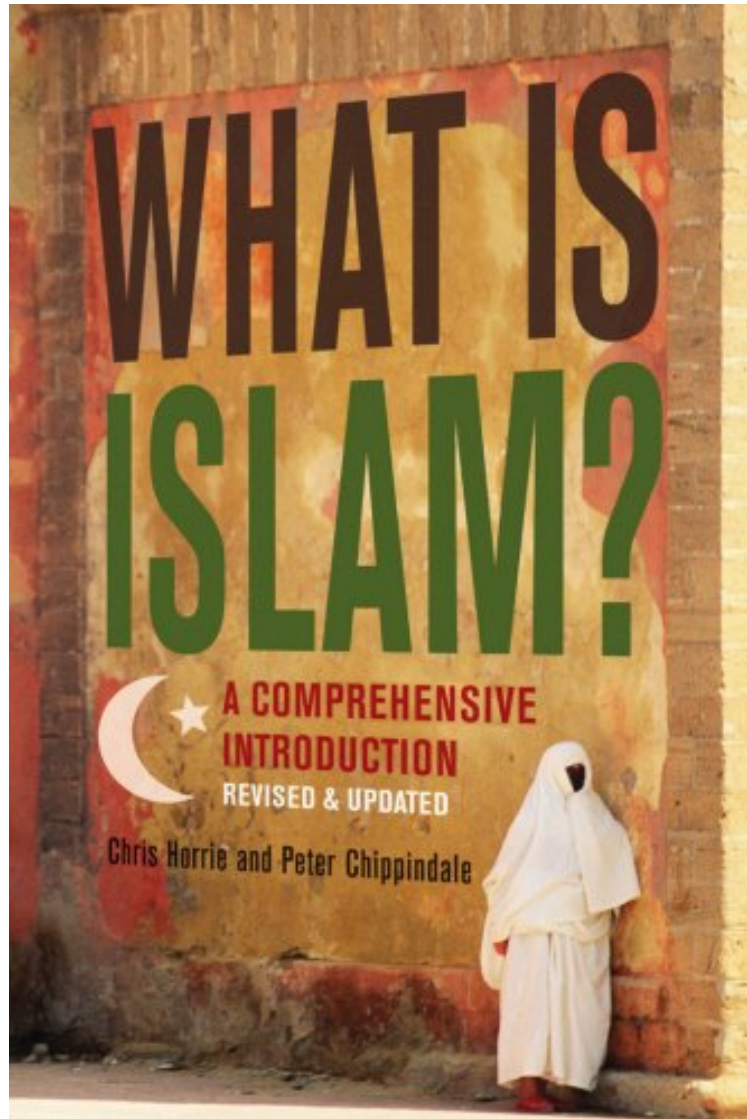


## What Is Islam?: A Comprehensive Introduction

*Chris Horrie, Peter Chippindale*

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**Chris Horrie, Peter Chippindale : What Is Islam?: A Comprehensive Introduction** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised What Is Islam?: A Comprehensive Introduction:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. very informative and objectiveBy YanoAn excellent book to know more about Islam.I really appreciate the different angles of presentation:- faith- history- sects- muslim presence in the world, by each countryIt is clear and very factual. A must read, in my opinion, to understand the world we live in.The authors stick to the facts, except for a couple of short apart in the whole book. So it makes for pretty raw reading. Compilation of infos like in a school book.Yet, there is not so much that it would become overwhelming.I picked this

one in a good library after browsing the section, and am happy about my choice. 8 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Some good info but often inaccurate and polemical

**By Gerard Lynch** This is a 2003 rewrite of a 1990 book, dealing with Islamic history, theology and culture. Written by non-Muslims with no particular axe, pro- or anti-Islamic, to grind, it would seem to be an ideal introduction for non-Muslims. However it is riddled with errors, dismally proofread, and on occasions the authors just can't put their polemic aside. On the plus side to start with - it has a very useful brief introduction to early Islamic history, and it deals with the different schools of Shari'a jurisprudence in a readable and crisp manner. It also presents a useful, though occasionally inaccurate, section on various sects of Islam. Useful if you're confused as to the difference between the Shi'i and the Sunni. However, from here the book starts going wrong. Firstly, the proofreading is dreadful. The Arabic name for Morocco, al-Maghrib, apparently means the West or the 'sunrise'. Er, don't know about your planet lads, but on mine the sun rises in the East. The section on the United Arab Emirates tells us there are 6 emirates in the UEA (sic), having listed 7 on the same page. The gross factual errors are even worse. Istanbul, they tell us, means 'City of Islam'... er, um, no, that would be 'Islamsehri'. Istanbul is actually a Turkicisation of the Greek 'i stan polis', or in the city. Alawites are apparently confined to Syria and Lebanon... er, that might surprise the 15 million or so Turkish Alevi, who form the largest Alawite community in the world. Finally, when they come to the section on Islamic countries, you know who they don't like, and in this case arch-enemies No. 1 and 2 are Turkey and Pakistan. Blinded by their own political convictions, they fail to do justice to the complexities of either country. Also lacking in that section is any analysis of countries where Muslims are not at least half the population - as a result important and ancient Muslim communities in India and China are ignored, as is the Islamic diaspora in Europe, as are the growing Islamic communities of countries like Kenya and South Africa. There is some useful information in this book, but in a crowded market you can do much better.

**4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Heavy with Opinion; Light on Facts**

**By Wayne Beckham** "What is Islam" is the product of two tabloid journalists, Chris Horrie and Peter Chippindale, whose previous titles include "Stick It Up Your Punter" and "The Man Who Was Screaming Lord Sutch." Chris Horrie is described (in a November 2002 interview with NPR's "On the Media") as an expert on English tabloids. In "What is Islam" you see the proof of that assertion. As previously pointed out, the book is riddled with simple errors (al-Magrib, al-'Arabi means "place of sunset" or "western" in Arabic) that anyone with access to the internet should have been able to discover. It also meanders from topic-to-topic, each only peripherally related to the subject that preceded it. Smack in the middle of the book is a tedious chronology, followed, only then, by a description of the sects in Islam. As far as this being the "revised and updated" version, the only evidence I could find of that was Chapter 10, an ill-reasoned and thinly veiled attack on America. Without citation or proof, it claims that George "Dubya" Bush declared a new crusade against all of Islam - never mind the careful pronouncements by the administration that Islam was a religion of peace hijacked by a minority of extremists. To expose the (supposed) ignorance and deep paranoia of America, Chris and Pete resort to linking American policies to the extremist positions of an obscure "Professor Huntington." After establishing this as their only source of information, they inform the world that America fears that, (on Page 104) "the far more technologically adept Confucian civilization of the Far East (which includes Japan) will finance the Islamic world and, in due course, supply it with all the high technology it could possibly require. Thus, at some unknown point in the near future, the West will face a deadly foe in the form of billions of fanatical Muslim fighters, financed and armed with high-tech weaponry by the latter-day space-age Chinese Emperor." In "What is Islam" Chris and Pete's version of hyperbolic yellow journalism reaches new heights. As far as the descriptions of Islam, such the five pillars of the faith and the difference between Shia and Sunni, you could have gotten more facts, without the editorial comment, by browsing any online encyclopedia. For the totally misinformed, this will be an easy read, aimed at the lowest common denominator. As such, you'd be better off picking up a tract from your local Masjid or Mosque. Or better yet, find an actual Muslim source for your investigations into Islam.

With more than a billion followers, Islam is the world's fastest-growing religion and a major global religious and political force in the 21st century. It is also the subject of much misunderstanding, and many people know little of its origins or principles. Here is the perfect introduction to this important and complex subject, covering all aspects of the religion including its origin, the Koranic law, a look at Islamic nations and their relative importance, major events in the history of Islam, and Islamic sects and the rise of militant Islam in the 20th and 21st centuries. This indispensable guide remains the definitive introduction to the subject.

About the Author Chris Horrie is an award-winning newspaper, magazine, and television journalist and the author of Tabloid Nation. Peter Chippindale is the coauthor, with Chris Horrie, of Stick It Up Your Punter!