

Islam: A Very Short Introduction (Very Short Introductions)

By Malise Ruthven

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Islam features widely in the news, often in its most militant versions, but few people in the non-Muslim world really understand the nature of Islam.

Malise Ruthven's Very Short Introduction contains essential insights into issues such as why Islam has such major divisions between movements such as the Shi'ites, the Sunnis, and the Wahhabis, and the central importance of the Shar'ia (Islamic law) in Islamic life. It also offers fresh perspectives on contemporary questions: Why is the greatest 'Jihad' (holy war) now against the enemies of Islam, rather than the struggle against evil? Can women find fulfilment in Islamic societies?
How must Islam adapt as it confronts the modern world?

In this new edition, Ruthven brings the text up-to-date by reflecting upon some of the most significant changes in the Muslim world in recent years; from the emergence of al-Qaeda and the attacks on New York and Washington on 9/11 and the ensuing wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, to the uprisings in the Middle East and North Africa. Ruthven includes new material surrounding the concept of a globalized Islam, bringing into question the effects of economic globalization, the effect of international
events in Middle Eastern countries, the issues surrounding Islam and democracy, and the reception and perception of Islam in the West.

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Editorial Review

Review
Review from previous edition: "very readable"

--RE Today 01/01/2002

"excellent little book"

--The Guardian 02/02/1998

About the Author

Malise Ruthven teaches at the University of Aberdeen in Scotland. He is the author of *Islam in the World*, a highly acclaimed overview of Islamic faith and history, and his reviews, essays, and blogs appear regularly in the *New York Review of Books*.

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