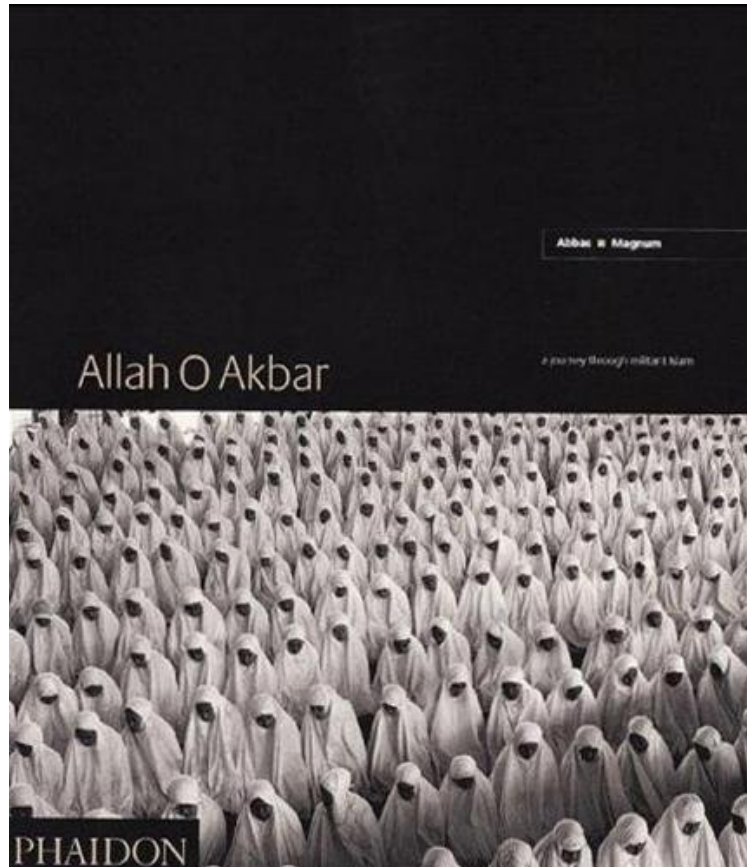


Allah O Akbar

Abbas

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Abbas : Allah O Akbar before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Allah O Akbar:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Incredible Pictures of Muslim World By No One Important Mr. Abbas, a long-standing member of the internationally renowned Magnum photo agency, has made a memorable photographic record of his journey inside and around the "muslim world". Traveling in 29 countries, from Iran to Saudi Arabia to United States to China, Abbas documents Muslim life and tries to make sense of what he sees for himself and the reader. Mr. Abbas has been a witness at some of the world's most memorable moments. He was on the plane with Ayatollah Khomeini when his plane landed in Tehran returning him from exile. And he stayed in Iran throughout the revolution (both before and after). In this book he brings you calmer moments (mostly) but no less memorable. He has an incredible photograph of "The Rock" in Mecca -- a sight I would love to see with my own eyes but know that I never will be able to. This book has its flaws -- it is rare to find a book you cannot quibble with. Sometimes, I feel that in some country he hasn't gotten beneath the surface enough. And some of his images are cliché, yes. But to my mind that does not diminish the power of the majority of images here, which are truly remarkable. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Pentivokesh A beautiful book. 11 of 13 people found the

following review helpful. Don't believe the hypeBy The Sanity InspectorThis beautiful coffee-table book of black and white photos is not well-represented by the excerpts available. Yes, the section on Iran has many pictures of frothing-at-the-mouth mobs surging through the streets, brandishing fists and assault rifles. No, the rest of the book is nothing like that. There are some ghastly pictures of war dead in the section on Kuwait, and the inevitable images of uzi-toting worshippers at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem, but nothing else like the featured parts. The book is much more sensitive and insightful than that.Iran-born Magnum photographer Abbas traveled through the Islamic world, searching for manifestations of militant Islam. (It's too bad he didn't collaborate with V. S. Naipaul in his research on the very similar subject of Islam in non-Arabic countries.) What he came up with were images that show the unifying (or uniformity-imposing, if you prefer) power of Islam. Everywhere he goes, he finds the same images: Schoolchildren bobbing and chanting over their Korans, tumbledown cemeteries where the dead are honored on Fridays, funerals, women and girls in hijab going about their daily business, men lolling on carpets in mosques reading the Koran, people stopping in their tracks to perform their prayers, and etc. There are also many delightful surprises: Schoolgirls in hijab cloaks playing basketball, ballerinas in a muslim former Soviet republic, a long-haired dervish in full flight with drum and tambourine leggings, a emotional Kuwaiti woman talking with an almost as emotional female American soldier after the liberation of Kuwait City, a bearded elder walking past a clutch of Pakistani teens in Britain who radiate "Cool Britannia". Some of the surprises are not delightful. We see a Christian in Sudan being tried and then flogged in a shariah court for drinking alcohol. A sheep in an English barbershop, cows in Indonesia, and camels in the pilgrimage places in Saudi Arabia are all sacrificed in performance of Islamic rites. Shiite Muslims lashing and lacerating themselves in one of their ceremonies. But throughout there are many images of pure photographic beauty. Baobab trees are shown in spiky, inky silhouette above a cemetery. Rows of white-cloaked women at prayer in Jakarta stretch beyond the border of the photo. Young Senegalese men pose in front of a tangle of limbs and vines after an initiation ceremony. Really gorgeous stuff, quite beyond the power of this amateur. The unobtrusive text tells of Abbas' travels among these peoples. He strikes out in the U. S. with the Nation of Islam, who quickly clam up and deny him access. He gets along fine with the Indonesian Muslims, and even has to coax statements of discontent out of them. (This visit was before the eruption of religious rioting in that country). His lack of religion causes him to frequently despair of understanding his subjects--a lack of confidence thankfully not shared by his camera.

Allah O Akbar begins the call to prayer that resonates around minarets in towns and villages from Sinkiang to Morocco, from Paris to Timbuktu. Wherever in the world you are, the message is the same: 'God is Great.' It is also, however, the cry of fundamentalists throughout the lands of the faithful. Abbas, a member of the prestigious photo agency Magnum, has spent seven years travelling through the Islamic world to capture the diverse and striking images that make up this extraordinary personal diary. As a photojournalist he has covered major political events in the developing world including wars and revolutions, driven by a desire to understand and expose the intricacy of the internal strains pulling within Muslim societies. Abbas is undoubtedly one of the world's leading makers of the 'telling' picture, and the combined immediacy and subtlety of the photographic images create a constant visual stimulus.

"His book fulfils one of the classic roles of great photojournalism, in that it helps both to illuminate an issue and to understand its complexities."-British Journal of PhotographyFrom the Inside FlapAllah O Akbar begins the call to prayer that resonates from minarets in towns and villages from Sinkiang to Morocco, from Paris to Timbuktu. No matter where in the world you are, the message is the same: "God is Great." It is also the war cry of Islamic militants throughout the lands of the faithful. Abbas has travelled throughout the Islamic world for seven years to take the photographs for this extraordinary book. Driven by a desire to understand and expose the internal tensions within Muslim societies, he highlights the conflict between a rising political movement looking for inspiration in a mythical past and a desire for modernization. The quality of immediacy in the work and the subtlety of its composition provide a constant visual stimulus; the sequence of dramatic and often disturbing images confirm Abbas's reputation as one of the few photographers who can raise photojournalism to an art form. The political influence Islam exerts on the world makes this book a work of enormous importance. Many Islamic societies seem shrouded in religious and cultural mystery, but through his words and images, Abbas provides a penetrating insight into the secrets of these communities and their world. Photographed and written as a personal account, the book speaks with all the urgency of a diary, recording a journey in the lands of Allah. After years of dedicated work, in 29 countries, spanning four continents, Abbas has drawn a telling portrait, coloured by the turmoil and the tradition, the militancy and the moderation to be found in Islam. About the AuthorBorn in Iran in 1944, Abbas came to the West, where he is based in Paris. As a photojournalist published by magazines worldwide, he has covered major political events in the developing world, including wars and revolutions. His books include *Iran*, *La Revolution Confisque* and *Return to Mexico*. He is a member of the prestigious photo agency Magnum.