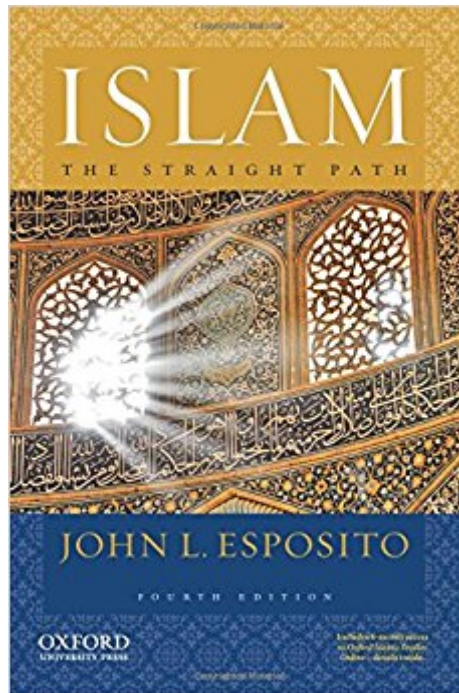




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Islam: The Straight Path



Synopsis

Now in a new edition, this exceptionally successful survey text introduces the faith, belief, and practice of Islam from its earliest origins up to its contemporary resurgence. John L. Esposito, an internationally renowned expert on Islam, traces the development of this dynamic faith and its impact on world history and politics. Lucidly written and expansive in scope, *Islam: The Straight Path*, Fourth Edition, provides keen insight into one of the world's least understood religions. It is ideally suited for use in courses on Islam, comparative religions, and Middle Eastern history and culture.

NEW TO THE FOURTH EDITION:

- * A revised Chapter 5, "Religion and Politics," provides more focused and up-to-date coverage of Osama bin Laden's influence and the continued growth of extremism; the relationship of Islam to violence; the meaning of jihad and the origins of a global jihad ideology; the role of suicide bombing; and the influence of Saudi Arabia's Wahhabi Islam.
- * An updated Chapter 6, "The Struggle for Islam in the 21st Century," covers Muslim responses to new social and political contexts and presents the diverse and competing positions--from traditionalist to modernist--of contemporary Muslim leaders on issues of religious authority, women's rights, Shariah, violence, and terrorism.
- * More extensive treatment of early Islam in Chapters 1 and 2
- * An enhanced art program featuring twenty-one photos and three maps
- * A new appendix that includes an extensive timeline of key events in the history of Islam
- * A FREE 6-month subscription to Oxford Islamic Studies Online (www.oxfordislamicstudies.com), edited by John L. Esposito. Please look inside for details.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"This is an excellent, comprehensive, and highly accessible introduction to Islam and its civilization; Muslims and their societies in the pre-modern to the modern period; and contemporary intellectual and political trends. In my opinion, it really is the single best introduction to Islam and Muslims today. The book keeps getting better and better with each new edition!"--Asma Afsaruddin, University of Notre Dame
"I have to commend OUP for its commitment to revising and updating this important book. Esposito writes in a lucid, accessible, and direct style that allows the book to be an excellent introduction for novice students. Esposito illustrates the rare ability of being comprehensive without being reductive."--Febe Armanios, Middlebury College

JOHN L. ESPOSITO is Professor of Religion and International Affairs and Professor of Islamic Studies at Georgetown University, where he is also Director of the Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding at the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service. His publications include *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality*, *Islam and Politics*, *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World* and *The Oxford History of Islam*.

Esposito's book first appeared in 1988. This fifth, updated edition was published in April 2016. It is an excellent book, well-informed and sympathetic, which has been widely used as an introductory text. Indeed, in some ways it has come to occupy the niche filled in its day by H. A. R. Gibb's remarkably durable "Mohammedanism" of 1949. New to this edition are discussion questions at the end of each chapter; Chapter 2, "The Muslim Community in History," now includes extensive coverage of Islam in the West; Chapter 5, "The Resurgence of Religion in Politics," which incorporates coverage of the unexpected and stunning Arab Spring; and Chapter 6, "The Struggle for Islam in the Twenty-First Century," now discusses a selection of major religious scholars, intellectuals, and popular preachers who address critical questions and issues of Islamic reform. There are also revisions and updates to the map of the Muslim world, the chronological timeline, and the bibliography. "Islam: The Straight Path", therefore, has more than retained its usefulness. Unfortunately, however, it has been produced in a slightly smaller format, and with a markedly smaller typeface, than its paperback predecessor, and is consequently far less agreeable to read. This was a regrettable false economy on the part of Oxford University Press.

Simply and amazing book. Gives people a look behind all the propaganda in the news, and gives a thorough as well as 99% accurate teaching of the TRUE Islam.

Very interesting. Great presentation

It's ok

With Islam such a hot topic these days, I've been looking for a history of the religion and not so much the ranting criticism or apology of it that one sees everywhere. Esposito gives such a history and once you see the history, the modern Islamic resurgent movements make a lot more sense. Esposito begins with Muhammad and the Koran and travels through Islamic history, the Caliphates, the Empires, the Declines, and the renewals. All very fascinating. Most importantly, one learns of the diversity of belief in Islam. And we thought Christianity was divided. It finally clarified the current day Sunni/Shii feuds for me. My beef with Esposito though, is his occasional 'defenses' of Islam against what he calls modern media stereotypes of the religion (and this before 9/11). The book would have had a much more objective tone if he would have left that out and not pushed 'tolerance' of Islam by explaining away its bothersome aspects. Possibly, he if did not, the reader might come to conclusions that bother Esposito. I am one reader that may have come to different conclusions that Esposito intended. For instance, Esposito, argues that modern day fanatical, militant Islam is akin to David Koresh and abortion clinic bombers (i.e. fanatical, militant Christians). At one point in my life, I may have agreed out of ignorance. But the history of Islam as presented in this book does not seem to support that view. Elements of Islam have always had violent elements and I see no reason to see them as fringe and not mainstream. Modern day violence can be seen akin to the Ghazi's of pre-Ottoman Turkey: expanding the sphere of Islam in various means, the sword being one of them. The fact that modern day Islamic governments demand the death of individuals also lends support to the fact that Islamic violence is not limited to fringe movements. Besides the occasional plea for his pluralism, the book is worth the perspective gained from knowing the history of Islam.

As usual John Esposito does not disappoint. He is thorough and fair. Definitely a must read book if you want an objective and unbiased look at Islam-the religion of over one fifth of the world population. In my opinion it's worth taking an unbiased look at a religion which the Guinness Book of World Records rates as the fastest growing religion in the world by the number of conversions.

perfect condition

I bought this book for a world history class and found it fascinating. The book helped me understand the roots of the Sunni-Shii split against the background of the tribal culture that existed in the region long before Islam. This is a book I will keep and reread several times. I would recommend it to anyone not familiar with Islam who wants a basic understanding of the history surrounding the religion.

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