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**“Encountering the Transnational: Women and the
Transformation of the Authoritative in Islam”**

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A “quiet revolution” in women’s lives is occurring in the Muslim world. The new information technologies have connected the world instantaneously for the first time in human history. Through the Internet the nature of political participation has shifted; individuals have a larger role than casting a vote. The satellite TV and Internet offer journey without visa or borders and provide opportunity for dialogue and a right to travel and observe other cultures. By recreating the public sphere as a domain of equality and inclusion, women are transcending the private sphere while simultaneously renegotiating public-gendered identities. In questioning and confronting the effects of the patriarchal monopolization of authority, women are not only engaging in the process of reinterpretation and reappropriation of religious texts, but also working to transform deeply rooted gender-polarized social, cultural and political structures. Through textual and contextual activism, Muslim public realities are being redefined and women activists emerge as major players in building vigorous civil society institutions that can protest, can look to the future and provide alternatives. For this paper, I want to explore these new areas of research on women and gender in the era of global communication and address present complexities and contradictions of Muslim women’s lives and their status in the era of globalization. In so doing, I will investigate the following questions: What is the impact of this new phenomenon on women, locally and transnationally? How are civil societies being defined by this impact? How are they critically distancing themselves from such institutions in order to allow the formation of a distinct network and discourse of dissent and dialogical reengagement?