Dr. Livia Holden’s research on divorce at the woman’s initiative in Pakistan and diasporas contributes to the study of Islamic divorce known as khul' as it is understood and used in different Islamic contexts. Khul', which is often referred to by contemporary scholars as a "woman's divorce," is recognized in most schools of Islamic law as a divorce by a woman's prerogative. However, anthropological research on law in practice finds that khul' is utilized in a variety of which are not always favourable to women. Thus, although khul’ may allow women some flexibility and options in divorce, it can also significantly disadvantage them.

*Divorce and the Woman’s Initiative in Pakistan and Diasporas* explores and analyses Muslim practices of khul' divorce in Pakistan and their impact in the diasporas. On the basis of more than one hundred cases observed in court and published precedents the author traces the multiple interpretative frames of current socio-legal narratives to throw light on their implication vis-à-vis legal outcomes. The author draws also from her own experience as expert in court for legal proceedings related to migration and asylum in which khul' divorce is discussed. The central question of her paper is how divorce at the woman's initiative is dealt with and what are the successful arguments in law courts? Her paper describes the interplay between custom and positive law as ways through which social actors make sense of power and governance very often creatively developing arguments following the different fora of litigation in South Asia and in the diasporas. Through a multidisciplinary inquiry combining legal pluralism, feminist methods and collaborative approaches, her paper highlights the necessity of understanding in a concerted construction of knowledge with social actors, the instances contradicting, even if not in an open conflict, the mainstream discourses on the men's exclusive initiative of Muslim divorce. Her paper also draws on the changes of the public discourse about divorce at the woman's initiative over the last two decades to conclude with considerations about the unexpected outcomes of advocacy and human rights instances.

Lady Judges of Pakistan follows legal proceedings in the law courts presided over by women-judges in four provinces of Pakistan: Punjab, Sindh, Baluchistan, and Khyberpakthunkw. Shot in observational style and developed on the basis of collaborative relationships, it weaves together court proceedings, personal narratives, and glimpses of everyday life. While the main action flows through the multi-sited management of justice, the interactions among the litigants, defendants, lawyers, clerics, and police offer insights in the socio-legal context that the women judges are grappling with in Pakistan. Three version lengths (29, 54, and 75 min.) in Urdu and English with English subtitles are available and the medium length version was screened at the University of Washington.