



# **Paradise Beneath Her Feet: How Women Are Transforming the Middle East (Council on Foreign Relations Books (Random House))**

*Isobel Coleman*

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Now with a new Preface and Afterword by the author

**“Outstanding . . . [Isobel Coleman] takes us into remote villages and urban bureaucracies to find the brave men and women working to create change in the Middle East.”—*Los Angeles Times***

In this timely and important book, Isobel Coleman shows how Muslim women and men across the Middle East are working within Islam to fight for women’s rights in a growing movement of Islamic feminism. Journeying through Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, Coleman introduces the reader to influential Islamic feminist thinkers and successful grassroots activists working to create economic, political, and educational opportunities for women. Their advocacy for women’s rights based on more progressive interpretations of Islam are critical to bridging the conflict between those championing reform and those seeking to oppress women in the name of religious tradition. Socially, culturally, economically, and politically, the future of the region depends on finding ways to accommodate human rights, and in particular women’s rights, with Islamic law. These reformers—and thousands of others—are the people leading the way forward.

Featuring new material that addresses how the Arab uprisings and other recent events have affected the social and political landscape of the region, *Paradise Beneath Her Feet* offers a message of hope: Change is coming to the Middle East—and more often than not, it is being led by women.

## **Praise for *Paradise Beneath Her Feet***

“Clearly written, deeply moving, and wonderfully enlightening.”—Reza Aslan, author of *No god but God*

“[An] engrossing portrait of real Muslim women that reveals how Islamic feminists . . . are working with and within the culture, rather than against it . . . to forge ‘a legitimate Islamic alternative to the current repressive system.’ Coleman doesn’t diminish the enormity of the struggle, but she argues convincingly that it might yet rewrite Islam’s future.”—*Publishers Weekly* (starred review)

“A nuanced view of Islam’s role in public life that is cautiously hopeful.”—*The Economist*

“Eye-opening . . . Deeply religious, profoundly determined and modern in every way, these are twenty-first-century women bent on change. Hear them roar and see a future being born before our eyes.”—*Booklist*

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