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# Believing Women In Islam Unreading Patriarchal

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 Islamic Interpretive Tradition and Gender Justice  
 Feminist Edges of the Qur'an  
 Reconfiguring Islamic Tradition  
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*Believing Women In  
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## MORSE OSBORN

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*Speaking in God's Name* SUNY Press  
 A world-renowned professor of Islamic studies, Amina Wadud has long been at the forefront of what she calls the 'gender jihad,' the struggle for justice for women within the global Islamic community. In 2005, she made international headlines when she helped to promote new traditions by leading the Muslim Friday prayer in New York City, provoking a firestorm of media controversy and kindling charges of blasphemy among conservative Muslims worldwide. In this provocative book, "Inside the Gender Jihad", Wadud brings a wealth of experience from the trenches of the jihad

to make a passionate argument for gender inclusiveness in the Muslim world. Knitting together scrupulous scholarship with lessons drawn from her own experiences as a woman, she explores the array of issues facing Muslim women today, including social status, education, sexuality, and leadership. A major contribution to the debate on women and Islam, Amina Wadud's vision for changing the status of women within Islam is both revolutionary and urgent.

*Islamic Interpretive Tradition and Gender Justice* Oxford University Press

In this book Professor Lang gives a very personal account of his search for God when he found out that his inherited religious beliefs could no longer answer his questions. A chance encounter led him to Islam. But now, how does he adapt to his new community, its beliefs and lifestyle?

**Feminist Edges of the Qur'an** U of Minnesota Press

A fascinating journey into Islam's diverse history of ideas, making an argument for an "Islamic Enlightenment" today In *Reopening Muslim Minds*, Mustafa Akyol, senior fellow at the Cato Institute and opinion writer for *The New York Times*, both diagnoses "the crisis of Islam" in the modern world, and offers a way forward. Diving deeply into Islamic theology, and also sharing lessons from his own life story, he reveals how Muslims lost the universalism that made them a great civilization in their earlier centuries. He especially demonstrates how values often associated with Western Enlightenment — freedom, reason, tolerance, and an appreciation of science — had Islamic counterparts, which sadly were cast aside in favor of more dogmatic views, often for

political ends. Elucidating complex ideas with engaging prose and storytelling, *Reopening Muslim Minds* borrows lost visions from medieval Muslim thinkers such as Ibn Rushd (aka Averroes), to offer a new Muslim worldview on a range of sensitive issues: human rights, equality for women, freedom of religion, or freedom from religion. While frankly acknowledging the problems in the world of Islam today, Akyol offers a clear and hopeful vision for its future.

**Reconfiguring Islamic Tradition** Believing Women in Islam Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur'an  
 Authors of autobiographies are always engaged in creating a "self" to present to their readers. This process of self-creation raises a number of intriguing questions: why and how does anyone choose to present herself or himself in an autobiography? Do women and men represent themselves in different ways and, if so, why? How do differences in culture affect the writing of autobiography in various parts of the world? This book tackles these questions through a close examination of Arab women's autobiographical writings. Nawar Al-Hassan Golley applies a variety of western critical theories, including Marxism, colonial discourse, feminism, and narrative theory, to the autobiographies of Huda Shaarawi, Fadwa Tuqan, Nawal el-Saadawi, and others to demonstrate what these critical methodologies can reveal about Arab women's writing. At the same time, she also interrogates these theories against the chosen texts to see how adequate or appropriate these models are for analyzing texts from other cultures. This two-fold investigation sheds important new light on how the writers or editors of Arab women's autobiographies have written, documented, presented, and organized their texts.

**Believing Women In Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations Of The Qur'an Edition** University of Texas Press  
 The first work to undertake a theological critique of Christian feminism as a whole, this book seeks to bring traditional faith and the feminist position into a deeper dialogue. Part One presents an overview of the historical issues raised by feminist theology. Part Two compares key feminist theological presuppositions to the prophetic interpretation of reality found in the biblical tradition.  
*The Beauty of the Hour* Oxford University Press (UK)  
 Gender equity in Islam presents an overview of the status and rights of Muslim women as defined by the Qur'an and Sunnah. Dr. Badawi examines the

spiritual, social, economic and political aspects of women's position in Islam and, in doing so, effectively summarizes the role of women in Muslim society.  
**A Brief Introduction** Simon and Schuster  
 A classic, pioneering account of the lives of women in Islamic history, republished for a new generation This pioneering study of the social and political lives of Muslim women has shaped a whole generation of scholarship. In it, Leila Ahmed explores the historical roots of contemporary debates, ambitiously surveying Islamic discourse on women from Arabia during the period in which Islam was founded to Iraq during the classical age to Egypt during the modern era. The book is now reissued as a Veritas paperback, with a new foreword by Kecia Ali situating the text in its scholarly context and explaining its enduring influence. "Ahmed's book is a serious and independent-minded analysis of its subject, the best-informed, most sympathetic and reliable one that exists today."—Edward W. Said "Destined to become a classic. . . . It gives [Muslim women] back our rightful place, at the center of our histories."—Rana Kabbani, *The Guardian*

**Some Impressions of an American Convert to Islam** University of Texas Press  
 Is women's inequality supported by the Qur'an? Do men have the exclusive right to interpret Islam's holy scripture? In her best-selling book *Believing Women in Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur'an*, Asma Barlas argues that, far from supporting male privilege, the Qur'an actually encourages the full equality of women and men. She explains why a handful of verses have been interpreted to favor men and shows how these same verses can be read in an egalitarian way that is fully supported by the text itself and compatible with the Qur'an's message that it is complete and self-consistent. *A Brief Introduction* presents the arguments of *Believing Women* in a simplified way that will be accessible and inviting to general readers and undergraduate students. The authors focus primarily on the Qur'an's teachings about women and patriarchy. They show how traditional teachings about women's inferiority are not supported by the Qur'an but were products of patriarchal societies that used it to justify their existing religious and social structures. The authors' hope is that by understanding how patriarchal traditionalists have come to exercise so much authority in today's Islam, as well as by rereading some of the Qur'an's most controversial verses, adherents of the faith will learn to

question patriarchal dogma and see that an egalitarian reading of the Qur'an is equally possible and, for myriad reasons, more plausible.

**Lost History** Amer Trust Publications  
 This latest edition of *Discovering the Qur'an* includes a new preface by the author. Used by students around the world as a reliable guide to reading a translation of the Qur'an, it shows how the Qur'an is experienced by Muslims, describing the rhythmic and rhyme scheme structures, the context in which it is heard, the part played by learning by heart, and the importance of calligraphy. It is also about the Qur'an and its relationship to Muhammed, as well as helping to divine the ordering of the surahs or chapters. In an English-speaking world newly sensitized to Islam and its believers, *Discovering the Qur'an* will be an invaluable tool to greater understanding.  
*Feminist Theology in the Light of Christian Tradition* Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing  
 Drawing on both religious and secular sources, this challenging book argues that divinely ordained law is frequently misinterpreted by Muslim authorities at the expense of certain groups, including women. Khaled Abou El Fadl cites a series of injustices in Islamic society and ultimately proposes a return to the original ethics at the heart of the Muslim legal system.

**Reading Arab Women's Autobiographies** Simon and Schuster  
 Samira Haj conceptualizes Islam through a close reading of two Muslim reformers—Muhammad ibn 'Abdul Wahhab (1703–1787) and Muhammad 'Abduh (1849–1905)—each representative of a distinct trend, chronological as well as philosophical, in modern Islam. Their works are examined primarily through the prism of two conceptual questions: the idea of the modern and the formation of a Muslim subject. Approaching Islam through the works of these two Muslims, she illuminates aspects of Islamic modernity that have been obscured and problematizes assumptions founded on the oppositional dichotomies of modern/traditional, secular/sacred, and liberal/fundamentalist. The book explores the notions of the community-society and the subject's location within it to demonstrate how Muslims in different historical contexts responded differently to theological and practical questions. This knowledge will help us better understand the conflicts currently unfolding in parts of the Arab world.  
**Basic Principles** McGill-Queen's Press - MQUP  
 Fourteen centuries of Islamic thought have

produced a legacy of interpretive readings of the Qur'an written almost entirely by men. Now, with *Qur'an and Woman*, Amina Wadud provides a first interpretive reading by a woman, a reading which validates the female voice in the Qur'an and brings it out of the shadows. Muslim progressives have long argued that it is not the religion but patriarchal interpretation and implementation of the Qur'an that have kept women oppressed. For many, the way to reform is the reexamination and reinterpretation of religious texts. *Qur'an and Woman* contributes a gender inclusive reading to one of the most fundamental disciplines in Islamic thought, Qur'anic exegesis. Wadud breaks down specific texts and key words which have been used to limit women's public and private role, even to justify violence toward Muslim women, revealing that their original meaning and context defy such interpretations. What her analysis clarifies is the lack of gender bias, precedence, or prejudice in the essential language of the Qur'an. Despite much Qur'anic evidence about the significance of women, gender reform in Muslim society has been stubbornly resisted. Wadud's reading of the Qur'an confirms women's equality and constitutes legitimate grounds for contesting the unequal treatment that women have experienced historically and continue to experience legally in Muslim communities. The Qur'an does not prescribe one timeless and unchanging social structure for men and women, Wadud argues lucidly, affirming that the Qur'an holds greater possibilities for guiding human society to a more fulfilling and productive mutual collaboration between men and women than as yet attained by Muslims or non-Muslims.

***Islam, Muslims, and the US*** Cambridge University Press

An accessible introduction to postmodernism, feminist theory and Islamic fundamentalism, this book is a highly controversial intervention into the debate on postmodernism and feminism which looks at what happens when they are jointly employed to illuminate the sexual politics of Islam. The author describes the rise of Islamic fundamentalism and the West's response to it. Postmodernism has exposed the vested interests implicit in racist stereotyped and colonial images of Islam, particularly radical Islam. However, the author argues that regardless of the sophisticated argument of postmodernists and their suspicion of power, as an intellectual and political movement, postmodernism has put itself in service to power and the status quo. She brilliantly

demonstrates how this has given rise to a neo-conservative feminism--or a new feminist orientalism, asking some hard questions of those who denounce the racism of Western feminism but uncritically embrace the Islamic identity of Muslim women.

**The Rights of Women in Islam**

University of Texas Press  
Mernissi recounts the extraordinary stories of fifteen queens and reflects on the implications for the ways in which politics is practiced in Islam today, a world in which women are largely excluded from the political domain.

***The Limits of Postmodern Analysis*** Simon and Schuster

Description: A significant contribution to a new genre of scholarship, this book takes readers into the very heart of Islamic teachings on women, gender and patriarchy, allowing them to understand Islam through its most sacred scripture rather than through cultural practices or Western media stereotypes. Serious and well researched, this is a rich resource book. Barlas develops a believer's reading of the Qur'an that demonstrates the egalitarian and antipatriarchal nature of its teachings.

***A History of Islam in 21 Women*** University of Texas Press

Homosexuality is anathema to Islam – or so the majority of both believers and non-believers suppose. Throughout the Muslim world, it is met with hostility, where state punishments range from hefty fines to the death penalty. Likewise, numerous scholars and commentators maintain that the Qur'an and Hadith rule unambiguously against same-sex relations. This pioneering study argues that there is far more nuance to the matter than most believe. In its narrative of Lot, the Qur'an could be interpreted as condemning lust rather than homosexuality. While some Hadith are fiercely critical of homosexuality, some are far more equivocal. This is the first book length treatment to offer a detailed analysis of how Islamic scripture, jurisprudence, and Hadith, can not only accommodate a sexually sensitive Islam, but actively endorse it.

**Believing Women in Islam** Zed Books

"In these two lectures [delivered in May and June 2008] Barlas offers a double critique: of Muslims for reading sexual inequality and oppression into Islam's scripture, the Qur'an, and a critique of "the West" for failing to develop morally relevant ways of speaking about Islam and Muslims"--Back cover.

***The End of the Jihad State*** Cambridge University Press

Does Islam call for the oppression of

women? Non-Muslims point to the subjugation of women that occurs in many Muslim countries, especially those that claim to be "Islamic," while many Muslims read the Qur'an in ways that seem to justify sexual oppression, inequality, and patriarchy. Taking a wholly different view, Asma Barlas develops a believer's reading of the Qur'an that demonstrates the radically egalitarian and antipatriarchal nature of its teachings. Beginning with a historical analysis of religious authority and knowledge, Barlas shows how Muslims came to read inequality and patriarchy into the Qur'an to justify existing religious and social structures and demonstrates that the patriarchal meanings ascribed to the Qur'an are a function of who has read it, how, and in what contexts. She goes on to reread the Qur'an's position on a variety of issues in order to argue that its teachings do not support patriarchy. To the contrary, Barlas convincingly asserts that the Qur'an affirms the complete equality of the sexes, thereby offering an opportunity to theorize radical sexual equality from within the framework of its teachings. This new view takes readers into the heart of Islamic teachings on women, gender, and patriarchy, allowing them to understand Islam through its most sacred scripture, rather than through Muslim cultural practices or Western media stereotypes.

**Women's Reform in Islam** Oxford University Press

Women's issues continue to dominate the Islamic world in particular, as there has been a very gradual change in the status of women in the Islamic world as a whole. This book covers various aspects relating to the status of women in the pre-Islamic period -- customs and -traditions, forms of marriage, divorce and forms of divorce, dower, traditions regarding slave-girls, and so on. It then goes on to deal with the status of women in the post-Islamic period -- the Qur'anic concept of women's rights in marriage, divorce, inheritance, custody of children, polygamy, maintenance, property, right to earn, etc. It quotes extensively from the Qur'an and Sunnah. It also deals with the Arab *adaat*, that is, pre-Islamic customs and traditions regarding women. Altogether, it attempts to arm Muslim women with Islamic arguments for their empowerment. The author, a renowned scholar, has sought to set the record straight by reinterpreting women's rights in the true Qur'anic spirit. He argues quite convincingly that the Holy Book gives equal rights to both the sexes, and it does not discriminate between them as regards personal, democratic and human rights. The question whether in a

secular society Muslim personal law needs any change, and, if so, in which direction the reform should be undertaken is dealt with in detail. This third edition contains a chapter: 'On a Muslim Woman Leading the Congregational Prayer'. This chapter deals

with the important aspect of Muslim women's problems and also hopes to further enhance their understanding of the Shari'ah issues.  
[Re-understanding Islam](#) Princeton University Press

Demonstrates for the first time that the cause of the Umayyad caliphate's collapse came not just from internal conflict, but from a number of external and concurrent factors that exceeded the caliphate's capacity to respond.

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