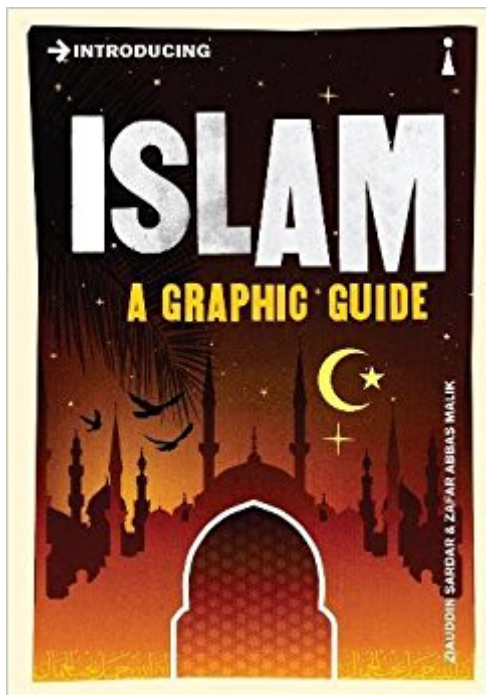


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Introducing Islam: A Graphic Guide



Synopsis

Islamic culture has produced some of the finest achievements of humanity. "Introducing Islam" is a fascinating look into a sometimes misunderstood faith.

Book Information

Paperback: 176 pages

Publisher: Icon Books (October 15, 2005)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1848310846

ISBN-13: 978-1848310841

Product Dimensions: 4.8 x 0.5 x 6.7 inches

Shipping Weight: 5.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.2 out of 5 stars 15 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #352,767 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #14 in [Books > Religion & Spirituality > Islam > Shi'ism](#) #25 in [Books > Religion & Spirituality > Islam > Law](#) #75 in [Books > Comics & Graphic Novels > Graphic Novels > Religion & Spirituality](#)

Customer Reviews

Ziauddin Sardar is a columnist, TV presenter and much more besides. His latest books are *Balti Britain* (Granta, 2008) and, with Merryl Wyn Davies, *Will America Change?* (Icon, 2008). Zafar Abbas Malik is the art director of *Arts and the Islamic World*.

This book has a topic that doesn't fit the format. The comics are not really as irrelevant or irreverent as they are in other parts of the series, and the book definitely adopts a moderate Sunnah interpretation of Islam. However, it actually avoids a lot of the content of the Hadith or the complicated structure of the Suras. There is a brief discussion of the highlights of Islamic civilization, and a simplified to the point of being problematic explanation of the relationship between classical Islam and the West. It does give a pretty digestible version of the history around the Prophet himself, but even things like the Shia-Sunnah debates are just not given enough time given the genre of the book. Still for a basic introduction, it works fairly well.

I've read several of the *Introducing...* series, including *Introducing Christianity*. I purchased *Introducing Islam*, as I'll be spending a lot of time in the middle east next year, and would like to have a better understanding and appreciation of the religion and culture. Where it works: *Introducing Islam*

provides a good historical overview of Islam, including its powerful influence on science, medicine, mathematics, astronomy, art, poetry, government, and the legal system. Where it doesn't work so well: The Introducing series are popular because they delve into the philosophical aspects of whatever they are discussing, including the controversial. Introducing Christianity does an excellent job of this. However, in Introducing Islam, you sometimes get the impression Sardar is walking on eggshells. The text is mostly apologetic. There is a perception, whether deserved or not, that Islam is an intolerant religion. Sardar could have pointed out the philosophical differences and conflicts within Islam, which he does not. Why is there a prohibition on publishing an image of Mohammed? Why do women live under such heavy restrictions in the Muslim world? Why did large parts of the Muslim world slip back into cultural, artistic, and scientific oblivion after dominating all three of these areas for centuries? Why was there no universal outcry in established Islam after the events of 9/11? None of these issues were answered. For 9/11, Sardar includes a picture of the twin towers and the simple statement "There is no relationship between Islam and the events of 9/11." but says nothing else. One almost suspects that Sardar fears the same monstrous intolerance that has dominated the headlines-both real and imagined-in the Western world. This was an opportunity for Sardar to really set the record straight, but in this regard, mostly says nothing. So ultimately, very much worth reading, but in some ways a lost opportunity.

I have read a few books on the Islamic religion (The Qur'an and the politically incorrect guide to Islam and other texts) over the years. I am always looking for more information on the subject in hopes of understanding better what the actual truth is concerning this religion. I purchased this 176 page soft cover paperback (Introducing Islam: A graphic guide by Ziauddin Sardar and Zafar Abbas Malik) for a bargain price. I have read other basic graphic guides from this publisher and found them to be surprisingly informative on a wide range of topics. This volume covers a lot of material, some of which I did not fully understand; nevertheless, it did approach the subject in a more objective and positive way than other books on Islam I have read in the past. This volume begins by explaining how Muhammad, according to the authors, "is the most influential man in history. But he is not an ordinary man. He is a Prophet-the last Prophet of God." As an admitted religious skeptic (of ALL RELIGIONS) I could see where this book was going. This text explains the life of Muhammad and how the word of God, spoken to him in Arabic through the Archangel Gabriel revealed the essence of the Islamic faith. According to Muhammad, "Islam is the Qur'an." This book also lists the many accomplishments in a wide variety of fields where the influence of Islam has created

progress in the world. It also explains the misunderstanding in the west of many of the terms used in the Qur'ân. It gives numerous explanations of what Jihād means, the spread of Islam in the world and the role women play in the Islamic religion. I did like this book but it also plays a rosy picture of Islam and fails to go into any detail about the present day violence which sometimes seems to be ignored by the main stream Islamic followers. If the picture portrayed in this volume is the REAL AND CORRECT interpretation of the religion of Islam then why does it seem that "Radical Islamic terrorists" are winning the propaganda war? Further, if the Qur'an is the true word of God, why are there so many different radical interpretations? Indeed, the truth is, whether it is the Bible, new and old testament, the Tora or the Qur'an they are all written by men supposedly inspired by some supreme being that can't be known, understood or seen. In any case, reading this volume will give anyone who is interested in the Islamic religion a different perspective than we see on the news these days. Just as there are moderate Christians, Jews and Muslims, in the same respect, there are radical Christians (Check the Crusades), Jews and Muslims. Rating: 4 Stars. Joseph J. Truncale (Author: The Samurai Soul: An old warrior's poetic tribute).

Wanted a book about Islam, instead got a book about the achievements of the Arab world. A bit of a letdown, the theology is lacking, even if the history isn't.

this was a good book. overall i like this series. i've read about 20 from this series

I found this book very interesting but a bit one-sided. Yes, Islam produced many brilliant authors, jurists and scientists, but the authors make it appear they were the first to do many things (e.g. Eratosthenes measured the circumference of the earth way before it was done by the Muslims) but that is not to take away from what Islamic science has contributed to the world. I do have to agree strongly with the section on Colonialism. European white men have been known to abuse and destroy other cultures throughout history (for the record I am a European white male).

This book is physically very small with miniscule type. This was not mentioned in the description. I would never have bought it if I had known this. I can't tell if it is any good because I can't read it. This problem is totally unnecessary and is a reflection of a bad publisher.

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