

« Study-Groups and the Practice of Ibadism in an Omani Town »

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This paper analyzes the dynamics and expectations of young women involved in a study-group in Bahla in the late 1990s. In particular, it describes how the young women understood their practice of meeting to learn as a continuation of an Ibadi tradition. It explores both the medieval practices to which the young women refer as well as contemporary Omani representations of scholarship as emblematic of Ibadism. At the same time, the paper discusses the young women's implicit understandings of the role of "learning" and human reason in proper, "religious" behavior. And, finally, the paper reflects on the tensions that these young women face as they grapple with their newly acquired and more generally available scholarly authority.