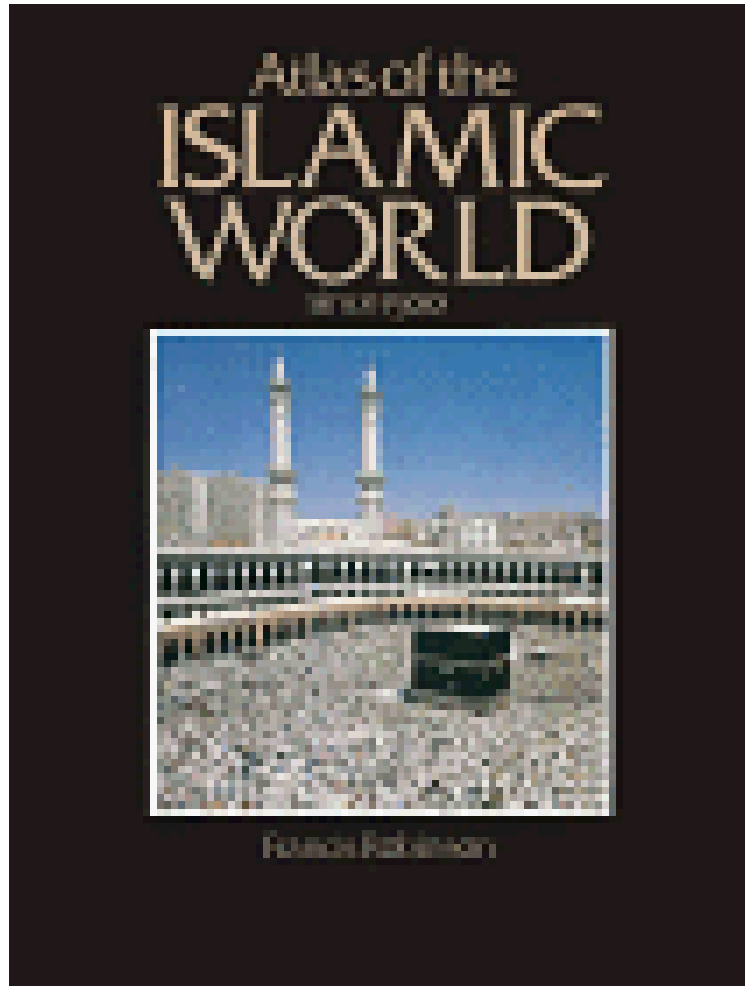


(Mobile book) Atlas of the Islamic World Since 1500 (Cultural Atlas of)

Atlas of the Islamic World Since 1500 (Cultural Atlas of)

Francis Robinson

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Francis Robinson : Atlas of the Islamic World Since 1500 (Cultural Atlas of) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Atlas of the Islamic World Since 1500 (Cultural Atlas of):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Rebecca A MahmoodExcellent reference work!8 of 30 people found the following review helpful. Plenty of fascinating informationBy Jill MalterThis atlas has plenty of photos, drawings and maps. It tells about Muslim history, Muslim religious life, Islamic art, and Muslim society. It is a useful reference.Normally, I would give such a reference five stars. But there are three outstanding questions. Namely, just how tolerant is Muslim society of non-Muslims? How tolerant is Muslim society of human rights? And how tolerant is Muslim society of truth? These are absolutely fundamental questions.These questions could have been asked of European society in the year 1200. Or German society in 1935. And it ought to be asked about Muslim society today. After all, we can see from this book that this society is well-organized and has the power to do plenty of good. But it can also be quite destructive, and self-destructive. What does this book say about that?Not much.This

book glosses over the problems Islam has had with human rights. It barely mentions the problems with dhimmihood. It discusses the status of women, but steers clear of taking a stand on the topic. In short, the book finds it easy to glorify anything about Islam that looks nice, but just can't bring itself to criticize anything about it. After some reflection, I've decided that this is a serious failing. If this were the year 1935, and there were a book that had a similar difficulty in finding any fault with German society or leadership, would I give it five stars? I hope not. Both Islamic society and human society as a whole need to respect the rights of others and value truth if they are to prosper. Now, how does the Muslim world view the West? How does it view minorities in its own lands? How does it view a small non-Muslim neighbor, namely Israel? Let's see what the book has to say about the latter question. "Nothing brought home the continuing inferiority of the Muslim position more acutely than the existence of the state of Israel," says the book. We find that this feeling was "exacerbated by the constant flow of immigrants," by what it calls the "expansionist aims of some Israelis" and by the "humiliation" of Arab armies in the wars of 1948, 1956, and 1967. All this without explaining how these wars occurred! Again, what if a book about Germany had said such misleading things in 1935? Would I have given that five stars? Again, I hope not. The book goes on to explain that Muslims everywhere take the war against Israel seriously. Well, if that is true, Muslim society has a big problem. Societies that base their existence not on trying to improve the lives of their citizens and becoming more prosperous but instead focus on aggressive wars against their neighbors are deserving of substantial criticism. Surely there is more to Muslim society than a goal of oppressing others! And I think that a book of this sort ought to point to ways in which more positive goals can be supported. This book is good at much of what it does, but it falls down badly when it comes to topics such as human rights or truth.

The Cultural Atlas series combines intellectual depth and visual richness as it distills and synthesizes an enormous amount of information. Weaving together geography, history, archaeology, anthropology, architecture, the arts, and more, these handsomely designed, interdisciplinary volumes encompass the entire physical and cultural world of each civilization, evoking its unique spirit and vitality. Delight the Eye, Inform the Mind Designed to appeal to both the serious student and the more casual reader, the Cultural Atlas series is written with authority and clarity. Panoramic in scope, these volumes provide an overview of places and peoples through the centuries and are illustrated throughout with hundreds of striking and informative photographs and drawings. Each volume is divided into three key sections: -- Geographical/ethnographic background -- Cultural history -- A tour of present-day regions. This volume details the transmission of Islamic culture from generation to generation and from state to state over the last 500 years.