



Muslim Women Reformers: Inspiring Voices Against Oppression

Ida Lichter

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In a world where the strident demands of Islamic extremists capture the media's attention, the courageous protests of Muslim reformers barely receive any notice. These include a surprising number of women who are prepared to challenge institutionalized persecution, risking derision, arrest, physical harm, and even death.

In this inspiring compilation of Muslim women's stories from around the world, the voices of these long-oppressed women ring loud and clear as they question ideology and culture, patriarchal and religious beliefs, and demand the social and political rights women lack in many Muslim countries. The reformers speak out with passion, humanity, and sometimes humor in these compact and often poignant biographies, bringing alive the harsh realities for women in many parts of the world.

By surveying a wide range of Muslim reformers, not only in the Middle East but also in Europe and North America, author Ida Lichter uncovers some significant emerging trends. For example, she notes that the majority of Muslim feminists would like to see reform contained within Islam. Many criticize their patriarchal culture for suppressing egalitarian views that they believe the Koran expresses and so they advocate a reinterpretation of the holy text. Some demand changes to discriminatory Sharia-based laws. Others campaign openly for political and educational reforms.

Complete with a glossary and a list of helpful Web sites, this vibrant anthology makes use of reliable translations from original languages to demonstrate the groundswell of grassroots change that promises eventually to bring even the most conservative sectors of Islam into the twenty-first century.

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