



Reclaiming the Nation: Muslim Women and the law in India

Vrinda Narain



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Living in pluralist India has had critical consequences for Muslim women who are expected to follow a determined and strict code of conduct. The impact of this contradiction is most evident in the continuing denial of gender equality within the family, as state regulation of gender roles in the private sphere ultimately affects the status of women in the public sphere. *Reclaiming the Nation* examines the relationship between gender and nation in post-colonial India through the lens of marginalized Muslim women.

Drawing on feminist legal theory, postcolonial feminist theory, and critical race theory, Vrinda Narain explores the idea of citizenship as a potential vehicle for the emancipation of Muslim women. Citizenship, Narain argues, opens the possibility for Indian women to reclaim a sense of selfhood free from imposed identities. In promoting the hybridity of culture and the modernity of tradition, Narain shows how oppositional categories such as public versus private, Muslim versus feminist, and Western versus Indian have been used to deny women equal rights.

A timely account of the struggle for liberation within a restrictive religious framework, *Reclaiming the Nation* is an insightful look at gender, nationhood, and the power of self-determination.



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