



Globalisation: Building Bridges between Islam & the West



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On 27 October, 1993, HRH Prince Charles, the Prince of Wales, gave a lecture at the Sheldonian Theatre, University of Oxford, entitled “Islam and the West”

If there is much misunderstanding in the West about the nature of Islam, there is also much ignorance about the debt our own culture and civilization owe to the Islamic world...The medieval Islamic world, from central Asia to the shores of the Atlantic, was a world where scholars and men of learning flourished. But because we have tended to see Islam as the enemy of the West, as an alien culture, society, and system of belief, we have tended to ignore or erase its great relevance to our own history.

*1001 Inventions : Muslim Heritage in Our World" edited by
Salim T. S. Al-Hassani, 2007.*



...each and every discussion led directly or indirectly to events that took place far away in America...The United States and the Muslim world had become irreversibly connected in an adversarial relationship, and henceforth every action taken by one side would elicit a reaction from the other. September 11 changed and challenged both worlds in unexpected ways.

"Journey Into Islam ; The Crisis of Globalization" by

Akbar Ahmed, 2007




I noted that a bishop and a rabbi, as well as others, had quite consciously reached out to me in Washington in the dark days after 9/11 and made me feel welcome, and mentioned especially the Christmas greeting sent by one - Bishop John Chane of the National Cathedral - which moved me greatly with its Abrahamic message of compassion, understanding, and above all, unity: 'The Angel Gabriel was sent by God to reveal the Law to Moses,' it read, and to 'reveal the sacred Quran to the Prophet Muhammad.'


...the bishop's words displayed extraordinary courage, imagination, and compassion."

Journey into Islam : The Crisis of Globalization" by Akbar Ahmed, 2007.






"The majority of the world's Muslims live in Asia and Africa, not the Arab world."




The many languages, customs, and ethnicities of the Muslim world illustrate its vast diversity. There are 57 countries around the world that are majority Muslims or have significant Muslim minorities - Arabs make up only roughly 20% of the global Muslim population.

from "Who Speaks for Islam?" by
John L. Esposito & Dalia Mogahed.



The largest Muslim communities are in Indonesia, Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, and Nigeria rather than Saudi Arabia, Egypt or Iran. And millions of Muslims live in Europe, the United States, and Canada, where they represent the second and third largest religion...

from "Who Speaks for Islam?" by
John L. Esposito & Dalia Mogahed.



Muslims are Sunnis (85%), who are the majority in most Muslim countries, or Shia (15%), who predominate in Iran, Iraq, and Bahrain.

Who Speaks for Islam? What A Billion Muslims Really Think" by John L. Esposito & Dalia Mogahed.

the word "terrorism" is derived from the Latin "terrere", which means "to make someone tremble".

*How To Win a Cosmic War : Confronting Radical Islam" by
Reza Aslan, 2009.*



...the vast majority of terrorist attacks on U.S. soil have been perpetrated by Christian terrorist groups in the past 15 years. Catholics, Lutheran, and Presbyterian activists have bombed gay bars, shot or killed abortion staff, and bombed their clinics.

White Christian supremacy inspired the attacks on the Centennial Olympic Park in Atlanta and many other incidents. Timothy McVeigh used Christian cosmotheism, espoused by William Pierce, to justify bombing the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. However different, religions have become a means to legitimize holy and unholy struggles and wars.

Who Speaks for Islam : What A Billion Muslims Really Think” by John L. Esposito & Dalia Mogahed





The Professor's Chair

You must have wondered why a chairman or woman, a professional head of an organization, is called by such a title. In today's terminology they are often just referred to as the 'chair'. This usually means a professor who has been awarded the chair of, say, mathematics, or it is a president who presides at the meetings of an organization and people have to address their remarks to this 'chair' person.

...If we go back to the teaching in the mosques, Muslim schools and universities over a thousand years ago, we'll find a study circle or a Halaqat al-'ilm or halaqa gathered around a professor who was seated on a chair, or kursi in Arabic....It is this notion of 'chair', or 'kursi', that evolved into a professional position, like the chair of a board or a committee.


**1001 Inventions : Muslim Heritage in Our World"
edited by Salam T. S. Al-Hassani.**



At a meeting of Hewlett-Packard's worldwide managers on 26 September, 2001, (15 days after 9/11), Ms Carleton Fiorina, the CEO of Hewlett-Packard Corporation said :

There was once a civilization that was the greatest in the world. It was able to create a continental super-state that stretched from ocean to ocean and from northern climes to tropics and deserts. Within its dominion, lived hundreds of millions of people, of different creeds and ethnic origins.

One of its languages became the universal language of much of the world, the bridge between the peoples of a hundred lands. Its armies were made up of people of many nationalities, and its military protection allowed a degree of peace and prosperity that had never been known. The reach of this civilization's commerce extended from Latin America to China, and everywhere in between.



And this civilization was driven more than anything, by invention. Its architects designed buildings that defied gravity. Its mathematicians created the algebra and algorithms that would enable the building of computers, and the creation of encryption. Its doctors examined the human body, and found new cures for disease. Its astronomers looked into the heavens, named the stars, and paved the way for space travel and exploration. Its writers created thousands of stories...Its poets wrote of love...

While modern Western civilization share many of these traits, the civilization I'm talking about was the Islamic world from the year 800 to 1600, which included the Ottoman Empire and the courts of Baghdad, Damascus and Cairo...

Although we are often unaware of our indebtedness to this other civilization, its gifts are very much a part of our heritage. The technology industry would not exist without the contributions of Arab mathematicians."

1001 Inventions : Muslim Heritage in Our World" edited by Salam T. S. Al-Hassani.



...the Syrian minister of expatriates, Bouthaina Shaaban, and many other Muslims throughout our travels expressed...sentiments of communal spirituality. Shaaban told us that "from 627 to 647 C.E., Muslims and Christians were praying together in the Umayyad Mosque until they decided to build a church.

We shouldn't think of East and West. You can't be a Muslim until you believe in Abraham and Christ. The oldest synagogue in the world is in Damascus. The oldest church in the world is in Damascus..



...The mosque holds a shrine dedicated to the head of John the Baptist, who is revered in Islam as Yahya the Prophet; another shrine for Hussein, the grandson of the Prophet of Islam and the son of Ali, who is especially venerated by the Shia; and, just outside the mosque's walls, a simple and small grave for Saladin, one of the greatest rulers of Islam....On my visit, I saw all manner of pilgrims at each of thee historical sites : Christians and Muslims praying at John's shrine, Shia women dressed in black who were from Iran and still mourning the death of Hussein, and scholars and tourists paying quiet tribute to the great Saladin.

Journey Into Islam : The Crisis of Globalization"

by Akbar Ahmed.



Thank You