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M. J Akbar

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M. J Akbar : The Shade of Swords: Jihad and the conflict between Islam christianity before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Shade of Swords: Jihad and the conflict between Islam christianity:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Two Stars By AAMAAdmiMJ glorified the whole 1400 history of barbaric practices that is unfit in 21st century 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Wonderful piece of writing By Neena Sen Loved the book, very well written. 9 of 19 people found the following review helpful. Islam and Jihad misinterpreted By Syed Rizvi Basically, this is a book of the history of rulers, emperors, caliphs, kings, tyrants and oppressors who failed to understand, respect and adhere to the principles of Islam and Jihad. The references and the sources of traditions quoted, including the source from which the title was adapted cannot be accredited for its authenticity. The terms Islam and Muslims had been intermittently and often wrongly used throughout this book to suggest that Muslims and Islam are interchangeable and same. This view is false and misleading. Islam does not tolerate its followers to deviate from its principles and still remain Muslim. Therefore, this book is not about Islam or Jihad as the author stipulates. It is about the history of dictators, monarchs and caliphs who gained power and abused it in the name of Islam to expand and rule. It is regrettable that the name of Islam has been exploited throughout the history more often by Muslim dictators and tyrants than by genuine religious authorities. Islam is a religion of peace and harmony. Aggression, suppression and repression are not acceptable alternatives. Quran clearly indicates that

religion is optional and cannot be imposed or forced upon any one. It is by free will and not by force that a person accepts Islam. The author also appears to be confused about the meaning and purpose of the concept of Jihad. Jihad is a complex concept always misinterpreted and often misapplied and this book does both. To cite few attributes: Jihad is total control of mind and actions in peaceful propagation of Islam. Jihad is character building leading towards moral excellence. Jihad is defensive resistance and not a conduit to battlefield. Jihad is not for reappraisal and revenge. Jihad is self defense or self protection from oppressors and tyrants. Jihad is certainly not murder of the innocent. Quran (29-6), "Who ever does Jihad it is against his own self". This book failed to mention that Prophet Mohammed fought only defensive wars. None of the 87 wars fought during his life were offensive. His life represented compromises, forgiveness, love, compassion and respect for human beings. Islam grew exponentially through love and respect for other human beings. An often ignored fact is the growth of Islam through out the world by missionaries and Sufi saints, who influenced people by their piety and human values only. Islam is self propagating because it teaches peace, equality, justice, spirituality and denounces exertion of power and all forms of foul politics.

The Shadow of Swords traces the origins of jihad in the struggle against oppression that was part of the earliest consciousness of Muslims. The conflict between Islam and Christianity began from the time of the Prophet himself and has acquired myriad shapes over fourteen hundred years. Akbar explains how jihad thrives on complex and shifting notions of persecution, victory and sacrifice.