



Dreams and Visions in Islamic Societies

Ozgen Felek, Alexander D. Knysh

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A wide-ranging consideration of the place of dreams and visions in Islamic societies from the premodern period to the present. Dreams and visions have always been important in Islamic societies. Yet, their pervasive impact on Muslim communities and on the lives of individual Muslims remains largely unknown and rather surprising to Westerners. This book addresses this gap in understanding with a fascinating and diverse account, taking readers from premodern Islam to the present day. Dreams and visions are shown to have been, and to be, significant in a range of social, educational, and cultural roles. The book includes a wealth of examples detailing the Sufi experience. Contributors use Arabic, Persian, Indian, Central Asian, and Ottoman sources and employ approaches grounded in history, sociology, psychology, anthropology, religious studies, and literary analysis. This is an illuminating work, showing how ordinary Muslims, Muslim notables, Sufis, legal scholars, and rulers have perceived both themselves and the world around them through the prism of dreams and visions. “This book provides a marvelous appreciative look at an important aspect of the art of narrative across many facets of Muslim community life, and the endurance of that art through the centuries. The stories communicate not only substantial elements of theological importance but a pervasive sense of the significance of personal relationships, especially affection for the Prophet, all told with much warmth and wit.” — John Renard, author of *Islam and Christianity: Theological Themes in Comparative Perspective* Ozgen Felek is a Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in Religious Studies at Stanford University. She is coeditor (with Walter G. Andrews) of *Victoria R. Holbrook’s Armagan*. Alexander D. Knysch is Professor of Islamic Studies at the University of Michigan. His books include *Ibn ‘Arabi in the Later Islamic Tradition: The Making of a Polemical Image in Medieval Islam*, also published by SUNY Press; *Islamic Mysticism: A Short History*; and *Islam in Historical Perspective*.

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