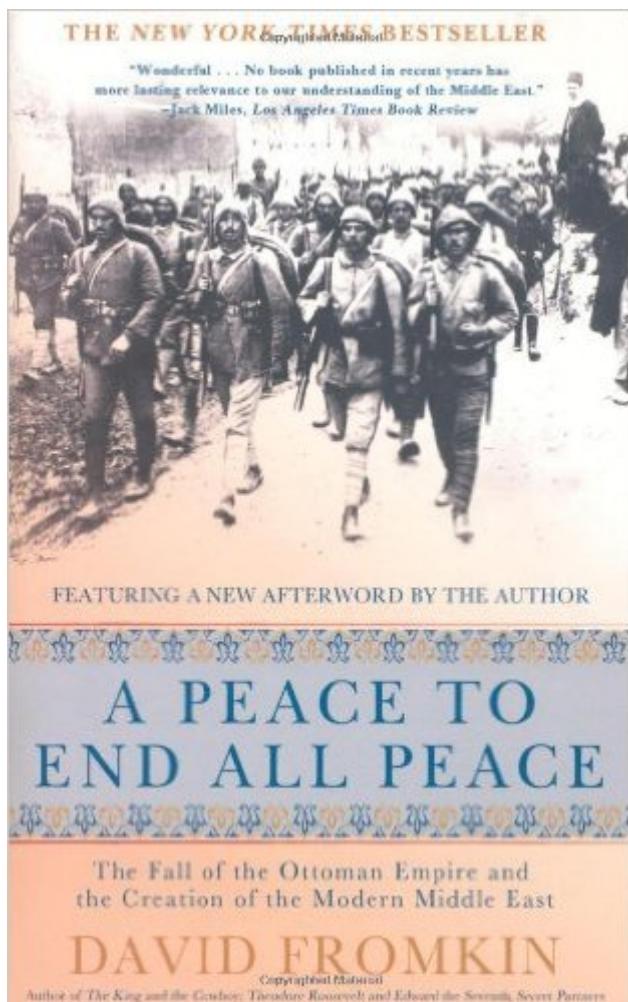


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A Peace To End All Peace: The Fall Of The Ottoman Empire And The Creation Of The Modern Middle East



Synopsis

Published with a new afterword from the authorâ•the classic, bestselling account of how the modern Middle East was createdThe Middle East has long been a region of rival religions, ideologies, nationalisms, and ambitions. All of these conflictsâ•including the hostilities between Arabs and Israelis, and the violent challenges posed by Iraq's competing sectsâ•are rooted in the region's political inheritance: the arrangements, unities, and divisions imposed by the Allies after the First World War.In A Peace to End All Peace, David Fromkin reveals how and why the Allies drew lines on an empty map that remade the geography and politics of the Middle East. Focusing on the formative years of 1914 to 1922, when all seemed possible, he delivers in this sweeping and magisterial book the definitive account of this defining time, showing how the choices narrowed and the Middle East began along a road that led to the conflicts and confusion that continue to this day.A new afterword from Fromkin, written for this edition of the book, includes his invaluable, updated assessment of this region of the world today, and on what this history has to teach us.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is an absolutely first-rate history book: it covers the complexity without simplification, yet tells a riveting story with a huge cast of larger than life characters (Churchill, Ataturk, Lenin, Lawrence of Arabia, and many others). It is also superlatively written. The book begins with the machinations leading up to the Great War. The Ottoman Empire - in decline for over 300 years, yet a useful "buffer" for the Western powers against the Russian Empire in the "Great Game" - is finally coming apart with the rise of the western-minded "young Turks." That means that it is finally collapsing and

Britain and France must decide whether to continue to prop up its vast territorial holdings or to nakedly seek to carve up its territories for the benefit of their own empires. France coveted Syria and Lebanon, GB the rest. In the end, it is what they got. Once the Great War began, however, the Turks allied themselves with the Germans, for which Churchill was unjustly blamed (he confiscated two destroyers that Britain's shipyards had just manufactured for the Turks). This led directly to the catastrophically mismanaged invasion of the Dardanelles, in a bid to end the War by pushing a wedge into the Germanic coalition from the South, again Churchill's idea. (Amazingly, the collapse of Bulgaria was what finally ended WWI 4 years later, as the allies entered the gap). As the Turks rallied, the allies turned to making alliances with the Arabs and others under loose Turkish suzerainty. The greatest accomplishment of the book is to dissect the mentality of British policymakers, which by today's standards was almost ghoulishly primitive.

Of course I know the importance of the Middle East in our present times, but I had little idea that the era of its formation was also a critical time for the formation of the ENTIRE modern world. The same events which created the Modern Middle East also caused both World Wars, and hints at the eternal conflict in Bosnia and Yugoslavia as well. And yet, the world of 1914 is so utterly different from our modern times. The start of this book finds the Ottoman Empire "ruling" over Central Asia, Britain in control of 1/3rd of the globe, and European countries still on an Imperial drive to conquer the world as fast as they can. The US was hardly a superpower during these times, and Civil and Womens' Rights are just a glimmer in History's Eye. The premiere draw for this book is the author's use of de-classified materials, which can finally tell us what really happened in the region, and how European powers formed it. Beware, though, as this book is VERY dense with detail; so dense that I often take an hour to read a 5-6 page chapter. It has some flavors of a novel, but the book is certainly not an "easy read." If you soak in all the knowledge, names, locations, and dates of this volume, you will become a relative expert on the Middle East! And yet, don't expect a complete understanding of the Modern Arab nations and the Islamic groups which reside in them. The Middle Eastern nations of the book's time period, 1914-1922, are about as different from their current condition and conflicts as the Civil War United States is from our modern country.

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