



Witnesses to a World Crisis: Historians and Histories of the Middle East in the Seventh Century

James Howard-Johnston

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James Howard-Johnston provides a sweeping and highly readable account of probably the most dramatic single episode in world history - the emergence of a new religion (Islam), the destruction of two established great powers (Roman and Iranian), and the creation of a new world empire by the Arabs, all in the space of not much more than a generation (610-52 A.D.). Warfare looms large, especially where operations can be followed in some detail, as in Iraq 636-40, in Egypt 641-2 and in the long-drawn out battle for the Mediterranean (649-98). As the first history of the formative phase of Islam to be grounded in the important non-Islamic as well as Islamic sources *Witnesses to a World Crisis* is essential reading for anyone wanting to understand Islam as a religion and political force, the modern Middle East, and the jihadist impulse, which is as evident today as it was in the seventh century.

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