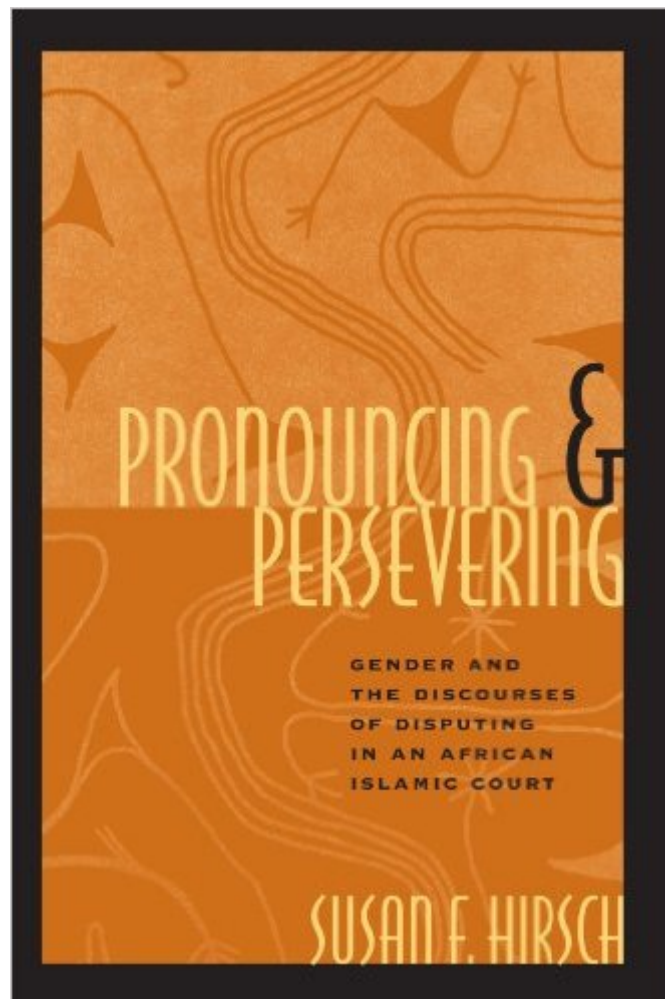


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Pronouncing And Persevering: Gender And The Discourses Of Disputing In An African Islamic Court (Chicago Series In Law And Society)



Synopsis

The title of Susan Hirsch's study of disputes involving Swahili Muslims in coastal Kenya reflects the image of gender relations most commonly associated with Islamic law. Men need only "pronounce" divorce to resolve marital conflicts, while embattled and embittered wives must persevere by silently enduring marital hardships. But Hirsch's observations of Islamic courts uncover how Muslim women actively use legal processes to transform their domestic lives, achieving victories on some fronts but reinforcing their image as subordinate to men through the speech they produce in court. *Pronouncing and Persevering* focuses closely on the language used in disputes, particularly how men and women narrate their claims and how their speech shapes and is shaped by gender hierarchy in postcolonial Swahili society. Based on field research and court testimony, Hirsch's book debunks the conventional view that women are powerless under Islamic law and challenges the dichotomies through which Islam and gender relations are currently understood.

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