

Rice University's Baker Institute

WOMEN & HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
**GENDER AND
HUMAN RIGHTS
IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

2014

THE EVOLVING ROLES OF WOMEN IN THE ARAB WORLD

Thursday, April 24, 2014
8:00 am–5:30 pm

James A. Baker III Hall
Rice University



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About the Conference

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region is undergoing a major transformation not only at the political level but also — and most importantly — on societal and ideological levels. Rice University's Baker Institute is hosting its first International Conference on Gender and Human Rights in the Middle East to explore the changing roles of Arab women in the political, economic and private spheres. A cross-disciplinary dialogue, guided by leading scholars and policymakers in the field, will investigate topics ranging from citizenship to domestic violence across the region. The conference will provide practical and specific policy prescriptions guided by a balanced, multifaceted perspective on gender relations in the Middle East.

About the Program

The Women and Human Rights in the Middle East Program produces in-depth research and substantive policy recommendations to help practitioners and policymakers better predict how broader participation of women in the public and private spheres might impact regional attitudes and promote societal progress. The program also hosts public lectures and academic conferences to promote the sharing of information, research and on-the-ground experiences, and to build bridges between scholars and policymakers in the Middle East, North Africa and around the world.

The Women and Human Rights in the Middle East Program focuses on three main areas of study: (1) Women and Economic Development in the Middle East, (2) Women and the Arab Awakening, and (3) Women and Political Representation in the Middle East. We take an interdisciplinary and international approach to our work, collaborating with partner organizations and scholars with a wide range of expertise.



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- 8:00 am Registration and Breakfast
- 9:00 am **Welcoming Remarks**
Marwa Shalaby, Ph.D.
Postdoctoral Fellow and Director, Women and Human Rights in the Middle East Program,
Rice University's Baker Institute
- 9:15 am **Keynote Address**
Valentine Moghadam, Ph.D.
Director, International Affairs Program, and Professor of Sociology, Northeastern University
- 9:30 am Break
- 10:00 am **Panel I — Islamic Law and Gender Equality**
Moderator: Rita Stephan, Ph.D., Georgetown University
Gail Buttorff, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Kansas
Amira Sonbol, Ph.D.
Professor of History, Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service in Qatar
Ayesha Chaudhry, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Islamic Studies and Gender Studies, University of British Columbia
- Noon Lunch
- 1:15 pm **Panel II — Agency and Women's Empowerment**
Moderator: Marwa Shalaby, Ph.D., Rice University's Baker Institute
Bozena Welborne, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Nevada, Reno; and
Contributing Scholar, Women and Human Rights in the Middle East Program, Rice University's
Baker Institute
Alessandra L. González, Ph.D.
Postdoctoral Research Associate, James Madison Program, Department of Politics,
Princeton University
Lindsay J. Benstead, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, Division of Political Science, Mark O. Hatfield School of Government,
Portland State University
- 3:00 pm Break

3:15 pm

Panel III — Societal Change Post-Arab Spring

Moderator: Kristian Coates Ulrichsen, Ph.D., Rice University's Baker Institute

Dina Kiwan, Ph.D.

Associate Professor; Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Media Studies;
American University of Beirut

Valentine M. Moghadam, Ph.D.

Director, International Affairs Program, and Professor of Sociology, Northeastern University

Wanda Krause, Ph.D.

Former Assistant Professor and Coordinator, Gulf Studies Program, Qatar University



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Participant Biographies

Lindsay J. Benstead, Ph.D., is an assistant professor of political science in the Mark O. Hatfield School of Government at Portland State University. Her research and teaching focus on clientelism, public opinion, parliamentary politics, women and politics, and survey methodology in the Middle East and North Africa. Previously, she was a postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Near Eastern Studies at Princeton University and a predoctoral fellow at the Council on Middle East Studies at Yale University. She has conducted public opinion surveys in Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia (with Ellen Lust) and Libya (with Ellen Lust and Jakob Wichmann) and published in *Foreign Affairs*, the *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, and the *Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication*. She holds an M.A.E. in applied economics and a Ph.D. in public policy and political science from the University of Michigan.

Gail Buttorff, Ph.D., is an assistant professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Kansas. She currently teaches courses on Middle East and North African politics, Islam and politics, and quantitative research methods. Her research interests focus broadly on elections and opposition politics in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). She is working on a book manuscript examining how perceptions of regime legitimacy affect opposition party strategy in authoritarian elections. In addition, Buttorff is working with colleagues at New York University Abu Dhabi and University College London on a large, multistage and multidisciplinary project examining obstacles to the implementation of family law reforms and the improvement of women's status in the MENA. She received her Ph.D. in political science from the University of Iowa.

Kristian Coates Ulrichsen, Ph.D., is the Baker Institute fellow for Kuwait. Working across the disciplines of political science, international relations and international political economy, his research examines the changing position of Persian Gulf states in the global order, as well as the emergence of longer-term, nonmilitary challenges to regional security. Previously, he worked as senior Gulf analyst at the Gulf Center for Strategic Studies and as co-director of the Kuwait Programme on Development, Governance and Globalisation in the Gulf States at the London School of Economics (LSE). He is a visiting fellow at the LSE Middle East Centre and an associate fellow at Chatham House in the United Kingdom. Coates Ulrichsen has published extensively on the Gulf. His books include "Insecure Gulf: the End of Certainty and the Transition to the Post-Oil Era" (Columbia University Press, 2011) and "The Political Economy of Arab Gulf States" (Edward Elgar Publishing, 2012). In addition, he is the author of "The Logistics and Politics of the British Campaigns in the Middle East, 1914-22" (Palgrave Macmillan, 2011) and "The First World War in the Middle East" (Oxford University Press, forthcoming). He is currently completing a book on Qatar and the Arab Spring and has been commissioned to write a textbook on the Gulf and international political economy. Coates Ulrichsen's articles have appeared several academic journals, and he consults regularly on Gulf issues for Oxford Analytica and the Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre. He also writes regularly for Open Democracy and Foreign Policy, and authors a monthly column for Gulf Business News and Analysis. Coates Ulrichsen holds a doctorate in history from the University of Cambridge.

Ayesha S. Chaudhry, Ph.D., is assistant professor of Islamic studies and gender studies in the Department of Classical, Near Eastern and Religious Studies and the Institute for Race, Gender, Sexuality and Social Justice at the University of British Columbia. Her teaching and research interests include Islamic law, Quranic exegesis and feminist hermeneutics. She is the author of “Domestic Violence and the Islamic Tradition: Ethics, Law and the Muslim Discourse on Gender” (forthcoming, Oxford University Press). This book explores the relationship of modern Muslims to the inherited Islamic tradition through a study of legal and exegetical discussions of wife-beating in the premodern and modern periods. She holds a B.A. and M.A. from the University of Toronto and a Ph.D. from New York University.

Alessandra L. González, Ph.D., is a postdoctoral research associate in the James Madison Program in the Department of Politics at Princeton University, where she conducts research on Islamic feminism in the Arab Spring. Prior to this she worked as a postdoctoral research associate for the John Jay College of Criminal Justice at the City University of New York (CUNY). In 2011, González became a research fellow at the Institute for the Studies of Religion at Baylor University in central Texas. She is the principal investigator of the Islamic Social Attitudes Survey Project (ISAS), a study in conjunction with Baylor’s Institute for the Studies of Religion (ISR) on Islamic religiosity and social attitudes, including women’s rights attitudes in the Arab Gulf region. She has book chapters in “Women’s Encounter with Globalization” (Frontpage Publications) and “Islam and International Relations: Mutual Perceptions” (Cambridge Scholars Publishing) as well as publications in the *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* and the *Annual Review of the Sociology of Religion*. She has presented her research at the Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy’s conference “The Rights of Women in Islam,” the American Council for the Study of Islamic Societies, the Dialogue of Civilizations Conference hosted by the Institute for Interfaith Dialogue in Houston, and the Gulf Research Conference at the University of Exeter. Her latest book manuscript is “Islamic Feminism in Kuwait: The Politics and Paradoxes” (Palgrave Macmillan Press). She received a B.A. in sociology and policy studies from Rice University and an M.A. and Ph.D. in sociology from Baylor University.

Dina Kiwan, Ph.D., is an associate professor in the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Media Studies at the American University of Beirut. Previously, from 2006 to 2011, she was a senior lecturer in citizenship studies at Birkbeck College, University of London, and co-director of the International Centre for Education for Democratic Citizenship (ICEDC), a joint international center of Birkbeck College and the Institute of Education at the University of London. Her book “Education for Inclusive Citizenship” (Routledge, 2008) was awarded joint second prize in 2009 by the Society for Educational Studies. She has extensive policy experience in the domain of citizenship, including naturalization and education, in the U.K., Europe and the Middle East. She received a B.A. from Oxford University, an M.A. from Harvard University and a Ph.D. from the University of London.

Wanda Krause, Ph.D., was previously assistant professor and coordinator of the Gulf Studies Program at Qatar University. Before coming to Qatar, Krause taught Middle East politics at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. Krause has studied, worked and researched in Germany, Canada, the U.K., Egypt and the Arabian Gulf, particularly the United Arab Emirates and Qatar. Her thematic areas of research are civil society, gender and women’s participation, Islamism, spirituality and activism, and state–society relations. She did her M.A. in international relations at the University of Guelph in Canada and wrote her thesis on feminist and Islamist organizations in Egypt. She holds a Ph.D. in politics of the Middle East from the Department of Politics at University of Exeter in the U.K. and wrote her dissertation on Arab Gulf civil society, gender and Islamism.



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Valentine M. Moghadam, Ph.D., is director of the International Affairs Program and professor of sociology at Northeastern University. She was previously director of the Women's Studies Program and professor of sociology at Purdue University. In addition to her academic career, she was a senior research fellow at the United Nations University World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU/WIDER) from 1990 to 1995 and a section chief at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) from 2004 to 2006. Moghadam's areas of research are globalization, revolutions and social movements, transnational feminist networks, and gender in the Middle East and North Africa. Her many publications include "Modernizing Women: Gender and Social Change in the Middle East," "Globalizing Women: Transnational Feminist Networks" (winner of the American Political Science Association's Victoria Schuck Award), and "Globalization and Social Movements: Islamism, Feminism, and the Global Justice Movement." Her current research is on democratization after the Arab Spring. Born in Tehran, Iran, Moghadam earned her M.A. and Ph.D. in sociology at American University in Washington, D.C.

Marwa Shalaby, Ph.D., is the director of the Women and Human Rights Program at Rice University's Baker Institute. She specializes in Middle Eastern politics, gender politics and quantitative research methodology. Shalaby is currently working on a multi-country project exploring female political representation in the Middle East. She graduated with honors from Al-Azhar University in Cairo, one of the most prestigious institutions in the Middle East, with a Bachelor of Arts. She also studied at the American University in Cairo and the Sorbonne in Paris before heading to the United States to earn her doctorate degree in comparative politics from the University of Houston.

Amira Sonbol, Ph.D., is a professor of history at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service in Qatar, specializing in the history of modern Egypt, Islamic history and law, women, gender and Islam. She is the author of several books, including "The New Mamluks: Egyptian Society and Modern Feudalism," "Women, the Family and Divorce Laws in Islamic History," "The Creation of a Medical Profession in Egypt: 1800-1922," "The Memoirs of Abbas Hilmi II: Sovereign of Egypt," "Women of the Jordan: Islam, Labor and Law" and "Beyond the Exotic: Muslim Women's Histories." Sonbol is the founding editor of *Hawwa*, the Journal of Women of the Middle East and the Islamic World published by E.J. Brill, and co-editor of *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*, a quarterly journal co-published with Selly Oak Colleges (U.K.).

Rita Stephan, Ph.D., is a foreign affairs officer at the United States Department of State and a visiting researcher at the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies at Georgetown University. She is also senior demographics fellow at the Arab American Institute. Before joining the State Department, she served as an analyst at the Ethnicity and Ancestry Branch of the Population Division in the United States Census Bureau. She was also a lecturer of sociology and women's studies at The University of Texas at Austin, a research associate at the Lebanese Emigration Research Center at Notre Dame University in Lebanon, and a research fellow at the American University of Beirut. Her publication topics include Lebanese women's movements, social movements, social networks and Arab-Americans. She received her Ph.D. in sociology from The University of Texas at Austin with a portfolio in women's and gender studies. Her dissertation topic, "The Family and the Making of Women's Rights Activism in Lebanon," earned her a P.E.O. Scholar Award and an American Association of University Women's Dissertation Fellowship.

Bozena Welborne, Ph.D., is a contributing scholar for the Women and Human Rights in the Middle East Program and an assistant professor at the University of Nevada, Reno. Her teaching interests include Middle East politics, international political economy, global development, women and politics, and qualitative methods. Welborne's current research focuses on the impact of Arab diaspora networks on institutional reform, norms diffusion, and social change in the Middle East and North Africa. In the past, her research has been supported by Fulbright, Boren, and Foreign Language and Area Studies fellowships, as well as through the International Foundation for Electoral Systems in Washington, D.C. Her work has been published in *Political Research Quarterly* and by the International Foundation for Electoral Systems. Her current book project — based on two years of field research across Morocco, Jordan, Bahrain and Yemen — is entitled “Between the Veil and the Vote: Exploring Women’s Political Agency in the Arab World” and considers the variation in women’s political influence across the region. Welborne is also a principal investigator on what is currently the largest academic survey of Muslim–American women in the U.S. (1,917 respondents across 49 states), inquiring into Islamic practice and politicization. She earned her Ph.D. in political science from the University of Colorado, Boulder.