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Title of Paper to be Presented: The Quran Workbook: Materiality and Devotion in

Contemporary Pakistan **Panel Title, if applicable:** Old/New Media Cultures in Modern Asia

Paper Abstract: Over the last two decades, increasingly large numbers of literate women in urban centers of Pakistan are participating in specialized programs of learning that focus on cultivating competencies for translation and interpretation of the Quran (from classical Arabic to Urdu). The ability to comprehend the meaning of the Quranic word not only marks a radical departure from older forms of textual engagement that privileged ritual recitation among laypersons but this shift in emphasis is also viewed as necessary to practice an 'authentic' and 'global' form of Islam. As a response to this shift, a new print genre, the Quran 'workbook' has emerged, which allows women to inscribe the meaning of the Quran in Urdu alongside the Arabic text. This paper explores the emergence and popular use of this type of workbook among women participants of religious learning to understand how this textual genre facilitates emerging notions of authentic religiosities among women participants. I highlight how such printed forms introduce new modalities of textual engagement for women readers of the Quran. I further show how such printed formats participate in and indeed nurture "graphic ideologies" (Hull, 2003), where writing is framed as the necessary condition for a 'truer' reading of the Quran to be undertaken. Focusing on the material objects and practices of writing that are deployed in making the Quran meaningful, this paper highlights how print genres not only remain relevant but are innovatively deployed towards constructing new subjectivities in contemporary Pakistan.