

Heretic

WHY ISLAM NEEDS
A REFORMATION NOW

Ayaan Hirsi Ali

READ BY THE AUTHOR

IN what is sure to be her most controversial book to date, Ayaan Hirsi Ali makes a powerful case that a religious Reformation is the only way to end the terrorism, sectarian warfare, and repression of women and minorities that each year claim thousands of lives throughout the Muslim world. With bracing candor, the brilliant, charismatic, and uncompromising author of the bestselling *Infidel* and *Nomad* argues that it is foolish to insist, as our leaders habitually do, that the violent acts of Islamic extremists can be divorced from the religious doctrine that inspires them. Instead we must confront the fact that they are driven by a political ideology embedded in Islam itself.

Today, Hirsi Ali argues, the world's 1.6 billion Muslims can be divided into a minority of extremists, a majority of observant but peaceable Muslims, and a few dissidents who risk their lives by questioning their own religion. But there is only one Islam, and as Hirsi Ali shows, there is no denying that some of its key teachings—not least the duty to wage holy war—inspire violence not just in the Muslim world but in the West as well.

For centuries it has seemed that Islam is immune to historical change. But Hirsi Ali is surprisingly optimistic. She has come to believe that a Muslim "Reformation"—a revision of Islamic doctrine aimed at reconciling the religion with modernity—is at hand, and may even already have begun.

Partly in response to the barbaric atrocities of Islamic State and Boko Haram, Muslims around the world have at last begun to speak out for religious reform. Meanwhile, events in the West, such as the shocking *Charlie Hebdo* massacre, have forced Western liberals to recognize that political Islam poses a mortal threat to free speech. Yet neither Muslim reformers nor Western liberals have so far been able to articulate a coherent program for a Muslim Reformation.

This is where *Heretic* comes in. Boldly challenging centuries of theological orthodoxy, Ayaan Hirsi Ali proposes five key amendments to Islamic doctrine that Muslims must make if they are to bring their religion out of the seventh century and into the twenty-first. She also calls upon the Western world to end its appeasement of radical Islamists—and to drop the bogus argument that those who stand up to them are guilty of "Islamophobia." It is the Muslim reformers who need our backing, she argues, not the opponents of free speech.

Interweaving her own experiences, historical analogies, and powerful examples from contemporary Muslim societies and cultures, *Heretic* is not so much a call to arms as a passionate plea for peaceful change and a new era of global tolerance. As jihadists kill thousands, from Nigeria to Syria to Pakistan, this book offers an answer to what is fast becoming the world's number one problem.

Ayaan Hirsi Ali is the *New York Times* bestselling author of *Infidel*, *Nomad*, and *The Caged Virgin*. Born in Somalia and raised a Muslim, she grew up in Africa and Saudi Arabia before seeking asylum in 1992 in the Netherlands, where she went from cleaning factories to winning a seat in the Dutch Parliament. A prominent speaker, debater, and journalist, she was chosen as one of *Time* magazine's 100 most influential people in the world. She is now a fellow at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. Hirsi Ali is the founder of the AHA Foundation.

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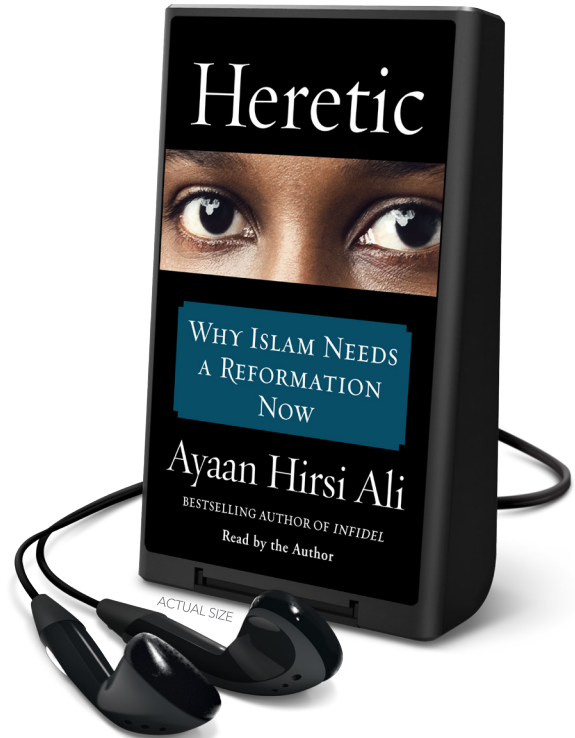
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