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Muslim Tradition: Studies In Chronology, Provenance And Authorship Of Early Hadith (Cambridge Studies In Islamic Civilization)



Synopsis

In *Muslim Tradition* G. H. A. Juynboll undertakes a broad-ranging review of the closely linked questions of date, authorship and origin of hadiths, i.e. the traditions of the prophet. Hadiths, which record the sayings and deeds of the prophet Muhammad, are central to Islamic teaching and beliefs and command a respect in the Islamic world second only to the Qur'an. The question of when, how and where particular hadiths came into existence is basic to the understanding of the formative period of Islam. This statement of a sceptical position, which can be visualized as located between, on the one hand, the orthodox Muslim view and, on the other, that of Western scholars, uses all the rich material available and explores the possibilities it opens up. The book faces major issues and reaches conclusions which may provide a basis for future debate in which, it is hoped, both Muslim and Western scholars will participate.

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Customer Reviews

"Muslim Tradition" expands upon the arguments of Joseph Schacht. As Schacht had proposed in the 1960s, Juynboll in the 1980s elaborated: that many Islamic traditions (Hadiths) were forged - so many, that the burden-of-proof for any given Hadith must rest upon the scholar making the assertion. Juynboll however fell into some of the same traps as Schacht had fallen into. Juynboll's book starts with an essay on the origins of the Hadith, as distinct from the origins of Islamic religious practice (Sunna). Much of this is based on Muslims' own accounts of who did what "first", the "Awwal" hadiths. From these, Juynboll sees Islamic law as not reliant upon hadith; where precedent

was needed, the example of the Companions sufficed (and such an anecdote was not equipped with an "isnad" chain of authority). Under Umar II, there came to be hadiths; and afterward, there arose hadith-centres, in Egypt, Syria, the Hijaz and especially Iraq. The next chapter sifts through these centres of hadith (and Sunna), and notes fundamental differences between the local judges' attitude toward hadith. Egypt and Syria did not use hadith much. Madina did accept hadiths, but it did not *follow* those hadiths. Iraqi law at the other extreme relied heavily upon hadiths - especially Baghdad, which, as we know, was founded later than were Kufa and Basra and so *could not* rely upon precedent. Then Juynboll goes for the jugular of the Hadith-based Sunna - the most famed "well-attested (mutawaatir)" traditions. Juynboll proves that these traditions are frauds; ergo, mutawaatir is invalid as a means to prove a hadith.

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