



Transforming Faith: The Story of Al-Huda and Islamic Revivalism among Urban Pakistani Women (Gender and Globalization)

Sadaf Ahmad

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Over the last decade, there has been an increasing number of middle and upper-class urban Pakistani women actively turning toward Islam via Al-Huda, an Islamic school for women aiming to transform the women who absorb its message into "pious" subjects. Established in the early 1990s, Al-Huda is unique in its ability to attract a following among these women, a feat other religious groups have been unsuccessful in accomplishing. In *Transforming Faith*, Sadaf Ahmad deftly explores how Al-Huda is fostering a new generation of educated, urban, middle-class women to become veiled conservatives. She offers an engrossing and sensitive account of how the school's aggressive recruiting methods through informal religious study groups and a one-year degree program combined with the school's techniques of persuasive teaching methods have turned Al-Huda into a social movement. As a woman of Pakistani origin, Ahmad offers an in-depth look at the students and members of Al-Huda in ways that a cultural outsider would be excluded from doing. She reveals that although Pakistani women are better educated than ever before they still face social barriers that limit them from working or pursuing further education. Ahmad's groundbreaking work demonstrates Al-Huda's ever-widening teachings and influence in Pakistan and in its recent global extensions. More broadly, this book illuminates how Al-Huda uses the trappings of modernity to engage educated women in a kind of religious study that transforms their ideology, behavior, and lifestyle within a particular Islamic framework. Because of Al-Huda's teachings, Pakistani society is changing, as is the rest of the Muslim world.

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