The Silent Qur'an and the Speaking Qur'an: Scriptural Sources of Islam Between History and Fervor

By Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi

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Two major events occurred in the early centuries of Islam that determined its historical and spiritual development in the centuries that followed: the formation of the sacred scriptures, namely the Qur'an and the Hadith, and the chronic violence that surrounded the succession of the Prophet, manifesting in repression, revolution, massacre, and civil war.

This is the first book to evaluate the writing of Islam's major scriptural sources within the context of these bloody, brutal conflicts. Conducting a philological and historical study of little-known though significant ancient texts, Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi rebuilds a Shi'ite understanding of Islam's early history and the genesis of its holy scriptures. At the same time, he proposes a fresh interpretative framework and a new data set for theorizing the early history of Islam, isolating the contradictions between Shi'ite and Sunni sources and their contribution to the tensions that rile these groups today.

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Editorial Review

Review

Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi does the field a great service with his discussion of important early Shi'ite thinkers and texts that are otherwise neglected. The Silent Qur'an and the Speaking Qur'an is an excellent work.

(Gabriel Said Reynolds, University of Notre Dame)

The Silent Qur'an and the Speaking Qur'an is a stimulating and thought-provoking study in the intellectual history of early Shi'ism and a treasure trove of information on early Shi'i exegesis, doctrine, and jurisprudence. Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi focuses on five leading Shi'i scholars of the eighth through tenth centuries and offers an in depth analysis of their work as highly significant sources for an alternative narrative of the historical developments of Islam's first two centuries.

(Meir Bar-Asher, Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

One of the most important pieces ever written on the Qur'an and Islam. It is a must-read for every student and expert of Islam and its history.

(*The Washington Book Review*)

About the Author

Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi is professor of classical Islamic thought at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Sorbonne University (Paris). He is also senior research fellow at the Institute of Ismaili Studies (London). His publications largely concern Shi'i Islam and the history of the Qur'an and include *The Divine Guide in Early Shi'ism* and *The Spirituality of Shi'i Islam*. He is also the general editor of *Dictionnaire du Coran*.

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