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## Memories of Muhammad

### Why the Prophet Matters

Omid Safi

A rising scholar of Islam presents a portrait of Muhammad that reveals his centrality in the devotions of modern Muslims around the world

Rather than the two-dimensional understanding of Islam shared by many in the West, this biography will offer new insights to the founder of Islam and a more three-dimensional portrait of Muhammad and how his one billion followers see him. Many of the recent significant controversies (Salman Rushdie, the Danish cartoon controversies) are about the Prophet, yet very few non-Muslims seem to understand why and how Muhammad fits into Islam.

Covering such hot button issues such as the spread of Islam, holy wars, the role of women, the significance of Jerusalem, tensions with Jews and Christians, wahabbi Islam, and the role of cyberspace in the evolution of the religion, *Memories of Muhammad* presents Muhammad as a lens through which to present the unfolding of both Islamic history and Islamic religion. This groundbreaking book offers the opportunity to move from telling Muhammad's own story to talking about how different Muslims throughout Islamic history have remembered and contested Muhammad's legacy.

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### Author Bio

Omid Safi is Associate Professor of Islamic Studies at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill where he specializes on Islamic mysticism (Sufism), contemporary Islamic thought, and medieval Islamic history. He is the Chair for the Study of Islam at the American Academy of Religion and a member of the advisory board of the Pluralism Project at Harvard University. He is the author of *The Politics of Knowledge in Premodern Islam*. Safi has been at the forefront of the progressive Muslim debate. His book *Progressive Muslims* (2003) contains a diverse collection of essays by and about "progressive" Muslims. He was one of the co-founders of the Progressive Muslim Union (PMU-NA).