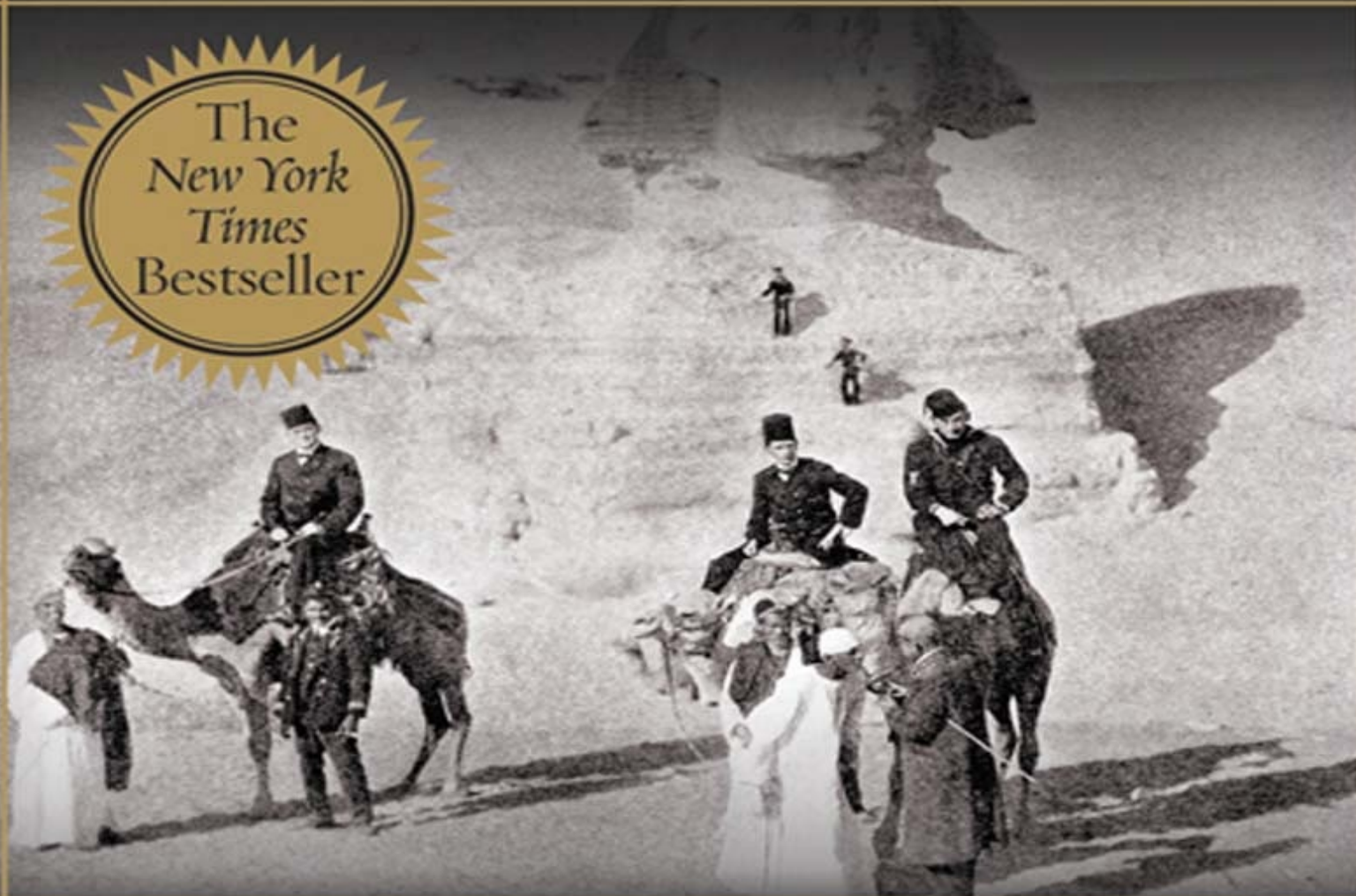


POWER, FAITH, *and* FANTASY

The
New York
Times
Bestseller



AMERICA in the MIDDLE EAST
1776 to the PRESENT

MICHAEL B. OREN

"Will shape our thinking about America and the Middle East for years."
—Christopher Dickey, *Newsweek*

WITH A NEW PREFACE AND UPDATED AFTERWORD

More praise for
POWER, FAITH, AND FANTASY

“[This] book is a landmark achievement. This is an absolutely vital work that will change the way Americans look at their role in the Middle East and beyond. The story is riveting and the research encyclopedic.”

—Walter Russell Mead

“Michael Oren’s *Power, Faith, and Fantasy* fills a real need. Americans have been involved in the Middle East throughout their history, but no one until Oren has documented that involvement so thoroughly and so vividly. Highly recommended.”

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“If you think America’s entanglement in the Middle East began with Roosevelt and Truman, Michael Oren’s deeply researched and brilliantly written history will be a revelation to you, as it was to me. With its cast of fascinating characters—earnest missionaries, maverick converts, wide-eyed tourists and even a nineteenth-century George Bush—*Power, Faith, and Fantasy* is not only a terrific read, it is also proof that you don’t really understand an issue until you know its history.”

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“Of considerable interest in that difficult time: well argued, and full of telling moments.”

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“This engrossing, informative, and frequently surprising survey of U.S. involvement in the Middle East over the past 230 years is particularly timely.... 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, *Library Journal*

“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, *Foreign Affairs*

“Oren concludes that the American presence and exercise of power ‘brought far more beneficence than avarice to the Middle East and caused significantly less harm than good.’ Those who read his magisterial study of American interaction with the Middle East through two centuries will find themselves hard pressed to disagree.”

—Ronald Radosh, *Weekly Standard*

“Oren’s is a fluent, comprehensive narrative of two centuries of entanglement.”

—*Publishers Weekly*

“To understand the present and make an informed judgment about the future, it is vital to read history, and Michael B. Oren has gifted us with an extraordinary look at ‘America in the Middle East.’”

—Bookviews.co

“Extensively researched.... The book is impressive for its broad strokes—analyzing 230 years of political, military and cultural history with wisdom and appreciation of complexity—and its untold details, whether portraits of little-known figures or surprising findings. And, Oren’s approach sheds much light on current events.... That he is also a novelist is evident in his prose; he’s skillful in making characters come alive and keeping readers engaged.”

—Santee Brawarsky, *Jewish Week*

“As a comprehensive examination of the United States’ association with the Middle East, his much-needed book fills a gap in the literature.... This is a wonderfully rich and thought-provoking history.... Highly recommended for all public and academic libraries.”

—*Library Journal*

“Even at more than 700 pages, the book leaves a reader wanting more. And because the detailed text reads so fluidly, all of that information is palatable, and much of it is downright gripping.... With Oren’s survey as a guide, any reader can become grounded in the realities of the vast Middle East.”

—Steve Weinberg, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*

“*Power, Faith, and Fantasy* provides a rich and complex context for assessing America’s embattled role in the Middle East today.”

—Lawrence Grossman, *The New Leader*

“Oren knows how to tell a story, turn a phrase and tweak a delightful detail.”

—Glenn Altschuler, *Baltimore Sun*

“There is no better introduction to the history of U.S. involvement in the Middle East than this highly readable book.”

—Paul Collins, *Sydney Morning Herald*

“Oren provides not an exhaustive study of recent Middle East history but rather an indispensable overview of its crucial turning points and trends.”

—Jack Fischel, *Courier Mo*

“Because there is no other book with such a sweeping view of the subject, the vast cast of characters Oren presents and the exhaustively researched tales of the way they played on each other will shape our thinking about America and the Middle East for years.... For now *Power, Faith, and Fantasy* is the best history we have of the history we’ve had, and an indispensable guide from point A to point Z.”

—Christopher Dickey, *Newswe*

“*Power, Faith, and Fantasy: America in the Middle East, 1776 to the Present*, Michael B. Oren’s brilliant, sweeping account of America’s considerably longer, vastly more complex entanglement in the region is a much-needed antidote, a fuller picture of the motivations behind an engagement that began in the very infancy of the republic, when Israel was a mere dream and the combustion engine not even a blueprint.... This is a majestically told story, its grand themes brought to life by a succession of riveting characters.”

—Gerard Baker, *The Times* (London)

“Mr. Oren goes on to list almost a dozen titles, some very highly regarded, on America and the Middle East that have fallen short of providing ‘the full sweep of America’s centuries-old engagement with the Middle East in all of its military, economic, and cultural aspects.’ This is exactly what he provides, and much of the pleasure of working through the book is realizing how well he does it.... An abundance of little stories and vignettes, persons and personalities, touching on all these themes make up Mr. Oren’s narrative.... To say this book is timely is only to say that all well-written history is timely.... As captivating as many of these stories are, the real worth of the book comes only when the reader takes it as a whole. A subtle and refreshing assumption about the importance of history and its relationship to the present underlies every page.... Mr. Oren has made a significant and readable contribution to the understanding of the historic relationship of America with the Middle East. It is a book worth seeking out.”

—David A. Smith, *Washington Tim*

“One of the most important books on the subject to be published in this or any other year.... *Power, Faith, and Fantasy: America in the Middle East, 1776 to the Present* by Israeli historian Michael Oren fills a void that has long existed in the historiography of the Middle East. Until the release of this beautifully written and meticulously researched volume this month, there simply was no comprehensive history of American involvement in the region.... Oren’s achievement is must-reading for policymakers and the general public alike. In an era in which global terror based in the Middle East is the primary challenge to the survival of democracy, *Power, Faith, and Fantasy* ought to be read and understood by as many Americans as possible.”

—Jonathan S. Tobin, *Jerusalem Po*

“In his magisterial history of the relationship between the United States and the Middle East, Michael Oren provides an exhaustively researched and compellingly told exercise in déjà vu.... Oren’s engrossing narrative reads like a who’s who of American history.... Even the historical footnotes are

engrossing narrative reads like a who's who of American history.... Even the historical footnotes are fascinating.... Oren is a wonderful storyteller. The ability to move from minute-by-minute chronicling to sketching the grand sweep of history is no easy feat, but he does so with elegance and a flair for the dramatic.”

—Robert Satloff, *New York Post*

“What Oren does is cull the history and put together a single, easy-to-read package. He’s thorough without sounding academic, which is a definite plus when you sit down with more than 700 pages of history.... Possess even the scantest level of curiosity, and this is the kind of book that’ll lead you into an adventure of discovery.”

—Zachary Reid, *Richmond Times-Dispatch*

“Oren effectively traces and harnesses the many threads of America’s connectedness to the Middle East, from its evangelical missions to its consuming thirst for oil. It is a panoramic view, ranging from the adventures of early visitors like John Ledyard, who fell in love with the Oregon territory when he sailed with Captain Cook but became the first American to explore the Middle East, to the cynical observations of Mark Twain, who wrote that the holy city of Jerusalem was ‘grimy and impoverished,’ full of lepers, idiots and Western pilgrims. Oren’s book is a rare hybrid: It is appealing as entertainment and useful as a reference work on America’s long and volatile engagement with the Middle East.”

—Mike Francis, *The Oregonian*

“Compelling.... Mr. Oren’s sweeping, highly textured history of the 230-year interaction between America and the Middle East told me much I did not know.... Mr. Oren’s work is prodigious, drawing upon hundreds of original and archival sources—letters, memoirs, books, and government documents—which he skillfully weaves into a finely drawn narrative that alternates among cultural, political, and economic interactions.”

—Judith Miller, *New York Sun*





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Warships of America's Great White Fleet preparing to enter the Suez Canal in January 1909.

POWER, FAITH, AND FANTASY

America in the Middle East, 1776 to the Present

Michael B. Oren



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*To Yossi Klein Halevi, my colleague and friend,
who helped make this book possible,
and for my wife, Sally,
who makes everything possible.*

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