

Religious Knowledge, Authority, and Charisma: Islamic and Jewish Perspectives (Utah Series in Turkish and Islamic Stud)

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The issue of religious authority has long fascinated and ignited scholars across a range of disciplines: history, anthropology, the sociology of religion, and political science. *Religious Knowledge, Authority, and Charisma* juxtaposes religious leadership in premodern and modern Islam with examples from the Judaic tradition. By illustrating various iterations of authority in numerous historical and cultural contexts, this volume offers fresh insights into the nature of institutions of learning and other systems of establishing and disseminating authority, the mechanisms for cultivating committed adherents, and the processes by which religious leadership is polarized and fragmented.

Contributors tease out the sources and types of authority that emerged out of the Sunni and Shi?i milieu and the evolution of Muslim elites who served as formulators and disseminators of knowledge and practice. Comparative insights are provided by the examination of ideological and historical developments among Jewish sages who inculcated similar modes of authority from within their traditions. The rigorous exploration of the dynamic interface of knowledge and power in Islam and Judaism serves to highlight a number of present tensions common to both religions. By intertwining a historical span that traces trajectories of continuity and change, integrative discussion of cross-sectional themes, and comparative perspectives, this volume makes a distinct contribution.



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