

Book Review: The Sword of the Prophet

Reviewed by Rick Bailey

The Sword of the Prophet: the politically incorrect guide to Islam; history, theology, impact on the world by Serge Trifkovic. Foreword by James Bisset (former head of Canada's Immigration Foreign Service and Ambassador to Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Albania). Regina Orthodox Press, 2002.

Copies can be ordered at www.reginaorthodoxpress.com (\$19.95) or www.amazon.com (\$13.97).

Review

In this 300-page book, Serge Trifkovic (PhD. University of Southampton, postdoctoral research on a State Department grant at the Hoover Institute at Stanford, reporter for BBC, VOA, *US News and World Report*, *The Washington Times*, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, etc.) writes an uncompromising description of the core motivations and goals of Islam that should make anyone shudder. His approach is primarily historical, though he does also give considerable attention to the theological foundations of Islam. Serge is the closest thing to a Christian version (Eastern Orthodox?) of Daniel Pipes that I have so far been able to find.

The first four chapters of the book convincingly argue that the problem we are facing since September 11th, 2001 is not terrorism, but orthodox Islam. In light of this conviction, the last two chapters discuss Islam's recent relationship with the West ("Western Appeasement" and "Jihad's Fifth Column"). These chapters show how

the level of trouble we are experiencing with Islam today is, to a very large degree, the result of choices made by the West over the past half a century. It also shows to what degree orthodox Muslims control Islam's agenda in the West today.

But Serge does not just describe; he also suggests a way out of the present mess. The most important change that Serge believes is needed is a change in the West's worldview away from secularism.

"Before its self-destructive civil war of 1914–1918, the Christian world was as sharply defined as the Muslim world. Both were perfectly capable of defining themselves against each other in a cultural sense, and keeping their tolerations and rejections in useful order. What secularism has done, since replacing Christianity as the guiding light of "the West," is to cast aside any idea of a distinctly "Western" social, geographic and cultural space that should be protected. This was obvious in Europe by the early 1960's, and for the past quarter-century, at least, it has become obvious in the United States. Patriotism rekindled after September 11 is a reminder that, at the grass-roots level, the capacity for instinctive self-definition is still alive, but it cannot be sustained if the dominant outlook is that of cultural relativism and anti-historicism" (from the Introduction).

Without a return to a Christian worldview, Serge believes that there

are good reasons to fear that the forces of orthodox Islam will, in the end, succeed against the technologically advanced, but spiritually dead West.

At the practical level, Serge provides several examples of what kinds of things he believes should be done. His solutions include:

- the ending of orthodox Muslim immigration into the West.
- the demand that until Christians can freely build churches in Muslim lands and openly proselytize Muslims, no Muslim should be allowed to build mosques or proselytize in the West.
- the expulsion of any Muslim (possibly including citizens) who believes in physical *Jihad*, or the establishment of *Shari'a* law.

Serge does not appear to believe that it is possible for a practicing orthodox Muslim, in good conscience, to be a citizen of the United States.

Serge clearly believes that Islam presents every bit as serious a threat to the freedom of the West, and the world, as the Nazis and Communists did. Just as during the cold war, Serge says that the West must practice a form of isolationism towards Muslim countries and a degree of intolerance towards the religion of Islam. The reason for this intolerance by the West towards Muslims is their doing, not ours.

"Islam, in Muhammad's texts and its codification, discriminates against us. It is extremely offensive. Those who submit to that faith must solve the problem they set themselves. Islam discriminates against all "unbelievers." Until the petrodollars support a

Koranic revisionism that does not, we should go for it with whips and scorpions, hammer and tongs. Secularists and believers of all other faiths must act together before it is too late" (from the Conclusion).

Serge does not lose sight of the individual Muslim. He agrees with Ernest Renan that "Muslims are the first victims of Islam" and that, therefore, "to liberate the Muslim from his religion is the best service that one can render him" (from the Conclusion).

Analysis

One of the things I like most about the book is that it is a political book about how to respond to Islam that includes a role for Christianity. As Evangelicals who are steeped in how salvation is a decision that must be made on the individual level, and who unquestionably believe in a separation of church and state, we tend to have great difficulty knowing how to deal with political Islam. I think we need to struggle more with the question of whether it is possible, when orthodox Islam and Christianity meet, to continue to have a separation of church and state. I don't think it is. And so this leaves us in the West with either the choice of playing politics against Islam or expelling orthodox Islam from the West. We should not lose sight of how bad it can get for Christians under Islamic rule. Would anyone like to volunteer a Christian answer of whether we should submit to a government that requires us to give some of our children to the state in order to maintain the right to remain Christian?

Should we submit to such a state knowing that those children taken by the state would be raised as Muslim soldiers whose job would be to repress us? This "Christian tax," practiced in the Balkans for about 300 years (75 years longer than the United States has existed as a country), should not be forgotten.

My criticisms of the book are that:

1) *As bad as Islam can be, I think he overemphasizes the negative qualities of Islam.* At times he fails to mention other motivations or details in situations that would make the behavior of Muslims more understandable. At times he is unfairly critical of them. Islam is not 100 percent bad. After reading this book you would think that

it was. In fairness to the author, he is trying to make a case against the misdirection of the present Bush administration's "war on terrorism." As such, it is not surprising that he should focus exclusively on the points that favor his side of the argument.

2) *It is not a missionary book.* While addressing the religious dimension of how to respond, the positive Christian motivation of love and concern for the welfare of Muslims are not as clearly emphasized as they should be. At times it borders on creating an irrational fear and hatred for Muslims.

(I do not personally know if he is a true believer or just a "Christian." Perhaps someone else on the forum can answer that question.)

Book Review: Daughters of Islam

Reviewed by Joyce Wiebe

Daughters of Islam by Miriam Adeney.

Have you ever asked yourself such questions as: Who exactly are Muslim women anyway? How are they different from their western counterpart? Where do they come from? What are their public roles, their role in the family and community? Given their religion and society, can they really become believers in the Lord Jesus Christ? What can we do to help them see Jesus?

The book *Daughters of Islam* addresses these questions and many others in a very thorough and careful way. It is documented with true stories

of Muslim women in Islamic countries around the world with five chapters alone of case studies on Muslim-background women believers. Miriam Adeney finds the good and beautiful in these women and treats them with respect and compassion.

The author has investigated, interviewed and researched the subject for some seven years, as well as drawing upon her anthropological background of cultures and people groups. She is eminently qualified to write a book such as this, and does so in a clear and sympathetic manner. By that I mean