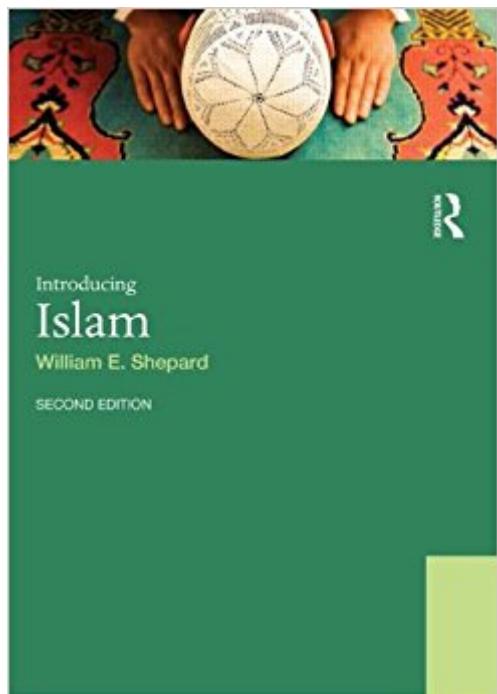


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# Introducing Islam (World Religions)



## **Synopsis**

Just what is Islam and what does it mean to be a Muslim in the world today? Since the events of 9/11 and 7/7, Islam has become one of the most controversial and misunderstood religions in the world. Introducing Islam encourages students to put aside their preconceptions and explore this fascinating religion. William Shepard traces the history of Islam from its origins in the life and career of Mohammed, through its classical expressions, to its interactions with the West in the modern world. A chapter is devoted to each major topic, including The Quran, Islamic law, Islamic theology, and the Sufi movement, as well as community rituals and Islamic art and culture. There is a survey of modern developments and four chapters are dedicated to individual countries, Turkey, Iran, Egypt and Indonesia. Fully revised and updated, the second edition of this core textbook adds crucial material on contemporary issues such as women in Islam and democratization and human rights. Illustrated throughout, the book also includes learning objectives, a glossary of key Arabic terms, comprehensive further reading lists and critical thinking boxes, helping students to critically engage with the material in each chapter. Further teaching and learning resources are available on the companion website at [www.routledge.com/cw/shepard](http://www.routledge.com/cw/shepard). This book continues to be essential reading for students of Islam worldwide.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

"This is an important, timely and valuable contribution to the understanding of Islam in the world of today. Shepard succeeds in providing an accessible and empathetic introduction to Islam whilst also

allowing for sufficient depth for the reader to go beyond the mere facts. The objectives for each chapter are clearly laid out and, with the discussion questions and additional website material, this results in a book that I will not hesitate in recommending to my students." Roy Jackson, University of Gloucestershire, UK "Introducing Islam is a fine, balanced and approachable text for bringing a basic understanding of Islam to undergraduates. Key issues in Islamic social and institutional histories, religious practices, scripture and theology are presented clearly and with an eye towards classroom activities and variable modes of syllabus organization. I've used this textbook multiple times - my students have appreciated its clarity, liked it, and learned from it." Rocco Gangle, Endicott College, USA

William A. E. Shepard is Associate Professor, Retired, of Religious Studies at the University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand. His previous publications include *The Faith of a Modern Muslim Intellectual* (Ahmad Amin) (1982), *Sayyid Qutb and Islamic Activism* (1996) and numerous articles and translations.

This book was informative and stimulating in learning about Islam. It contains a lot of information. However, as with any religion you will want to consult some other texts to gain a clearer understanding of contexts. I read this book with many others at the same time and found it helpful with details the other books leave out and vice versa with other books.

Served its purpose greatly. The book arrived in excellent condition!

Great experience

This book gives the non-Muslim a great opportunity to understand the Muslim point of view. It helps to demystify the religion and enables the reader to see Muslims as multifaceted human beings.

Dont like it

Not the same book as pictured. Plain blue front with very large font, written at the equivalent of a third grade reading level, not appropriate for college or advanced student. Not a textbook by any stretch of the imagination, very disappointed

This is a good introductory book on the religion of Islam. Shepard understands that Islam is not a monolithic edifice, and that the understanding of it depends very much in the individual, the time, and the place, as upon the generally agreed concepts of Sharia itself. Appropriately his text is nuanced toward the various Sunni, Shia, and Sufi perspectives of Islam, and his history, religious overview, and detail of Islamic tradition should strike most instructors as useful and more than adequate for an introductory text. There are weaknesses of the book. Shepard relies too heavily on dropping terms, and although there is a useful glossary and most terms are well-explained, the frequency of their use may confuse some student readers. His questions at the end of the chapter also tend to be general, vague, and overall weak. A good instructor will not be reliant upon them and can compensate. Also, he does provide some political context and background for Egypt, Iran, and Indonesia, which are fairly succinct and good, but one might wish he had done more of this. Overall I would rate this as a strong textbook, but certainly one that could be improved. (p.s. illustrations and pictures are comparatively few. The text is all black an white, but that may keep the cost down)

This is an excellent teaching textbook that I use for my Introduction to Islam course. Students response positively to it as well. My only recommendation to the publishers is to improve the electronic supplemental materials that come with the textbook to cover a broader range of topics.

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