



## New South Asian Feminisms: Paradoxes and Possibilities

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South Asian Feminism is in crisis. Under constant attack from right-wing nationalism and religious fundamentalism and co-opted by 'NGO-ization' and neoliberal state agendas, once autonomous and radical forms of feminist mobilization have been ideologically fragmented and replaced. It is time to rethink the feminist political agenda for the predicaments of the present.

This timely volume provides an original and unprecedented exploration of the current state of South Asian feminist politics. It will map the new sites and expressions of feminism in the region today, addressing issues like disability, Internet technologies, queer subjectivities and violence as everyday life across national boundaries, including India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Written by young scholars from the region, this book addresses the generational divide of feminism in the region, effectively introducing a new 'wave' of South Asian feminists that resonates with feminist debates everywhere around the globe.

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## **Editorial Review**

### Review

'Since the 1970s, South Asia has seen wide-ranging economic changes that have had major implications for people's livelihood strategies, whilst 'mainstreaming' has given gender issues an unprecedented visibility in development discourses and organisations. A changing road-map has required new strategies and vocabularies as well as different modes of intervention for responding to transnational processes and global discourses, to the ambiguities of co-option by the state or NGOs, or to collaboration with other social movements. This volume makes a very welcome contribution to our understanding of the diverse ways in which new generations of South Asian feminists have responded to these challenges.' Patricia Jeffery, Professor of Sociology, University of Edinburgh and co-editor of *Appropriating Gender: Women's Activism, Politicized Religion and the State in South Asia* and author of *Frogs in a Well: Indian Women in Purdah* (the first volume in Zed's *Women in the Third World* series) 'This is a significant contribution to the interrogation of feminist subjectivity and politics by a younger generation of scholars exploring both older and newer forms of activism in South Asia and the UK. Be it sex work or NGO work, war or sexual harassment, be it cyber feminism, subnationalism or multi faithism, this collection of essays offers fresh and thoughtful perspectives. A must read for anyone seeking to understand the paradoxes and possibilities which challenge us today in South Asia and beyond.' Malathi de Alwis, co-editor of *Feminists Under Fire: Exchanges Across War Zones and Embodied Violence: Communalising Women's Sexuality in South Asia* 'Covering a wide range of debates, which look at women's sexuality, violence against women, secularism and women in conflict, the contributions in *New South Asian Feminisms: Paradoxes and possibilities* bring to light a very lively and dynamic sphere of social and political activism. Going beyond a retrospective or a nostalgic mode to examine the adjustments and negotiations that feminist organizations have been making, this collection of essays limns out the contours of their new and exciting formations, as women challenge the hierarchies of class, race and gender in a highly volatile and changing world.' Professor Firdous Azim, BRAC University, Bangladesh 'I can think of no better guide to contemporary feminisms in South Asia than this collection of uniformly first-rate essays. Individually, and collectively, they map out the contemporary terrain for feminist scholarship and politics with great judiciousness and acuity. *New South Asian Feminisms* deserves to be at the centre of conversations that constitute South Asian scholarship.' Mrinalini Sinha, Alice Freeman Palmer Professor of History, University of Michigan 'A timely examination of feminist practice in an era of neo-liberalism. These divergent and nuanced histories and analyses from across South Asia are certain to spark debate and re-vitalize women's activism. As such, they are a much needed challenge to discourses proclaiming the demise of feminism and the end of history.' Shahnaz Rouse, Professor in Sociology, Sarah Lawrence College, New York 'As a collection, *New South Asian Feminisms* makes us re-engage with feminisms and the actual dynamics of movements. With the inclusion of multiple voices, the book enables a process of thinking and assimilating, whereby the reader is challenged to go beyond rhetoric and confront some of the views put forward.' Pramada Menon, Queer Feminist Activist, New Delhi 'This volume is a significant contribution to the growing academic interest in exploring recent trends in contemporary South Asian feminisms. Locating these trends in the context of continuity and change, the theoretically and empirically rich essays succeed in significantly widening our understanding of feminisms in both the past and the present.' Prem Chowdhry, former Professorial Fellow of the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi, and author of *Contentious Marriages, Eloping Couples: Gender, Caste, and Patriarchy in Northern India* 'The book encourages thoughtful reflection on the complexity of the issues before feminism in South Asia, their evolving nature, and the need for vigilance and care in interpreting women's different oppressions and the interrelationships and interactions among these.' *Asian Journal of Women's Studies*

## About the Author

Srila Roy is a lecturer in sociology at the University of Nottingham, UK.

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