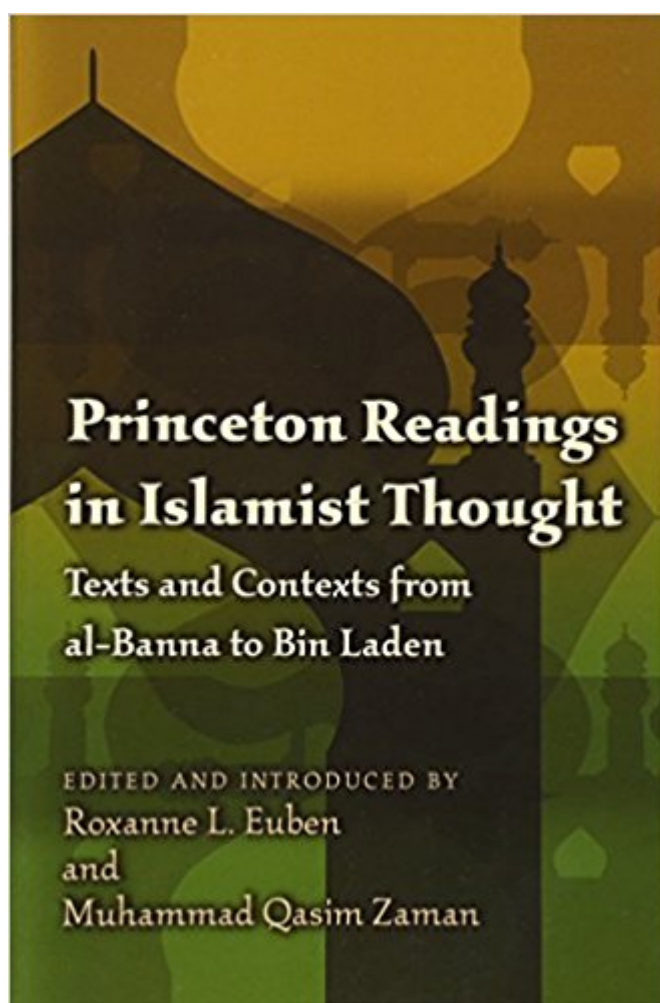


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# Princeton Readings In Islamist Thought: Texts And Contexts From Al-Banna To Bin Laden (Princeton Studies In Muslim Politics)



## Synopsis

This anthology of key primary texts provides an unmatched introduction to Islamist political thought from the early twentieth century to the present, and serves as an invaluable guide through the storm of polemic, fear, and confusion that swirls around Islamism today. Roxanne Euben and Muhammad Qasim Zaman gather a broad selection of texts from influential Islamist thinkers and place these figures and their writings in their multifaceted political and historical contexts. The selections presented here in English translation include writings of Ayatollah Khomeini, Usama bin Laden, Muslim Brotherhood founder Hasan al-Banna, and Moroccan Islamist leader Nadia Yassine, as well as the Hamas charter, an interview with a Taliban commander, and the final testament of 9/11 hijacker Muhammad Atta. Illuminating the content and political appeal of Islamist thought, this anthology brings into sharp relief the commonalities in Islamist arguments about gender, democracy, and violence, but it also reveals significant political and theological disagreements among thinkers too often grouped together and dismissed as extremists or terrorists. No other anthology better illustrates the diversity of Islamist thought, the complexity of its intellectual and political contexts, or the variety of ways in which it relates to other intellectual and religious trends in the contemporary Muslim world.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Princeton Readings in Islamist Thought presents representative writings of that radical minority of Muslims who reject political quietism, resist alien intrusions, and call for a divinely mandated state

and society as set out in the Koran and as exemplified in the early Muslim community."--Foreign Affairs" There is no other anthology that better demonstrates the multiplicity of Islamist thought, the intricacy of its intellectual and political contexts, or the variety and diversity of ways in which it relates to other intellectual and religious trends in the contemporary Muslim world."--Tauseef Ahmad Parray, *Islam and Muslim Societies*

"This book is an excellent primer on the key ideas and prominent thinkers that have shaped Islamism over the past century. Euben and Zaman provide the reader with both text and context by pairing selections from key Islamist works with their own incisive analysis. The result is a most useful and timely intellectual history of Islamism."--Vali Nasr, author of *Forces of Fortune: The Rise of a New Muslim Middle Class and What it Means for Our World* "One could find no better guide to this difficult, dangerous, and deceptive terrain."--Anne Norton, University of Pennsylvania "This splendid volume literally opens the door to Islamic political thought for Western scholars and teachers of politics. Brilliantly introduced and contextually framed by the editors, the selections represent remarkable geographic and historical range. We are all in the debt of Euben and Zaman for this immense labor and for the subtlety of their own thinking about politics, interpretation, violence, theory, gender, translation, and more."--Wendy Brown, University of California, Berkeley "This volume is a real contribution. The selection of texts is first-rate, and the biographical introductions to the individual texts are extremely impressive."--Noah Feldman, author of *The Fall and Rise of the Islamic State* "A superb volume. No other anthology on Islamism provides this depth or breadth. The biographical notes that precede each selection are exceptionally beneficial. These notes do more than just introduce the authors; they explore the background, networks, and issues that link each writer with broad patterns of Islamic political thought."--Bruce Lawrence, editor of *Messages to the World: The Statements of Osama bin Laden*

Islamism and the adherents to the ideology, so called "Islamists", is concept that is currently breaking through esoteric usage and beginning to enter common parlance. What this book does, and beautifully at that, is introduce the reader to the political, theological, and philosophical foundations of the proponents of Islamism. The beginning part of the book explicates the contemporary arguments advocated by the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hasan al-Banna, and follows that up with his disciple Sayyid Qutb. These communications have normally been limited to Arabic speaking audiences and the author has translated the original sources in such a manner that clearly and succinctly displays the passion, vigor, and rigor of the original ideology. Later in the

book, issues such as the political context of Islam are debated, followed by gender issues in the Islamic context, then issues on fighting, and lastly violence. The last section is probably the one I have the least interest in, and this kind of subject matter is generally not pleasant to read. Some of the segments will be uncomfortable for some, and I would not consider this book a candidate for a "pleasure" read. Nonetheless, this is a valuable contribution to an important and relevant topic. I would assume that this book is not for the casual reader. It is a treasure of original sources translated into English and would be best utilized by those with a moderate background, and appreciation of, Islamic thought. I found the introductions in each of the segments to be invaluable and elucidating. While remaining short, they will walk the reader through the necessary historical background of the relevant author, and give you the requisite information needed to properly frame the proceeding material. Overall this book is a real gem to the researcher and scholar of Islamic thought, an invaluable reference for those of us who do not at present understand the Arabic language.

I absolutely loved this book. It is primarily a collection of translated works written by influential Islamists. The book itself, and every section is introduced by the two editors of the book and is heavily sourced and footnoted and detailed in its analysis making the book an excellent reference resource. I only really had two "complaints": the first was that, despite its already considerable length, I would have liked it to be longer and more encompassing. The second is that I would love to see an updated edition now that Osama bin Laden has been killed and Zawahiri is at the helm of Al Qaeda. It would also be great to see works on Al-Baghdadi, and Muhammad Yusuf, as well as the new wave of internet Islamists. The book does much to showcase the differences in the roots of modern Islamist discourse relative to traditional Islamic practices and discourse, with a particular emphasis on the seemingly anti-scholar rhetoric that many Islamists have come to utilize and come to rely upon to justify their own lack of formal religious education.

In my mind, required reading in this day and age. Especially via reading Qutb and Al Banai it is clear that an influential number of thinkers believe: 1. The west is morally corrupt 2. It is time to move from defense militarily to offense militarily 3. All man made institutions must be "destroyed" for Allah to rule. It is not an exaggeration to say: This is Mein Kampf for the present day. It is impossible to say we did not know, we did not hear. High time the Western World ceased behaving like ostriches.

Having little background in Islamic beliefs, this book was of great help understanding the diversity

within the religion. It served as a good primer for the breadth of Islamic beliefs with excellent introductions to each thinker without the polemics I've seen in other texts.

Nice starting book for people interested in modern Islamism. The selection of articles are quite comprehensive.

If you are interested in the Islamists phenomena, you should really read this. This book has a lot of works from Radical Extreme Muslims; however, it also has works from the founders of the Islamist movement. It is a great and informative book. My only complaint is the introduction was very dry and it wasn't really needed. Other than that though this book is great for an inside perspective of an Islamists.

"Princeton Readings in Islamist Thought", ed. By Roxanne Euben and Muhammad Q. Zaman (2009), 516 pgs. If the "Look Inside Me" feature is not available, please note that reading excerpts include works by: al-Banna (Toward the Light), Abul-Ala Mawdudi (The Islamic Law), Ali Nadwi (Muslim Decadence and Revival), Qutb (Signposts; In the Shade), Khomeini (Islamic Government), M.B. al-Sadr (The General Framework of the Islamic Economy), H. al-Turabi (The Islamic State), Y. al-Qaradawi (Islam and Democracy). M. Mutahhari (The Human Status of Woman in the Quran), Z. al-Ghazali (An Islamist Activists), N. Yassine (Modernity, Muslim Women, and Politics in the Mediterranean), al-Salam Faraj (The Neglected Duty), U. A. al-Rahman (The Present Rulers and Islam: Are They Muslims or Not?), Hamas (Charter of the Islamic Resistance Movement of Palestine), M. H. Fadlallah (Islamic Unity and Political change; September 11th), The Taliban (A New Layeha for the Mujahidin), Usama bin Laden (Declaration of War against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places), M. Ata al-Sayyid (Final Instructions), glossary. Also recommended: "The Al Qaeda Reader" by Raymond Ibrahim (2007).

Very informative set of articles on the key individuals who are driving the minds of many young Muslims and the ideologies of those key individuals. Easy to read and author aware and educational.

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