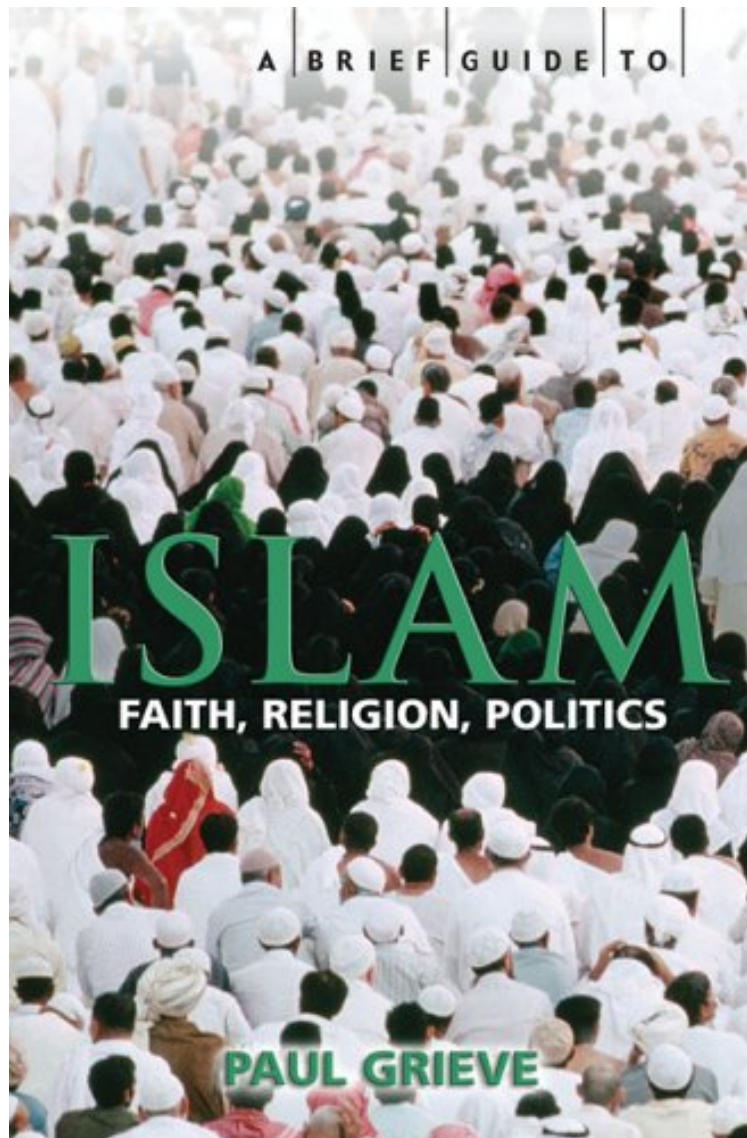


[Free pdf] A Brief Guide to Islam: Faith, Religion, Politics

A Brief Guide to Islam: Faith, Religion, Politics

Paul Grieve

*DOC | *audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF | ePub*



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#3441208 in Books Running Press 2006-03-27Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 1.11 x 5.12 x 8.72l, .79
#File Name: 0786718048416 pages | File size: 63.Mb

Paul Grieve : A Brief Guide to Islam: Faith, Religion, Politics before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Brief Guide to Islam: Faith, Religion, Politics:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. ExcellentBy BeeToynThis is a very thorough introduction into the creed. I highly recommend it to anyone who seeks better understanding of the culture. I didn't find it biased in any way.10 of 14 people found the following review helpful. worth 100 starsBy CustomerWhile searching for a good guide to Islam, I saw a favorable book review on this one, and bought it. From the beginning, I was riveted--I could

hardly put it down. This "brief" guide is exactly what he promises: a brief but COMPLETE guide, describing and explaining every aspect of this great religion. He describes everything from the influence of the poet Rumi, to architecture of a mosque, the government of Jerusalem, to American Black Muslims. This book gave me more insight than I could have imagined into the enormously complex phenomenon that is Islam. I am surprised at the other reviews posted here. One didn't even read the book! Another is clearly biased to Israel, and unfortunately cannot see Islam in an objective way. This is precisely the value of Grieve's astonishing scholarship. He shows all the nuances of Islam--good and bad--their historical origins and how they continue to influence Islam today. He writes clearly and in such a straightforward and engaging way that I thought I was reading historical fiction. Grieve is simply a superb writer. I feel deeply grateful to have come across this book. Although I've read a number of others on religion (notably those by Karen Armstrong), I've never before read anything so well-written, explanatory and removed from bias. An understanding of Islam is more important than ever. Frankly, I think this should be mandatory reading for every college undergraduate, and cannot recommend it highly enough. 10 of 10 people found the following review helpful.

Good introduction, but shows bias
By Joel Nickel
This book is a very good introduction to Islam. It is educational and interesting. It is written so that the most important information is presented first, and less important (and more detailed) information is presented later. For instance, Muhammed's biography, the Five Pillars of Islam, and a comparison between Islam and other world religions are all within the first half of the book. Short stories on topics of interest are spread throughout the book, and that makes the reading easier. However, I cannot give the book 5 stars because it seems like the author seeks to praise Islam at the expense of Judaism and Christianity. He seems to willingly accept stereotypes of these religions while trying to debunk stereotypes about Islam. For instance, Grieve states, "Death is not itself regarded as a punishment in Islam, as in Christianity." I'm not aware of any Christian denomination that presents death as punishment. It's almost as if Grieve acquired his knowledge of Judaism and Christianity from characters in fictional television series. While reading the book, I couldn't help but compare the author to a protective mother who sees no wrong in her own child but will lash out at anyone else who dares to offer advice or criticism. In this light, the words on the jacket seem to be more defensive than factual: "Paul Grieve is an unbeliever -- he is not a born-again Muslim, a proselytizer or a frustrated desert romantic." Having said all this, I still highly recommend the book. The simple fact is that I learn more when I read a book that challenges my preconceived notions. When Mr. Grieve sticks to talking about Islam instead of other faiths, his writing is very engaging. It's just unfortunate that the bias is most evident in the first 20 pages of the text. Past that, other faiths are only mentioned sparingly. It's likely that people who are not committed to any of the faiths mentioned will probably be able to easily ignore the bias. Ultimately, if you would like to have more than a superficial knowledge of Islam, then this book is a very appropriate choice.

Differences and conflicts make for sensational headlines, but *A Brief Guide to Islam* starts with the similarities between the major Abrahamic faiths of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Only then can the differences be understood. By exploring the beliefs, history and politics of the ordinary people of Muslim countries, Paul Grieve offers a fully comprehensive survey that combines authoritative analysis with carefully chosen primary sources. The result is a user-friendly book that challenges cliché and stereotype in areas such as art, women, banking, war, Malcolm X, and the dos and don'ts of visiting a Muslim country. It also exposes the big issues behind the headlines: can Islam support true democracy? Is true democracy what the West really wants for the Middle East, or are we merely seeking a cover of legitimacy for a policy of 'might is right'? Paul Grieve is an unbeliever; he is not a born-again Muslim, a proselytizer or a frustrated desert romantic. His aim is simply to inform. This is the ideal summary for the reader looking for a broad overview of the political and religious contentions that are part of our everyday lives.

From Publishers Weekly
Starred . Grieve, a London-based writer and self-styled student and traveler of the Islamic world, puts forward a riveting book on Islam that decries and then corrects the widespread ignorance about the faith and its history. He consistently jolts the reader out of preconceived notions about Islam and Muslims, particularly concerning the Palestinian conflict. Grieve's precise insights into the Muslim worlds, past and present, are astonishingly accurate. He provides the real and surprising backstory on everything from the Crusades and colonialism to Muslim immigration to Europe and women under Islam. He also provides succinct introductory information on Islam, including recommending Qur'an translations and reviewing standard prayer techniques. Of the harsh reputation Islam has received in the West, Grieve writes: "The universal message of Christianity would be similarly diminished... if the faith were to be defined only by reference to sectarian murders in Northern Ireland, the history of the Spanish Inquisition, or the sad stories of lust and greed in modern television evangelism." His book is by no means an ode of praise to Islam; he is properly critical of the marginalization of women in Muslim societies, which he argues will hold the Muslim world back. If you read only one book about Islam this year, this should be it. (Apr.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. A sympathetic and sensitive treatment of a difficult subject: exploratory as well as explanatory; well-informed, confidently narrated and well-written. -- David Gardner, Middle East Correspondent * Financial Times *
About the Author
While writing his critically successful

novel *Upon a Wheel of Fire*, Paul Grieve became interested in events in the eastern Mediterranean. After two years at the Mosque de Paris he spent a further three years in the Middle East studying Islamic history, jurisprudence, politics and Arabic. The result is this book. Grieve lives in London.