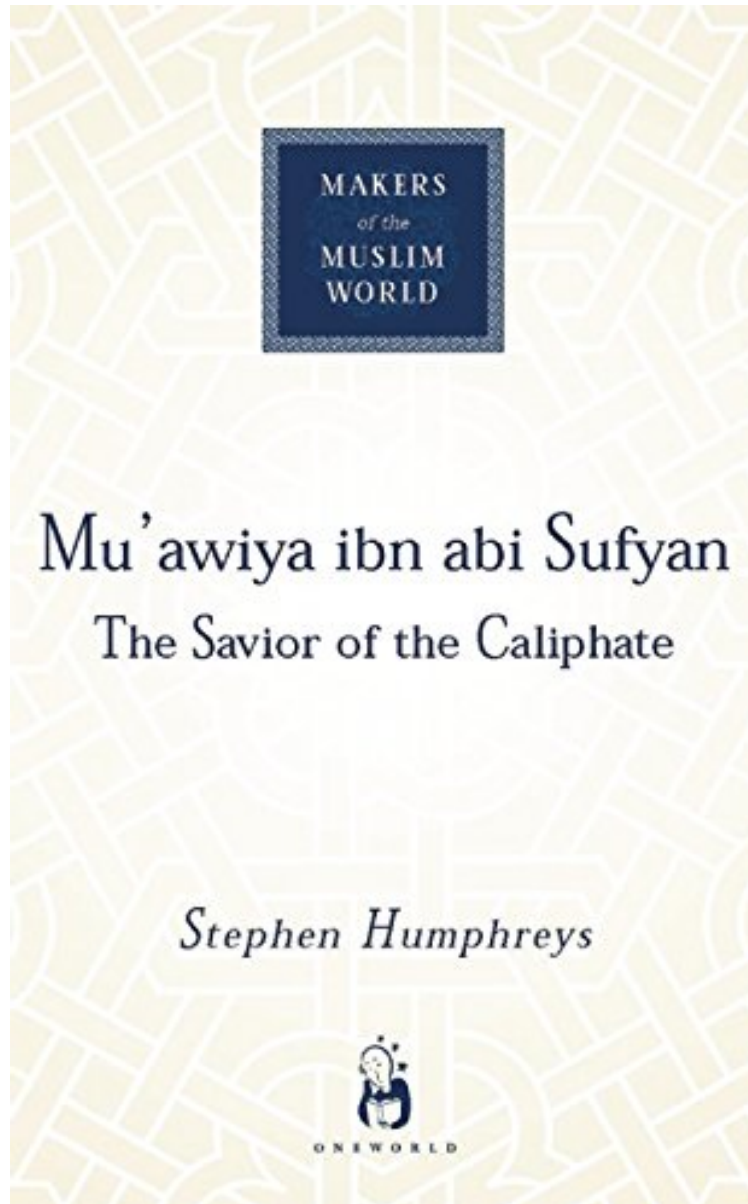


(Download) Mu'awiya ibn abi Sufyan: From Arabia to Empire (Makers of the Muslim World)

Mu'awiya ibn abi Sufyan: From Arabia to Empire (Makers of the Muslim World)

R. Stephen Humphreys
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R. Stephen Humphreys : Mu'awiya ibn abi Sufyan: From Arabia to Empire (Makers of the Muslim World)
before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Mu'awiya ibn abi Sufyan: From Arabia to Empire (Makers of the Muslim World):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. well-written introduction for the popular market
By David Reid Ross
This book is in a series of "Makers of the Muslim World" which Patricia Crone is overseeing. I know of Stephen Humphreys from his translation of Tabari over the years 644-655 (but of course I can't review that book here). I'll just say he's to be trusted on Uthman. Here he's writing about Uthman's cousin Muawiya. How does he do? Muawiya is a controversial figure, as Humphreys points out; his ACTIONS are well-known from the Hadith and also from non-Muslim witness, but no-one has much of a handle on what Muawiya *thought*. Humphreys sees the amir as a warlord whose main aim was to maintain order in the new Islamic empire. Muawiya used Islam as a tool to that end. His chief virtue was "hilm", the real antonym to "jahl"; where the Arab virtue was in raids and physical courage, Muawiya's virtue was in calmly working the political levers so he didn't HAVE to fight....Except against the Byzantines. But if he'd brought low the Romans, the Arabs might not have to fight a real opponent again, ever. So anyway. I didn't see much here to quibble with, beyond this or that year of this or that Roman raid which could be moved in this or that direction. Humphreys does omit, or is more likely unaware of, some primary source material - namely Dashkurantsi's history of the Caucasian Albanians. But none of it much affects the main thrust of this book. Other than that, it's a quick and breezy read, and as informative as any biography of this close-lipped figure can be. I recommend it for any students of the period wanting a scholarly-consensus introduction to this amir. I'd also recommend it to Muslims, if they're moderate enough not to see the amir as infallible or hopelessly evil.
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Simply brilliant
By Mona
This little book offers so much and it is brilliant! Congratulations for Prof. Humphreys for packing so much into this book. Indispensable to understanding the first century of Islam. Beautifully written, concise, well researched... a real find.

In this accessible study, Stephen Humphreys introduces the most elusive of the early caliphs, Mu'awiya ibn abi Sufyan (602-680). Throughout history, some have accused him of being the first caliph to diverge from Muhammed's model of ideal Muslim leadership whilst others credit him with uniting an empire in disarray and transforming the Caliphate into a practicable form of government. In light of this, Humphreys critically analyses his sources, and seeks to get as close as possible to a historical account of the great man.

About the Author
Stephen Humphreys is professor of History and Islamic Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. He is author of Islamic History: A Framework for Inquiry.