

# Notes on Contributors

**Margot Badran** is a historian and gender studies specialist focusing on the Middle East and Islamic societies and a consultant on gender, culture and Islam. She is a Senior Scholar at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington DC, and Senior Fellow at the Prince Alwaleed in the Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding at Georgetown University. Among her publications are *Gender and Islam in Africa: Perceptions, Practices, and Empowerment* (2011 forthcoming); *Feminism in Islam: Secular and Religious Convergences* (Oneworld Publications 2009); *Feminists, Islam and Nation: Gender and the Making of Modern Egypt* (Princeton University Press 1996); and *Opening the Gates: An Anthology of Arab Feminist Writing* (Indiana University Press 1990). She has also published numerous articles and essays in newspapers and journals.

**Cassandra Balchin** is a freelance researcher, writer and human-rights advocacy trainer, and has been part of 'Women Living Under Muslim Laws' (WLUML) for 15 years. Formerly a journalist in Pakistan, her research and writing has focused on Muslim family laws and law-reform processes, and more recently, on critiques of international development policy and practice regarding religion. She is currently involved with networking, advocacy and policy work in the context of Muslim communities in Britain. Her recent publications include "Muslim Women" and "Moderate Muslims": British Policy and the Strengthening of Religious Absolutist Control over Gender Development', in R. Eyben and J. Moncrieffe (eds), *The Power of Labelling: How and Why People's Categories Matter* (Earthscan 2007) and *Recognising the Unrecognised: Inter-Country Cases and Muslim Marriage and Divorce in Britain* (WLUML 2005).

**Ziba Mir-Hosseini** is an independent consultant, researcher and writer on Middle Eastern issues, based at the London Middle East Institute and the Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Law, both at SOAS, University of London. She has a BA in Sociology from Tehran University (1974) and a PhD in Social Anthropology from the

University of Cambridge (1980). She is a founding member of the Musawah Global Movement for Equality and Justice in the Muslim Family ([www.musawah.org](http://www.musawah.org)). Her publications include *Islam and Gender: The Religious Debate in Contemporary Iran* (Princeton University Press 1999) and (with Richard Tapper) *Islam and Democracy in Iran: Eshkevari and the Quest for Reform* (I.B. Tauris 2006). She has directed (with Kim Longinotto) two award-winning documentary films on contemporary issues in Iran: *Divorce Iranian Style* (1998) and *Runaway* (2001).

**Islah Jad** is the Director and one of the founders of the Women's Studies Institute at Bir Zeit University, Palestine. She is also Assistant Professor of Gender and Development at Bir Zeit. Islah is one of the founders of WATC (Women's Affairs Technical Committee), a national coalition for women in Palestine. She has published many works on Palestinian and Arab women's political participation and is the co-author of the *Arab Human Development Report 2005* (UNDP).

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**Nida Kirmani** recently completed a PhD in Sociology from the University of Manchester. Her thesis, 'Questioning "the Muslim Woman": the Narration of Multiple Boundaries in Zakir Nagar', looked at the formation of religious identity in a majority-Muslim neighbourhood in Delhi. Nida also holds an MA in Development Studies from the University of Manchester.

Alongside her academic experience, Nida has worked with human rights organisations in the USA, Egypt and India. Her primary research interests are related to religion, gender and development in South Asia. Nida is working jointly as a Research and Policy Analyst with Islamic Relief.

**Yousry Moustafa** is the Project Manager of the GTZ Project: ‘Promotion of Women’s Rights in Egypt’. From 1997 to 2003, he served as the Executive Director of the Egyptian Organisation for Human Rights and the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies. He also served as a human rights consultant and coordinator for the Arab Human Rights Fund and the Women and Memory Forum, a Cairo-based NGO. His work experience in the Middle East includes several years of work with local, regional and international Human Rights NGOs. He has published writings and papers on human rights, citizenship and democracy, and identity politics in the Arab region. He is a board member of the Arab Human Rights Fund. Yousry holds a Master’s degree in Environmental Pollution from Zagazig University, Egypt.

**Pragna Patel** is a founding member of the Southall Black Sisters and Women Against Fundamentalism. She worked as a coordinator and senior case worker for SBS from 1982 to 1993. In 2009, she returned to SBS as its Director. She has been centrally involved in some of SBS’s most important campaigns around domestic violence, immigration and religious fundamentalism. Among her many publications are ‘R v Zoora (Ghulam) Shah’, in Rosemary Hunter, Clare McGlynn and Erika Rackley (eds), *Feminist Judgments: From Theory to Practice* (Hart

2010); *Faith in the State? Asian Women’s Struggles for Human Rights in the UK* (Springer 2008) and several essays in *From Homebreakers to Jailbreakers* (edited by R. Gupta; Zed Books 2003).

**Hania Sholkamy** is an Egyptian anthropologist with a PhD from the London School of Economics and Political Sciences and a BA and MA from the American University in Cairo (AUC). She is Associate Research Professor at the Social Research Center of the AUC. She has co-edited with S. Szreter and A. Dharmalingam *Categories and Contexts: Anthropological and Historical Studies in Critical Demography* (OUP 2004) and with F. Ghanam *Health and Identity in Egypt* (AUC Press 2004). She is a member of the executive committee of the Institute for Gender and Women’s Studies of the AUC, a Fellow of the Economic Research Forum and a member of the International Faculty of the Arab Gulf University in Bahrain. She is currently regional coordinator of the ‘Pathways of Women’s Empowerment Research Programme Consortium’, in partnership with IDS.

**Mariz Tadros** is a Research Fellow at the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), and a researcher in the Pathways of Women’s Empowerment Research Programme Consortium, working closely in collaboration with the Middle Eastern regional hub. Prior to joining IDS, she was an assistant professor of political science at the American University in Cairo and worked for many years as a journalist for *Al-Ahram Weekly* newspaper. Recent publications include the Egypt country report for Freedom House, *Women’s Rights in the Middle East and North Africa* (2010) and ‘The Non-Muslim Other in Muslim Family Legislation’ in *Hawwa* 7.2 (Winter edition 2009).