

**OPEN LETTER TO ANDRE WINK THE DUTCH HISTORIAN  
EMIRETUS AT MADISON-WISCONSIN**

ZULFIKAR MOINUDDIN AHMED

I see you knew my friend Shahab Ahmed the man who wrote his doctoral thesis at Princeton on the Satanic Verses. Well we were not so close. When I was at Columbia 1995-2000 my ex-wife Natalia Brizuela and I were friendly with Shahab Ahmed and Dana Sajdi. He was a mentor on some matters. I first borrowed from him your books on *Al-Hind: The Making of the Indo-Islamic World*. I was fascinated as all of it was new to me, and I read for my own education in those days. I was profoundly moved. You are a much more talented historian than Bernard Lewis. I was disappointed when he spoke in Council on Foreign Relations supporting the Iraq War. Edward Said had responded. I am not a historian. I did study the French Annales historians, Fernand Braudel and Marc Bloch and others. And then K. N. Chaudhari's beautiful *Asia Before Europe*. I am now involved in some geo-political issues and am not an academic.

I wish you the very best, Professor Andre Wink. Your books will change the world I am sure.

Fine I will tell you more about myself Mr. Wink. I am not Muslim at all. I became Atheist at six in 1979. My grandmother told me that God flowers the trees with a big watering can. It was Bengali monsoon season and I was intrigued. I sat staring at the sky through monsoon rain totally drenched looking for the huge hands behind the watering can for hours. Then I said to myself. No. I moved to America at 13 in 1987 and was a secular humanist till 2006. I do have a zealous faith now, but it is my own, neither Islam nor Christianity.

Sincerely,

Zulfiqar Moinuddin Ahmed

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*Date:* December 12, 2021.