



Western students tour nine Islamic nations in a quest to find common ground

Journey into Islam: The Crisis of Globalization tells the story of their amazing journey
Akbar Ahmed, ISBN-13 978-0-8157-0132-3, £19.99, Published June 2007

“Professor Akbar Ahmed has written a book of extraordinary insight. This is a book which exposes the full seriousness of current tensions but one which is full of hope because it not only deepens understanding but charts a better way” **Lord Bishop James Jones, Bishop of Liverpool**

“Akbar Ahmed’s voice needs to be heard, and his courage strengthened.” – **Elie Wiesel, Nobel Peace Laureate**

“Another (generous role model of moderate Islam) is Akbar Ahmed, whose forthcoming *Journey into Islam* tells the story of his search for tolerance within, and dialogue between, faiths.” – **Chief Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks, The Times**

Why? As we approach the second anniversary of the London tube bombings, we are still looking for answers to that question.

Leading Islamic scholar and the “worlds leading authority on contemporary Islam” (BBC) Akbar Ahmed and former High Commissioner of Pakistan to Great Britain is certain that the answers will not be found through the war on terror and believes that the way forward for peace is through dialogue, understanding and respect for the differing cultures of East and West.

With this in mind Ahmed led a group of young Americans on a unprecedented expedition deep into the heart of the Muslim world. *Journey into Islam: the Crisis of Globalization* is the remarkable story of their journey and their quest to find common ground.

With the firm belief that Islam and the West can move past the hatred and mistrust that have characterized relations in recent years, Ahmed and his companions visited mosques, madrassahs and peoples homes to listen to the fears, hopes and beliefs of everyday Muslims and how they really view the West. They collected questionnaires and conducted one-on-one interviews but most importantly, they listened. They heard the hopes and frustrations of students and professors, presidents and prime ministers, sheikhs and cab drivers.

As Western leaders wage war on terror, *Journey into Islam* offers a new framework for understanding the Muslim world. The book provides insight on how the West can improve relations with Islamic nations and peoples. Written with equal parts compassion and urgency, it makes a powerful case for forming bonds across religion, race, and tradition to create lasting harmony between Islam and the West.

Ahmed and his team returned from their fascinating journey with both cause for concern and occasion for hope alongside the overriding belief that dialogue is the key to lasting peace between their cultures. Ahmeds captivating narrative and personal photos take the reader on a fascinating tour of Islam and its people. His earnest pursuit of a tangible solution to the seemingly insurmountable differences between East and West offers hope for the future.

Akbar Ahmed is the Ibn Khaldun Chair of Islamic Studies at American University and a visiting fellow at the Brookings Institution. He is former high commissioner of Pakistan to Great Britain and has taught at Princeton, Harvard, and Cambridge Universities. His many books include *After Terror: Promoting Dialogue among Civilizations*, with Brian Forst (Polity, 2005), *Islam under Siege: Living Dangerously in a Post-Honour World* (Polity, 2003) and *Discovering Islam: Making Sense of Muslim History and Society* (Routledge, 2002). He will be in the UK from 20th June until 20th July and is available for interview.

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Ambassador Akbar Ahmed

Ambassador Akbar Ahmed is the Ibn Khaldun Chair of Islamic Studies at American University in Washington, DC. According to the BBC, he is “the world’s leading authority on contemporary Islam.” He is a nonresident senior fellow in foreign policy studies at the Brookings Institution and a Distinguished Senior Fellow of the Hasan Family Foundation. He has been Visiting Professor at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton; has taught at Princeton, Harvard, and Cambridge Universities; and was the High Commissioner of Pakistan to Great Britain. He has advised Prince Charles and met with President George W. Bush on Islam. His many books include *After Terror: Promoting Dialogue among Civilizations*, with Brian Forst (Polity, 2005), *Islam Under Siege: Living Dangerously* (Polity, 2003), and *Discovering Islam: Making Sense of Muslim History and Society* (Routledge, 2002). His many books, films, and documentaries have won numerous awards.

Dr. Ahmed is regularly interviewed on CNN, CBC, the BBC, and ARY TV. He has appeared several times on *The Oprah Winfrey Show* and *Nightline*. He presented and narrated “The Glories of Islamic Art,” a three-part television series for Channel 5, UK, which was broadcast in 2006.

Ahmed recently led a Muslim delegation to the Holocaust Museum; he attended President Ford’s funeral ceremony at the National Cathedral, where he was part of the “Procession Order” as a “Representative of Faith” escorting the casket; and he delivered the invocation at the Mayor’s Inaugural Prayer Service in Washington, DC. He is a member of the incident management team for the Department of Homeland Security and an expert panelist with the new online feature, “On Faith,” for the *Washington Post* and *Newsweek*. In 2006, he and Dr. Judea Pearl won the first ever Purpose Prize Award. They were finalists in the “Most Inspiring Person of the Year 2005” poll conducted by BeliefNet.

In 2004, he was named the Professor of the Year for Washington, DC, by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education. He was given the first Gandhi Center Fellowship of Peace Award and was invited to join the World Wisdom Council.

He is a trustee of the World Faiths Development Dialogue—set up by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the President of the World Bank—and a trustee of the Board of the Council for a Parliament of the World’s Religions. He was a senior fellow at The Case Foundation. He was the first Muslim to lecture at the Holocaust Museum in Washington, DC. And, he is Principal Investigator for “Islam in the Age of Globalization,” a project supported by the Brookings Institution, American University, and The Pew Research Center.

**ADVANCE PRAISE FOR
Journey Into Islam: The Crisis of Globalization
Brookings Institution Press**

“Akbar Ahmed’s voice needs to be heard, and his courage strengthened.”

Elie Wiesel, Nobel Peace Laureate

“Akbar Ahmed is one of contemporary Islam’s outstanding exponents: a role-model of reason in an age of anxiety, tolerance at a time of tension, and hope when all too many are tempted by despair. In *Journey into Islam: The Crisis of Globalization*, he invites us to listen to the many voices of Muslims today as they face a confusing and often threatening world. It is essential reading, wise, literate, insightful, optimistic, honest and humane, the work of one of the great religious sages of our time.”

Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks, Chief Rabbi of Britain and the Commonwealth

“For those of us who have been waiting patiently for Professor Ahmed’s report from his explorative journey to the Muslim world, the outcome was well worth the wait. *Journey into Islam: The Crisis of Globalization* provides a fresh, scholarly, and invaluable insight into the mindset of Muslim society in the post 9/11 era, a society that many in the West view as unreasonable and most Muslims view as victimized. Are these two perceptions reconcilable through dialogue? Remarkably, the book is sprinkled with optimism. A ‘must read’ for anyone concerned with the course of this planet.”

**Professor Judea Pearl, University of California, Los Angeles;
Daniel Pearl Foundation**

“Really interesting and important. This book is a breakthrough in our understanding of the complex relationships between globalization and Islam. Based on in-depth interviews carried out in many countries, it gives a detailed picture of life in the Muslim world. The team of researchers has listened in particular to women and to young people. The result is a book that will be an essential resource for anyone interested in some of the key questions of our times, concerning not just the role of Islam in world society, but differing concepts of religiosity.”

**Lord Anthony Giddens, House of Lords;
former director, London School of Economics**

“Like the students who went with him to see how Muslims are reacting to post-9/11 events, the reader could ask for no finer guide than Akbar Ahmed in comprehending the deepest feelings and attitudes of the Islamic world. From the highest leaders to the cab drivers one gains a sense of why fundamentalist leaders have displaced national ones in the admiration of people from the Gulf to Southeast Asia. In this eloquent and insightful study Ahmed combines the erudition of a scholar with the passion of an activist to point the way towards understanding and reconciliation. It is a unique reading experience, rich in on-the-ground perception and realistic hope.”

Professor Lawrence Rosen, Princeton University

“*Journey into Islam: The Crisis of Globalization* is a stunning achievement by one of the world’s leading experts on Islam. Based on field research and profound understanding of anthropological and sociological theory, this is the first book that lets Muslims speak for themselves. Readers will be fascinated, finding both diversity in and common ground with the personalities they meet. They’ll be left with a sense of optimism that true dialogue between civilizations is not only possible but essential.”

**Professor Tamara Sonn, College of William & Mary;
former president of the American Council for the Study of Islamic Societies**