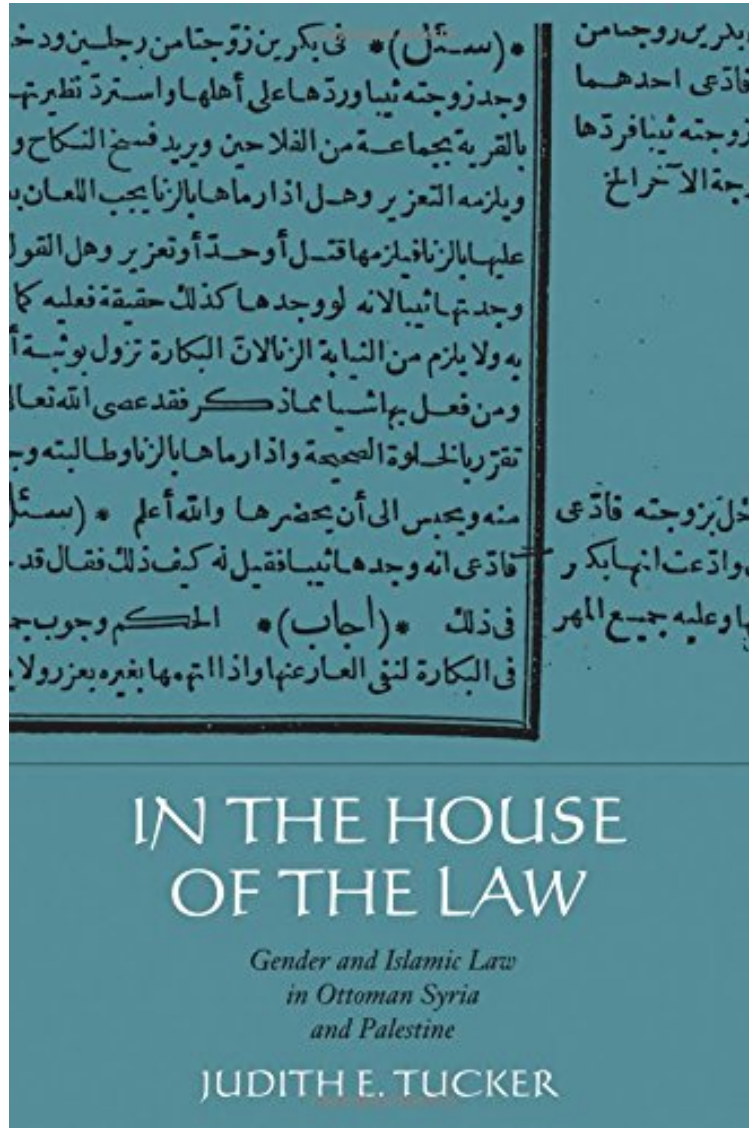


In the House of the Law: Gender and Islamic Law in Ottoman Syria and Palestine

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.

"The history of women in the Middle East is seen in a new perspective in Judith Tucker's study of Islamic law in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Syria and Palestine".ShofarFrom the Inside Flap"An original, valuable, and important study. . . . This book will quickly establish itself as a key work in the field of Middle East women's studies."Leila Ahmed, author of *Women and Gender in Islam*"The history of women in the Middle East is seen from an entirely new perspective in Judith Tucker's rewarding study of Islamic law in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Syria and Palestine."Shofar"Tucker presents a study of the tensions between the two traditions as acted out in the law courts in the Ottoman province of Shams...during the 16th through 18th centuries."S. Bowman, *Choice*