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978-0-521-53747-6 - Women, Family, and Gender in Islamic Law

Judith E. Tucker

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## WOMEN, FAMILY, AND GENDER IN ISLAMIC LAW

In what ways has Islamic law discriminated against women and privileged men? What rights and power have been accorded to Muslim women, and how have they used the legal system to enhance their social and economic position? In an analysis of Islamic law through the prism of gender, Judith E. Tucker tackles these complex questions relating to the position of women in Islamic society, and to the ways in which the legal system shaped the family, property rights, space, and sexuality, from classical and medieval times to the present. Hers is a nuanced approach, which negotiates broadly between the history of doctrine and of practice and the interplay between the two. Working with concepts drawn from feminist legal theory and by using particular cases to illustrate her arguments, the author systematically addresses questions of discrimination and expectation – what did men expect of their womenfolk? – and of how the language of the law contributed to that discrimination, infecting the system and all those who participated in it. The author is a fluent communicator, effectively guiding the reader through the historical roots and intellectual contours of the Islamic legal system, and explicating the impact of these traditions on Islamic law as it is practiced in the modern world.

JUDITH E. TUCKER is Professor of History in the Department of History and Center for Contemporary Arab Studies at Georgetown University, Washington, DC. Her previous publications include *Women in Nineteenth-Century Egypt* (Cambridge, 1985) and *In the House of the Law: Gender and Islamic Law in Ottoman Syria and Palestine* (1998).

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*Georgetown University*



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*For Sue, Beth, and Prilla*  
*my sisters*

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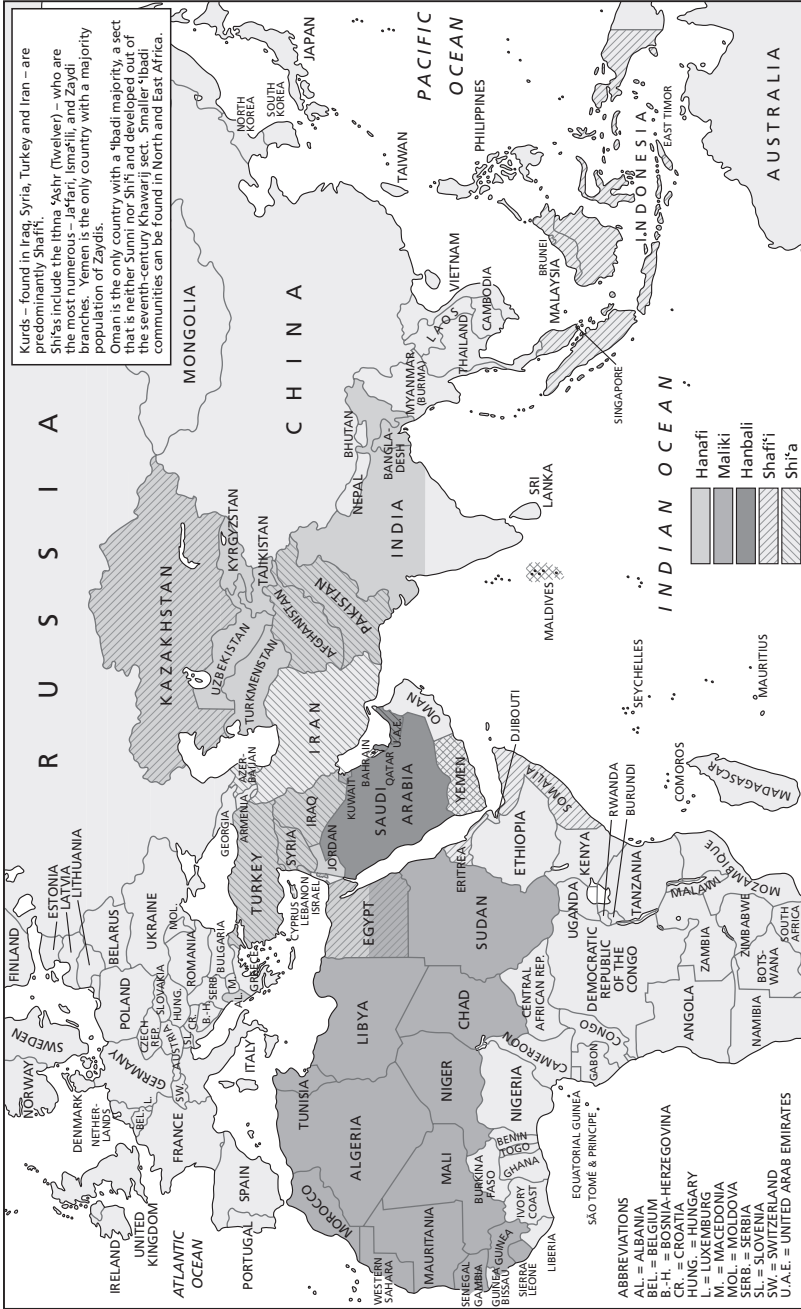
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Map 1 Countries with majority Muslim populations

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Map 2 Areas of predominance of Islamic legal schools (*madhhabs*)