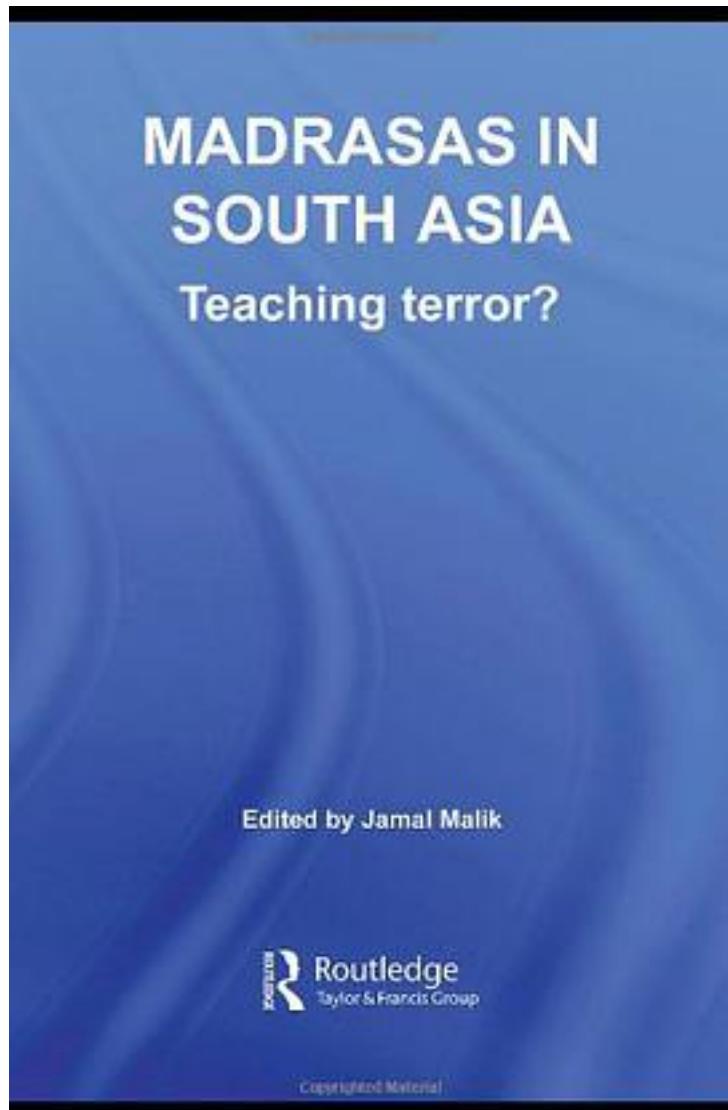


Madrasas in South Asia



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After 9/11, madrasas have been linked to international terrorism. They are suspected to foster anti-western, traditionalist or even fundamentalist views and to train al-Qaeda fighters. This has led to misconceptions on madrasa-education in general and its role in South Asia in particular. Government policies to modernize and 'pacify' madrasas have been precipitous and mostly inadequate. This book discusses the educational system of madrasas in South Asia. It gives a contextual account of different facets of madrasa education from historical, anthropological, theological, political and religious studies perspectives. Some contributions offer recommendations on possible - and necessary - reforms of religious educational institutions. It also explores the roots of militancy and sectarianism in Pakistan, as well as its global context. Overall, the book tries to correct misperceptions on the role of madrasas, by providing a more balanced discussion, which denies neither the shortcomings of religious educational institutions in South Asia nor their important contributions to mass education.

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