



Islam And Human Rights: Tradition And Politics, Third Edition

By Ann Elizabeth Mayer

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Do Islam and Islamic law constitute real obstacles to human rights? In this revised and updated edition, the author offers critical assessments of recent Islamic human rights schemes that dilute or eliminate the human rights protections afforded by international law and compares these both with the Islamic legal heritage and with international human rights law. Contesting stereotypes about a supposedly monolithic Islam inherently incompatible with human rights, Mayer dissects the political motives behind the selective use of elements of the Islamic tradition by conservative groups opposed to democracy and human rights. The third edition considers recent developments in human rights law and policy. For example, in Egypt, the notorious Abu Zaid case—where a scholar was declared an apostate and divorced against his will—marked a dramatic setback for human rights in the name of upholding Islamic law. However, some regimes are rethinking their previous attacks on the international human rights system—Iran being an example of a country that has recently been moving in the direction of combating the view that its Islamic ideology necessarily leads to human rights violations. In addition, the debates on whether Islam stands in the way of human rights continue in the UN, provoked in part by recent "Islamic" reservations to human rights conventions. This edition considers these recent events and many others. Also new to the third edition: the Cairo Declaration of Human Rights in Islam and many excerpts from the Iranian constitution.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Must reading for anyone interested in the changing order in the Middle East and Islamic societies in general, and certainly for human rights activists with interest in the Muslim world."

About the Author

Ann Elizabeth Mayer is Associate Professor of Legal Studies and Business Ethics at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania . She holds a PhD in Middle Eastern History from the University of Michigan, a JD from the University of Pennsylvania Law School, and a Certificate in Islamic and Comparative Law from the School of Oriental and African Studies in London. She has conducted research in countries ranging from Morocco to Pakistan and has published extensively on Islamic law in the contemporary Middle East and on international human rights law, especially women's international human rights.

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