



## The Rushdie Affair: The Novel, the Ayatollah, and the West

*By Daniel Pipes*



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Daniel Pipes, Director of the Foreign Policy Research Institute, explains why the publication of *The Satanic Verses* became a cataclysmic event, with far-reaching consequences. Pipes details what the fundamentalists perceived, and what the novel actually said, that proved so offensive to some Muslims.



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## **The Rushdie Affair: The Novel, the Ayatollah, and the West** By Daniel Pipes Bibliography

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

One of several forthcoming books on the subject, this sober study by a senior lecturer at the University of Pennsylvania describes and analyzes the international repercussions to the publication of *The Satanic Verses*. Pipes demonstrates convincingly that, although Salman Rushdie was preoccupied with the twin issues of religious sensitivities and censorship, he wanted to shake the world without accepting responsibility for what he wrought. Pipes also explains why the book is regarded as blasphemous and why many Muslims are convinced that it is part of a Western conspiracy against Islam. He questions the legality of Khomeini's death edict against Rushdie, and surveys Muslim reactions to the edict and Western responses to Muslim intimidation and state-sponsored terrorism. He shows that, ironically, the strongest opinions on all sides came from those who had not even seen, much less read, the novel.

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From Library Journal

There has been a sudden deluge of books about Salman Rushdie and the attempt to silence him. This book, written by an expert on Middle East politics, is one of the better ones. Besides recounting the events that took place between the publication of *The Satanic Verses* and the Ayatollah's edict, covered elsewhere by the republication of source documents and news accounts (see, for instance, *The Rushdie File*, LJ 3/1/90), this work examines the text of Rushdie's novel to see why the book was considered blasphemous by the Ayatollah. Pipes suggest that with his knowledge of Islam Rushdie must have known that his book would be considered blasphemous. The text and legality of the edict are also considered. Because of Pipes's expertise, this section and the subsequent evaluation of the repercussions of the edict are valuable, making the book of primary importance in its coverage of this controversy.

- Gordon Stein, *Univ. of Rhode Island Lib., Kingston*

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### Review

"A well-reasoned, all-inclusive weighing of the edict for the assassination of Salman Rushdie for his "blasphemous" novel, *The Satanic Verses*. (Pipes) is nothing if not a legal scholar, and here he weighs the pros and cons of Rushdie's act and Muslim ire down to the finest feather's-weight of right and wrong. . . .

Does Pipes himself - writing here for an extremely sober audience - have a hidden agenda in his study? Not when he seems to take into account every possible prejudice on both sides and shows them with as much fair-mindedness as can be humanly mustered. Worthy and important."

—*Kirkus Reviews*

"There has been a sudden deluge of books about Salman Rushdie and the attempt to silence him. This book, written by an expert on Middle East politics, is one of the better ones . . . making the book of primary importance in its coverage of this controversy."

—Gordon Stein, *Library Journal*

"The Rushdie Affair is a lucid, balanced, often startling, and ultimately convincing analysis. . . . But the author, who is director of Philadelphia's Foreign Policy Research Institute, is an experienced analyst of the Middle East, and his book is distinguished by its multitude of illuminating explanations for the violence of

feeling with which Muslims sometimes reacted to *The Satanic Verses* . . . worthy. . . . Scrupulously fair, respectful of Islam yet unintimidated by the flood of threats and invective unleashed by *The Satanic Verses*.”

—Mark Caldwell, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*

“This is a highly enjoyable book to read, a work of impeccable scholarship that can be read like a thriller. . . . Pipes offers a number of important conclusions that merit attention at all levels.”

—Amir Taheri, *Los Angeles Times*

“Mr. Pipes has earned our gratitude for his scholarly presentation.”

—Sol Schindler, *The Washington Times*

“Daniel Pipes, a specialist in Middle Eastern affairs and head of the Foreign Policy Research Institute in Philadelphia, modestly and appropriately disclaims any literary credentials. It is rather his firm understanding of Islamic tradition and shrewd apprehension of political realities that distinguish both his analyses of the Muslim perceptions of blasphemy in Rushdie’s work and his essay on the causes and world-wide effects of such perceptions. . . . Pipes the political scientist has an almost obsessive regard for laying equally bare the bones of bias - real or presumed - on both sides. . . . The book, as a whole is a useful gathering of facts, a scrupulous record of world-wide events, an interesting analysis of how the explosion of terror came about and a thoughtful presentation of its probable future effects.”

—Beverly Fields, *Chicago Tribune*

“Daniel Pipes, author of five other books on the Middle east and a sympathetic outside observer of Islam. . . . untangles the story so anyone can follow it.”

—Tom Blackburn, *The Palm Beach Post*

“Pipes has earned our gratitude for his scholarly presentation.”

—Sol Schindler, *Insight*

“[The subject] has been thoroughly examined in scholar-journalist Daniel Pipes’ judicious, carefully laced book.”

—David Elliott, *The San Diego Union*

“*The Rushdie Affair* is an extremely well-written and clear analysis of the issues raised. Mr. Pipes, who teaches Middle Eastern affairs at the University of Pennsylvania, comes down firmly against censorship but pays the Muslim critics the compliment of taking their arguments seriously and not trying (as so many have) to explain them away with ulterior political motives. He is informative about the Islamic background to the argument - producing, notably, some fascinating examples of earlier works, published in Muslim countries, that were apparently no less blasphemous yet failed to provoke quite the same furor.”

—Edward Mortimer, *The New York Times*

“This intelligent, easy-to-read book *The Rushdie Affair*, by an American scholar on Middle Eastern affairs puts the whole outrage into perspective.”

—Dean Sims, *Tulsa World*

“Now, Middle East expert Daniel Pipes has written a comprehensive overview of the affair. . . . The book is a valuable summary of the implications well beyond Salman Rushdie.”

—Philip G. Altbach, *Buffalo News*

“A fascinating and revealing book.”

—Lionel Rolfe, *Los Angeles Daily News*

“Daniel Pipes’ exhaustive re-examination of the fallout from Rushdie’s *The Satanic Verses*. . . . Pipes - director of the Foreign Policy Research Institute in Philadelphia - threads his way through the thicket of moral, religious and intellectual issues here with a commendable rigor that even the late Ayatollah would find stimulating.”

—Tom Dowling, *San Francisco Examiner*

“*The Rushdie Affair*, a savvy, fair-minded analysis by Daniel Pipes of Philadelphia’s Foreign Policy Research Institute.”

—Dennis Drabelle, *USA Today*

“Daniel Pipes has written an illuminating, provocative, and ultimately frightening account of the Rushdie affair. In his hands, the story ceases to be one of a crackpot religious fanatic imposing his will on a defenseless author and an ignorant populace. Instead, Pipes fleshes out the remarkable series of events to demonstrate a political, religious and cultural Armageddon. As Pipes carefully details, it is a grave mistake to ignore the implications of the Rushdie affair. . . . This book is best described as an original, a primer for Western readers. . . . Daniel Pipes is a thoughtful researcher. His book not only contains an exhaustive compilation of the statements and deeds of the major players in the Rushdie affair, it also remarks on significant silences and non-deeds.”

—Samuel Seidner, *The Boston Jewish Times*

“This book . . . provides the most readable accounts about the most (in)famous writer-heretic of the late 20th century.”

—B. B. Lawrence, *Choice*

“Author Pipes has burrowed beneath these surface events to reveal a subterranean world of ironies associated with the Rushdie affair. . . . The path to that understanding has become more accessible through Pipes’ careful rendering of the Rushdie affair.”

—Arnold Ages, *Heritage Southwest Jewish Press*

“Daniel Pipes has written a fast-paced and clearly understandable explanation of the entire Rushdie affair, explaining and exploring why Rushdie’s book shook Iran and the Muslim world and why the Western Christian world responded so vigorously. The book is vital to understanding the differences and similarities between these two religious camps, particularly in light of subsequent events in the Middle East that will probably be of concern to the West, both diplomatically and economically, for many years to come. . . . Comprehension of the forces in play in *The Rushdie Affair* will be of vital importance in understanding our diplomatic needs in the Middle East in the coming decades.”

—Margery H. Livas, *The News*

"Daniel Pipes's *The Rushdie Affair: The Novel, the Ayatollah, and the West* appeared in 1990, when tensions provoked by *The Satanic Verses* were still running high. Even after two decades it remains the most balanced account of the events."

—Elizabeth Powers, *The Weekly Standard*

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Bertha Montes:**

This *The Rushdie Affair: The Novel, the Ayatollah, and the West* book is not really ordinary book, you have after that it the world is in your hands. The benefit you receive by reading this book is usually information inside this e-book incredible fresh, you will get info which is getting deeper you read a lot of information you will get. This specific *The Rushdie Affair: The Novel, the Ayatollah, and the West* without we recognize teach the one who looking at it become critical in considering and analyzing. Don't always be worry *The Rushdie Affair: The Novel, the Ayatollah, and the West* can bring when you are and not make your tote space or bookshelves' come to be full because you can have it in the lovely laptop even mobile phone. This *The Rushdie Affair: The Novel, the Ayatollah, and the West* having very good arrangement in word in addition to layout, so you will not really feel uninterested in reading.

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#### **Luann Bowen:**

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**Jennifer Randolph:**

In this period of time globalization it is important to someone to get information. The information will make you to definitely understand the condition of the world. The condition of the world makes the information much easier to share. You can find a lot of personal references to get information example: internet, classifieds, book, and soon. You will observe that now, a lot of publisher that print many kinds of book. The actual book that recommended to you personally is *The Rushdie Affair: The Novel, the Ayatollah, and the West* this book consist a lot of the information of the condition of this world now. This kind of book was represented how do the world has grown up. The vocabulary styles that writer make usage of to explain it is easy to understand. Often the writer made some analysis when he makes this book. That's why this book ideal all of you.

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