



Women and the Transmission of Religious Knowledge in Islam (Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization)

By Professor Asma Sayeed

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Asma Sayeed's book explores the history of women as religious scholars from the first decades of Islam through the early Ottoman period (seventh to the seventeenth centuries). Focusing on women's engagement with *ʿadāth*, this book analyzes dramatic chronological patterns in women's *ʿadāth* participation in terms of developments in Muslim social, intellectual, and legal history. Drawing on primary and secondary sources, this work uncovers the historical forces that shaped Muslim women's public participation in religious learning. In the process, it challenges two opposing views: that Muslim women have been historically marginalized in religious education, and alternately that they have been consistently empowered thanks to early role models such as *ʿĪshā bint Abī Bakr*, the wife of the Prophet Muḥammad. This book is a must-read for those interested in the history of Muslim women as well as in debates about their rights in the modern world. The intersections of this history with topics in Muslim education, the development of Sunnī orthodoxies, Islamic law, and *ʿadāth* studies make this work an important contribution to Muslim social and intellectual history of the early and classical eras.

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Review

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"This work by Sayeed is not merely another study on women or gender with a focus on Sunni Islam. Similarly, it is not just about Islamic education and the dissemination of Hadith (stories about the practices and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad) that serve as norms for Islamic behavior, both religious and secular. Sayeed's perspectives are much more inclusive, bringing together various methodologies and disciplines ... Highly recommended."

S. P. Blackburn, Choice

About the Author

Asma Sayeed is Assistant Professor of Islamic Studies in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures at the University of California, Los Angeles. She has published articles in *Studia Islamica* and *Islamic Law and Society* and has contributed a number of encyclopedia articles on women's history in early and classical Islam.

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