



Dining with al-Qaeda: Three Decades Exploring the Many Worlds of the Middle East

Hugh Pope

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Following in the footsteps of Sir Richard Burton and Lawrence of Arabia, Hugh Pope presents his modern-day explorations, mined from more than three decades, of the politics, religion, and aspirations of Muslim peoples to show how the Middle East is much more than a monolithic "Islamic World."

An Oxford-educated scholar of the Middle East and acclaimed former foreign correspondent for *The Wall Street Journal*, Pope has lived and worked in two dozen countries throughout the region. In eighteen revealing chapters, he delves into the amazingly varied cultures ranging from the south of Sudan to Afghanistan and from Islamabad to Istanbul. His probing and often perilous journeys--at one point during a meeting with an al-Qaeda missionary, Pope is forced to quote Koranic verse to argue against his own murder--provide an eye-opening look at diverse societies often misrepresented by superficial reporting and "why they hate us" politics. With intimate and personal anecdotes arising out of experiences from war fronts to bazaars to the palaces of kings, Pope weaves a rich narrative that embraces art, food, poetry, customs, and the competing histories of the Middle East.

Merging the traditions of the classics *Balkan Ghosts* and *From Beirut to Jerusalem*, *Dining with al-Qaeda* illuminates an infinitely complex part of the world. With U.S. foreign policy aiming to engage more constructively with Muslim nations, this lyrical book of adventures collects some of the truly important untold stories of our times.

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