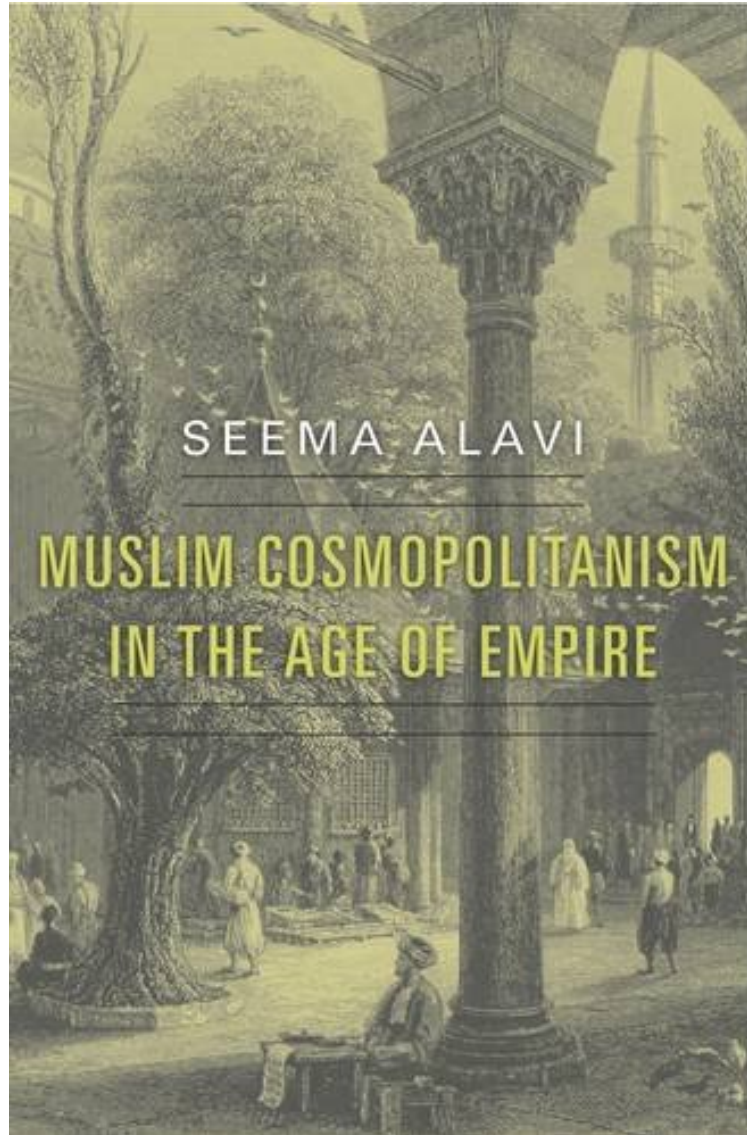


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Muslim Cosmopolitanism in the Age of Empire

Seema Alavi

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Seema Alavi : Muslim Cosmopolitanism in the Age of Empire before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Muslim Cosmopolitanism in the Age of Empire:

Muslim Cosmopolitanism in the Age of Empire recovers the stories of five Indian Muslim scholars who, in the aftermath of the uprising of 1857, were hunted by British authorities, fled their homes in India for such destinations as

Cairo, Mecca, and Istanbul, and became active participants in a flourishing pan-Islamic intellectual network at the cusp of the British and Ottoman empires. Seema Alavi traces this network, born in the age of empire, which became the basis of a global Muslim sensibility—a form of political and cultural affiliation that competes with ideas of nationhood today as it did in the previous century. By demonstrating that these Muslim networks depended on European empires and that their sensibility was shaped by the West in many subtle ways, Alavi challenges the idea that all pan-Islamic configurations are anti-Western or pro-Caliphate. Indeed, Western imperial hegemony empowered the very inter-Asian Muslim connections that went on to outlive European empires. Diverging from the medieval idea of the umma, this new cosmopolitan community stressed consensus in matters of belief, ritual, and devotion and found inspiration in the liberal reforms then gaining traction in the Ottoman world. Alavi breaks new ground in the writing of nineteenth-century history by engaging equally with the South Asian and Ottoman worlds, and by telling a non-Eurocentric story of global modernity without overlooking the importance of the British Empire.

Muslim Cosmopolitanism in the Age of Empire is an exhilarating book encompassing broad swaths of trans-imperial history, religio-cultural geography and a stunning breadth of vision. In the current times, when Muslims, for a variety of reasons, have become victims of insularity and ghettoization, Alavi's book is a potent antidote to the widespread but ill-informed media narrative about Muslim resistance to forces of modernity and globalization. (M. Asaduddin *The Wire* (India) 2015-06-09) An impressively well-researched and theoretically rich book that illuminates the transformation of Muslim transnationalism and cosmopolitanism during the long 19th century. (Cemil Aydin, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill) An important book about Muslims and modernity by an outstanding historian of South Asia. (Ayesha Jalal, Tufts University) *Muslim Cosmopolitanism in the Age of Empire* is an engrossing, wide-ranging and beautifully written account of an emerging Muslim political imagination in the 19th century. Through an examination of five extraordinary figures, Sayyid Fadl, Rahmat Allh Kairanawi, Haji Imdadullah Maki, Nawab Siddiq Hasan Khan and Maulana Thanseri, Seema Alavi brings alive the variegated, improvisatory and inventive character of Muslim politics and theology, as it struggled to come to terms with new imperial forms. Each of these figures is deeply fascinating in their own right, chosen in part for the extraordinary geographical range of their influence. If you want to understand the contradictory nature of the engagement of modern empires with Islam, this book provides a fascinating historical guide. (Pratap Bhanu Mehta *Indian Express* 2016-06-06) About the Author: Seema Alavi is Professor of History at the University of Delhi.