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# The Trouble With Islam Today: A Muslim's Call For Reform In Her Faith



THE TROUBLE WITH ISLAM TODAY



## Synopsis

Winner of Oprah's first "Chutzpah Award" for boldness, Irshad Manji is among the world's most visible - and vocal - Muslim reformers. In this audiobook, narrated by her, Irshad explains the disturbing attitudes with which too many of her fellow Muslims practice Islam today: Arab cultural tribalism posing as pure faith. An uncritical approach to the Quran as the final and therefore superior word of God. And a rejection of universal human rights as if they are incompatible with the Divine. As a faithful Muslim, Irshad shows that Islam has the raw material to rectify these injustices. Irshad offers a practical vision of how reform-minded Muslim can empower women, promote respect for religious minorities and foster a competition of ideas. This vision builds on "ijtihad" (ij-tee-had), Islam's lost tradition of independent thinking. Irshad Manji's message for Muslims and non-Muslims? Dare to ask questions - out loud. In this audiobook, her voice rings clearly, compassionately, and passionately. You will love the musical surprises, too!

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 8 hours and 16 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

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Audible.com Release Date: October 10, 2011

Language: English

ASIN: B005UG3XOE

Best Sellers Rank: #29 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Religion & Spirituality > Islam #461 in Books > Religion & Spirituality > Islam #855 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Nonfiction > Social Science

## Customer Reviews

By Bill Marsano. Is there a campaign against Irshad Manji's book? Certainly it seems something odd is afoot. Impartial readers should examine the reviews posted (52 as of April 10) and decide for themselves. I have; here are my conclusions: Thirty reviews are positive--3 to five stars--and 14 (nearly 50%) are by people who have reviewed for before. Only 7 (less than 25%) are anonymous, signed "A Reader"). In general, the reviewers discuss the merits of the . Twenty-two reviews are hostile--almost all only 1 star--and only 5 (about 23%) are by previous reviewers. (One claims a children's game caused repeated vomiting by her child; reviews a \$2.79 screwdriver; and attacks a

book she admits not having read. In short, she doesn't review--she rants.) Nine (about 40%) are anonymous. Many are merely ad hominem attacks on the author, who is described as dishonest, ignorant, money-hungry, publicity-seeking (even fatwa-seeking) and fostering a "craze for Islamophobia." One calls Manji "simply not a Muslim" because of her "inability to read Arabic, absence from active Muslim worship, embrace of the West and its secular values, not to mention her identity as a Lesbian feminist." I believe 's reader-reviews are important and should not be distorted by partisan attacks. Readers should be alert to possible unfairness in this case. Now (at last) to the book itself. Manji addresses her fellow Muslims thus: "I have to be honest with you. Islam is on pretty thin ice with me. I'm hanging on by my fingernails . . . ." What sounds like a nifty, snappy, wise-ass opener is, it soon becomes clear, really an expression of pain.

[...] A liberal woman raised in a strict Islamic family, Manji offers readers an interesting insiders view of Islamic life. Questions regarding the narrowness of her experience may be legitimate, but they still offer a telling look at the trouble modern Muslims face trying to integrate their faith into their modern life style. Many can question how Islam reached its current position, but despite its position as one of the world's fastest growing religion, Manji is correct that it faces a crisis. The largest funders of Islamic proselytizing and scholarship -- Persian gulf petrol dollars -- also represent the faiths most conservative elements. Not surprisingly, they often conflate ancient Arabian social custom with articles of Islamic faith causing substantial regression towards misogynist and anti-democratic principles. Here she offers ample evidence such as books donated by Saudi Arabian charities to Islamic primary schools, which contain blanket vitriolic attacks on America, the West, and Jews. This analysis dovetails well with the question she raises about what effect the large number of repressive authoritarian governments in Islamic countries has on the faith. Here argument that changes in Islam will have to come from Western Muslims is interesting, though she does not do enough to ask how they can gain sufficient legitimacy to bring about such change. Manji's most frightening observations and probably the most often attacked are her observations regarding the current Middle East crisis. In current charged times these are hot button issues, but her analysis adds a much needed element to the current debate.

Organized religion has a tendency to invite disaster due to the inherent flaws of the human condition that predicate judgment, mistrust, hatred, and disdain for those who adhere to a faith and dogma different from our own. In particular, the monotheistic Semitic religions over the course of history have proven to be the most rigid and intolerant of other faiths; this 'my way or the highway'

approach has resulted in warfare, conquests, and carnage that--unfortunately--carries through to today. In the post-9/11 world, Islam has occupied center stage of our global lexicon. In the name of this religion, international networks of terrorism have been spawned to attack, kill, and terrify. And Islam, like any other faith, has its problems--the totalitarian intolerance of dissent being one of its ugliest thorns. Under such a foreboding environment, Canadian TV journalist Irshad Manji dares to speak out via an open letter to all Muslims in her compelling and riveting book, *THE TROUBLE WITH ISLAM*. Granted, the author openly admits she is grappling with her faith; one day, she laments, she may leave Islam for good. Yet Manji has the courage and fortitude to shed light on the myriad of problems inflicting her faith: the oppression of women in the Arab and Muslim world; the unwavering intolerance of other religions in Arab and Muslim nations; the rampant anti-Semitism festering and infecting mosques around the world. The author presents a convincing case that Islam has been captured by zealots who espouse a malignant, narrow interpretation of the Koran: an interpretation that portrays Islam as an antiquated relic looking backward--instead of a peaceful vehicle for adaptation and change in an ever-changing world.

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