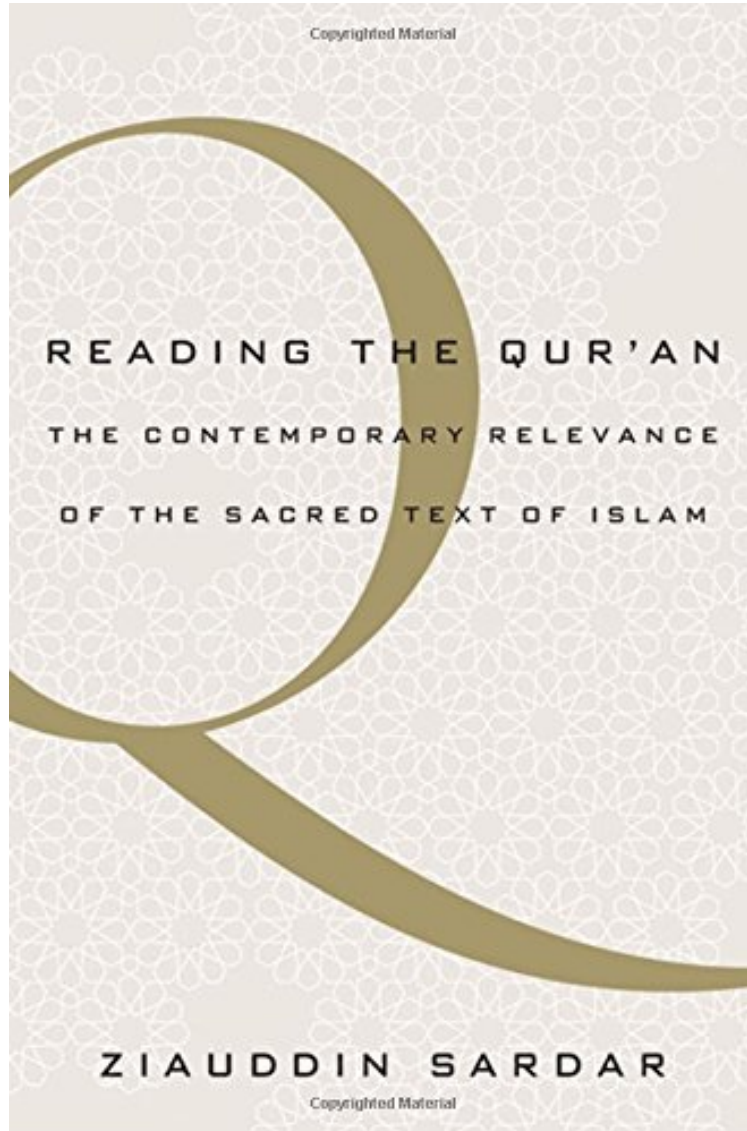


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Reading the Qur'an: The Contemporary Relevance of the Sacred Text of Islam

Ziauddin Sardar

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Ziauddin Sardar : Reading the Qur'an: The Contemporary Relevance of the Sacred Text of Islam before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Reading the Qur'an: The Contemporary Relevance of the Sacred Text of Islam:

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the holy ...By Mohammad NawazIt is an excellent commentary on the interpretation and application of the holy book. The central theme is that the Quran has to be read, interpreted and understood not exclusively in its historical context. It should also be understood to be conducive to the needs of modern society. Furthermore, no thinking person can deny that the Islamic scripture, considered by the Muslims as valid for all periods, must be interpreted and applied in accordance with the needs of the period in which we live. Otherwise it may not satisfy the claim of its universality for all times. Properly interpreted and understood it can be a guide for its followers within the framework of the changing times. Life is not a constant phenomenon and its needs, problems and solutions also require a dynamic perspective. Then the Quran can be a great force among Muslim societies to promote the wellbeing of people and human dignity without any distinction on the basis of religions. In that broader context, the philosophy and explanations in the book are valid even for the religions other than the three Abrahamic faiths.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. An attempt at contemporary readingBy M Al-ShaerIn reading through the book the author gives a much needed historical narrative of the process of bridging the Quran to the non-Arabic speaking reader.The author also tries to present the Quran in a modern way through a contemporary reading.I think the reading although contemporary is not innovative and does not provide the reader with a complete system or way to read on his own. He still resorts to studying opinions of various scholars and choosing among them.To me, a native speaker of Arabic I didn't find it innovative and methodical enough. I would recommend the writings of Mohammad Shahrour although only one is available in English for free on the webShahrour.org0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Siraj I. MuftiZiauddin is always superb. Very well written.

"I grew up reading the Qur'an on my mother's lap," writes Ziauddin Sardar. "It's an experience I share with most Muslim children. And so it is that our connection to the Qur'an is infused with associations of the warmest and most enduring of human bonds." In *Reading the Qur'an*, Sardar--one of Europe's leading public intellectuals--laments that for far too many Muslims, the Qur'an he had learned in his mother's lap has become a stick used for ensuring conformity and suppressing dissenting views. Indeed, some find in the Qur'an justification for misogyny, validation for hatred of others, an obsession with dress and mindless ritual, rules for running modern states. Arguing passionately but reasonably against these trends, Sardar speaks out for a more open, less doctrinaire approach to reading the Qur'an. He contends that the Qur'an is not fixed in stone for all time, but a dynamic text which every generation must encounter anew, and whose relevance and implications for our time we have yet to fully discover. The words of the Qur'an imply movement: the religious life, it tells us, is not about standing still but always striving to make our life, our society, the entire world around us a better place for everyone. Sardar explores the Qur'an from a variety of perspectives, from traditional exegesis to hermeneutics, critical theory, and cultural analysis, drawing fresh and contemporary lessons from the Sacred Text. He also examines what the Qur'an says about such contemporary topics as power and politics, rights of women, suicide, domestic violence, sex, homosexuality, the veil, freedom of expression, and evolution. Ziauddin Sardar opens a new window on this remarkable Sacred Text, in a book that will engage all devout Muslims and will interest anyone curious about the Qur'an and Islam today.

"This lucid, scholarly and exciting book could not be more timely; it takes the reader on a spiritual and intellectual journey that is essential for Muslim and non-Muslim alike and addresses some of the most pressing needs of our time." -Karen Armstrong, author of *A History of God and Muhammad: A Biography of the Prophet* "[Sardar] is asking the right questions, and the health of the world community over the next couple of centuries may depend on how well, and how often, others in his faith ask the same questions." - National "Sardar is passionate in his approach without being dogmatic. Will appeal to many open-minded readers of other faiths and those generally interested in spirituality." --Booklist "If one could pick just one book to connect the Muslim past with its complex present and future potential, *Reading the Qur'an* would be that book. To use a metaphor from the eleventh-century exemplar of rational mysticism, Imam Ghazzali, both Muslims and non-Muslims must 'sail into the endless ocean of its meanings,' with Ziauddin Sardar the nimble captain on that voyage of hope and discovery." -Professor Bruce Lawrence, Duke University "Sardar explores the Quran from a variety of perspectives, drawing fresh and contemporary lessons from the Sacred Text." --Islamic Horizons "A helpful book for opening the minds of spiritually engaged readers interested in the place of holy books in today's world." -- Library Journal "This lucid, scholarly and exciting book could not be more timely; it takes the reader on a spiritual and intellectual journey that is essential for Muslim and non-Muslim alike and addresses some of the most pressing needs of our time." -Karen Armstrong, author of *A History of God and Muhammad: A Biography of the Prophet* "[Sardar] is asking the right questions, and the health of the world community over the next couple of centuries may depend on how well, and how often, others in his faith ask the same questions." - National "Sardar is passionate in his approach without being dogmatic. Will appeal to many open-minded readers of other faiths and those generally interested in spirituality." --Booklist "If one could pick just one book to connect the Muslim past with its complex present and future potential, *Reading the Qur'an* would be that book. To use a metaphor from the eleventh-century exemplar of rational mysticism, Imam Ghazzali, both Muslims and non-Muslims must 'sail into the endless ocean of its meanings,' with Ziauddin Sardar the nimble captain on that voyage of

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About the Author Ziauddin Sardar, a writer, broadcaster and cultural critic, is visiting professor at City University, London. He has published more than 45 books, and made a number of documentaries for UK's BBC and Channel 4. He recently wrote a year-long blog on the Qur'an for The Guardian. Reading the Qur'an is adapted and expanded from those blogs.