

The Future of Political Islam by Graham E. Fuller.
Palgrave Macmillan 2003.

Graham Fuller brings a professional lifetime's experience in Intelligence focussed on the Islamic world to this analysis of its current political trends.

To those of us whose perspective on Islam is all too frequently preoccupied with fundamentalist fanaticism and terrorism, Fuller presents a picture that is by no means as monochrome as one might imagine.

Starting with an assessment of the impact that Islam's glorious past has on its inglorious present he proceeds to analyse the role of political Islam throughout the Islamic world, the polarisation of radical and liberal Islamism, the experience of Islamic political power in Iran, Sudan and Afghanistan, Islam and the challenge of western-style democracy, the tensions between Islam and the west and its impact on Islamist movements and possible future outcomes for political Islam.

Fuller writes sympathetically but realistically, and the end result is a book that should be read by all those whose concerns about the future are predicated on the relationship between the western democracies and the nations of the Islamic world. The Future of Political Islam may lighten some of the darker areas of pessimism in this regard, and it will certainly serve as a valuable source of information for those engaged in the most challenging area of 21st century inter-faith dialogue, that between Islam and Judaism.

Rabbi Dr Charles H Middleburgh