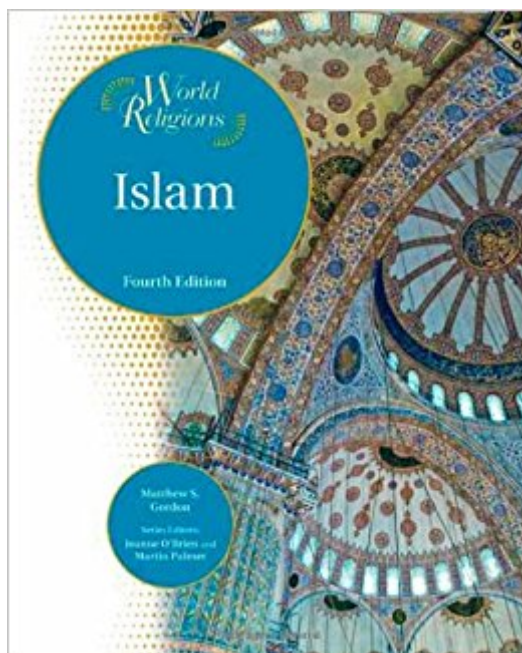


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Islam (World Religions (Facts On File))



Synopsis

This fourth edition provides readers with an up-to-date understanding of the relationship between religion and politics in today's society. Topics include: the founding and spread of Islam; the Koran; Hadith and Islamic law; branches of Islam and their basic beliefs; Muslim customs and rituals and Islam and the modern world.

Book Information

Series: World Religions (Facts on File)

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Age Range: 12 - 17 years

Grade Level: 7 - 12

Customer Reviews

Gordon provides an accessible, well-written and evenhanded introduction to Islam, one of the world's fastest-growing religions. In brief chapters, he discusses the rise of Islam; the centrality of its sacred text, the Qur'an; the importance of the Prophet Muhammad; the major developments of both Sunni and Shi'i Islam (including "sub-sects" of both traditions); the ethical principles and "Five Pillars" of the faith; the role of the mosque and of sacred sites such as Mecca; the concept of sacred time and the Islamic lunar calendar; Muslims' beliefs about death and the afterlife; and Islam in the modern world. Throughout, Gordon provides a balanced approach, noting, for example, that the Ayatollah Khomeini's 1990 fatwah against novelist Salman Rushdie was opposed by many Islamic scholars and that the religion is "far from monolithic" in its laws or practices. Each chapter closes with an excerpt from some primary source for example, the opening verses of the Qur'an or an Urdu poem praising Muhammad and then interprets that passage with a brief commentary. These

bite-sized chunks of original source material go a long way toward helping readers become familiar with Islam's historical and literary traditions. The book is enhanced by well-chosen, full-color photographs and illustrations, which are so animated that they seem to invite readers to contemplate the interior of a mosque, or to participate in a schoolroom discussion with British Muslim girls. Overall, this is a handy, informed and attractive primer. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Grade 7
•Gordon's update of his 2001 edition includes developments in Afghanistan and Iraq, new census data on the increase of Muslims in the U.S., and half a dozen recent books as further reading. A paragraph in the introduction addressing the association of violence and extremism with Islam cites events in the past five years and adds to the history of Western stereotypes of Muslims. The author includes a slightly more detailed account of Islam's imperial past and subsequent reform movements (still omitting Sayyid Qutb). Oddly, the account of Iran ends with moderate Khatami, not Ahmadinejad. Only two illustrations are different (ordinary Muslims replace Khomeini and Tansu Ciller). All but a tiny part of the text remains unchanged. Changes in Hartz's 2002 volume are even harder to discern. Some white space has been used for more excerpts from Baha'i texts, and a couple of new titles appear in the bibliography. A few pages on "Spreading the Faith" have been rewritten (though the accompanying growth chart still ends in 2001). Membership figures are either very conservative or outdated. The section on persecution, especially in Iran, is expanded, though it does not mention Iran's 2004 destruction of sites revered by Baha'is, for instance, or the death of another Baha'i in an Iranian prison in 2005. Only one of the functional black-and-white photos is different. These minimally altered editions preserve the clarity, coverage, and concision of the originals. Both volumes are worth having, but upgrading to the new editions is largely optional.
•Patricia D. Lothrop, St. George's School, Newport, RI Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

The revised edition covers the highlight concepts of Islam. What I wanted to note here is that the author, rather than just noting "what" a particular Islamic custom or ritual is, also provides much "why" background to that ritual. He does an excellent job in noting the religious disputes between the Sunni versus the Shiite versus the Sufism order. He does a fine job in detailing the fall-out between the Sunni and Shiite sects in the 750s C.E. He provides nice "why" background to the various religious rituals. A book less for a child, more for a teenager...and a fine review for adults just

learning about Islam. Not much quoting from the Quran, but a lot of analysis about various subjects in the Koran. Great tight writing. This is a "keeper".

thank you

As someone who has no prior knowledge of Islam, Gordon somehow made this book easy to read and understand. He takes the reader through the origins of the religion all the way to some current issues. For a religion this old and a book this small, Gordon skips the nonsense and goes straight into what matters. By doing this, he developed a book that gives a person, ignorant to the topic, a more than decent understanding. The nine chapters are split up very nicely and he avoids dragging on and on over any one subject. Gordon also adds a very helpful glossary at the end of the book. I caught myself flipping back there at least a few times every chapter. While browsing through my school's library, knowing I was looking for an Islam based book, I noticed that their selection was very limited. I wanted a very broad book with an overview of the religion, just to grasp this more than complex religion. Come to realize, Gordon's was the only book that met that criteria. Of course, reading all about modern day issues of Islam is always of interest, but without any base knowledge of the religion itself, those current books mean nothing to me. Finding this book was a great way to get an understanding of a religion we see on the news daily. By Gordon breaking down the history, terminology, controversies, and beliefs of Islam, he gives the reader a great start understanding a very complex religion, like Islam.

This revised and updated edition of Matthew Gordon's Islam World Religions provides updated details on the current activities of Islam and provides an important survey of the history, fundamental beliefs, structure and population of believers of Islam in the modern world. Black and white photos pepper a survey which provides students in grades 6 and up with a basic introduction to the religion.

This easy to read book covers Islam's history, beliefs, sacred text, concept of the afterlife, etc. Like all of the books in this series, it's meant to be a brief introduction. Especially good for a child or someone with no or little prior knowledge of the religion.

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