

Women, Religion, and Social Change II

PANEL: PERSPECTIVES ON THE GLOBAL AND THE LOCAL

HARVARD DIVINITY SCHOOL

SPERRY ROOM

FRIDAY, MAY 2, 2003

9:00 - 10:30 AM

DIANA L. ECK: We first gathered in 1983, 20 years ago. And many of us who were there, in fact all of us, have grown and aged and developed various forms of infirmity, but all of us various forms of wisdom as well and perspective, a genuine perspective on what's going on in the world.

The other is a group of women, on the whole younger, but who have been part of a group of women's religious networks in North America that the Pluralism Project has brought together now three times over the last two years. Two years ago about this time, and after September 11th in New York, November of that year, and again just a year ago.

And so we have this conversation that will have many kinds of implications: pedagogical, policy implications, for all of these women who are gathered here to think about the world in this particular time. And our first panel this morning is on the topic of globalization, the global and the local. And certainly as we think about the last 20 years, the term globalization has been one that has come increasingly to our vocabulary with all of its meanings, both positive and negative. The fact that our world systems, banking, communication, security, etc. are interrelated, that powerful telecommunications networks link one part of the world to the other and deploy worldwide advertising strategies and create worldwide markets and become worldwide news brokers, all of this has changed the texture of the world in which we live.

And of course the voices and visions of people in religious communities are part of this globalization. People represent themselves through their websites. And you can go to the website of the Muslim Women's League, where Laila Al-Marayati has been a part, or to the website of Jamaat-e-Islami in Pakistan or India, and hear what people say to represent themselves. And as potential world citizens, it also means that we can, as I do, keep a bookmark on my computer to look at the news in my hometown where my mother still lives in Bozeman, Montana, look at the Bozeman Daily Chronicle and read the police reports and also turn to the Times of India.

We have this capability in ways that are remarkable. It means that we can watch President Bush in real time fly in and land on the deck of an aircraft carrier. It meant that we saw Nelson Mandela as he walked out of prison. It meant that we could sit in our pajamas, as Dorothy and I did in our library on Holyoke Street and watched the transfer of power in Hong Kong. It means we can watch King Hussein lowered into his grave in Jordan.

Incredible transformation of what should be our sympathies and our abilities to educate.

But alas, of course, it's not always been that way. We also see the side of globalization that has meant exploitation; that the collapse of space, time and borders, as the Human Development Report of the UN put it, may mean the creation of a global village but not everyone can be a global citizen. The wealthiest 20% control 86% of the world's wealth and the poorest 20% are left out altogether. In the US, 25% of us are online and only 1/400 of 1% in South Asia. And I can print out that big fat Development Report of the UN every summer, as I do, on my computer because we in the United States consume 84% of all the world's paper.

So we need to think about the ways in which and analyze the ways in which globalization has changed our world for better, for worse, and forced us to think in new and strategic ways. And to help us do that this morning, we have some remarkable women. And I will ask Mary Hunt, the founder of a group called WATER, to come forward and take over the podium and chair this session. Mary, great to have you here.

MARY HUNT: Thank you. [applause] Good morning and thank you, Diana. I would like to just take a moment on behalf of the participants of the conference to thank Diana and the entire staff for a marvelous-- [applause]-- a marvelous meeting. And I especially want to thank the staffpeople for the gracious hospitality. We have not only had tremendous content already but we have been treated in such a loving and caring way that I want to thank you on behalf of everyone.

I'm going to chair this distinguished panel this morning, asking each of our speakers to spend ten minutes-- it's a sin but we're going to ask them to spend ten minutes laying out some of their own ideas on our topic this morning, which is the question of really how have the energies of globalization, the technologies of communications and the realities of interdependence altered our religious communities, our lives, our issues, our understandings and our strategies for social change. In ten minutes. [laughter]

The bios for my colleagues and myself can be found on the webpage of the Pluralism Project in the section dedicated to this conference, so I will simply introduce them in the briefest of ways, assuming that the myriad details can be read on your own.

Our first panelist is Dr. Brigalia Bam, who came 20 years to this conference from exile and who now lives in her country, South Africa. She is the chairperson of the Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa. She has held various posts throughout the world, including the Africa Regional Secretary and Coordinator of the Women's Workers Program for the International Food and Allied Workers Association, National Executive Secretary of the World Affiliated YWCA of South Africa, and Executive Program Secretary for the Women's Department of the World Council of Churches.

At the time of her appointment as Commissioner of the Independent Electoral Commission in 1997 she was General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches. She's also the founder and president of the Women's Development Foundation.

We welcome Brigalia Bam back to Harvard and recall with deep respect her presentation 20 years ago entitled "Priorities for Women in South Africa."

Our second speaker is Dr. Devaki Jain, development economist and a prolific writer who taught public finance social statistics in Delhi University and held a fellowship at the Center for Advanced Studies at the Delhi School of Economics. She was a Fulbright Fellow attached here at Harvard and at Boston University in 1983. She received an honorary doctorate in economics from the University of Durban-Westville in 1999, and she retired as Director of the Institute of Social Studies Trust in 1994.

Dr. Jain, many of you will remember, was the co-editor with Diana Eck of the book that resulted from the first Women, Religion and Social Change conference, that wonderful yellow-covered volume *Speaking of Faith*, published in 1987, which included her own essay, "Gandhian Contributions Toward a Feminist Ethic." We welcome you, Dr. Jain.

And our third speaker is Azza Karam, Program Director of the Women's Development at the World Conference on Religion and Peace. The World Conference on Religion and Peace started as a women's program in 1998 to ensure women's commitments and concerns were taken seriously in all areas of religion and peace involvement.

Dr. Karam has worked for decades in the fields of gender, development, human rights, democratization, conflict in Islam. She's the author of the forthcoming volume *Transnational Political Islam*. We look forward to the book and we're delighted to welcome you.

I'll be the final speaker. I am a Catholic feminist theologian, the co-founder and co-director of WATER, the Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual, which is a small nonprofit in the Washington area, what we call and "think and do tank" that works on feminist theological, ethical and liturgical development by and for women from a variety of faith traditions. I've just finished editing a guide for women in religious studies that Oxford University Press will publish shortly, and I'm currently writing on same-sex love and American religion.

So, we are your panelists and we welcome you to our panel and look forward to your comments and your discussion as we move along this morning. I present, with pleasure, Dr. Brigalia Bam. [applause]

BRIGALIA BAM: Thank you very much. It's wonderful to be back again. And I thought this morning before I speak-- I know my time will go but it doesn't matter, it's too important for me to do that. My mother used to say in our home there were 12 commandments, and we had to know these commandments, especially the 11th and the 12th. The 11th being anyone in the family having to remember to say thank you. And then she would of course stare at you and you would have to remember you didn't say thank you, which I felt was important this morning to thank you, but also to say to those women in this continent, in the United States, who really were the founding mothers of the feminist theology, that we thank them and honor them today. And I prefer to name them, as I do in my country, the living ancestors.

Now, in the African tradition, if you are an ancestor you're something very super, very special. You bring the best and the omen, the best of the vision and the best of all, and I would like us to pay tribute to them this morning. We're talking with Connie, remembering all those wonderful women in the early days and of the '60s and beginning of the '70s who were struggling. And I remember the theologians in the World Council of Churches, those

days who were the gurus coming from Europe say "What's this feminist theology? The Americans are ruining everything, there's nothing theological about it."

But also to say thank you for giving us this chance, Diana, to be here. It's really wonderful for us, who are living in other countries where we are so fully occupied with what is going on in our own countries, especially my South Africa, where we are in the process of transformation, dismantling apartheid, even after ten years; you would be amazed, that though we have made some progress, there is still a lot to be done. But also the preoccupation for us as countries of Africa-- we are many countries. We are 54 countries. Our preoccupation related to our own being as nations of Africa, with the debates of recovering. We are using the term "re- nations" because we are really discovering ourselves in a different way, our selfhood and our determination.

Diana, when you wrote, which I quoted you here, you said, I quote, "as our global linkages become stronger, we all need the mirror of one another's vision." I thought after I had prepared something, I thought, no, I change it. And I always say to people, if you have written something, don't change it, because then you'll get lost. [laughter] But the more I felt that way this morning is the more I felt what I need to do in this short time we have is really to share with you something about this African continent and what this globalization means.

Many things are extremely positive about globalization, and I think that Diana has made reference to those things. That we're able to reach one another, we're able to know what is happening. The information is wonderful. And that's very good. And I want to share a human story, which is important. Last Friday in my country-- which is a positive story on the communication not across the world but also within the national situation-- Mrs. Winnie Mandela, who is well-known by most people, was found guilty and caught. And I was in the office discussing with a lawyer what were the chances and she was found guilty within the time we were talking and given a five-year sentence, at which point when I left my office I picked up my cell, which is wonderful because I could get to the chief prosecutor at the same time, and I was able, believe it or not-- and that's the time I really love this communication-- within 30 minutes having reached 50 South Africans by e-mail, being able to reach people through the cells in the office for us to be able to make sure that it would be a disgrace that this woman, though she was guilty, a mother, a grandmother, was going to be imprisoned and our government. But that is the positive side of being able to make those linkages within such a short time and be able to make sure that you save someone's life. But I thought this morning let me talk and narrow my presentation, simply to share with you some things of this globalization as it affects the countries in Africa. Where we are really nurturing ourselves political systems within Africa, where we are struggling for democracy because we are committed to democracy in all its forms, because we know that it can maximize the human equality and freedom for all, including women, and that is a bigger picture of it.

My comments on globalization will specifically look at the situation in Africa as it relates to our economic policies. And the part I will present to you is not a positive one, because I think the positive things are understood by everybody else, but to say that there is no

country in the world, not a single country in the world that is not part and parcel of the global economic relationships. After all, we should remember that the uniqueness of capitalism in history is that it was the first economic system which operated as a global system, and we must also remember that colonialism and imperialism also had always put itself in a global fashion. So it is not something new, but it has taken other forms. And what is happening in most countries of Africa, because all of us without exception have been under colonial rule, globalization has become controversial, though it has all the positives. And why has it become controversial? It is not mere internationalization of economic policies but also cultural and social-political relations are being affected. This is true all over the world.

It is also true that people are appreciating all the changes that are coming with technology, the modern science, the modern means of communication, and of course the modern world market. And these are the things that no one is contesting in the world. But what do they mean in situations of our economies? And I thought I needed to look at that because we are discovering that when we talk about gender issues, in my country we are so obsessed on gender mainstreaming, that every corner you turn in South Africa we talk of gender mainstreaming, and we are so tired of monitoring and scolding. We have commissions, we have Bill of Rights, we have the biggest gender commission, we have our non-governmental organizations, and we have everything, we have the constitutional court. We have set up almost every possible structure you can think of to make sure that as women we are protected and that apartheid system will never come back again. But we are in fact facing the worst poverty that we have ever seen, and the feminization of poverty. And that's why I thought let me just bring that a little bit to that, because for us it has become even a bigger challenge now than other challenges. Of course we know that we have to struggle all the time for our rights, because I am convinced men will never give us this power unless we fight for it. And that's another way of looking at it.

But what is happening in the African continent is that the systems that we have of our economy are not able to be competitive with the modern way of life, because our economies, even though it is yes and yes and yes, had been set and structured under the old colonial systems, and to change them is very, very difficult.

When you begin to look at the foreign industries that come to invest, they are not coming to invest in our terms. You do not get an investment where as a country you are the one who determines the criteria, you are the one who determines; it's across the national boundaries. And the emphasis that is coming on the globalization that in fact governments should not impose any restrictions. You are talking of the free market where people go in and out and invest. And what I find always a contradiction is that on the one hand we are open to this market, the world market, and the freedom of movement of capital and the trade that goes on of course for the countries in Africa. You know we have resources, many resources, in that continent, but we do not necessarily have all the capabilities of being able to compete in the international market.

So it has not benefitted the ordinary people in the African continent, the globalization, and there is no way in which as it is now that this freedom of the movement, of capital, and with

no control is able, because there is no dialogue that takes place, there is a tendency and an assumption of uniformity, and so there is no way in which there is space for diversity. And it is the survival of the fittest. And survival of the fittest means that those who are benefitting from the globalization again are those people who control the market, they are those people live in urban areas, the women are not there, the women are living in rural areas, and they are really struggling for the economy.

And there is a tendency that with the globalization our values are being lost. And there is a loss of what I call the social control. One of the crises we have in South Africa has to do-- which will shock you-- with the pornography. I was in the group that set up the laws of information and the control of pornography, which is becoming a crisis in many of our schools.

And what becomes a challenge for us with all these issues we face on economy is how do we as women try to continue to retain those values, because when you look at television, sometimes when you look at South African youngsters you wouldn't tell whether they are American kids or are they really South African kids. I don't know the difference anymore, especially when you look at black kids. They all look like all kids. They have the same music, the same clothing, the same everything. And that's fine, as long as we can still preserve some of those important values. And to me, that is the challenge to women.

And the second one is how do we continue as women, which is a challenge that from our roots we are able to preserve the humanity in the (inaudible). How do we humanize the systems of globalization? Because there is no way in which you are fighting that you can humanize it.

And I want to say that I hope we will continue that as we talk, not only about the religion, which I think has entered itself fully into our lives, but how do we also preserve the cultural integrity of each nation so that the generations to come, they will not find models that are monolithic but they will know that they live in one world, in one village, but there's still within the given world the diversity and the value that the global society can offer them, and that we can still learn from one another. Because I see dangers that the future generations with their monocentric models, very Euro-centric for those of us coming from Africa, will be the ultimate value for the world in which we live. Thank you. [applause]

HUNT: Thank you very much to Brigalia Bam. Wonderful presentation that will give us a lot to think about and to discuss. Now I'd like to present Devaki Jain, who I know will do the same thing.

DEVAKI JAIN: Good morning and thank you. It's like coming home, because in '84, Diana and I, along with my husband, taught a course in Braun Room on the life and thought of Mahatma Gandhi. So to come back to this building was very moving and sentimental. And so thanks to all of you.

I'm addressing exactly the questions that were raised for this session that Mary Hunt re-articulated, and I'm going to use some data from a lecture I heard in Cairo by Ismail Serageldin, who is the director of the Alexandria Bibliotheca and from the UNDP 2001, to

get the bald facts on these two issues, that is the spread of what can be called the energies of globalization and the distribution of the so-called technology of communications and the real realities of interdependence.

And as I present you with the bar charts and the data, what it really reveals are two things. One is that it reveals that a very miniscule portion of the globe, and this would definitely be even more miniscule if you look at the poverty sections, have access to what all of you are excited about, which is the information technology. And while globalization itself may be energetic in that there's a sense of momentum, of capital flows here and there and then the corporates, the multinationals, and even civil society expressions like in Seattle or in Porto Alegre looks very active and has a lot of resistance, actually I propose that it has depleted the energy of the poor in almost all the countries of the world in a very real way. And just as an example of the normal connection between energy, is between nutrition and energy. There is tremendous nutritional deprivation, especially in our countries, and I'm sure amongst the poor, even in the north.

So I'm giving you some of the tables just to save time. And you will see, this is again from Ismail, the wealth of the richest 225 is more than that of the poorest two and a half billion. Assets of three rich people is more than 48. But the next charts are the one on information technology. And here is the increase in disparities. This is stunning. In 1960 the richest 20% were 70, raised to 82 in '89. But look at the poorest. It's 2.3 to 1.4. So rich to poor ratio has doubled, 30% in 1960 and '89. And there are many other gaps like this. And the supposed knowledge revolution has also served to accentuate all differences and create new inequalities, and this is the knowledge-have-nots. The developed world has 15% of the population of the world and 88% Internet. The developing world, which has 85% of the population, has 12% Internet.

And then I use patent ownership, which Ismael uses, and research priorities. Someone else mentioned this also yesterday. That if you look at patents and research priorities-- oh I've lost it. It doesn't matter. You'll find that, again, the developed countries as one firm which has 2,890 patents in the United States compared to all the developing world's patents, which is equal.

So it's just the gross inequality in the distribution of what you call the benefits of globalization is the main point that I wanted to bring through those figures. Now there are other more traditional inequalities around the world. For example, in India, and unfortunately I can't put up that map, which is so dramatic. I call it the blood-stained hands of Mother India. We have a juvenile sex ratio, which is the sex ratio of children between 0 to 6 years old, and here what has happened in the last 10 years, that in 1991 to 2001 many, many states in India, the sex ratio has dropped by 50 points. That means more females of the species are being killed in the womb.

Now, earlier it was embedded in certain states in India, like Haryana and Punjab, which are very male and which are very rapid growing states, but now it is spreading to the states which are less chauvinistic, like Andhra [Pradesh], Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra. ... Which

is really a dramatic change, just in the last ten years, where India and the civilization is moving.

Indian, "Indic tradition," I call it, has become the killing fields for the females in India in the last ten years. And it is my submission that this is due to the extra pressures on society, which has come both due to disparities due to globalization and the digital gap that is the aspirations which are denied because of the increasing inequality.

So given that this is what I call the local impact or the local perspective on these two elements which we have been asked to address, communication and globalization on the majority of communities, how would I see what has been raised here, the reality of interdependence and our understanding and our strategies for social change? To me, the reality is that it is not interdependent. It is devastating and it is one-way, north to south. The second is that there's an emerging vibrant and almost homogenous world community which is interconnected and globalized and feeds on itself. This global society has got caught in its own web of lifestyles, related to consumption and opportunity, to the point of turning away from the more multiple-layered, interdependent and more moral connectivities that communities had. This neo-global community is called, for example in India, the middle class. It feeds on itself, it is a vote bank, it determines policy, it attracts media, and it is the face of India now, which is projected diplomatically and otherwise. And this face is used politically to reveal modernity, momentum, the dynamism of India, 'India the new emerging global power,' and this kind of type of sentiment, entirely the self-perpetuating, locked up, middle class society.

The emergence of this amoral, unattached to roots, self-propelled class of people, men and women, circulating in this other economy that is the global goods and services opportunities economy, has distorted the earlier, however faulted ethic moral concerns and impulses, religious consciousness, intimacy, and the intimacy with deprivation, with injustice, with inequality. The corporate is now the icon in India, not the public. Not the public work, public service, constructive work that Gandhi talked about. And that corporate, curiously, feeds conservative religion. And I'll give one example.

Some of the most interesting innovations in India through the information technology hype that we have at home are that an Indian living in Cambridge, Massachusetts can ask for a specific ritual or puja to be performed in one of the temples, the most popular temples in India, on his behalf, and he can see it on his television screen being performed in his name. And since he's able to pay about a hundred times more than what an Indian can pay for that same service, the Indian priests and Indian temples seeing so much money have got terribly commercialized. And we see what we call the non-resident Indian's hunger for his roots in religious practice.

Now this, in my view, has regenerated dogma and rigidity into a religion like Hinduism, that was at one time not only open but a non-religion, a way of life, a consciousness of the divine, perhaps a minimalist religion. And I think Diana would agree with that. Today its shapes, contours mimic other structured religions, as without structure there can be no

boundary for practice. And it is practice that this non-resident Indian would like to feed into his alienated children to keep up the memories of his own childhood.

So yes, the energies of globalization, the technologies of communication, have altered our religious communities, our lives, our issues, our understandings. But where the buck stops is that it hasn't given us any inspiration for strategies for social change. In fact, I would suggest that we are in the precarious and almost rotted stage where from the bottom through the middle on to the top-- politics, administration, business, academic, civil society-- we are blocked. We are engaged in ways which have no connection to the spirit of social change or social justice.

And I know that I've-- even yesterday people were uncomfortable that I sounded so doomist and unhappy and what they called failed. It's not that. Today I'll end with some good news, which is stunning and which I wish if we all pray it'll happen. India and Pakistan have made up and the Indian Prime Minister phoned the Pakistani Prime Minister and they are exchanging High Commissioners. And I was confiding to Diana that the reasons don't seem to be good reasons, but I won't tell you that until you ask me the question. [laughter] Thank you. [applause]

HUNT: I'm tempted to simply open the questions now. I'd like to introduce Azza Karam, who comes to us from New York via Egypt. [applause]

AZZA KARAM: Thank you. Yes, I sound like I took the long way to Boston. It's a pleasure to be here, and I'd like to reiterate with the other panelists that in terms of gratitude to Diana and her staff for bringing us all together.

My presentation is slightly different. It will take you to the Islamic world, for one thing, but I wanted to start with a story that was shared with me a couple of weeks ago by a good friend in Egypt who says that her 3-year-old nephew came up to the father and said, "So Baba, I understand this bin Laden fellow, when is he going to strike the Americans again?" And this is a 3-year-old child. He said, "Well..." The father sort of hesitated and said, "Well why do you think he's going to strike again?" He said, "Well because the Americans are hurting the Iraqis now and it's time for him to strike again, don't you think?" And my friend tells me that the father was at a total loss as to how to direct this particular conversation. He says, "Well how do you know? Where is your information coming from?" So the father said, "Well why are you asking me this, where did you get this information from?" He said, "Well, it's on the television, daddy, have you not been watching? Aren't you not looking at the news and seeing what's happening?"

And it led to a little bit of a reflection on, well, here's a 3-year-old who seems to be quite aware of world events, possibly better than a number of us in this part of world at least, but also just from watching-- this is not somebody who is a TV junkie, by any stretch of the imagination. This is just a 3-year-old boy who happens to overhear some of the news and just what's on the media. But it would occur that what's on the media seems to be rather informative, in some parts of the world at least.

What I want to share with you today, there's three specific parts to this. The first is looking a little bit at the rise of the religious right in general. And I want to share a bit of a continuum for you that I think has become-- it started off as a continuum, trying to describe what is going on in the Islamic world, and it has appeared increasingly more relevant globally, if you will. And then I want to briefly talk with you about some of the women's responses and some of the women's activism locally, regionally and globally that one can also situate on that particular continuum. And finally, I just want to leave you with a question that I think we should all try to reflect on a little bit together, and what better venue than this particular one?

Now, I think there is probably not going to be that much, especially after Beverly's brilliant presentation yesterday, not much of a disagreement about the fact that the religious right-- and when I say the religious right I don't refer to fundamentalists. I see a big distinction between those who are very literal in their interpretation and reading of their texts and those who become very politically engaged on the basis of what they're reading in their texts, and who have a very specific idea of what their religious society should look like politically. And I refer specifically to those who are the more politically engaged, though they may and do indeed denigrate the political process, but they are very actively committed to changing it and becoming as such the leaders of a new political shape or future.

And I think that there's-- it's important to keep in mind that one of the things that came out after September 11th was the video of bin Laden that was immediately aired throughout the world, was the clarity with which both President Bush and Osama bin Laden seemed to believe very strongly that God was on their side. And whichever way they seemed to explain it, and they seemed very much to be in polar opposites to each other, and yet each one used the language of God quite liberally in their justification of why they were carrying out the activities they were carrying out, and certainly of why they were intending to carry out further activities. So it seemed that God was somewhat torn. [laughter] I certainly hope that he was on nobody's side on that particular debate.

But it was also very, very clear that both protagonists were responding to each other, using that particular language of religious divine justification and justice. And it was also quite clear that that discourse was not used, so the language of God's presence was not used to legitimize or to justify peaceful responses. On the contrary, it was used to basically underline why war was necessary, why a conflict, an armed conflict, was extremely necessary, in their opinion.

So we saw effectively an escalation, not only of violence but of an almost normalization of a militaristic discourse all around. So even when President Bush and his administration were talking about peace, they were talking about peace through the road of war, which is a very interesting way of reaching it.

But what we also noticed is that the affluence, if you will, of a nationalistic discourse, that again was a very extreme form of nationalistic discourse and that was clearly a sort of-- there was a very thin line between religious nationalism, if you will, the discourse of the

ummah in the Muslim context, and in this case a discourse of the free nation, which is the free God-fearing nation, the United States and its allies. Somebody mentioned yesterday that there were only two allies. Actually the coalition was boasting 24 countries. Nobody seems to be able to name them, but the popular discourse is there were 24.

Now, it is-- one of the things that has been also very noticeable, apart from this normalization of the rhetoric of peace via war, was the fact-- and the use of God to justify it-- was the fact that effectively, whether we were talking about the context of the United States or Great Britain or the so-called western world, or whether we were talking about the Islamic world and anywhere else in between, one of the things that was very clearly pushed aside was the discourse of women's rights. And this is a time when we have more important things to think of obviously, which is making peace and waging war in the process. So what on earth-- who has the luxury to talk about women's rights at times like these? And as many of you noted yesterday, you suddenly start to see decisions which are being made on issues which, whether it is Roe versus Wade or a whole host of other issues in the Arab and Muslim world in general which get relegated because they were women's rights issues, which gets completely silenced at best, or certain decisions getting made which are highly problematic at worst. So effectively the same old, same old argument of we have serious political things to talk about, women's rights and human rights, is discourse in general is at best a distraction.

Now I want you to think in terms of the continuum a little bit. If you see-- my right is going to be your left, so it's going to be thoroughly confusing, but just imagine two opposite ends of the scale. On the one end is the right-wing religious discourse, and the main characteristic of this discourse, apart from the fact that it's a political discourse, effectively using religion, it is also a discourse which does not contend with any other alternative. It sees that the religious/political is the only framework, and it will be that specific religion, whether it happens to be Christianity, whether it happens to be Judaism, whether it happens to be Islam, whether it happens to be Hinduism. That is all we need. It is that theology, this reinterpreted, recreated political theology that is the only thing that you need as a manifesto to determine your life, your entire life, and that of your citizens.

On the very opposite extreme is a discourse which almost in response to but still very, very distinctive determines that if you even breathe the word religion, you're in deep trouble. You're not part of us, you're not one of us, we don't wish to work with you, we don't wish to listen to you, and we certainly don't wish to have anything to do with you. And it is in its own way, as I said, a response to that extreme of religious discourse. But both, quite frankly, are about as inclusive of each other or of others as nothing.

So effectively we're talking about a recreation of the same methodology of exclusion and denigration and disrespect, da, na, na, but each in the name of the opposite of the other. So one is extreme right religious, one is the extreme secular, if you will. Somewhere in between hover those who wish to see a little bit more of a middle path, if you will, something that can be respectful of religious sentiment but can be-- but urges towards more quote, unquote, I hate that term, "progressive" or "enlightened" or whatever you have, reinterpretations of not only text but tradition and sentiment. And at the same time,

trying to see where the secular and the religious can actually be combined, as opposed to stand in that extremities.

Now, when I first thought about this continuum it occurred to me to be particularly relevant in the context of the Muslim world, where on the one side you had the Islamists, the radical Islamists, and on the other side you had the secularists. However, if you think about it, we can see that this political continuum is as relevant anywhere in the world today, particularly with the heightened awareness of religious political extremism that seems to be more the norm of the day and it's part and parcel of the whole globalization process.

Now, it also is relevant for feminist movements and feminist sentiment, because on the one hand of the continuum you have the women are-- and I define feminism very, very clearly as both an awareness of women's less privileged status, shall we say, to be politically correct in societies, but also doing something about it. So it's not just that you're conscious of it but you're actively engaged to do something about it, and what you do will differ according to the contexts. So on that continuum, again, you have those who wish within that very radical religious political spectrum to still talk about women's rights, to still try to see a different way of understanding what women's roles are that is not demeaning or oppressive to women.

And then on the other extreme, the secular feminists we're all much more familiar and most of us more comfortable with, who argue for women's rights and will tolerate no word related to religious or the divine or whatever, because they feel it immediately counteracts the feminist purpose.

Now, because I only have zero minutes left, I think I'll just end on looking at that specific question I wanted to leave you with, which is-- but I think I should mention, though, that in between in that middle continuum are a whole host of women's movements which have as their primary goal the attempt to see to what extent you can still be a woman of faith and women of faith and deeply committed to the faith tradition and at the same time seeing to what extent what the faith advocates can be liberating, enlightening, the tool for empowerment, if you will, for women and where is it that human rights discourse that is supposedly secular, even though those of us who have studied it know that it was built on certain values that are not secular, but that's not a good thing to say these days, but to what extent can that discourse be actually extremely compatible with the faith-based discourse and be for women's rights and for women's empowerment. And those are the groups that we very much work with in my organization most of the time.

Now here is the question. There is an incredible amount-- there is a huge gulf between those major strands of women's activism on the two ends of that political spectrum. There is an incredible amount of distrust, suspicion of each side, so much so that it makes those who are trying to build the bridges a) you don't hear their voices, b) you find it extremely difficult-- they find it extremely difficult to be articulate about what they're trying to do, because they get shouted at by both sides. One side says, how dare you not be respectful of

your religion much more and just see it as the only way; the other side says how dare you talk about religion and bring it into the discourse in the first place, shame on you.

So the battle is within the women activist movement. It really doesn't even come from the outside, because the outside is the other battle that you then have to face once you've got your discourse together. It's a very difficult place to be if you choose to be in that place, and a good many organizations and women individuals do choose to be in that place.

The question that I would want to leave you with-- and I apologize for going over my time-- but my question would be can we afford to have that gap, that mistrust amongst us at a time when there is the unholy alliance between those religious/political elements who are increasingly making the decisions on behalf of all of us around the world, and the ones who would be the first to marginalize any discourse on women's human rights? Can we afford that gap amongst us? Thank you. [applause]

HUNT: Thank you very much, Azza. Remarkably, my own presentation, which will be brief as well, touches very much on-- or picks up very much on the theme that you have just completed.

I want to talk this morning about the globalization of justice as we attempt to speak of globalization, what it might be to talk about the globalization of justice, especially from the perspectives of feminists who are in religion trying to do the work that some of us are engaged in.

I speak this morning as a white feminist anti-war US citizen the day after the president of my country jetted onto an aircraft carrier for political capital to pronounce the end of combat in an unjust war, with all of the color and triumphalism and false consciousness that accompanied this economically-driven war from the beginning. It was quite a show last night, in case you missed it.

Despite the hideous regime of Saddam Hussein, nary a weapon of mass destruction was found during this war. Several hundred US and British troops were killed. But thus far, no effort has been made to reconstruct how many thousands of Iraqis died, including many women and children. To this, I can only express my moral repugnance. As a feminist from the Roman Catholic tradition, I found myself for the first time in adult memory in agreement with the Pope. [laughter & applause] When he said, when the Holy Father, as we speak, said "war is a failure for humanity," I found myself as a Roman Catholic, non-lobotomized feminist agreeing with the Pope. War is a failure for humanity.

On a panel like this, I am tempted to simply say I'm sorry, we did the best we could, honestly, and then be seated. I am painfully aware that the US is in worldwide disgrace among people who seek to work collectively, cooperatively and through international agencies to solve common problems. Like many US residents, I abhor the hegemonic economic dominance of what I have come to call this super-stupid power. That's how I think of the Bush administration, not just a superpower, but a super-stupid power. Vermont's Howard Dean, a Democratic presidential hopeful, was right recently when he

observed that history is the record of the eventual demise of all such regimes, no less Washington than Rome.

There is in my view a certain absurdity about a time when we can send people to the moon, invent and use the Internet, complete the first map of the human genome, and still not have the first clue about justice. But absurd or not, globalization, or as my Latin American friend Sylvia would say, gobblization, given the voracious appetite of US corporate and military elite, gobblization has touched most dimensions of human life, communication as well as HIV/AIDS, especially for women, and now SARS, Coca-Cola and Nike sneakers. But there is still, I think, a frontier to be globalized, and that's what I'd like to explore this morning, or at least begin a conversation, and that is what would it mean to globalize justice?

Globalized justice might provide another model of globalization itself, one that uses technology and communication for the common good, one that respects differences, values variety, encourages participation, as justice will simply have it no other way. Americans who live in the belly of this growing beast but refuse to wrap ourselves in the flag and cheer the troops are allegedly a minority. But this is a country in which the president was not elected but appointed, and where the press is so permanently embedded with the powers that be that it is virtually impossible to gauge public opinion.

I suspect underneath it all we may be a majority who deplore the use of bunker-buster bombs paid for by our taxes, but who resent even more being lied to by a government as to what evidence it had to justify this war in the first place. And even more of us are outraged to see the transparent greedy economic thread that runs through this whole sorry chapter. Vice President Dick Cheney's Halliburton chums were granted contracts without competitive bidding to tend oil wells and clean up after the battles they created. George Schultz's pals at Bechtel gained mega-million dollar contracts to rebuild the infrastructure the US helped to destroy. It's enough to make even the most naïve cynical, enough to push the most committed of us to despair.

Still with other religious feminists who find that what Dan McGuire has called the renewable moral energy of religion, in our case the renewable moral energy that emerges from the feminization of our respective religious traditions, I look to my religious tradition and to our common work for resources to continue working against growing odds. Feminist justice work over the last 20 years, especially the religious rooted work that many of us in this room have been about, is part of what I think of as the globalization of justice. If any good has come from this difficult period in world history, it is that the tools of technology and networks of committed people can be used for the common good, as is evidenced by efforts at peacemaking.

I said yesterday, and I'll repeat it, that I received efforts of asylum from Cuban and Uruguayan friends who worry that US peace activists were in danger here. They knew before, and better than I, the degree to which government surveillance and the suspension of human rights, especially for immigrants in this country, are justified under the rubric of homeland security. Indeed, many small nonprofit organizations like WATER, where I work, are now feeling the economic pinch exacerbated by the war.

Nevertheless, there is much to critique and to learn from our efforts as religious feminists, which I think we would begin to look at critically and hopefully build on this weekend. Let me look simply at three areas. First, feminist religious social justice work conducted in multi-religious ways can and does make a difference.

Let me give you an example of this during the recent war months. The Global Peace Initiative of Women had a breakfast meeting in Washington. Now, breakfast meetings in Washington usually last about 45 minutes. This went four hours. Hundreds of women representing dozens of faith traditions gathered in the shadow of the White House for a morning of spirituality and networking. As the chair of the event, the Reverend Dr. Joan Campbell put it, and I quote, "never let it be said that women were too busy to pray for peace at a time of impending war." Buddhist nuns with shaved heads sat next to Muslim women in headscarves, chanting and praying together. A Jewish cantor intoned her holy words while Catholic nuns led rounds of *dona nobis pacem*.

Meanwhile over coffee, the activists among us plotted how we might respond to the macho peace efforts of highly placed religious men with whom we agree in principle about the end of war but with whom we differ markedly on the means. I refer in the main to progressive Christian men-- I'll confine myself to that group-- who when the chips are down resort to the same default assumptions. If only they as a delegation of Christian men could meet with George Bush as they met with Tony Blair. If only their godfather ruler king could hold sway instead of his, all would be right with the world.

It's tough to critique the folks who are on your side, but it's even tougher for me to see women in religious institutions ground down by the relentless sexism that remains unchanged, while male leaders, male religious leaders were all but ignored in peacemaking efforts. So our inter-religious feminist efforts become more urgent still, especially as we model how to prioritize dialogue over conclusion, inclusivity over name recognition in the work of peace. We need this work if we are to globalize justice, but it needs to have a deeper impact, not only on religious communities but on society as well.

Second, I think we have learned that while religions may be useful for providing vision and values, they are impotent to make social change without so-called secular partners. Our colleague Starhawk in her periodic posts during this time reported brilliantly on the coalition work of pagans and goddess worshippers, in concert with some of the most effective peace action groups. The use of the Internet, of course, has made an enormous difference here. Code Pink, a creative grassroots women's group, spread its shocking pink color signature around the country, beginning with daily 9 to 5 vigils at the White House that many of us participated in.

I noted that the Code Pink women were savvy enough to invite our own Grove Harris and others to bring creative ritual and spirituality to the day, adding, in my view, a dimension to this work and not simply the religious platitudes that they could have expected from patriarchal religions.

Globalized justice, then, requires this sort of so-called secular and religious cooperation-- I think it's a false distinction-- and it makes sense that we simply don't duplicate efforts. And the third and final lesson that we learned, at least that I have learned, is that globalized justice will require a new organizational and institutional forms, much as we have tried to create them in our own religious traditions. One welcome outcome of this period has been an unprecedented conversation all over the world about what it means to be a global community. Well, the Bush government and the corporations that undergird it may not realize it, they have unleashed a public torrent of expectation for the future that I think will be increasingly hard to ignore. This round may be over and Saddam Hussein may have gone to ground, as they like to say, but we are no safer; indeed, I believe we are in greater danger, with chemical, biological and nuclear weapons, but more so with economic sanctions and human rights abuses in the hands of rogue states like this one.

Trusting the world's well-being to the US government is simply folly, as demonstrated by the colossal diplomatic, cultural, commercial and military blunders of the last two months that resulted in the decimation of a country, its cultural treasures and its national pride in the name of democracy that it takes in vain. Moreover, the US domestic situation cries out for justice, with healthcare, jobs, housing and education for our own poor, mostly women and children, in peril.

Globalized justice, then, demands that we respect groups like the UN, the World Court, and such agencies that are given the resources and autonomy they need to function. It requires the replacement of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank with agencies that will truly see that basic human needs are met and that greedy, over-fed, over-consuming nations like this one are subject to global limits. This, of course, is hearsay for those who worship at the corporate altar, but it is necessary if we are to avoid future wars that Vandana Shiva predicts will be fought over water rights, a basic human right now denied to millions of people.

These three lessons that feminist religious multi-religious work-- pardon me, that feminist multi-religious justice work can be effective, that religions can be useful but need to work in concert with others, and that globalized justice will require new organizational and institutional forms, I think come from the work of people in this room.

Of course, I'm all too aware of the downside of globalization. I don't want to replicate its universalizing, essentializing tendencies, even when it comes to justice. That means that the way in which we bring it about will be as important as the goal itself. Our work as religious feminists, while not perfect and sometimes painful, proves that participatory, culturally diverse, ideologically-mixed efforts can and do bear fruit. At the very least, they keep the bellicose actions confined to the verbal realm, and the bombs and missiles remain unused. At best, dare we hope, they add to the justice quotient and more people will live long enough to enjoy it. Thank you. [applause]

I'd like to suggest that we have about 15 minutes for question and conversation, especially for hearing from you. So our colleagues are in the aisles with microphones and the floor is now open. Thank you for your attention.

BEVERLY HARRISON: Thank you. Brigalia reminded us that we should say thank you, and I'd like to make a speech saying thank you to all of you, and to also say publicly how important the work of DAWN has been to my students, who have been doing political, economic and cultural studies in the US. This is all a very wonderful reminder of what analysis has accomplished.

But I did want us to say at least a word, and maybe you would care to comment on this. We are so glib, we're such techies in this country and so fascinated with the Internet and the web. But one of the things that I worry a lot about and hear too little discussion of is the usefulness of the new technology in disinformation. And I didn't get a chance to talk about that yesterday, because we really have not seriously looked at the power of disinformation, particularly in terms of the political right. And I am also very worried about this as I look at the young in this country. The extraordinary trust of the information and the complete lack of control, and it is corporate control totally, and we just haven't even begun to analyze this.

So would anyone care to talk about this, where you are and from your situation? The Bush people rule by disinformation and we don't even look at how they do this.

KARAM: Yes, thank you for bringing that point up, Beverly. It is one of the things that if you access some of the websites of the moment, you'll find that a great deal of hate seems to be transmitted through a number of these. But also some of the so-called quote, unquote "intelligence" research that was carried out indicated that a number of the planned attacks, which were supposedly prevented, seemed to have been communicated via the Internet, so certain e-mails, coded e-mails, which would indicate when, where, what, why, who was going to do it and so on. So that has certainly been a means of transmitting the not-so-nice information.

But I think more relevant than that, in terms of the power of disinformation, is if you access a number of these sites you will note that there is a great deal of supposed material that explains-- and I will speak about the Islamic context in particular, that's the one I'm most familiar with-- where supposedly passages from the Qur'an are cited by people to say, see, this is how much they hate us, this is how much this is a religion that advocates killing and murder of Christians and of Jews, and here it is, it's all in their holy book and it's all in their tradition. And some of the hadiths, which are cited to show the sayings of the Prophet and so on. And it's incredibly glib, at best. It is remarkably disinformed at worst. A number of passages are misquoted from the Qur'an or are taken completely out of context or are simply reinvented quite frankly; some of them don't even exist. They don't even exist. So there is a great deal of that that goes on in that context, which seems to then justify a sense of this is a very negative question or this is a very negative issue or this is a very negative religion, and therefore look at it that way. But I'm sure that there's other aspects that you were referring to, and I don't know if somebody else wants to talk on that?

HUNT: I think we'll take some more questions and get some more comments out on the floor. But thank you Bev and Azza. Dorothy Eck?

DOROTHY ECK: I have a question, and that is, you know, there are possible benefits from globalization, but what we've heard a lot of are how detrimental it is, and especially to small communities. I think of all the stories about local water systems that have been privatized and really in the end deprive people of weapons-- or of water.

But I wonder what is being done to really provide the benefits, possible benefits, of globalization to local areas, especially rural areas. And in the matter of health and nutrition and disease, I think of a program that George McGovern has. A lot of us cut political teeth with George McGovern, but he's now working primarily to try to develop a system where worldwide every school, every elementary school, will have school lunches, feeling that that not only will encourage, especially girls, to get to school, but will also provide the nutrition, maybe the only nutrition they need. I think there are possibilities of making use of globalization for that kind of purpose, and wondered what you know about it.

HUNT: Great. I'm sure there are comments on the panel. Devaki, would you like to start?

JAIN: I don't think I can give a decent answer to that question, because if you see liberal-- we deconstruct globalization to liberalization, privatization. Because ultimately if you just use the word globalization, there's something romantic, if not sexy about it, you know, one globe, one village. These are all words which have mesmerized us. But actually it is privatization. And it does--

DOROTHY ECK: It doesn't have to be.

JAIN: No, it doesn't have to be, but the way it's working around the world now is supporting a privatization, even of water, and liberalization saying, pull down your trade barriers, open up and be competitive. Competition is good for you, it's the most-- as economics would say, it maximizes the resources and minimizes the price. But actually it's symmetrical between the power structures, that you don't have symmetry in globalization. That is, United States, Europe put up barriers on trade which are asymmetrical to developing countries. Africa has been absolutely robbed, even South Africa, by a deal which says you open up your agriculture, we open up, but they don't open up.

So there is distress in this issue of trying to get the best out of globalization. At the moment, the way globalization is working in my perception as an economist, it is not giving you an opportunity to make the best of it. It's a dream of asymmetry and inequality and a reflection of the hierarchies in political and economic power right now.

So personally I feel we simply cannot even look for the little light of hope in a globalization pattern. Even this global society that is being formed, us and Porto Alegre and so on, are very problematic to many of us because they exist but they are not able to change the terms of trade between north and south. They are not able to change the WTO rules, they are not able to make the UN Security Council work. So you begin to feel an impotence, which is bad because impotence makes you feel negative, and one wants to feel positive and energized and future-looking. So that is why it's very difficult to search for that little niche where I can

convert globalization into a happy, good, well-being, creating thing. Because of the subtext of globalization is privatization, liberalization, trade ...

HUNT: Thank you, Devaki. Maybe Brigalia has another idea on this.

BAM: I just wanted to say something. When I spoke, the time was very limited. I want to add that there are also very powerful institutions who are dealing with globalization. And the World Bank, the IMF, WTO, are very powerful institutions that are not very easy to reform and change, but I don't want to talk about that.

I'm anxious that Mary should say something related to the crisis that women face in the world, especially in Africa on the HIV/AIDS. The reason I'm anxious on that is that there is very strong correlation between the nutrition question, which has been raised, and also the HIV/AIDS. And I read in her paper and I'm anxious that she makes the point on this whole question of global justice, because there is just death out there for women. They are dying, needless to say, in numbers, younger women, and the life-- what is it-- the 36 years of age being the real average, and nobody really gives us the true figures of younger women. And I just want us to make the linkages on the nutrition question and women and [global justice], which I think she has articulated, if you don't mind.

HUNT: Yeah, I'll just say one word about it. I think you probably know much-- obviously know much more about this situation, especially in Africa, than I do. And Sissela Bok, is she still here?

SISSELA BOK: Yes.

HUNT: Yes, you might want to say something to this question too, because you have great experience now working on this across the street with the population people. But I think what you're pointing to, Brigalia, is this connection between not only nutrition and potable water but women's choices across the board, especially with regard to education and other development issues, that HIV/AIDS has morphed now into a disease which is primarily a disease of women and dependent children and primarily a disease in the South.

And so when we talk about globalization, globalization can be a homogenizing term that does not, at least AIDS is a good example of it, does not-- that passes over the specificity of how it is not an equal opportunity disease, it is not a globalized disease in an equal way, as if it were available to everyone. In fact, it is a disease that mirrors the power structures in a globalized economy, in a globalized political order. And that in some ways is its most-- in some ways it holds a mirror up to us, and those who suffer most and who suffer most often are now especially young women with dependent children.

So for me as a feminist, the question becomes not just that we are offended around issues of discrimination and oppression but we're killed by them. And I think that ups the ante a little bit, that we need to really take seriously. And I'd like to-- maybe Sissela, would you like to make a comment? And then we'll go on to the next question.

SISSELA BOK: Well, Mary and I were talking at the Pop[ulation] center right across the street. We have a number of fellows, young fellows, mostly women, as it so happens, from the developing world, and others also at the Harvard School of Public Health who are working together on various projects having to do with HIV/AIDS, and I think they would agree very much with both of you, how women are dying in extraordinary numbers and, however, they're also working on the causes, and nutrition definitely matters.

And here I would like to come back to what Dorothy Eck said. Yes, I do believe that there can be-- that globalization can be put to use for cooperation across borders, also with respect to not only nutrition in general but very much HIV/AIDS. And there's going to be a meeting on the part of all the fellows who are working now around Harvard on HIV/AIDS in different societies in a few weeks.

But I do think that one thing they are of course coming up with is that it is not just in general the evil forces of globalization that are causing this, it's very often something in the country in particular. Let's take South Africa, what the government is doing and not doing there. It is the role of men in so many families. There are so many different problems that unfortunately contribute to the disaster that HIV/AIDS is for families and for men and women and children.

HUNT: I think it also allows people to make what in my view is an outrageous suggestion, that now energies and resources go into prevention, and those who have the disease would simply be allowed to die out, as it were. I'm putting it rather baldly, but that is-- and that would mean a whole generation of especially young black women.

Azza has a quick comment and then I'd like to go to Nawal and then over here to ... (inaudible).

KARAM: I just wanted to respond very, very briefly to the points raised about HIV/AIDS. And to give as an example the fact that-- just to give as an example the fact that-- and these are some statistics I shared with Brigalia yesterday, that when we did our research we found that over 50%, in fact between 50 to 75% of social services worldwide, working specifically but not only on the issue of HIV/AIDS, tended to be organized or provided through religious communities, different religious centers. Now within that, 90% of those actually doing the work at the very grassroots level and providing the services were women of faith.

Let me just-- one more example. The organization I work with has brought together, and here is where globalization can be extremely useful and very necessary, a coalition of African women of faith who are working on HIV/AIDS and particularly working on the 14 million orphans of AIDS in Africa, but working with these issues. And the amount of information and sharing of experiences and resources sharing that they're bringing together as women of faith networks is absolutely amazing, and this would not be possible had we not had the opportunity to use an international organization working with a global network, working in Africa with people all over the world basically.

HUNT: Thank you Azza. Now, Nawal.

NAWAL EL SAADAWI: I like very much your expression about globalization of justice. I like it very much. But I'm thinking how can we do it? How can we really have this global justice? Diana, you brought us 20 years ago and now you are bringing us after 20 years. What did we do in the last 20 years? And do you have a plan for our group for the coming years? Because I am really worried.

I love your talk. This panel is great. What I have heard yesterday and today is great. But we are not doing something together as a group. And this is the problem. I live in Egypt and we try our best, but here you have a lot of-- you have money, you have ability to bring us. So we have to work together.

So my question is how to globalize from below? There is this new expression which I like very much, globalization from below, and that's what we have. We have our power. We don't have money, we don't have any media. We don't have the ...(inaudible). And we don't have this media that inform us all the time, all the time. But what we have, we have ourselves. We have our unity. We have our cooperation.

So my question, how we can globalize from below. And we start with our group. What are we going to do from here, we as a group, in the coming years? And how we are going to cooperate? And also, where is my letter that was distributed with the signature? [laughter]

HUNT: There are two copies of it somewhere. Shall we take Sharifa's question and then we'll come back to a more general discussion? And then we need to break about three minutes ago, and we will have-- just to advertise-- we will have the next panel starting at 10:45 on "Religious Networks and Women's Leadership," and I think that may provide some answer to Nawal's question. So let's go on to--

ALKHATEEB: Well there are two parts of the question. One is what about us as a grouping starting a global movement to nationalize all natural resources inside each country, that they would never be allowed to be bought by anyone outside whatsoever, for any reason, and never be able to be privatized? So that whatever those natural resources are would have to be nationalized. And then when there are rivers and water sources that go beyond one country into two countries, those two or three counties have to cooperate and jointly own those resources for the benefit of their own people. I think that in and of itself could spark a lot of development and a lot of national development rather than being taken over by multinational corporations for their purposes.

HUNT: I'm going to ask Devaki to respond.

ALKHATEEB: Okay. And my second one is when someone talks, as you spoke of global justice, for me it sends up red flags, because again there's the chance of a Euro-centric concept of justice being imposed on the rest of the world, and how will you avoid that?

HUNT: There was a gentleman up here with a question. Can yours wait until the next session, or did you want to ask yours?

BAM: He had his hand up. Let him ask.

Audience member (unidentified): My question really was in regard to globalization. It seems to me and it flows comments that were made earlier here, about the need-- how do we address the issue. It seems to me the globalizers now are essentially in control of the governments in developing nations. We have a globalizer who was a president of the university, this university. It seems pretty clear that globalization is increasing the inequality in the world very dramatically, it's producing more wage slavery, it's essentially evil. I would use that term. It's evil, in a religious sense and a secular sense.

Now, what can we do about it as citizens? We can talk about it, we can complain about it, but women, men, citizens have to do something about this because it will only bring about-- I think it will also increase the chances and risk of war.

HUNT: Thank you. I'm going to ask Devaki if you'd like to make a comment.

JAIN: It's troubling when you have a discussion like this, because there is a sense of a US-centric or a-- you can't help it, the larger group here is US-based, so it is a US-centric view of the world, like God's view of the world. But I sometimes feel, why are we worried about going into the real nitty-gritty of these things? When people say look back, retrospect, analyze, it looks like you're looking backward and not moving forward. But we cannot move forward without more details.

For example, let us just take HIV/AIDS, since it was mentioned. There's such a lot of work going on on the monopoly of the pharmaceutical companies. Now that is really a World Trade Organization. In term, the World Trade Organization cannot sort it out because it is ruled by the asymmetry of the economic powers of the world. That is the US patent system and so on.

So if we simplify and say we'll work together, we'll internationalize water, we'll claim the natural resources, it's wonderful because feminists are so visionary and so hopeful. But that's what we did for 30 years. Nawal asked what did we do for the last 20 years. We tend to fantasize our capacity to change. But if we are hard-nosed and go into the detail and work out the detail asymmetries and know about it before we do it, it might be more helpful.

So when you-- to answer your question, my dear sister, I mean this attempt to nationalize or to own water resources when we can't even have an ownership of a piece of land for a woman in Africa and maybe even in other parts of the North, to think of that in this particular world system would be difficult. But definitely we can rise. I mean, revolutions are born somewhere, and certainly I would-- I'm such a feminist that I feel only we can do that evolution. But as Nawal said, it has to be systematically thought out. How we structure that initiative which bursts like firecrackers all over the world, but it's very difficult, as she pointed out. There's so much difficulty within faith, even within women within faith. So much bridge-building has to be made.

HUNT: Thank you so much.

JAIN: So I'm so worried about too much hope.

HUNT: Thank you so much. On that dispiriting note, we'll adjourn for coffee and tea, and then we will re-gather here in ten minutes. I want to thank the panelists and thank all of you. [applause]

END OF PANEL