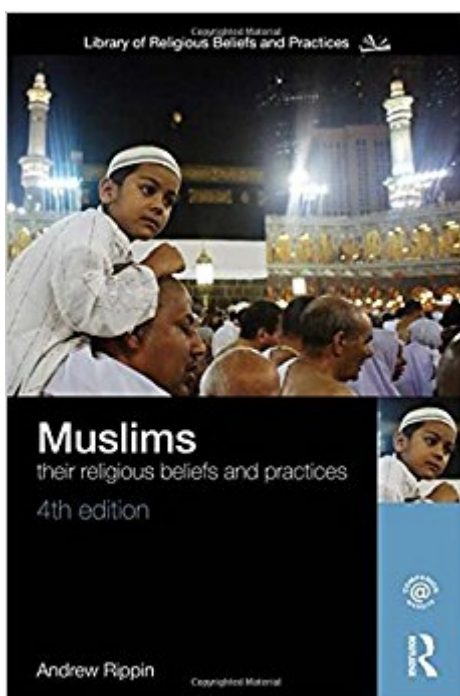


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# Muslims: Their Religious Beliefs And Practices (Library Of Religious Beliefs And Practices)



## Synopsis

Andrew Rippin's *Muslims* is essential reading for students and scholars alike. This new edition has been comprehensively updated and for the first time features a companion website with extensive links to additional reading and resources to help deepen students' understanding of the subject. *Muslims* offers a survey of Islamic history and thought from the formative period of the religion to modern times. It examines the unique elements which have combined to form Islam, in particular the Qur'an and the influence of Muhammad, and traces the ways in which these sources have interacted historically to create Muslim theology and law as well as the alternative visions of Islam found in Shi'ism and Sufism. Combining core source materials with coverage of current scholarship and of recent events in the Islamic world, Andrew Rippin introduces this hugely significant religion in a succinct, challenging and refreshing way. The improved and expanded fourth edition contains a new chapter on perceptions of Muslims today as well as a new series of text boxes to stimulate students' thinking about essay topics and research projects. Using a distinctive critical approach that promotes engagement with key issues, from fundamentalism and women's rights to problems of identity, Islamophobia and modernity, this text is ideal for today's students.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

'Highly recommended. An introduction that stands out due to its comprehensive coverage from a critical historical perspective attuned to the dynamics of constructing religious identities both in the past and present. Just the right amount of challenge for undergraduate students.' - F. Volker

Greifenhagen, University of Regina, Canada 'With his pedagogical clarity, critical academic approach and vast knowledge, Andrew Rippin's book is truly an authoritative and stimulating guide. The combination of classical and contemporary sources and a large number of examples from different epochs and regions provide the reader with a thorough introduction to Islamic studies.' - Gáfrán Larsson, University of Gothenburg, Sweden "This thorough work by Rippin is one of the best short introductions to Muslim thought...this is an excellent classroom textbook. Rippin lives up to his goal to treat Islam to 'the full rigor of analysis that humanistic and social-scientific study can provide.' Summing Up: Highly recommended." G.M. Smith, Delaware County Community College, USA in Choice " Praise for previous editions: 'Probably the best general account of what Muslims believe' - Robert Irwin, The Guardian'Provides a scholarly and yet readable introduction to the Islamic tradition. Rippin presents a complex religious tradition in a condensed, well-documented and up-to-date work.' - Roxanne D. Marcotte, Studies in Religion'Rippin manages to give an accessible and representative overview of the doctrinal and ritual developments of Islam.' - Oliver Scharbrodt, Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies

Andrew Rippin is Professor of History and former Dean of the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Victoria, Canada. He specialises in Islamic Studies and has written and edited several books on Islam and the Qur'an, including Classical Islam: A Sourcebook of Religious Literature and The Islamic World (both published by Routledge).

I gave this text only four stars out of five, because the first half on the origins of Islam through the seventeenth century could have been more thorough. The book is essentially divided into two parts. The first half covers the basic history and doctrines of Islam in the early period. The second half is dedicated to the Islam in the modern world with a focus on contemporary religion. The first half is superficial at best. Its primary utility is to point the reader to other sources. The text must be supplemented with a reader in primary sources like Rippin's Textual Sources for the Study of Islam, or Cragg and Speight's Islam from Within. The text is biased toward history and doctrine with very little attention paid toward ritual. However, there are some insights on Islamic architecture well worth reading. The second half on modern Islam is more useful. Rippin is provocative and less likely than some other authors to write in platitudes and parrot Edward Said's Orientalism. Here again though, the focus is on history, sociology, and doctrine, without much discussion of the rituals and practice of the religion and how it is experienced by the Muslim. Were I to choose a text for a class on Islam, I

would probably choose Denny's Introduction to Islam (3rd edition). However, I might also supplement it with the second half of this text. Denny tiptoes around the consequences of contemporary militant Islam. This text does not, however this text does not do justice to the religion of Islam as phenomenon.

A good overview of Islam. It comes up a little short on some subjects, Sufism, Wahhabism, and is stronger on origins and the historical conditions that shaped the faith. Probably one of the best ways to begin your study or a good summary for a general reader.

A little long-winded. Could use some editing to make it more concise.

Purchased for a class. Wouldn't necessarily read for entertainment, but it's good for reference. Accessible and easy to understand.

Informative and will not offend anyone.

Muslims: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices is a condensed version of a two-volume work that was published in the early 1990s. Like its predecessors, this book provides readers with a synthesis of the development of Islam from the 7th century to the early 21st century and offers insight into future activity that would influence Islam's interpretation. Rippin strives to provide a spectrum of Muslims' perceptions of their religion through scholarly activity--by Muslims and non-Muslims--dedicated to it. The seventeen chapters are organized into six parts. Topics discussed include formative elements of Islam and an Islamic identity, classical Islam and alternative versions of classical Islam, reform movements within Islam in modern times, and possible trajectories in the foreseeable future. The work is well referenced and provides an extensive bibliography for further reading. In the introduction Rippin describes his attitude as: "Avoiding scholarly analysis in order not to appear 'anti-Islamic' or to make the subject 'easy' is neither academically responsible nor respectful of Islam itself which, it seems to me, simply deserves the full rigor of analysis that humanistic and social scientific study can provide: in doing that we are in fact saying that Islam is a subject worthy of study, something which is essentially denied when a less rigorous approach is undertaken [2]." This sentiment is echoed throughout the book. While essentially a work on Islamic history, Rippin chooses to deal with issues rather than present a historically styled narrative. Its usefulness is enhanced by its emphasis on the overarching issues that make specific facts

important. It contains critical discussions of the nature of the sources and the received accounts. When approaching the work from the perspective of issues, the chapters discussing pre-modern times mirror those discussing contemporary times. Issues discussed in Chapter 2, "The Quran [sic]" for example are re-visited in Chapter 14 "The Quran [sic] and modernity." Other extensions are more subtle such as Chapter 7 "Ritual practice" and Chapter 15 "Issues of identity." This book synthesizes a complex and vast phenomenon like Islam with rigorous analysis and projections into the future. Rippin's approach is useful for introducing Islam with its complexities without overwhelming the non-specialist reader. NOTE: Andrew Rippin, F.R.S.C. is Professor of History and Dean of the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. He is a specialist in Islamic Studies with an interest in the Qur'an and the history of its interpretation. Armchair Interview says: A rich and suggestive work on Islam.

This volume, along with the previous one, is too academic and ideologically-oriented in the way it presents Islamic religious beliefs and practices. From the outset, it advances the argument that Muslim practices are not consistent with the requirements of modern life. The author's proof for this is a tourist-like, first impression of life in another country. He visited the Muslim-majority country of Turkey and noticed that in the early morning hours mosques use loudspeakers to transmit the adhan (call to prayer). In fact such a practice, which hardly represents the core of Islamic rituals, can be found in places like Dearborn, Michigan and Washington, D.C. in the United States, where a growing Muslim community is thriving in this most "modern" of all countries. The thrust of the book is not to explain Islamic religious practices and what they mean to Muslims, but to follow an outmoded tradition of orientalist research. This type of inquiry is tension-ridden, based on a selective use of the data.

I accidentally posted my review of Vol. 2 on the Vol. 1 site. "Reader from DC" seems to have deliberately done the same even tho' he's attacking something from the Intro to Vol. 2, hence my confusion. Will post an actual review for vol. 1 once I've read it...

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