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Department of Religion and Women's Studies Program
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EDUCATION

Ph.D. November 2000, Religion, Columbia University
M.A. June 1994, International Studies/Comparative Religion, University of Washington
B.A. May 1990, French, Vassar College

SUMMARY OF SKILLS

- Ten years of experience preparing written expert witness reports and providing in-court and telephonic testimony for clients in the U.S. and U.K.
- Knowledge of a broad range of quantitative and qualitative research methods, including gender and women's studies, cultural analysis, institutional analysis, participant observation, action research, case studies, literary analysis, and interviewing
- Fifteen years of social development experience with analytical expertise in social analysis, gender development, partnership development with government, academic, NGO, private sector, and civil society networks
- Twenty-four years of anthropological and ethnographic fieldwork experience in gender, religious movements, ethnic and religious conflict, Islam, family and broader social networks, and demographic change
- Regional experience in the MENA, South and Southeast Asia and Western Europe
- Professional translation experience into and from French, Hindi, Urdu, and Arabic
- Skilled at using the Internet for research; experienced public speaker; collaborative work
- Proficiency with Microsoft Word, Excel, Power Point, SPSS, Squarespace, Blackboard online learning

PROFESSIONAL CONSULTING AND GRANTWRITING EXPERIENCE

2021

Country of Origin Information Expert, Davis Polk and Wardwell, LLP. Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving a Pakistan national seeking asylum in Hong Kong. Case pending.

Country of Origin Information Expert, Mondair Solicitors, U.K. Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving a Pakistan national seeking asylum in the U.K. Case pending.

2020

Country of Origin Information Expert, Law Offices of Jason M. Sullivan. Provided expert analysis and report for a legal case involving an American national seeking a divorce from a Pakistan national. Case settled.

Country of Origin Information Expert, Law Offices of Tsirina Goroshit & Associates, PC. Provided expert report for a legal case involving two Indian nationals seeking asylum in the U.S. Case and testimony pending.

Country of Origin Information Expert, SWLLC, UK. Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving a Pakistan national seeking asylum in the U.K. Case pending.

Country of Origin Information Expert, African Advocacy Network. Provided expert report for a legal case involving two Pakistan nationals seeking asylum in the U.S. Case and testimony pending.

2019
Country of Origin Information Expert, Luke Abrusley Law, LLC. Provided expert report and testimony for a legal case involving an Egyptian national seeking asylum in the U.S. Case pending.

Country of Origin Information Expert, Mondair Solicitors. Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving a Pakistan national seeking asylum in the U.K. Case pending.

Country of Origin Information Expert, Wilsons Solicitors. Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving a Pakistan national seeking asylum in the U.K. Case pending.

Country of Origin Information Expert, NLS Solicitors. Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving a Pakistan national seeking asylum in the U.K. Case pending.

Country of Origin Information Expert, KB & A Associates. Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving an Indian national seeking asylum in the U.S. Case pending.

Country of Origin Information Expert, Naimeh Salem & Associates. Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving a Pakistan national seeking asylum in the U.S. Case pending.

2018

Country of Origin Information Expert, Wilson Solicitors Provided expert report for a legal case involving a Pakistan national seeking entry clearance to the U.K. as the spouse of a U.K. legal resident. Asylum granted.

Country of Origin Information Expert, Bajaria Solicitors Provided expert report, advice, and court testimony for a legal case involving Indian national seeking asylum in the U.K. Asylum granted.

Country of Origin Information Expert, Wilson Solicitors Provided expert report for a legal case involving Pakistan LGBT national seeking asylum in the U.K. Asylum granted.

Expert Witness, DeMott, McChesney, Curtright, and Armendáriz, LLP Provided expert report, advice, and court testimony for a legal case involving Pakistan Shi'a nationals seeking asylum in the U.S. Asylum granted.

Expert Witness, Quan Law Group Provided expert report, advice, and court testimony for a legal case involving a Pakistan Shi'a national seeking asylum in the U.S. Asylum denied.

Country of Origin Information Expert, Kobre & Kim Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving a Pakistan Shi'a national seeking asylum in Hong Kong. Asylum granted.

2017
Country of Origin Information Expert, Davis Polk Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving a Pakistan national seeking asylum in Hong Kong. Asylum granted.

Country of Origin Information Expert, Sutovic and Hartigan Solicitors. Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving Pakistani Christian nationals seeking asylum in the U.K. Asylum granted.

Country of Origin Information Expert, Duncan Lewis Solicitors Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving Pakistan nationals seeking asylum in the U.K. Asylum granted.

Expert Witness, Sanctuary for Families Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving a Pakistan national seeking asylum in the U.S. Asylum granted.

Expert Witness, Monty & Ramirez Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving a Pakistan Shi'a national seeking asylum in the U.S. Case pending.

Country of Origin Information Expert Wilson Solicitors. Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving a Pakistan LGBT national seeking asylum in the U.K. Asylum granted.

2016

Expert Witness, Coram Children's Legal Centre, U.K.. Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving Pakistan Shi'a nationals seeking asylum in the U.K. Asylum granted.

Expert Witness, Capital Area Immigrants' Rights Coalition. Provided expert report and advice for a legal case involving a Pakistan national seeking asylum in the U.S. Asylum granted.

2015

Consultant, Raising Voices. Reviewed, evaluated, and/or revised 9 violence prevention programming documents for faith-based program – SASA! – for the prevention of violence against women and girls in Uganda

Expert Witness, Arnold & Porter, LLP. Prepared expert witness report for law firm on a discrimination case involving an American Muslim client. Case was settled on behalf of plaintiff

Expert Witness, Bhogal Partners, U.K. Provided expert report and advice for two legal cases each involving a Pakistan national and Pakistan LGBT seeking asylum in the U.K. Asylum granted in both cases.

2014

Consultant, Savan Group. Served as Lead Researcher, Writing Lead, and Subject Matter Expert for publication, "A Working Woman's Guide to Her Job Rights," for the U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau.

2013

Global Women's Institute at the George Washington University and the Malala Foundation
Part of a team that developed curriculum materials for high school and college students, based on the autobiography of Malala Yousafzai. My contribution was "Religion and Religious Extremism".

Web content writing, Atrinova, <http://www.atrinova.com/>

Wrote content for the website and supervised/edited assistant content writer's work

Manuscript review, NYU Press

Reviewed a book manuscript on Pakistani women and visual culture in the Western media

Expert Witness, Law Offices of Renee C. Redman (New Haven, CT)

Prepared expert witness report on a legal case involving a Pakistan national seeking asylum in the U.S. Asylum denied.

2012

Workshop, Gender and Islam, the George Washington University's Institute for Middle East Studies
Delivered presentation on women and Islam in the MENA and South Asia for K-12 educators

Expert Witness, Law Offices of Usman B. Ahmad (Long Island, NY)

Prepared expert witness report on a legal case involving a Pakistan national seeking asylum in the U.S. Asylum was denied.

Consultant, American Council on Education

Part of a team of scholars of religion that reviewed and evaluated curricular materials for the College Network, Indianapolis, IN

2010-11

Expert Witness, Cleary, Gottlieb, Steen, and Hamilton, LLC (Washington, D.C. office)

Provided consultation and court testimony, prepared expert witness report on a legal case involving a Pakistan national seeking asylum in the U.S. on the basis of gender-based violence. Asylum granted.

Research and Consultation, Burdeshaw Associates

Provided 6 reports pertaining to country, political, and cultural conditions in Pakistan and Afghanistan. The reports were commissioned for government and private-sector clients of Burdeshaw Associates.

Principal Investigator and co-Director, “Women, Reconstruction, and the Challenges of Civil Society in Afghanistan”

Lead team of 8 partners at George Washington University to solicit funding and coordinate round table and keynote speech by activists, government and business representatives from Afghanistan and the U.S. (March 30, 2011)

Expert witness, University of Connecticut Law Asylum Clinic

Provided consultation, prepared expert witness report on a legal case involving a Pakistan national seeking asylum in the U.S. on the basis of gender-based violence. Asylum granted.

Delegate, El Fateh Univeresity (Libya) and Brown Lloyd James, LLC

Member of a delegation that met with women's groups and representatives from civil society and academic organizations in Tripoli to discuss strategies, ongoing initiatives, and progress on women's human rights issues in Libya.

2009-10

Consultant, American Council on Education

Part of a team of scholars of religion that reviewed and evaluated curricular materials for the Foreign Service Institute, Arlington, VA

Consultant, Council of American Overseas Research Centers

Evaluated applications for Arabic language study programs

2007-08

Consultant, American Council on Education

Part of a team of scholars of religion that reviewed and evaluated curricular materials for the (Baptist) Seminary Extension, Nashville, TN

Lecture Presentation, Council of American Overseas Research Centers/Critical Language Scholarships (CLS)

Presentation for CLS orientation career panel on practical applications of Arabic in the field

Consultant, Prometric

Part of a team of scholars of religion that designed and evaluated valid test items for the DSST (Dantes Subject Standardized Test) examination, for an “Introduction to World Religions” survey course

Grantwriting and Program Design Consultant, George Washington University

Part of a team of scholars of religion that designed a program and drafted a proposal for the Luce Foundation Fellowship in Religion and International Affairs, Elliot School of International Studies (application unsuccessful)

2006

Consultant, USAID and HED, Asia and Near East Bureau’s “Leadership Training for Women”

Initiative. Developed concept design for women's higher education programs in multiple countries of Asia and the Near East, co-wrote accompanying 98-page guidance document and 30-page executive summary

Lecture Presentation, Fulbright-Hays (Washington, DC)

“The changing landscape of NGO and international aid partnerships in Morocco: from relief to sustainable development,” for Fulbright-Hays seminar abroad orientation, “Promoting Grassroots Community Development in Morocco and Mali”

2004-05

Consultant, Co-coordinator for GWU faculty consulting partners, for Nortel Networks Kidz Online’s “Shaqa`iq” project on women, education, and work in the Arab World, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State. Co-wrote a 100-page report on country, cultural, and employment conditions in Egypt, Syria, and Lebanon, and co-led a GWU team of 10.

TEACHING, RESEARCH, AND RELATED EXPERIENCE

2004 (ongoing)

Associate Professor with tenure (since May 2012), George Washington University, Department of Religion and the Women’s Studies Program

2003-2004

Visiting Assistant Professor, Mount Holyoke College, Department of Religion

2002-2003

Visiting Lecturer and Research Associate, Harvard University Divinity School

2000-02

Postdoctoral Fellow, Instructor, University of California, Berkeley

PUBLICATIONS

Books

Islam and Gender Activism: A Global Perspective (book manuscript in progress)

Gender, Piety, and the Sacred in Islam (book manuscript in progress)

Women Mystics and Sufi Shrines in the Indian Subcontinent (University of South Carolina Press, 2010)

Shared Idioms, Sacred Symbols, and the Articulation of Identities in South Asia (co-edited with Michael Nijhawan, York University, Toronto) Routledge Books, 2009

Journal articles

“What Can We Learn from Islamic Gender Activism in Indonesia? A Critical Inquiry” (in submission)

“Perfecting Women in the New Age of Ignorance” Patterns of Gender Discourse in Popular Indo-Pakistani

“Women’s Literature” (in submission)

“A critical technocultural discourse analysis of Muslim fashion bloggers in France: Charting «restorative technoscapes»” with Jennifer Takhar, *Journal of Marketing Management* (January 2021)

“Reproducing “rhetrickery” in online fertility marketing: Harnessing the «rhetoric of the possible,»” with Jennifer Takhar, *Consumption Markets & Culture* (August 28, 2018)

Reclaiming Muslim Space in 21st-Century Turkey.” *Near East Quarterly* (August 2011).

An Islamic Discursive Tradition on Reform as Seen in the Writing of Deoband’s Maulana Taqi ‘Usmani” *Muslim World* vol. 99 iss. 3 (2009): 452-477.

“Women Pirs, Sainly Succession, and Spiritual Guidance in South Asian Sufism” *Muslim World* vol. 96, no. 1 (Jan 2006)

“Muslim Women Mystics and Female Spiritual Authority in the South Asian Sufi Context” *Journal of Ritual Studies* 18.1 (2004)

“Islamic and Islamicizing Discourses: Ritual Performance, Didactic Texts, and the Reformist Challenge in the South Asian Sufi Milieu.” *Annual of Urdu Studies* 17 (2002)

Reports

“Religion and Religious Extremism” in *I am Malala: a Resource Guide for Educators*. Washington, DC: The Global Women’s Institute; Little, Brown, and Co.; and the Malala Fund, 2014.
<https://malala.gwu.edu/sites/malala.gwu.edu/files/Malala-Resource-Guide-HS-2.pdf>

Blogs

Huffington Post Religion <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/kelly-pemberton/>

Women and Gender in Islam, <http://www.kellypemberton.com/womenandgenderinislam>

Encyclopedia entries and edited volume chapters

“The Politics of Gender in the Sufi Imaginary,” in Deepra Dandekar and Torsten Tschacher, eds. *Islam, Sufism, and Everyday Politics in South Asia*. Routledge Books, 2016.

“Devotional Literature,” *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Islam and Women*. Ed. Heba Raouf., OUP, 2013.

“A Chishti Response to Communal Strife in India Today,” in Charles Ramsey and Clinton Bennett, eds., *In Search of South Asian Sufis*. Continuum Books, 2012..

“Gender” in *Key Themes for the Study of Islam*, Jamal Elias, ed. Oneworld Publications, 2009.

“Introduction: Towards an Integrative Hermeneutics in the Study of Identity” (with M. Nijhawan), in *Shared Idioms, Sacred Symbols, and the Articulation of Identity in South Asia*, ed. K. Pemberton & M. Nijhawan. London & New York: Routledge 2009.

“Ritual, Reform, and Economies of Meaning at a South Asian Sufi Shrine,” in *Shared Idioms, Sacred Symbols, and the Articulation of Identity in South Asia*, ed. K. Pemberton & M. Nijhawan. London & New York: Routledge 2009.

Entries for the *Encyclopedia of Women and Islamic Cultures*, vol. III. Suad Joseph, general ed. Brill Academic Publishers, 2006.

“Whither Urdu? Language, Community, and Power in India Today,” in Ather Farouqui, ed. *Redefining Urdu Politics in India*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2006.

MEDIA INTERVIEWS

2019

Interview with Nexus Media on Gender, Sexuality and Recycling

Interview with GW Today, “GW Researchers Converge on Paris”

2016

Interviews with Pakistan media agencies on Gender and Development in Pakistan

Volunteer work with Moms Clean Air Force for legislative action on climate change

2015

On-camera interview with Voice of America on why Muslim youth in Europe may be attracted to Islamic extremist groups

On-camera interview with PBS’s “To the Contrary” on gender equality in the Qur’an

On-camera interview with China Central TV (CCTV) on why young women are joining ISIS

2013

On-camera interview for Discovery Learning Alliance documentary on Islamic medicine

2011

Phone interviews, CNN (belief blog), “Gadhafi used ‘renegade’ Islamic view for ‘purely political purposes’” (October 1, 2011) and “Will this Year’s Hajj have an ‘Arab Spring’ Effect?” (Nov 4, 2011)

2010

Televised Interview, Voice of America Pakistan, “Views on President Obama One Year after the Cairo Speech”

2008

Televised Interview, Voice of America Pakistan, “Unani Medicine”

SELECTED CONFERENCE PAPERS AND LECTURES

“Transforming Minds? The Growing Impact of Muslim Fashion Bloggers in France.” Race in the Marketplace Conference, Université de Paris-Dauphine, Paris, France (June 2019)

“Securing State Support for Gender Activism in Pakistan: An Uphill Battle?” GWU-LCWU Conference on Gender: Global Gender Perspective, Lahore Pakistan, (November 2016)

“User-gendered content? Evaluating the rhetoric of online fertility marketing discourses,” ESCP-EAP 13th Conference on Gender, Marketing, and Consumer Behavior, Paris, France (July 2016)

“Religion, Gender, and Environmentalism in the MENA: Old Frontiers and New Directions,” Invited Lecture at the American University of Kuwait, Salmiya campus, May 2015

Keynote address, “The Politics of Gender in the Sufi Imaginary,” The University of Heidelberg (Germany), Sufi Islam and the Politics of Belonging in South Asia Conference, November, 2014 (by invitation)

“What Can We Learn from Islamic Gender Activism in Indonesia? A Critical Inquiry,” International Conference on “Southeast Asian Islam: Legacy and New Interpretation,” Jakarta, Indonesia, organized by the Center for the Study of Islam and Society (PPIM), State Islamic University Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta (August 14-16, 2014)

Discussion about the Middle East and the Arab Spring, GWU IMES (Institute for Middle East Studies) K-12 teacher Outreach Program, Alice Deal Middle School (Feb 2014).

“An Introduction to Islam and Women,” GWU IMES (Institute for Middle East Studies) K-12 teacher Outreach Program: Gender and Islam: Law, Society, and Rights, October 2012 (by invitation)

“Women in Islam, and in Islamic history, culture, society, and politics,” guest lecture for the Foreign Service Institute June, 2012 (by invitation)

“Religious Authority: Law, Mysticism, and Scholarship in Islam,” guest lecture for the Foreign Service Institute January 2012 (by invitation)

Muslim Women Peacebuilders workshop, American University, 2009 (by invitation)

“Islamic Medicine: Perspectives on its Contemporary Revival in South Asia and the Middle East” Punjab University and the American Institute of Pakistan Studies, Lahore, Pakistan, 2009 (by invitation)

“The Influence of Persia upon the Development of Unani medicine: Healing Systems, Epistemologies, and the Mirror of the Past.” Association for the Study of Persianate Societies Conference, Punjab University and Lahore University of Management Sciences, Lahore, Pakistan, 2009

“An Islamic Discursive Tradition on Reform as Seen in the Writing of Deoband’s Maulana Taqi ‘Usmani.” Annual Conference on South Asia, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI 2007, and American Academy of Religion Conference, San Diego, 2007

“Perfecting Women in the New Age of Ignorance: Emerging Patterns of Reformist Rhetoric in Indo-Pakistan,” Annual Conference on South Asia, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI 2006

“The changing landscape of NGO and international aid partnerships in Morocco: from relief to sustainable development” Fulbright-Hays seminar abroad orientation, “Promoting Grassroots Community Development in Morocco and Mali” Washington DC, June 2006

“Teaching Islam within a Liberal Arts Curriculum,” Workshop on Teaching Islam, US Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland, February 2006 (by invitation)

“An Assembly of Love Songs: Gender, Genre, and Performance in Contemporary Sufi Practice” (Middle East Studies Association Conference, Washington, DC, November 2005)

“Media and State Responses to Islamists in India: the Deobandi Factor” UC Berkeley Conference, “Islam and Muslims in America: History, Development and Future Prospects,” Berkeley, CA, April 2003 (by invitation)

“Reformist Sufis on Women and Spiritual Authority in the Second Age of Ignorance,” University College of London/SOAS/Arts and Humanities Research Board’s Centre for Asian and African Literatures Workshop, “Gender and Literature in Cross-Cultural Contexts,” London, England, April 2003 (by invitation)

“Reading Gender in Mystical Islam: Women, Piety, and Sainthood Contextualized,” Harvard University Divinity School, Spring Lecture Series, Cambridge, MA, March 2003

“Whither Urdu? Language, Community, and Power in India Today,” International Seminar: “Agenda for Urdu Education in 21st Century India with Special Reference to Dr. Zakir Husain,” New Delhi, February 2002 (by invitation)

SELECT HONORS AND AWARDS

Columbian College Facilitating Fund, George Washington University (2017-18)

Faculty Fellowship, Mount Vernon campus, George Washington University (2015-16)

Global Women’s Institute Research Fellowship, The George Washington University (2014)

Columbian College Dean’s Faculty Research Award, The George Washington University (2014)

GW-Bogazici fund grant, George Washington University (2011)

Institute for Middle East Studies, summer stipend for research (2010-11)

University Facilitating Fund Fellowship, George Washington University (2009, 2007)

Larson Fellowship in Health and Spirituality, Library of Congress (2008-09)

Junior Scholar Incentive Award, George Washington University (2004)

Research Associate/Visiting Lecturer, Women’s Studies in Religion Prog., Harvard University (2002-03)

Chancellor’s Postdoctoral Fellowship, University of California, Berkeley (2000-02)

Charlotte Newcombe Dissertation Fellowship (1998-99)

USED-Fulbright Fellowship for Dissertation Research (1997-98)

LANGUAGES

Fluent: French, Hindi, Urdu
Working knowledge: Persian, Spanish

Moderate: Arabic (MSA and Egyptian),
Turkish (modern and Ottoman)

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Academy of Religion
Middle East Studies Association
Association for the Study of Persianate Societies

American Institute of Pakistan Studies
American Iranian Council

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AT GWU

Steering Committee, The George Washington University Humanities Center (2020-present)
Director of Undergraduate Studies, Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (2019-present)
Hiring Committee for Director search, Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies
Program Advisor, M.A. Program in Islam (2014-present)
Undergraduate Studies Committee (2017)
Women's Studies Executive Committee (2004-present)
Curriculum Development Project (based on Malala Yousafzai's autobiography), The GWU Global Women's Institute and the Malala Foundation
Research Advisory Committee (2011-14)
Director and Graduate Studies Advisor, M.A. Program in Islam (2004-14)
President's Task Force on Global Initiative on the Status of Women (2010-11)

REFERENCES (Available on request)
