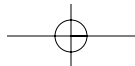
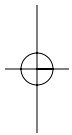
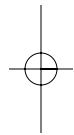
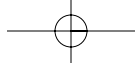


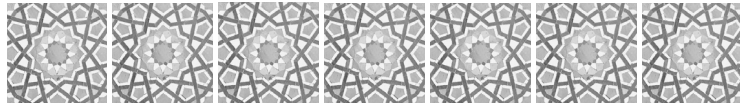


THE CASE FOR
Islam-Christian Civilization





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Islam-Christian Civilization



Richard W. Bulliet



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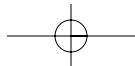
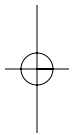
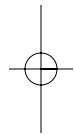
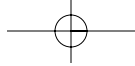
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Preface



A FEW DAYS after the terrorist devastation of the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, the wind was from the south. We could smell the burning in my apartment in northern Manhattan. Like most Americans, I felt an overwhelming urge to do something useful. This book is my response to that urge.

Though it is based on my career as a professor, this is not a scholarly book in the purest sense. My hope is that the different perspectives I am proposing will appeal not just to specialists but to many different audiences. The four chapters it contains do not add up to a continuous historical exposition, but they all contribute to the idea that the title of the book is intended to evoke: Despite the enmity that has often divided them, Islam and the West have common roots and share much of their history. Their confrontation today arises not from essential differences, but from a long and willful determination to deny their kinship.

The first chapter grew out of a speculative essay I wrote around 1970—and filed away with the thought that certain ideas are so large that they are best published by old men with white beards. I now have a white beard and am approaching old age faster than I care to admit. The ideas in the second chapter began to gestate a few years later when it first dawned on me that the return of Islam as a political force was not only the most important contemporary development in the Muslim world, but one that had clear, and indeed necessary, historical causes. The Iranian revolution confirmed these hunches a few years later, and I have been deeply interested in Islamic politics ever since. The third chapter is rooted both in my student years in the fledgling field of Middle East Studies, and in my experiences with the Middle East Studies Association, of which I was Executive Secretary from 1977 to 1981. The fourth chapter takes its inspiration and title from a book I published in 1994.

I have received helpful comments on the text from several people to whom I owe a deep debt of gratitude: Mark Bulliet, Lucy Bulliet, Mohsen Ashtiany, Lisa Anderson, Ze'ev Magen, and Mia Bloom.

Richard W. Bulliet
March 2004



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