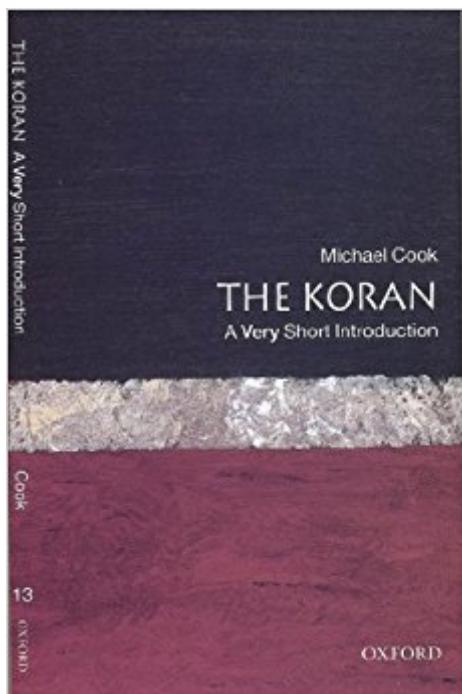


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# The Koran: A Very Short Introduction (Very Short Introductions)



## **Synopsis**

The Koran has constituted a remarkably strong core of identity and continuity for a religious tradition that is now in its fifteenth century. This Very Short Introduction explores the significance of the Koran both in the modern world and in traditional Muslim culture. Michael Cook provides a lucid and direct account of the Koran as codex, as scripture, as liturgy, and as the embodiment of truth, and examines its means of formation and dissemination. He also discusses issues of interpretation for certain key verses, demonstrating that fecundity of the text for readers throughout the world.

**ABOUT THE SERIES:** The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

This book has three main sections: "The formation of the Koran", "the Koran in the traditional

Muslim world" and "the Koran in the modern world". I myself did not find Cook's ruminations on "the Koran in the modern world" particularly enlightening. However, "the Koran in the traditional Muslim world" section is solid. Cook's discussions of "the Koran as codex" (technicalities of book production, etc.), "the Koran as text" (layout of the text on the page; vocalization; facsimiles from Qur'an manuscripts; the question of variant readings) and "the Koran as worship" (its use in prayer; the sample in musical notation; the problem of translation in Islamic tradition) are full of information on subjects that are very important to Muslims, but rarely discussed in popular books of this sort. In the final section, "the formation of the Koran", Cook discusses the collection of the scripture, presents some of the problems involved in the traditional accounts of its revelation and ends with a very brief airing of "a couple of examples of the many ideas that have been put forward in the last quarter-century of Western scholarship on the Koran" (p. 139), particularly the views of Wansbrough and the "much less heretical" theories of Neuwirth.

This book was not a detailed book regarding the Koran. It was more concerned with the origins of the Koran and the different interpretations by different people who have studied the Koran since the time of Mohammed . I cannot strongly recommend this book as a starting point for understanding the Koran !

very helpful.

I'm very glad I ordered this book. It is a truly academic and comprehensive introduction to the Koran. If all the books in this "short introduction" series are written as well as this one, then I would read all of them.

There is no better way to learn so much about The Koran in so little time as is possible with Michael Cook's A Very Short Introduction. I own several titles from the series and each has its strengths and weaknesses. This one shares a weakness with several of the other Short Introductions in that the topic is too exhaustive to cover in the less than two hundred pages used by Cook. Nothing I can offer will add or subtract from the previous reviews, but I will claim that the book is a good one and valuable for understanding the sacred text if you find it foreign. Furthermore, it is a handy reference that I have returned to several times as recent political conversations hover around fundamentalism in general, and Islam in particular. Note that the two practices are no more one and the same than Christianity and fundamentalism, but both sets are often interlinked.

Close to a must read along with the companion book on Islam. I now have a much better understanding of the necessity and symbology of the koran to Islam.

For example the grave reactions to defiling of korans now makes more sense to me. Also the variations in translation right up to the very end of book. Highly recommended.

Decent intro to the history of the koran, the Arabic language, and discusses some really cool archaeological findings.

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