



# In Amma's Healing Room: Gender and Vernacular Islam in South India

*Joyce Burkhalter Flueckiger*

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"[I]t is extremely salubrious to see the ways Islam works in the lives of ordinary people who are not politicized in their religious lives.... No other book on South Asia has material like this." —Ann Grodzins Gold

In Amma's Healing Room is a compelling study of the life and thought of a female Muslim spiritual healer in Hyderabad, South India. Joyce Burkhalter Flueckiger describes Amma's practice as a form of vernacular Islam arising in a particular locality, one in which the boundaries between Islam, Hinduism, and Christianity are fluid. In the "healing room," Amma meets a diverse clientele that includes men and women, Muslim, Hindu, and Christian, of varied social backgrounds, who bring a wide range of physical, social, and psychological afflictions. Flueckiger collaborated closely with Amma and relates to her at different moments as daughter, disciple, and researcher. The result is a work of insight and compassion that challenges widely held views of religion and gender in India and reveals the creativity of a tradition often portrayed by Muslims and non-Muslims alike as singular and monolithic.

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