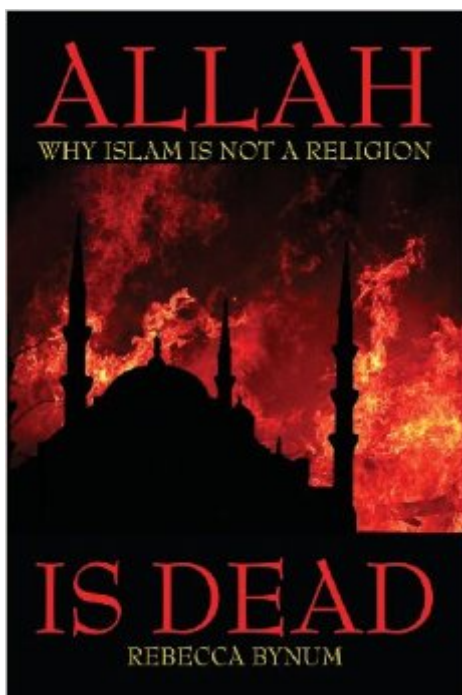


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Allah Is Dead: Why Islam Is Not A Religion



Synopsis

Many analysts have worked on the problem of Islam's political aspects, but few have tackled Islam philosophically as a whole. Rebecca Bynum does that. She discusses Islam and its status in the modern world with a depth and precision missing in many modern accounts and sadly concludes that the great hope of secularizing the Muslim world is a pipe dream. It is much more likely, according to Bynum, that the secular world will be Islamized. Overall, however, her analysis is hopeful and provides an important ideological tool for dealing with Islam which is to reconsider its classification. Bynum maintains Islam's current status as a religion, along with all the other religions of the world, is in error. She refers to Islam as the duck-billed platypus of belief systems and proposes it should be classified accordingly; as the hybrid religio-socio-political belief system it is. She also reminds the Western world about what religion itself actually is, not the caricature modern analysts often mean when they refer to "religious fundamentalisms." Bynum has given policy-makers a powerful tool for dealing with Islam. Let us hope they understand, and grasp, and choose to make use of it.

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Customer Reviews

This is arguably the most important book extant today that accurately describes the true character and the objectives of the Islamic religion. What it makes clear is that the freedom of religion which Islam claims for itself is in fact an opaque cover for what is actually a comprehensive authoritarian and immutable doctrine that dictates not only moral and spiritual goals for observant Muslims but a fixed unchallengeable set of orders that dictate the behavior of Muslims in every sphere of daily

life. Deviance from or overt challenges to this doctrine are considered capital crimes punishable by death. The practical and ineluctable result of this is that truly observant Muslims are required to regard their religious doctrine and its antecedents as the supreme law of their life, supreme over the civil laws of the country in which they reside, including western secular democracies. The logical inference from this is that observant Muslims are in fact committing acts of sedition when they seek to justify their actions using Islamic law, justification for which has recently extended to use Islamic law as an excuse for committing murder and "honor killings". What Bynum makes clear is that the notion that "freedom of religion" cannot and should not be allowed as a rationalization for not recognizing Muslim transgressions of law or crime, and that the stark fact that Islamic doctrine is indistinguishable from what we consider civil law must not prevent us from openly criticizing and resisting Muslim practices and beliefs. The practical impact of such unity of religion and state is that Islam is in effect no different from any other secular, political, social or cultural belief system or movement and therefore the stricture that we should not criticize Islam does not apply at all.

This book will be troubling to Muslims and empowering to non-Muslims. Ms. Bynum exposes the material aspects of Islam as a sharp contrast to the Judeo-Christian spiritual faiths. Islam is all about rules, about emulating one person - Muhammad, and about self-sacrifice. Having a personal faith in God and aspiring to ideal virtues take a second seat to group conformity. Writes the author, "Compassion demands that we see Muslims as human beings first. . . . [But] should we not then thoroughly examine the fundamental error of Islam [which sees] Muslims are more and non-Muslims less? . . . their theology in this regard is contradictory and unsupportable. Judged in this light, is it not incumbent upon us to seek to free individual Muslims from the totalitarian thought-system of Islam, just as we once sought to free Eastern Europeans from the totalitarian system of communism on the basis that it is fundamentally in error? . . . We should seek to break the hold Islam has on the Muslim mind." (pp. 51-52) This thought-provoking book will challenge those who still hold that Islam is merely another religion like Christianity and Judaism.

I spent many years living in a muslim community, I have read the Arberry version of the Koran, then more recently Bill Warner's An Abridged Koran (which I highly recommend). I know I have enough knowledge and experience to safely state that what Bynum says about Islam is shocking, but TRUE! As Bynum suggests, the Western world's most powerful response would be to reclassify Islam as a political organisation, which is what it is.

A remarkable and highly reasoned, thoughtfully researched and written analysis. Bottom line: Islam is amoral. Everything that happens is Allah's will, whether for good or ill. Lacking a moral code and an individual connection with a Higher Power makes Islam a non-religion.

I received a copy of this Book from my father as a gift. The book's main premise is that Islam should not be judged as just another religion like Judaism or Christianity. It is a political ideology, that like Nazism, creates a duality in humans. You are either a Believer or a Kufar (non-believer, meaning dirty). Despite this, Islam is ravaged with internal conflicts since the beginning, but if you are not a Muslim beware of the consequences once Islam has taken over your society. I will not attempt to summarize any other part of her argument, because I'd do no justice to it. I recommend this for anyone who takes Islam seriously, and these days more and more people ought to. This is on my gift list for many of my family and friends.

This book describes the deeper, less obvious, aspects of Islam that only an 'insider' would recognise. As someone with many years of living within the Islamic community in Europe, I recognised many issues the author analysed, ie the "materialism" of Islam. Despite being initially put off by the title and cover, I found it to be one of the best books I have read on this subject so far. Using a Literary Theory approach, the author highlights the fact that it is our "beliefs" that are the most important factor to have knowledge of, because out of our beliefs springs our imagination, and then our culture. In other words, our cultures, our civilisations, are a product of our collective beliefs about the world. The author also argues that Islam is not a religion, but a political ideology, and that we need to separate what is religion and what is a political organisation.

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