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The Scimitar and the Veil: Extraordinary Women of Islam

Jennifer Heath

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The Scimitar and the Veil portrays over thirty extraordinary Muslim women from the birth of Islam through the 19th century. From scholars to warriors to concubines and queens, "The Scimitar and the Veil gathers scholarship about the women of Islam into one fascinating book presented for general readership. Based on sources ranging from Swahili lore to Persian pageant plays to Muslim feminist writings to the explorations of Western scholars of Islam, The Scimitar and the Veil is written in a poetic, sometimes humorous, energetic and contemporary style that will appeal to a broad range of readers. Muhammad was born to a widowed mother, tended by a slave woman, and fostered by a Bedouin woman. His marriage to Khadija, a wealthy businesswoman from Mecca was long, fruitful, and faithful. She was the first to convert to Islam. From Barakah, Muhammad's surrogate mother, and Fatima, his cherished daughter, to the Sufi mystic Rabi'a, The Scimitar and the Veil is the first popular history and overview of Muslim women and their great accomplishments. While there are other books about women in Islam, The Scimitar and the Veil is the most comprehensive and written in a style meant to appeal to a general audience.

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