



Power, Faith, and Fantasy: America in the Middle East: 1776 to the Present

By Michael B. Oren

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“Will shape our thinking about America and the Middle East for years.”? Christopher Dickey, *Newsweek*

Power, Faith, and Fantasy tells the remarkable story of America's 230-year relationship with the Middle East. Drawing on a vast range of government documents, personal correspondence, and the memoirs of merchants, missionaries, and travelers, Michael B. Oren narrates the unknown story of how the United States has interacted with this vibrant and turbulent region. 68 black-and-white photographs, 4 maps

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Following up his acclaimed study of the Six-Day War, historian Oren analyzes America's 200-plus-year involvement in the Middle East, from battling Barbary pirates to toppling Saddam Hussein. Dietz, one of *AudioFile* magazine's Best Voices of the Century, with a measured, leisurely reading style, turns in another solid performance. Dietz comes from the classic school of readers, sounding like an action movie-trailer narrator in a more contemplative mood. His almost brusque masculine swagger is highly appropriate for Oren's tale of American misadventure in the Middle East, compounded in equal parts of the three titular components. Counterintuitively for so long an audiobook, Dietz's tortoise-like performance adds to, rather than detracts from, Oren's prose, with Dietz's careful pace giving Oren's carefully researched tome an added measure of dignified wisdom. *Available as a Norton hardcover (Reviews, Nov. 20, 2006). (June)*

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From [Booklist](#)

This engrossing, informative, and frequently surprising survey of U.S. involvement in the Middle East over the past 230 years is particularly timely. Oren, a frequent contributor to the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, and *New Republic*, illustrates that American interests have frequently combined elements of romanticism, religious fervency, and hardheaded power politics. In the early nineteenth century, President Jefferson, perhaps acting against his own instincts to remain aloof from the affairs of the Old World, sent the infant American navy to confront the Barbary pirates off the coast of North Africa. Like many of our future endeavors in the region, the results were a mixture of success, failure, and farce. Other episodes covered here that are particularly interesting include previously obscure American efforts to locate the source of the Nile and the efforts by American missionaries to convert vast numbers of Ottoman subjects. But Oren is at his best when describing American involvement in the twentieth century as the U.S. replaced Britain as the dominant "imperial" power in the area. Appealing to both scholars and general readers. *Jay Freeman*
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Review

When a brilliant, lucid historian such as Michael B. Oren . . . brings the past back to life . . . it is a shaft of light in a dark sky. --Robert Kagan"

Hugely ambitious, drawing on hundreds of original sources to create a finely balanced overview of this enormously complex subject. --Max Rodenbeck"

Elegant and engaging.... Had George W. Bush been able to read this magnificent book before he launched Operation Iraqi Freedom... he might well have realized just how dangerous it has been to shoot first and ask questions later in the Middle East over the past 200 years. --Douglas Little"

A tour de force, brilliantly researched and written, and extremely interesting as well as informative. --Henry Kissinger"

Michael Oren's deeply researched and brilliantly written history will be a revelation to you. --Niall Ferguson, Harvard University, author of *Colossus*"

A landmark achievement. --Walter Russell Mead, Council on Foreign Relations"

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