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**A Letter Written But Best Not Delivered: Pius II's Epistle to Mohammed II**

In the light of current events, attempts at a rapprochement between the Judaeo-Christian West and the Islamic East acquire added interest because the clash of these two religions and the cultures they represent could spark a conflagration that might entail the destruction of both. Are mutual understanding and tolerance leading to a rapprochement between Christendom and Islam possible? Difficult as it is to answer this question, one thing is certain: the way not to approach Islam is surely embodied in Pius II's *Epistola ad Mahomatem II* in which he attempted to convert the conqueror of Constantinople to Christianity. In my paper I discuss those passages of this epistle which illustrate the cultural and religious arrogance of Pius II towards Islam and why his divergence from the views expressed by his friend, Nicholas of Cusa in his *Cribratio Alchorani*, marks a low-point in the history of occidental attempts to understand and come to terms with the Moslem religion.