



# **In the House of the Law: Gender and Islamic Law in Ottoman Syria and Palestine**

*Judith E. Tucker*

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In an rewarding new study, Tucker explores the way in which Islamic legal thinkers understood Islam as it related to women and gender roles. In seventeenth and eighteenth century Syria and Palestine, Muslim legal thinkers gave considerable attention to women's roles in society, and Tucker shows how *fatwas*, or legal opinions, greatly influenced these roles. She challenges prevailing views on Islam and gender, revealing Islamic law to have been more fluid and flexible than previously thought. Although the legal system had a consistent patriarchal orientation, it was modulated by sensitivities to the practical needs of women, men, and children. In her comprehensive overview of a field long neglected by scholars, Tucker deepens our understanding of how societies, including our own, construct gender roles.

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