egypt to Iran increasingly disconnected from societies, arts and culture offer effective means to break down stereotypes and barriers, increase understanding, and foster social change. In America’s often troubled relations with Muslim communities

*Cynthia P. Schneider is a nonresident Senior Fellow in the Saban Center for Middle East Policy at Brookings, leads the Arts and Culture Initiative within the Project on U.S. Relations with the Islamic World, and is a Distinguished Professor in the Practice of Diplomacy, Georgetown University.*

worldwide, one dimension of the problem has been the general ignorance of Islam and Muslims. Likewise, stereotypes, conspiracy theories and just plain misinformation about the United States abound in many Muslim-majority countries.

Recent public opinion polls reveal the prevalence of negative stereotypes on both sides, as well as the critical importance of cultural factors in shaping the relationship between the United States and the Muslim world.<sup>iv</sup> The data reinforce the urgent need for more accurate information about Muslims and Islam in the United States, for more nuanced and accurate portrayals of America and Americans in the Muslim world, and for greater cross-cultural engagement.

In Muslim communities worldwide, as in the United States, people are not defined by religion or politics. They have multiple identities. Creative expression in all its forms can move beyond political and cultural differences to humanize and find common ground. Films like *The Kite Runner* and *Slumdog Millionaire* have demonstrated that good stories can transcend borders. New media and social networking devices make it possible to extend the reach of these and other creative products. The United States should capitalize on its comparative advantage in creating commercially successful artistic products in order to promote diplomacy and improve strategies for economic and societal development.

This paper will focus on two key ways in which arts and culture can operate as a component of a constructive relationship between the United States and Muslim communities around the world: 1) through cultural engagement, best achieved through collaborations and co-productions; 2) through leveraging the potential of arts, culture, and media to foster positive social change.

Three principle themes apply generally to the potential impact of integrating arts, culture, and media more deeply into the relationship between the U.S. and Muslims throughout the world:

- Arts and culture are an effective means for educating about other cultures, undermining stereotypes, and highlighting the common humanity that binds us all together.
- In addition to this bridge-building function between societies, artists can also be important agents of social change at home. They are frequently at the forefront in examining and criticizing their own government and society. Often creative expression can evade censors and captivate the public.

- Too often, policymakers and funders view arts and culture in isolation from international politics and social change, thereby overlooking the powerful impact they can have upon both. Ideas conveyed through the arts and media can penetrate deeply into societies and spread rapidly. The value of creative expression in all its forms needs to be recognized and incorporated into broader strategies of diplomacy, development, and social change.

### *Media and the Arts as Agents of Social Change*

Artists act as the mirrors of any society, reflecting on its good and bad points, and challenging the status quo. During the Cold War period, American musicians and writers, traveling on U.S. government-sponsored tours, brought abstract concepts of liberty and freedom of speech to life by speaking openly, and sometimes critically, about aspects of American society. Today dissent frequently finds its expression in rap and hip-hop, which offer an especially potent point of connection between the United States and predominantly youthful populations in the Muslim world. At a time when some governments and religious authorities in the Muslim world are suppressing freedom of speech, creative expression offers an “escape valve for dissent.”<sup>v</sup> Today, artists throughout the Muslim world often try to hold their governments accountable, but due to a combination of political and economic factors, they face challenges in reaching local and international audiences. With the exception of a few AID and State Department programs, these social critics and proponents of change receive little support or recognition from the United States and their works are generally not incorporated into policy making.

From television shows whose narratives capture government corruption, like *At your Service, Minister* (Afghanistan) and *The Station* (Egypt), or consider improved rights for

*“Media holds individuals and institutions accountable at a time when courts are broken. If nothing more, it embarrasses people, which is very important in [Afghan] culture.”*

Saad Mohseni, U.S.-Islamic World Forum, Doha, Qatar, Feb. 14-16, 2009.

women, to local versions of *American Idol* such as *Afghan Star*, media can influence social change because of its broad reach

and powerful, emotional impact. Indigenous media communicate ideas and values implicitly, and within the local context. For example, *Afghan Star* introduced to Afghan audiences the radical notion of merit-based competition,

with the winner selected by popular vote (absent any corruption). The program has had a surprisingly powerful impact: over 30% of the population tunes in; winners have come from different ethnic groups each year (suggesting people really vote on merit); finalists have included women for the last two years; grass roots “campaigns” which engage people in civic actions are conducted for contestants; over time, contestants and their supporters have learned to lose gracefully.<sup>vi</sup> In marked contrast, the Bush administration’s long-time advocacy of the “American” values of democracy and individual freedoms have been met with limited success.

Creative expression and its practitioners in the Muslim world deserve support for holding governments accountable, and for shaping and revealing identities, thus fostering national, regional, and cultural pride. In countries where extremism poses a threat, arts, culture, and media

can provide the glue that holds civil society together. The act of questioning, challenging the status quo, and risk taking inherent in creative expression can help lay the groundwork for more open societies

*“Arabs and Muslims do not know their own history. Where does the spirit of this age (“Arab Renaissance” of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries) exist today, where notions of another culture are recognized as productive and preserved, and where contrarian views can remain alive and in print?”*

Dr. Ismael Serageldin, U.S.-Islamic World Forum, Doha, Qatar, Feb. 14-16, 2009.

based on democratic processes.<sup>vii</sup>

In countering the influences of extremism and intolerance in the Muslim world, there is no need to call on American ideas and examples or to hark back to the great flowering of civilization in the Arab world one thousand years ago. The classics of the Arab Renaissance of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries suffice. But the classics as well as more contemporary works are often inaccessible. Both for Arabs and Muslims to understand their own rich history of tolerance and inquiry, and as well as to inform the West, these books must be published (or re-published) and distributed.

Independent media and new technologies such as social networking have the potential to influence or even bring about social change, but, with the exception of non-governmental organizations such as *Search for Common Ground*, they are not yet regularly integrated into political or developmental strategies.<sup>viii</sup> Extremist groups attract youth because they fill a vacuum. The positive potential of new

technologies to engage Muslim youth in alternative ways has not been realized, even though Internet access is readily available in many parts of the Muslim world.<sup>ix</sup> Collaboration between content creators and new media or technology experts is needed to set up social networking groups and other forms of online connections.

### *“Best Practices” in Cultural Engagement: Collaboration and Co-Productions*

From the heyday of American cultural diplomacy during the Cold War to the present, collaboration and co-production have proven extremely effective mechanisms for cultural engagement. Yet despite the success of the occasional collaborative production, such as the staging of *Our Town* in Cairo in 2003, or the music and dance academies held by the music and performance group *American Voices* in 2007-2008 in Erbil, Iraq, the number of American collaborative initiatives pales in comparison with those led by European countries and cultural entities.<sup>x</sup> Events during the past year point to the promise of both commercial and nonprofit collaborations and co-productions between groups in the United States and in Muslim majority regions.

The economic recession, which has wreaked havoc on the film industry as well as other sectors, may have a silver lining for cultural engagement between “Hollywood” and creative voices in the Muslim world. In the fourth quarter of 2008, the recession,

*“I am in the antiques business. Hollywood is in the midst of a sea change, a dramatic re-evaluation of traditional financial models. A new formula of how a film might work could come from anywhere.”*

Walter Parkes, U.S.-Islamic World Forum, Doha, Qatar, Feb. 13, 2009.

combined with the collapse of the video market, rendered traditional models for financing and making films in the United States obsolete. At the same time, new digital products have been generating innovative forms of creation and distribution. The convergence of film, television, and the internet is collapsing geographic borders enabling a “Hollywood” film or television program to originate from anywhere. The blockbuster success of *Slumdog Millionaire*, meanwhile, suggests American audiences may now be more open to sub-titled, foreign films. This combination of factors presents an opening for film makers from the Muslim world, and for international collaborations that connect creators with investors and producers, and creative products with new audiences.<sup>xi</sup>



New media and cell phone technologies are overtaking traditional methods of production and distribution, thus providing new means of engaging the Muslim world. (The question of how to monetize creative intellectual property in the Muslim world remains, though.) New types of co-productions would increase U.S.-Muslim world collaborations and introduce new, diverse voices to global audiences.

*“It is always best not to be competitive with old media, but rather just leap into new media.”*

Cory Ondrejka, U.S.-Islamic World Forum, Doha, Qatar, Feb. 14-16, 2009.

The Kennedy Center, working with the State Department, has conducted a vigorous cul-

tural diplomacy program targeting the Arab world that has included arts management seminars in Washington, Cairo, and Palestine, and culminated with *Arabesque: Arts of the Arab World*, a three-week cultural showcase.<sup>xii</sup> In June, the Asia Society, in partnership with the Brooklyn Academy of Music and New York University, co-sponsored a festival of Islamic arts, *Muslim Voices*.<sup>xiii</sup> The festivals contained new collaborative productions, and illustrated intersections between East and West as well as distinctive art forms of the Muslim world. Private funding supported both festivals and foreign governments contributed substantially to the Kennedy Center festival.

*“Cultural bridges might make a difference; they might make a new beginning.”*

Gamal Al Ghitany, *Arabesque: Arts of the Arab World*, The Kennedy Center, March 8, 2009.

These endeavors provide examples of the salutary effects of collaboration and co-production. These major celebrations of the arts and culture of the Arab and broader Muslim world not only helped educate American audiences, but also offered a tangible measure of respect that was reflected in the considerable coverage of the festivals in the press of the Middle East, western Africa, and Southeast Asia. Regrettably, public and private funding has not begun to match U.S. rhetoric on improving outreach to the Muslim world. Without a robust, sustained policy of cultural engagement – and sufficient funding – the long-term impact of these worthy efforts is unclear.

### *Impediments to Success*

The most significant impediment to success is lack of funding. The State Department’s Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs never recovered from the dramatic budget cuts of the late 1990s, although its funding has increased incrementally over the last eight years.<sup>xiv</sup> Even before the economic downturn, the private funds dedicated to cul-

tural engagement with the Muslim world were negligible.<sup>xv</sup> With the added strain of the recession, public sector leadership will be required for any serious, sustained effort. In the United States, arts and culture tend to be viewed apart from efforts directed toward diplomacy, capacity building, and social change, and there is no inter-agency strategy for cultural engagement with the Muslim world. The United States has valuable knowledge and experience in creating successful entertainment products but this has yet to be integrated into development strategies.

The stark separation between the U.S. government and the commercial entertainment sector is ironic, since entertainment products contribute so significantly to perceptions of the United States. Television has experienced a dramatic surge in popularity and production in the Middle East in the last ten years, with American programs distributed in increasing numbers.<sup>xvi</sup> Anecdotal evidence suggests that people in the Middle East who have never met an American feel a familiarity with them as a result of watching a program like “Friends”.<sup>xvii</sup> The active participation of leading members of the Hollywood community in *Muslims on Screen and Television (MOST): A Resource Center for the Creative Community* ([www.mostresource.org](http://www.mostresource.org)), a nonprofit that

works to normalize Muslims and themes related to Islam in popular culture – not to mention other initiatives such as the recent trip of members of the Academy of Motion Pictures to Iran – suggests a willingness on the part of entertainment leaders to engage the Muslim world. A practical strategy to involve them, and their products,

should be developed.

In what is generally viewed as a strategic mistake, the United States spent hundreds of millions of dollars under the direction of the Broadcasting Board of Governors to establish Al Hurrah, an American television channel in the Middle East. While this channel sometimes provides a platform for lively debates, it has not garnered a significant viewership and is regarded with suspicion as a creation of the U.S. government. However, an increase in the number of satellite stations in the Middle East has expanded the demand for programming. Some of this demand could be met through publicly funded programming created by non-government entities and marketed to satellite networks in the Muslim world.<sup>xviii</sup>

### *America Houses and America’s Voice Corps*

In 2007, then Senator Barack Obama advanced proposals to open “America Houses” in the Arab world and, through the “America’s Voice Initiative,” to send Americans fluent

in foreign languages to speak and listen to foreign publics, especially in the Arab world.<sup>xix</sup> After World War II, the U.S. government supported the development of America Houses around the world, particularly in Germany and Japan. Beginning in the 1980s, though, American Cultural Centers began to close their doors. Over the past eight years the “American Corners” program was developed to reach beyond large cities to regional hubs. However, these smaller hubs, often unstaffed, are no substitute for a place that is recognized as a source for information about the United States, provides a venue for events involving American culture, politics, and society, and is staffed by personnel knowledgeable about America and the host country. The locations and programs of “America Houses”

should be selected with the goal of promoting U.S. strategic objectives for the country and/or region.

*“The idea of an America House is impossible in the places that need it the most.”*

Saad Mohseni, U.S.-Islamic World Forum,  
Doha, Qatar, Feb. 13, 2009.

In some locations, especially in places where English lessons and exposure to American ideas, books, films, and other products might be most valuable, an “America House” would pose too many security concerns. In such cases, the “American Corner” formula of offering American books, journals, films, and computers with web access inside an existing local institution could be expanded to include meeting places where readings, screenings, exhibitions, discussions, collaborations and co-productions could take place. The addition of video games and other U.S. entertainment products could also help attract a younger clientele. For security reasons, these centers might need to be given generic names such as “Cultural (or Cross Cultural) Center” rather than “America House.”

### RECOMMENDATIONS: STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

- Recognize the power of artists and their creations to build bridges, influence societies, encourage critical thinking, promote the development of civil society, and foster economic advancement. Integrate arts and culture into diplomatic and development strategies involving the Muslim world.
- Dramatically increase the funding available for artistic and cultural initiatives and for individual artists. In the case of government funding, develop an inter-agency process to maximize the impact of programs from different agencies, emphasizing long-term, sustained ef-

forts. Such increased government support would require a new appropriation and/or the shifting of funds for public diplomacy and cultural activities from the Pentagon to the State Department.

- Concentrate funding on entities and projects that have proven track records and that build on established points of connection between the United States and the Muslim world. Follow the “best practices” that have already been developed by groups doing this kind of work over the last decade.
- Encourage co-production and public-private partnership models, especially in film, television, music, and new media. Engage interested entertainment leaders in developing outreach strategies, including donating materials for use in Embassies and America Houses.
- Leverage new media and social networking to reach youthful populations in the Muslim world by forming interdisciplinary working groups of policymakers, artists, and technology experts, and by seeding and funding collaborative new media projects and initiatives. Engage legal and business experts to find ways of monetizing creative content from the Muslim world.
- Support people and projects in the Muslim world that use the media to foster positive social change, and promote the values of diversity, co-existence, mutual respect, and democracy. Help to remove barriers to free expression in media and the arts.
- Eliminate U.S. visa policies that impede artistic collaborations, and remove grant application or reporting requirements that discourage the participation of arts and culture figures from the Muslim world.
- Keep government agencies, such as the Broadcasting Board of Governors, out of the business of creating content. Rather, provide grants to independent film and television producers to develop content that can be offered to outlets in the Muslim world. Assess the relative value added of continuing to fund and broadcast Al Hurrah, compared to funding independent content.

### *America Houses and America’s Voice Corps*

- Provide the Houses with sufficient budgetary support to host robust cultural programs, and to be staffed by employees knowledgeable in arts, media, and the host country. Partnerships with local governments and institutions may be required to sustain significant America

House, such as the coalition formed by the Institute of Cultural Diplomacy in Berlin.<sup>xx</sup>

- Equip the Houses with computers (including video games), new media, films, and books. The Houses should also offer English lessons, feature translation programs, and aid in the distribution of newly translated books.
- Adapt the programming of the Houses to meet local needs. Emphasize collaborative projects and the use of new media in developing “America Houses” or “Cultural Centers.” An advisory board comprised of local leaders and U.S. Embassy representatives should assist with program development.
- Recruit people of diverse backgrounds for the America’s Voice Corps. Send them to regions seldom visited by Americans and provide them opportunities to interact with the local population. Partner with other organizations, such as the U.S. Center for Citizen Diplomacy, to extend the reach of the Voice Corps.<sup>xxi</sup>

### RECOMMENDATIONS: PROJECT IDEAS

- Use social networking tools to build a sustainable cross-cultural community of interest around a cultural event, such as a concert, film festival, or art exhibition. Capture the event through short videos shot by audience members and uploaded onto social networking sites. Use social networking tools to create long-term connections between participants; focus on establishing links between young people in the U.S. and Muslims around the world. “Test pilot” this concept to develop a model that can be replicated for other events.<sup>xxii</sup>
- Develop a major event with crossover appeal, such as an international hip-hop or rock concert. Build in jam sessions and performances that combine western and eastern musicians. If possible, arrange to stage the concert twice, once in the Muslim world and once in the U.S., or, alternatively, broadcast the concert internationally. The type of social networking build up, capturing, and follow through described above could be used to expand and strengthen the impact of the concert.
- Create a two-way online portal, staffed by a manager knowledgeable in film making in the Muslim world, to encourage film co-productions and to facilitate on location productions by U.S. companies in the Muslim

world. The portal would allow U.S. film makers and companies to “shop” for scripts and locations by presenting comprehensive, easily accessible information on film making in different Muslim countries, showcasing story ideas from writers in the Muslim world, and providing details regarding in-region technical capabilities. Through the portal, creators from the Muslim world would have access to U.S. film makers, and U.S.-based users would have ready information on film making in the Muslim world, as well as access to talent there.

- Support a coalition of production companies and new media experts to develop a platform for independent producers of web-based programming in the United States and the Muslim world. The platform should include an advertising model. The platform might take the form of a “channel,” “pipeline,” or virtual broadcaster, or focus on series-type programs.
- Reprint and publish (in Arabic), and translate into other languages, classics of Arab literature and contemporary writings, as well other forms of creative expression such as film and music that show “the other side of Islam.” The project should be housed in the Muslim world, for example at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina in Egypt.
- Develop a film festival featuring five independent U.S. films and five films from the Muslim world that would travel, along with the films’ directors, across the United States and the Muslim world.
- Mimic the French government’s Tournées program of distributing first-run French films to U.S. college campuses by adapting the program to disseminate films produced in, or with content about, the Muslim world.<sup>xxiii</sup> Funding would ideally come from a coalition of sources from the Arab and Muslim world, possibly with initial seed funds from the United States.
- Use arts and culture to engage with Iran. The recent visit of a delegation from the Academy of Motion Pictures to Iran’s House of Cinema might provide an opening. Other points of connection could be made through music (including hip-hop) and poetry – the latter is so popular that many Iranian blogs are written entirely in verse.

## APPENDIX

### THE FOLLOWING ENDORSE THESE RECOMMENDATIONS

Rabih Alameddine  
*Author*  
Lebanon; United States

Salman Ahmad  
*Rock musician, film maker, author, UN Aids  
Ambassador*  
Pakistan; United States

Jane Alexander  
*Actress, Former Chair,  
National Endowment for the Arts*  
United States

Derek Ashong  
*Founder, Take Back the Mic*  
United States

Bader Ben Hirsi  
*Film Director, Producer, Writer*  
Yemen; UK; France

Vishakha Desai  
*President, Asia Society*  
United States

Mohammed Gohar  
*CEO, Video Cairo SAT*  
Egypt

Howard Gordon  
*Executive Producer, "24"*  
United States

Shamil Idriss  
*Director, UN Alliance of Civilizations Media Fund*  
United States

Daoud Kuttab  
*Palestinian Independent Media activist*  
Palestine

Lauren Levy  
*Vice President, Offspring Entertainment*  
United States

Aaron Lobel  
*President and Chairman, America Abroad Media*  
United States

Roger Mandle  
*Executive Director, Qatar Museums Authority*  
United States; Qatar

Laurie Meadoff  
*Founder, Chat the Planet*  
United States

Saad Mohseni  
*CEO Tolo TV and Moby Media*  
Afghanistan

Naif al Mutawa  
*Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Teshkeel  
Media Group*  
Kuwait

Shuja Nawaz  
*Director, South Asia Center, Atlantic Council  
of the United States*

Cory Ondrejka  
*Fellow, Network Culture Project, University of Southern California,  
Annenberg School of Communications*  
United States

Walter Parkes  
*Parkes-McDonald Productions*  
United States

Nashwa al Ruwaini  
*CEO, Pyramedia, Inc.*  
Egypt; United Arab Emirates; Qatar

Dr. Ismail Serageldin  
*Director, Bibliotheca Alexandrina*  
Egypt

Chris Shields  
*CEO, Festival Networks, LLC*  
United States

Peter Singer  
*Brookings Institution*  
United States

Amy Tan  
*Writer*  
United States

Lucas Welch  
*President and CEO, Soliya*  
United States

Alesia Weston  
*Assistant Director, Feature Film Program, International,  
Sundance Institute*  
United States

Michael Wolfe  
*Co-Director, Unity Productions Foundation and  
Muslims on Screen and Television (MOST): a Cross  
Cultural Resource Center*  
United States



- <sup>i</sup> [http://www.whitehouse.gov/the\\_press\\_office/Remarks-by-the-President-at-Cairo-University-6-04-09/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-by-the-President-at-Cairo-University-6-04-09/);  
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/inaugural-address/>
- <sup>ii</sup> February 14-16, 2009, <<http://www.qatar-conferences.org/usislamic2009/overview.php>>. The Arts and Culture Leaders Workshop is part of the Arts and Culture Dialogue Initiative, <<http://dohanetwork.org/content/arts-and-culture-dialogue>>. We are grateful to The Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art for support for the Arts and Culture Dialogue Initiative, including the 2009 Arts and Culture Leaders Workshop.
- <sup>iii</sup> <[http://www.whitehouse.gov/the\\_press\\_office/Remarks-by-the-President-at-Cairo-University-6-04-09/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-by-the-President-at-Cairo-University-6-04-09/)>.
- <sup>iv</sup> Jon Cohen and Jennifer Agiesta, “Most in Poll Back Outreach to Muslims,” *Washington Post*, April 6, 2009, A10; John Esposito and Dalia Mogahed, *Who Speaks for Islam?* Gallup Press, 2008.
- <sup>v</sup> Cynthia P. Schneider and Kristina Nelson, with research by Mohammed Yousri, *Mightier than the Sword: Arts and Culture in the U.S.-Muslim World Relationship*, the Brookings Project on U.S. Relations with the Islamic World, June 2008 p.16 ([http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2008/06\\_islamic\\_world\\_schneider/06\\_islamic\\_world\\_schneider.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2008/06_islamic_world_schneider/06_islamic_world_schneider.pdf)).
- <sup>vi</sup> Saad Mohseni, remarks at the launch of *Muslims on Screen and Television (MOST): a Resource Center for the Creative Community* <[www.mostresource.org](http://www.mostresource.org)>, Paley Center for Media, Los Angeles. The documentary *Afghan Star*, about the television program won the audience award at the 2009 Sundance Festival.
- <sup>vii</sup> *Mightier than the Sword*, p.16.
- <sup>viii</sup> <<http://www.sfcg.org>>.
- <sup>ix</sup> Dancing Ink Productions has studied the potential of virtual worlds to increase understanding and connections between the United States and the Muslim world, <[http://dancinginkproductions.com/?page\\_id=80](http://dancinginkproductions.com/?page_id=80)>; *Hometown Baghdad* <<http://chattheplanet.com>> offered a promising model for social networking.
- <sup>x</sup> <<http://www.americanvoices.org/projects/2007/unity/>>; <<http://www.americanvoices.org/projects/2008/Iraq>>; *Mightier than the Sword*, p.24.
- <sup>xi</sup> MOST (*Muslims on Screen and Television: a Cross Cultural Resource Center*, [www.mostresource.org](http://www.mostresource.org)), an organization that developed out of the Arts and Culture Dialogue Initiative, hosts events in Los Angeles designed to familiarize leaders in film, television, and new media in the U.S. with developments in the Muslim world.
- <sup>xii</sup> <<http://www.kennedy-center.org/programs/festivals/08-09/arabesque>>.
- <sup>xiii</sup> <<http://www.muslimvoicesfestival.org>>.
- <sup>xiv</sup> *Mightier than the Sword*, pp.24-28.
- <sup>xv</sup> Less than 5 percent of U.S. private philanthropy targets arts and culture in the Muslim world, with a fraction of one percent dedicated to the Middle East and North Africa. The State Department spends about \$11 million annually on cultural programs throughout the world (*Mightier than the Sword*, p. 4). As a result of the recession, one of the few foundations supporting cultural engagement with the Muslim world, the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art, will not award new grants in 2009.
- <sup>xvi</sup> Tim Arango, “World Falls for American Media. Even as It Sours on America,” *New York Times*, December 1, 2008, <[http://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/01/business/media/01soft.html?\\_r=1&ref=us&pagewanted](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/01/business/media/01soft.html?_r=1&ref=us&pagewanted)>.
- <sup>xvii</sup> Interview with Dalia Mogahed, Executive Director, Gallup Center for Muslim Studies, May 2007.
- <sup>xviii</sup> The non-profit production company *Layalina* has produced programs that have been widely distributed by leading channels in the Arab world at a fraction of the costs spent on Al-Hurrah, <<http://www.layalina.tv>>.
- <sup>xix</sup> Senator Barack Obama, “The War We Need to Win”, August 1, 2007, Woodrow Wilson Center, Washington DC, <[http://www.barackobama.com/2007/08/01/the\\_war\\_we\\_need\\_to\\_win.php](http://www.barackobama.com/2007/08/01/the_war_we_need_to_win.php)>; Walter Pincus, “Clinton’s Goals Detailed”, *Washington Post*, January 19, 2009, A17, <[http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/01/18/AR2009011802268\\_pf.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/01/18/AR2009011802268_pf.html)>.
- <sup>xx</sup> <http://www.culturaldiplomacy.org/amerikahausberlin/index.php?en>.
- <sup>xxi</sup> <<http://www.uscenterforcitizen diplomacy.org>>.
- <sup>xxii</sup> The Asia Society, in cooperation with the Arts and Culture Dialogue Initiative, will host a cross cultural social networking site for its “Contemporary Art in Pakistan” exhibition, as well as another for the “Concert for Pakistan” (United Nations, September 12, 2009), organized by Salman Ahmed (CITE WEBSITE).
- <sup>xxiii</sup> <<http://www.facecouncil.org/tournees/index.html>>.

