

## Exploring Islam

*Since the events of September 11, 2001, North Americans have become conscious in a new way of their ignorance of Islam. These lectures will offer different angles of entrée into an exploration of Islam, both as an historic religious tradition, and as a contemporary reality of many dimensions. In exploring Islam in these ways, we will both experience Islam as other to the West and ourselves as other to Islam, and from that recognition, move on to considering how we may envision a pluralistic future for our planet.*



### **Democratizing Shi'ism: On the Theoretical Foundation of Iran's Reform Movement**

Peyman Vahabzadeh  
Thursday, March 13, 2003  
1:30–2:30 pm (Reception to follow)  
Room 5119 AQ

The idea of authority is an immanent part of Islamic thought. Iran's current reform movement embodies serious rethinking of the fundamental principles of authority in Shi'ism. As such, the reform movement is as much a political movement for democratization of the Iranian society as it is a cultural and intellectual renaissance.

*Peyman Vahabzadeh is the author of Articulated Experiences and teaches sociology and political theory at Simon Fraser University and University of Victoria. His poetry, fiction, essays, and papers have been published in English, Persian and German.*



### **The Ethical Crescent**

Amy B. Sajoo  
Date, time and location TBA

Islam is widely understood as an ethos that encompasses the public and private domains. What is not well grasped is that the substance of that ethos turns on the evolving demands of a humanistic reason that constantly redefines tradition and identity. Ethics rather than law is paramount in Muslim scripture and civil heritage alike, a primacy that has critical implications. For it lends sustenance to a pluralist, nonviolent code that has long resisted the claims of orthodoxy and militancy— while nourishing civic, intellectual and spiritual cultures that are shared by Muslims as well as non-Muslims from Indonesia and Tajikistan to France and Canada.

*Amy B. Sajoo is the editor of Civil Society in the Muslim World: Contemporary Perspectives (2002). He has served as an advisor with various departments of the federal government in Ottawa, and is a frequent media commentator on Islam on both sides of the Atlantic. He is presently based in Vancouver.*

All lectures take place at Simon Fraser University's Burnaby campus. To confirm dates and times for lectures, call 604.291.5855 or email [grahama@sfu.ca](mailto:grahama@sfu.ca)