

Muslims. Greenlee invites you to see Muslim *conversion* to the Good News through seven mostly sociological lenses. Woodley's colleague, Phil Parshall, revisits the amazing contextualised work of Sadrach in 1835 (Indonesia) and then his own contextual pilgrimage in the alias nation of 'Quristan' before saluting Woodberry's gentle contribution in seeking to calm the waters in the divide that has recently polarised Evangelical missiologists. Appropriately, John Travis (nom du plume) follows Parshall by generously outlining the contribution of Wilder, McGavran and Woodberry in the recent Jesus Movements among Muslims.

Finally, Christine Mallouhi closes out the Festschrift by addressing her favourite passion: the nature of witness for Christ as peace-making relationships with Muslims carried out in humility and with love.

Because many in Woodberry's community of scholars are respectfully exploring the dynamics of Insider Movements, both the advocates and detractors of this experiment do well to study both the movement and the proponents. This book does the proponents credit. Not all of Woodberry's former students have joined him in promoting Insider Movements. The book would have been stronger had they also been featured. Yet it remains a significant missiological testament of both Woodberry and of Fuller's remarkable contribution. Since these voices will be among the leading writers in the coming decade, I say you give yourself a free weekend to read them and salute Woodberry and his company for their outstanding innovative labours.

Reviewed by Benjamin Lee Hegeman

Benjamin is a colleague and friend of the editor. He teaches part-time at Houghton College in the Islamic Studies concentration and spends part of each year in Benin, West Africa, where he serves with SIM as the Academic Dean of the Baatonou Language Bible College.

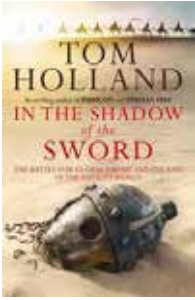
In the Shadow of the Sword: The Battle for Global Empire and the End of the Ancient World

by Tom Holland

Little Brown, London 2012, ISBN: 978-1408700075, 544 pages(!)

Tom Holland is the historian who has written a number of historical novels and three previous non-fiction works of historical scholarship: *Rubicon: The Triumph and Tragedy of the Roman Republic* (2004), *Persian Fire: The First World empire, Battle for the West* (2006) and *Millennium: The End of the World and the Forging of Christendom* (2009). Tom Holland has also presented this 'revisionist view' in his television presentation on the BBC, which is available on YouTube (See: [Tom Holland: In the Shadow of the Sword](#)). Mr Holland has a flair for presenting the details of ancient history in a great storyteller's manner. Most

likely your previous Arab & Muslim history reading has been with Philip Hitti, Bernard Lewis or Nicholson, who were very impressive with the facts but did not venture into a critical examination of the ‘facts’ approach.



In his opening chapter, Holland describes the battle of Yusuf As'rar Yath'ar with the Ethiopian Christians as a battle between the Jewish cause and the Christian cause. Yusuf's contemporaries believed the forces of heaven and hell had clashed. This seems to present a new concept of the identity of that battle. In this way, Holland sets out his purpose: to trace the origins and the progress of the revolution and the patterns of how peoples came to be altered. In his view, this is a significant change from earlier epochs of history. In writing on this theme, he senses that he has entered in a field full of landmines, as he

seeks to delve into facts and details of supernatural activity that are not usually discussed in the public arena. Even if as a Christian you do not appreciate his denial of the supernatural, he seems to have a deep insight into the spiritual thinking of these people particularly the relevance of how each people group believes that God speaks to them, and the sound, music and importance of the ‘word’ of God. In reading his account of the rise of Islam, I was reminded a bit of idea of a clash of civilisations by Sam Huntington.

In the first chapter, ‘Known & Unknown,’ Holland introduces his purpose and views in greater detail. He holds the ‘revisionist view’ of Islam—that there are no historical document about the events in the life of Mohammed, nor have any early manuscripts of the Qur'an been found. He stresses that the sources on the early history of Islam that are available are mostly late 8th and 9th century documents (150-200 years after Muhammad's death). This ‘revisionist view’ was first held by prominent scholars such as Dr Patricia Crone (*Hagarism: The Making of the Islamic World*, 1980; *Slaves on Horses: The Evolution of the Islamic Polity*, 1980 & 2003; *The Nativist Prophets of Early Islamic Iran: Rural Revolt and Local Zoroastrianism*, 2012), Dr Gerald Hawting (*The Idea of Idolatry and the Emergence of Islam: From Polemic to History*, 2006 and *The Development of Islamic Ritual (Formation of the Classical Islamic World)*, 2006) and John Wansborough (*Quranic Studies: Sources and Methods of Scriptural Interpretation*, 1972 and *Sectarian Milieu: Content and Composition of Islamic Salvation History*, 1978).

The other view, known as the ‘traditionalists view’, accepts without critical questioning that Muhammad was born 570 A.D. and received the Qur'an as we have it today from 610 to 632 in Mecca and Medina. This view was the only view for many years and is often still taught in Christian schools and of course is the view held by Muslims.

As for *In the Shadow of the Sword*, I found chapter two, ‘Transhahr,’ very inter-

esting and for me, personally, a useful study of Persian history and of Zoroaster. It gives one a bigger picture of the background and influences in the development of Shi'ism. It also made me realise I should probably read the authors earlier book, *Persian Fire*, (2006). The next chapter is a more in depth look at the 'new Rome'—Byzantium. It is a different approach than thru the eyes of the church fathers. I think at times Christians will be irritated with the author, but looking at how others see world problems can stimulate more critical thinking. In fact chapters 2-5 build the pre-Islamic background of these people.

The heart of the book, for most Christian workers, is most likely the opening chapter and then chapters six and seven. It would be worthwhile at least to read these chapters if one cannot give time to this mammoth book.

Chapters six: 'More Questions Than Answers', covers the beginnings and rise of this people group to power and formation of Islam. He explains his revisionist views under the following headings: When? ... (Attempts at finding a clear precise date or timing... Is it early 7th century by Muhammad, or later into the 8th and 9th centuries by someone or someones else?) 'Is there any evidence for an early date?' 'What does the Examination of the documents which are available and are from a later date show?' 'Where...?' (Looking for geographical evidence for a flourishing city at Mecca and the other places named in the Qur'an) . Why? (What brought these people together and led them to conquer the Middle East and North Africa?)

When did the saying, 'there is no Allah but Allah and Muhammad is the messenger of Allah' begin? This statement appeared for the first time under Abd-al-Malik ibn Marwan, the Fifth Umayyad Caliph (646-705A.D). Also the statements on the shrine in Damascus and the Dome of the Rock inscribe the Lord is God alone. Mr Holland includes a story of Jewish rabbinical influences on how the Hadiths come into being.

The last chapter, seven, is 'The Forging of Islam'. This section is looking at the evidence for the formation of Islam, its structures, practices and institutions as we know it today. When did the saying, 'there is no Allah but Allah and Muhammad is the messenger of Allah' begin? This statement appeared for the first time under Abd-al-Malik ibn Marwan, the Fifth Umayyad Caliph (646-705A.D). Also the statements on the shrine in Damascus and the Dome of the Rock inscribe the Lord is God alone. Mr Holland includes a story of Jewish rabbinical influences on how the Hadiths come into being. Although Holland did not find conclusive answers to all his questions, he raises the concerns about the Shadow of the Sword.

My personal suggestion would be that you consider reading at least part of the book. I think it is a worthwhile read. Do not let its size put you off. It is also good for us to sometimes listen to journalistic views which may take us out of our comfort zone. I personally find it amazing the number of new people who are writing about Islam, without having had years of previous interest in this subject. It is a global topic these

days. If you have not read any revisionist material, Tom Holland is an easy place to start.

Reviewed by Elsie Maxwell

Having completing her PhD in Tunisia in Islam and African Literature in the '70s, Dr. Elsie Maxwell has lived and ministered in England since the mid-eighties. She taught courses in Islam for several decades at the London School of Theology and served a member of AWM's ministry team in London until her retirement a couple of years ago. She continues to live and minister in London.

Qur'anic Geography: A Survey and Evaluation of the Geographical References in the Qur'an with Suggested Solutions for Various Problems and Issues

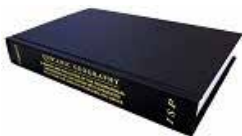
by Dan Gibson

Vancouver: Independent Scholars Press, 2011

The book is available on Starting Point Books (www.stpt.ca) in hardcover & PDF.

For most Muslims, their faith is defined more by orthopraxis than orthodoxy. At the heart of Islamic practice stand the five pillars and one in particular, *Salat*, daily unites millions of Muslims around the world as they pray facing Mecca.

Why is Muslim prayer focussed on Mecca? The obvious answer is, because that was where Islam began and where the Ka'ba and its Black Stone have always been, ever since Muhammad's day. *Everybody* knows this, don't they? Yet, an interesting thing about Islam is that there is much that we *assume*, but often very little that is actually *known*. Historians have long realised there are massive questions concerning Mecca – for example, Patricia Crone in *Meccan Trade* (Princeton University Press, 1987) notes that descriptions of the original Holy City of Islam in the early Islamic sources do not fit well with where Mecca is today. Thus Dan Gibson's book, *Qur'anic Geography*, sets out to explore these questions in detail: Where did Islam actually begin and was Mecca the original Holy City?



Three Northern Civilisations

Gibson begins his study by noting that the Qur'an contains little geography: just 65 references with only nine places mentioned by name, including 'Ad (23x), Thamud (24x) and Midian (7x). This immediately tells us these three civilisations were important to the Qur'an's original audience – so where were they located?