
Believing Women In Islam Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations Of The Quran

Asma Barlas

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Women and Gender in Islam Princeton University Press

In this comprehensive open access book, written for readers from any or no religious background, Leena El-Ali does something remarkable. Never before has anyone taken on every last claim relating to Islam and women and countered it not just with Qur'anic evidence to the contrary, but with easy-to-use tools available to all. How can a woman's testimony be worth half of a man's? How can men divorce their wives unilaterally by uttering three words? And what's with the obsession with virgins in Paradise? Find the chapter on any of the seventeen topics in this book, and you will quickly learn a) where the myth came from and b) how to bust it. The methodology pursued is simple. First, the Qur'an is given priority over all other literary or "scriptural" sources. Second, the meaning of its verses in the original Arabic is highlighted, in contrast to English translations and/or widespread misunderstanding or misinterpretation.

[A Double Critique](#) Zed Books

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. For this

revised edition of Believing Women in Islam, Asma Barlas has written two new chapters—"Abraham's Sacrifice in the Qur'an" and "Secular/Feminism and the Qur'an"—as well as a new preface, an extended discussion of the Qur'an's "wife-beating" verse and of men's presumed role as women's guardians, and other updates throughout the book.

[Feminist Edges of the Qur'an](#) University of Texas Press

This popular introduction by a well-known Islamic scholar has been updated and expanded, offering a balanced portrayal of the Qur'an and its place in historic and contemporary Muslim society. Features new sections on the Qur'an and its relationship to democracy, science, human rights, and the role of women. Contains expanded sections on the Qur'an in the life cycle of Muslims, and in Islamic ethics and law. Incorporates additional images and student features, including a glossary. Supported by an accompanying website (available on publication) hosting a range of additional material, including student resources, links to important websites, news stories, and more. This title is also available as an eTextbook on the CourseSmart platform, as a Wiley Desktop Edition, or via your preferred eTextbook vendor; eTextbooks offer convenience, enhanced electronic functionality, and flexible pricing options - learn more at www.wiley.com/college/wileyflex

[Struggling to Surrender](#) National Geographic Books

This study analyses the commentaries of four Muslim intellectuals who have turned to scripture as a liberating text to confront an array of problems, from patriarchy, racism, and empire to poverty and interreligious communal violence. Shadaab Rahemtulla considers the exegeses of the South African Farid Esack (b. 1956), the Indian Asghar Ali Engineer (1939-2013), the African American Amina Wadud (b. 1952), and the Pakistani American Asma Barlas (b. 1950). Rahemtulla examines how these intellectuals have been able to expound this seventh-century Arabian text in a socially liberating way, addressing their own lived realities of oppression, and thus contexts that are worlds removed from that of the text's immediate audience. Through a close reading of their works, he underlines the importance of both the ethico-social content of the Qur'an and their usage of new and innovative reading practices. This work provides a rich analysis of the thought-ways of specific Muslim intellectuals, thereby substantiating a broadly framed school of thought. Rahemtulla draws out their specific and general importance without

displaying an uncritical sympathy. He sheds light on the impact of modern exegetical commentary which is more self-consciously concerned with historical context and present realities. In a mutually reinforcing way, this work thus illuminates both the role of agency and hermeneutical approaches in modern Islamic thought.

No Truth Without Beauty Simon and Schuster

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.

Believing Women in Islam Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing

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Inside the Gender Jihad University of Texas Press

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.

The Reign of Hisham Ibn 'Abd al-Malik and the Collapse of the Umayyads Oxford University 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.

A History of Islam in 21 Women Simon and Schuster

A compelling study of the little known contributions of Islam's cultural, artistic, and scientific accomplishments to Western civilization looks not only at the historic achievements of the Muslim world and the role of inspired leaders who encouraged intellectual inquiry, championed tolerance, and sponsored artistic and literary endeavors, but also at the ancient envy that fuels today's conflicts. Reprint.

Homosexuality in Islam Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd

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*

A Return to Reason, Freedom, and Tolerance Stanford University 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.

Rethinking Tradition in Modern Islamic Thought Believing Women in Islam Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur'an

A captivating look at the history of the pure females of Islamic paradise known as the houri The fascination with the houri, the pure female of Islamic paradise, began long before September 11, 2001. Beauty of the Houris: Heavenly Virgins, Feminine Ideals demonstrates how the ambiguous reward of the houri, mentioned in the Qur'an and developed in Islamic theological writings, has gained a distinctive place in the cultural eye from the seventeenth to the twenty-first century. The houri had multiple functions in Islamic texts that ranged from caretaker, to pure companion, to personal entertainment.

French, English, and American writers used the houri to critique Islam and Muslim societies, while also adopting the houri as a model of feminine beauty. Unlike earlier texts that presented different forms of the houri or universalized the houri for all women, writings about the houri after September 11th offer contradictory messages about Islam. In the twenty-first century, the image of the houri has come to symbolize a reward for violence and the possibility of gender parity. As a cosmic figure that inspires enduring questions about the promise of paradise and the idealized feminine form, the houri has a singular past and broad potential for future interpretation. The Beauty of the Houris narrates an intellectual history of the houri and offers a contemporary account of how theological ambiguity has led to different interpretations of this powerfully enduring Islamic concept.

The Enduring Legacy of Muslim Scientists, Thinkers, and Artists Oxford University Press

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.

Essays on Religion and Politics Cambridge University Press 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.

Reopening Muslim Minds Scholastic UK

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 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.

Women and the Transmission of Religious Knowledge in Islam University of Texas Press

"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.

Rereading the Sacred Text from a Woman's Perspective University of Texas Press

The book first explores some of the concrete issues fundamental to status of Muslim women, such as the production of statistics which mask women's contribution to the economies of Arab states. Mernissi also looks at a variety of demographics including education and literacy - she shows their importance not only for empowering women but also for improving their health.

Shahrazad Tells Her Story SUNY Press

The Tao of Islam is a rich and diverse anthology of Islamic teachings on the nature of the relationships between God and the world, the world and the human being, and the human being and God. Focusing on gender symbolism, Sachiko Murata shows that Muslim authors frequently analyze the divine reality and its connections with the cosmic and human domains with a view toward a complementarity or polarity of principles that is analogous to the Chinese idea of yin/yang. Murata believes that the unity of Islamic thought is found, not so much in the ideas discussed, as in the types of relationships that are set up among realities. She pays particular attention to the views of various figures commonly known as "Sufis" and "philosophers," since they approach these topics with a flexibility and subtlety not found in other schools of thought. She translates several hundred pages, most for the first time, from more than thirty important Muslims including the Ikhwan al-Safa', Avicenna, and Ibn al-'Arabi.

Qur'an of the Oppressed SUNY 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.

Liberation Theology and Gender Justice in Islam Oxford University Press

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.