



The Modern Middle East: A Political History since the First World War

Mehran Kamrava

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The first succinct and authoritative overview of the making of the modern Middle East, this lucid book brings a valuable mix of historical perspectives and contemporary analysis to a wide audience of readers seeking expert knowledge about this troubled and fascinating region. Giving a rich perspective on the region's historical and political evolution, the book traces the influence of factors such as religion, culture, and economics and illuminates events and topics currently in the news. With its broad thematic sweep and its balanced presentation of contentious issues, it is essential reading for general readers and students who want to better understand the world today.

Mehran Kamrava sets the stage with a concise discussion of the evolution of Islam and the religion's profound role in the region. He then looks at, in turn, the rise and fall of the Ottomans, the trials of independence and state-building, the emergence and fiery spread of nationalism, the two Arab-Israeli wars of 1967 and 1973, the Iranian Revolution, and the two Gulf Wars and beyond, including discussion of the invasion of Iraq by the United States. After tracing the consequences of these historical events for a host of political phenomena, Kamrava gives detailed attention to three pivotal issues: the challenges of economic development, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and the question of democracy. He also examines issues that will shape the future: population growth, environmental pollution, and water scarcity.

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Lizeth says

I haven't read many non-fiction books, but these past few months I decided I needed to enter that room and not be afraid. A friend of mine recommended this book and I'm glad I took his advice. It provides a very good and reader-friendly introduction to the Middle East. It doesn't read too much like a history book. In fact, some chapters read more like a short story. I recommend it.

Sree Chaithanya says

Gripping narration!!an islam point of view(well,true to my senses) well putforth

Raghda Ani says

I have to say, before reading this book I had a diminished knowledge on the history behind so many conflicts in the middle east. This book was very informative and helpful especially for those who are looking for explanations to what is happening in the world surrounding us

Ben says

Lots of interesting information, but presented in a kinda dry standard history book kind of way.

Steven Wedgeworth says

Very informative and very helpful. I learned a ton and cried a little. Kamrava does a good job of criticizing Western meddling in the Middle East without being screechy.

Saman says

the analysis in the book is excellent .

the book is an introduction because there are lots of things not mentioned.(although the author apologies for that in the introduction)

and i just felt like he was trying to put so much in the book sometimes it gets chaotic

Harris Niazi says

Growing up a Pakistani, the events occurring in Middle East have always been a contentious and a continuous source of debate in our society. Due to the political connections in general and the religious connections in particular, whatever happens throughout Middle East, has considerable reverberations in Pakistan. Despite those close connections, surprisingly, the knowledge of the history of Middle East is not common.

Back in school when we were taught the history of the subcontinent, there was a brief mention of the First World War and how the Treaty of Sevres divided the Ottoman Empire. In response to that, a politically charged Khilafat Movement (for the restoration of the Empire) was initiated throughout British India in 1919. Though the movement failed miserably yet it is considered a very important political event in the history of Pakistan. So naturally, it always intrigued me to know about the region's history as well as the events that made up the present Middle East.

When I took up reading this book, I was aware of the important events in recent history of the Middle East but knew very little about the actual history (the historical make-up) of the region. After reading the book, I can say that every topic, every event that I expected, was mentioned in the book in quite satisfying details. The fact that I liked most about this book is that the author has delineated the history of the region in a detailed and a professionally unbiased manner. The book explains all the significant historical events in comprehensible details without boring the reader. The way in which all those historical details are shortened- without missing any significant event- is really commendable. After providing the ancient as well contemporary history of the region, the author gives details about the problems that the region faces in present times.

The only regret I have after reading this book is that I did not read it earlier :)

Aaron says

The title is misleading because @ the beginning of the book he delves into the foundations of Islam and the schism that occurred after Mohammed's death. He briefly touches on the interim period between then and the early 20th century as the title suggests. This is very much a scholarly work and he does a great job of just laying the facts out on the page with little to no opinion on events.

Bill Kyzner says

This is being used as a textbook. It is dense, but provides an excellent history.

Tracey Cruickshank says

excellent reference point for anyone needing to know what the true issues are in the middle east. Clear, understandable writing from the beginning of the Ottoman Empire to the present. Last few chapters were a bit beyond my scope or interest level but glad I read them.

Philippg says

very informative and readable history of the middle east after WW1

A.y. says

Solid history book. I'd actually read it even if it wasn't a textbook for a class. I bought a copy so I can add it to my permanent library, and lend it to others. Good backbone for my future reading on the Middle East and North Africa.
