



Command Recommend Reading List

The books and additional publications of interest in the U.S. Naval Forces Central Command/U.S. Fifth Fleet/Combined Maritime Forces Reading List were selected based on criteria to enhance professional development among service members assigned to the U.S. Central Command Area of Responsibility. The selection of these books and publications should not be construed as an explicit or implicit endorsement by the U.S. Navy for these particular books and publications, or the authors' or publishers' views or interpretations.

Middle East

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

by Michael B. Oren

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.

A Peace to End All Peace: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East

by David Fromkin

The critically acclaimed New York Times bestselling account of how the modern Middle East came into being after World War I, and why it is in upheaval today. In our time the Middle East has proven a battleground of rival religions, ideologies, nationalisms, and dynasties. All of these conflicts, including the hostilities between Arabs and Israelis that have flared yet again, come down, in a sense, to the extent to which the Middle East will continue to live with its political inheritance: the arrangements, unities, and divisions imposed upon the region by the Allies after the First World War. In *A Peace to End All Peace*, David Fromkin reveals how and why the Allies came to remake the geography and politics of the Middle East, drawing lines on an empty map that eventually became the new countries of Iraq, Israel, Jordan, and Lebanon. Focusing on the formative years of 1914 to 1922, when all-even an alliance between Arab nationalism and Zionism-seemed possible he raises questions about what might have been done differently, and answers questions about why things were done as they were. The current battle for a Palestinian homeland has its roots in these events of 85 years ago.

The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money & Power

by Daniel Yergin

Now with a new epilogue that speaks directly to the current energy crisis, *The Prize* recounts the panoramic history of the world's most important resource: oil. Daniel Yergin's timeless book chronicles the struggle for wealth and power that has surrounded oil for decades and that continues to fuel global rivalries, shake the world economy, and transform the destiny of men and nations. This updated edition categorically proves the unwavering significance of oil throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first by tracing economic and political clashes over precious "black gold." With his far-reaching insight and in-depth research, Yergin is uniquely positioned to address the present battle over energy, which undoubtedly ranks as one of the most vital issues of our time. The canvas of his narrative history is enormous -- from the drilling of the first well in Pennsylvania through two great world wars to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, Operation Desert Storm, and now both the Iraq War and climate change. The definitive work on the subject of oil, *The Prize* is a book of extraordinary breadth, riveting excitement, and great value -- crucial to our understanding of world politics and the economy today -- and tomorrow.

The Arab Mind

by Raphael Patai

The classic study of Arab culture and society is now more relevant than ever. Since its original publication in 1983, the revised edition of Raphael Patai's *The Arab Mind* has been recognized as one of the seminal works in the field of Middle Eastern studies. This penetrating analysis unlocks the mysteries of Arab society to help us better understand a complex, proud and ancient culture. *The Arab Mind* discusses the upbringing of a typical Arab boy or girl, the intense concern with honor and courage, the Arabs' tendency toward extremes of behavior, and their ambivalent attitudes toward the West. Chapters are devoted to the influence of Islam, sexual mores, Arab language and Arab

art, Bedouin values, Arab nationalism, and the pervasive influence of Westernization. With a new foreword by Norvell B. DeAtkine, Director of Middle East Studies at the JFK Special Warfare Center and School, Fort Bragg, N.C., this book unravels the complexities of Arab traditions and provides authentic revelations of Arab mind and character.

The Sixth Crisis: Iran, Israel, America, and the Rumors of War

by Dana Allin and Steve Simon

The Sixth Crisis explores the fraught linkages between the Iranian nuclear challenge, the increasing likelihood of an Israeli preventive strike, the continuing Israel-Palestine tragedy, and President Barack Obama's efforts to recast America's relations with the world's Muslims. It is the first full account of the situation since Obama took office. The authors, a former senior official on President Clinton's National Security Council Staff and a leading authority on international politics, lay out in clear and accessible detail the technical and political dimensions of Iran's nuclear program, and the ongoing diplomacy to stop it. They show how Israel's panic about Iran's nuclear threat--combined with its policy toward the Palestinians--is undermining Jerusalem's alliance with America. Tehran, meanwhile, is exploiting tensions between Arab regimes fearful of a nuclear Iran and an Arab public that is both angry about the plight of the Palestinians and resentful of Israel's nuclear monopoly in the region. The Sixth Crisis brilliantly illuminates this fateful juncture. The status quo is on an incline to disaster, and the hopes that President Obama has inspired are threatened by the toxic mixture of Israeli-Palestinian stalemate and Iran's nuclear ambitions.

Arab Voices: What They Are Saying to Us, and Why it Matters

by James Zogby

The Arab World is a region that has been vastly misunderstood in the West. Arab Voices asks the questions, collects the answers, and shares the results that will help us see Arabs clearly. The book will bring into stark relief the myths, assumptions, and biases that hold us back from understanding these important people. Here, James Zogby debuts a brand new, comprehensive poll, bringing numbers to life so that we can base policy and perception on the real world, rather than on a conjured reality.

Bahrain

Amirs, Admirals, and Desert Sailors: Bahrain, the U.S. Navy, and the Arabian Gulf

by David F. Winkler

Host to the U.S. Navy for nearly six decades, Bahrain has been a steadfast American ally in the turbulent Middle East. Its unique relationship with the United States evolved through a series of friendships between Bahrain's ruling Al Khalifa royal family and top U.S. Navy flag officers assigned to the fleet in the Gulf. Over the years it has become a

strategic partnership critical to global security. As naval historian David F. Winkler examines these developing relationships, he offers a fascinating overview of Bahraini history, the entry of American humanitarian and economic interests, the establishment of an American naval presence in the Cold War, the Arab-Israeli conflicts, and the downfall of the Iranian shah, among other subjects. The author tells the story from both Bahraini and American perspectives. Given U.S. commitment to the region and its concurrent objectives of combating the global war on terrorism and establishing democracy, this book provides an important historical context for those interested in a crucial facet of American foreign relations. While many works describe the history of U.S. diplomatic and military involvement in the Gulf, this is the first to cover in depth the history of the U.S. Navy in Bahrain.

Iran

The Ayatollah Begs to Differ: The Paradox of Modern Iran

by Hooman Majd

In this critical but affectionate portrait of Iranian politics and culture, Majd, the Western-educated grandson of an ayatollah, delves into the very core of Iranian society, closely examining social mores and Farsi phrases to identify the Persian sensibility, which, Majd determines, cherishes privacy, praise and poetry. Nothing is too small or too sweeping for Majd to consider, and although he announces his allegiance to the former president Khatami, he remains scrupulously even-handed in assessing his successor Ahmadinejad, shedding light on the Iranian president's obsession with the Holocaust and penchant for windbreakers and why the two are (surprisingly) intertwined. The author's brisk, conversational prose is appealing; his book reads as if he is chatting with a smart friend, while strolling around Tehran, engaged in ta'arouf (an exaggerated form of self-deprecation key to understanding Persian society). Although Majd seems to gloss too quickly over realities that don't engage his interest—women's voices are only intermittently included—this failing scarcely mars this remarkable ride through what is often uncharted territory.

Immortal: A Military History of Iran and Its Armed Forces

by Steven R. Ward

"Immortal" is the only single-volume English-language survey of Iran's military history. CIA analyst Steven R. Ward shows that Iran's soldiers, from the famed "Immortals" of ancient Persia to today's Revolutionary Guard, have demonstrated through the centuries that they should not be underestimated. This history also provides background on the nationalist, tribal, and religious heritages of the country to help readers better understand Iran and its security outlook. "Immortal" begins with the founding of ancient Persia's empire under Cyrus the Great and continues through the Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988) and up to the present. Drawing on a wide range of sources including declassified documents, the author gives primary focus to the modern era to relate the build-up of the military under the last Shah, its collapse during the Islamic revolution, its fortunes in the Iran-Iraq War, and its rise from the ashes to help Iran become once again a major

regional military power. He shows that, despite command and supply problems, Iranian soldiers demonstrate high levels of bravery and perseverance and have enjoyed surprising tactical successes even when victory has been elusive. These qualities and the Iranians' ability to impose high costs on their enemies by exploiting Iran's imposing geography bear careful consideration today by potential opponents.

All the Shah's Men: An American Coup and the Roots of Middle East Terror

by Stephen Kinzer

With breezy storytelling and diligent research, Kinzer has reconstructed the CIA's 1953 overthrow of the elected leader of Iran, Mohammad Mossadegh, who was wildly popular at home for having nationalized his country's oil industry. The coup ushered in the long and brutal dictatorship of Mohammad Reza Shah, widely seen as a U.S. puppet and himself overthrown by the Islamic revolution of 1979. At its best this work reads like a spy novel, with code names and informants, midnight meetings with the monarch and a last-minute plot twist when the CIA's plan, called Operation Ajax, nearly goes awry. A veteran New York Times foreign correspondent and the author of books on Nicaragua (*Blood of Brothers*) and Turkey (*Crescent and Star*), Kinzer has combed memoirs, academic works, government documents and news stories to produce this blow-by-blow account. He shows that until early in 1953, Great Britain and the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company were the imperialist baddies of this tale. Intransigent in the face of Iran's demands for a fairer share of oil profits and better conditions for workers, British Foreign Secretary Herbert Morrison exacerbated tension with his attitude that the challenge from Iran was, in Kinzer's words, "a simple matter of ignorant natives rebelling against the forces of civilization." Before the crisis peaked, a high-ranking employee of Anglo-Iranian wrote to a superior that the company's alliance with the "corrupt ruling classes" and "leech-like bureaucracies" were "disastrous, outdated and impractical." This stands as a textbook lesson in how not to conduct foreign policy.

The Soul of Iran: A Nation's Journey to Freedom

by Afshin Molavi

Iran thundered onto the world stage in 1979 with an Islamic revolution that shook the world. Today that revolution has gone astray, a popular democracy movement boldly challenges authority, and young Iranians are more interested in moving to America than in chanting "Death to America." Afshin Molavi, born in Iran and fluent in Persian, traveled widely across his homeland, exploring the legacy of the Iranian revolution and probing the soul of Iran, a land with nearly three millennia of often-glorious history. Like a master Persian carpet maker, Molavi weaves together threads of rich historical insight, political analysis, cultural observation, and the daily realities of life in the Islamic republic to produce a colorful, intricate, and mesmerizing narrative.

Pirates

Pirate State: Inside Somalia's Terrorism at Sea

by Peter Eichstaedt

Veteran journalist Eichstaedt's compelling book, based on his extended African visits, portrays a country in chaos, torn about by tribal fighting, corruption, and the violence of desperate people fighting for survival. Beginning with the dramatic re-telling of Maersk Alabama's capture by a small group of pirates and its eighteen year old leader, Eichstaedt then discusses the tiered payment system for the pirates and the countless individuals vying for the million dollar ransoms. Although piracy began in response to the usurpation of Somalia's fishing waters by larger foreign vessels, it quickly became a money-making operation generating a "total ransom purse" of \$82 million in 2009. We see interviews with the Somali refugees who fled from a camp in Kenya, and we see the devastating effects of piracy on ordinary citizens. The book includes an analysis of the UN efforts to end piracy, the hijacking of humanitarian food supplies, and even the expansion of criminal networks into other countries. Eichstaedt recognizes that Somalia's pervasive poverty and illiteracy pose major obstacles to change. His even-handed polished style, and impressive documentation let the horrors and ramifications of piracy speak for themselves.

Somalia: The New Barbary?: Piracy and Islam in the Horn of Africa

by Martin M. Murphy

Somali piracy is repeatedly associated with the historical specter of barbarity. The world now fears Somalia has taken on its mantle by becoming a safe haven for terrorists wishing to wreak havoc on civilized societies. Western policy towards Somalia focuses on the country's poverty-stricken Islamic population, but are these efforts misdirected? Is an aggressive naval solution to the piracy problem adequate? Is the failure of the Somali state a useful explanation for piracy and will violent Islamism exploit modern piracy for its own ends? Martin Murphy, author of the definitive guide to modern maritime piracy and terrorism, employs his critically-acclaimed approach to review the history, motivation, organization, criminal methods, and operational tactics of Somali piracy, from its initial manifestation in the early-1990s to today. He links their activities and fortunes to the rise and fall of Somalia's political groups; explains how and why violent Islamists operate within Somalia; and outlines the extent to which they may exploit maritime dimensions in the future. He concludes with a consideration of the various political and military solutions being used to meet these challenges and whether they will resolve them effectively.

Terrorism

The Assassins

by Bernard Lewis

The Assassins is a comprehensive, readable, and authoritative account of history's first terrorists. An offshoot of the Ismaili Shi'ite sect of Islam, the Assassins were the first group to make systematic use of murder as a political weapon. Established in Iran and

Syria in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, they aimed to overthrow the existing Sunni order in Islam and replace it with their own. They terrorized their foes with a series of dramatic murders of Islamic leaders, as well as of some of the Crusaders, who brought their name and fame back to Europe. Professor Lewis traces the history of this radical group, studying its teachings and its influence on Muslim thought. Particularly insightful in light of the rise of the terrorist attacks in the U.S. and in Israel, this account of the Assassins--whose name is now synonymous with politically motivated murderers--places recent events in historical perspective and sheds new light on the fanatic mind.

Hezbollah

by Hala Jaber

Revered by many fundamentalist Shiites and reviled by the West, Hezbollah is considered to be a paradigm for other militant groups wishing to make the promise of Islamic Revolution a reality. Journalist Hala Jaber was granted exclusive and unparalleled access to the inner circle of this organization, and she exposes not only its tactics, but also its history, ideology, and culture.

Osama Bin Laden

by Michael Scheuer

9/11 almost instantaneously remade American politics and foreign policy. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Patriot Act, water boarding and Guantanamo are examples of its profound and far-reaching effects. But despite its monumental impact--and a deluge of books about al-Qaeda and Islamist terrorism--no one has written a serious assessment of the man who planned it, Osama bin Laden. Available biographies depict bin Laden as an historical figure, the mastermind behind 9/11, but no longer relevant to the world it created. These accounts, Michael Scheuer strongly believes, have contributed to a widespread and dangerous denial of his continuing significance and power. In this book, Scheuer provides a much-needed corrective--a hard-headed, closely reasoned portrait of bin Laden, showing him to be a figure of remarkable leadership skills, strategic genius, and considerable rhetorical abilities. The first head of the CIA's bin Laden Unit, where he led the effort to track down bin Laden, Scheuer draws from a wealth of information about bin Laden and his evolution from peaceful Saudi dissident to America's Most Wanted. Shedding light on his development as a theologian, media manipulator, and paramilitary commander, Scheuer makes use of all the speeches and interviews bin Laden has given as well as lengthy interviews, testimony, and previously untranslated documents written by those who grew up with bin Laden in Saudi Arabia, served as his bodyguards and drivers, and fought alongside him against the Soviets. The bin Laden who emerges from these accounts is devout, talented, patient, and ruthless; in other words, a truly formidable and implacable enemy of the West.

Son of Hamas: A Gripping Account of Terror, Betrayal, Political Intrigue, and Unthinkable Choices

by Mosab Yousef and Ron Brackin

Since he was a small boy, Mosab Hassan Yousef has had an inside view of the deadly terrorist group Hamas. The oldest son of Sheikh Hassan Yousef, a founding member of Hamas and its most popular leader, young Mosab assisted his father for years in his political activities while being groomed to assume his legacy, politics, status . . . and power. But everything changed when Mosab turned away from terror and violence, and embraced instead the teachings of another famous Middle East leader. In *Son of Hamas*, Mosab reveals new information about the world's most dangerous terrorist organization and unveils the truth about his own role, his agonizing separation from family and homeland, the dangerous decision to make his newfound faith public, and his belief that the Christian mandate to "love your enemies" is the only way to peace in the Middle East.

The Search for al Qaeda: Its Leadership, Ideology, and Future

by Bruce Riedel

Riedel, senior fellow at the Brookings Institution and senior adviser on the Middle East to three past presidents, reviews how al-Qaeda has flourished since the September 11 attacks with franchises mushrooming around the world. The author surveys al-Qaedas origins, workings and key members and introduces fresh information about the organizations ideology and future plans. Riedel warns against conflating the war against al-Qaeda with the current war in Iraq (the president chose to declare war not on al Qaeda, but on 'terrorism, a concept that he and Vice President Dick Cheney arrived at by confusing 9/11 with Saddam Husseins Iraq) and demonstrates how U.S. actions compound the publics ignorance and vulnerability. He argues that concentrating forces in Iraq has diverted attention and presence from Afghanistan and Pakistan, the hotbeds of jihadist organization, and suggests redirecting the military back to the badlands of the Afghan-Pakistan border while offering economic aid to forestall the extremism that thrives in destitute areas. Riedels argument in favor of greater U.S. involvement in the Arab-Israeli peace process is persuasive, and his prescriptions are well-evidenced, unfailingly sound and refreshingly sensible.

Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism

by Robert Pape

One of the world's foremost authorities on the subject of suicide terrorism, the esteemed political scientist Robert Pape has created the first comprehensive database of every suicide terrorist attack in the world from 1980 until today. In *Dying to Win*, Pape provides a groundbreaking demographic profile of modern suicide terrorist attackers—and his findings offer a powerful counterpoint to what we now accept as conventional wisdom on the topic. He also examines the early practitioners of this guerrilla tactic, including the ancient Jewish Zealots, who in A.D. 66 wished to liberate themselves from Roman occupation; the Ismaili Assassins, a Shi'ite Muslim sect in northern Iran in the eleventh and twelfth centuries; World War II's Japanese kamikaze pilots, three thousand of whom crashed into U.S. naval vessels; and the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka, a

secular, Marxist-Leninist organization responsible for more suicide terrorist attacks than any other group in history.

Growing Up bin Laden: Osama's Wife and Son Take Us Inside Their Secret World

by Najwa bin Laden, Omar bin Laden, and Jean Sasson

In 1974, at the age of 15, Najwa married her first cousin, 17-year-old Osama bin Laden. She had grown up in a conservative Muslim household; he was one of the wealthy, powerful bin Ladens. She recalls a young husband drawn away on business and her life of seclusion and duty, giving birth to seven sons and four daughters, accepting other wives and children into the family and its itinerant homes. Omar, the fourth child of Osama and Najwa, recalls a severely strict father: no toys, no ventilators for boys who suffered from asthma, hikes in the desert with no water. Omar remembers accompanying his father to a training camp at 15 and their later confrontations—and eventual break—as he began to understand his father's involvement in al-Qaeda. He also recalls conflicting emotions, including love and pride in his father and eventually shame for his father's renown as a terrorist and architect of the 9/11 attacks on the U.S. A compelling look at the intimate family life of a notorious man, as told by his wife and son.

Pakistan

In the Line of Fire: A Memoir

by Pervez Musharraf

According to Time magazine, Pakistan's President Pervez Musharraf holds "the world's most dangerous job." He has twice come within inches of assassination. His forces have caught more than 670 members of al Qaeda in the mountains and cities, yet many others remain at large and active, including Osama bin Laden and Ayman Al Zawahiri. Long locked in a deadly embrace with its nuclear neighbor India, Pakistan has come close to full-scale war on two occasions since it first exploded a nuclear bomb in 1998. As President Musharraf struggles for the security and political future of his nation, the stakes could not be higher for the world at large. It is unprecedented for a sitting head of state to write a memoir as revelatory, detailed, and gripping as *In the Line of Fire*. Here, for the first time, readers can get a firsthand view of the war on terror in its central theater. President Musharraf details the manhunts for Osama and Zawahiri and their top lieutenants, complete with harrowing cat-and-mouse games, informants, interceptions, and bloody firefights. He tells the stories of the near-miss assassination attempts, not only against himself but against Shaukat Aziz (later elected prime minister) and one of his top army officers (later the vice chief of army staff), and of the abduction and beheading of Daniel Pearl -- as well as the forensic and shoe-leather investigations that uncovered the perpetrators. He details the army's mountain operations that have swept several valleys clean, and he talks about the areas of North Waziristan where al Qaeda is still operating.

Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military

by Husain Haqqani

Among U.S. allies in the war against terrorism, Pakistan cannot be easily characterized as either friend or foe. Nuclear-armed Pakistan is an important center of radical Islamic ideas and groups. Since 9/11, the selective cooperation of president General Pervez Musharraf in sharing intelligence with the United States and apprehending al Qaeda members has led to the assumption that Pakistan might be ready to give up its longstanding ties with radical Islam. But Pakistan's status as an Islamic ideological state is closely linked with the Pakistani elite's worldview and the praetorian ambitions of its military. This book analyzes the origins of the relationships between Islamist groups and Pakistan's military, and explores the nation's quest for identity and security. Tracing how the military has sought U.S. support by making itself useful for concerns of the moment--while continuing to strengthen the mosque-military alliance within Pakistan—Haqqani offers an alternative view of political developments since the country's independence in 1947.

Deadly Embrace: Pakistan, America, and the Future of Global Jihad

by Bruce Riedel

Pakistan and the United States have been locked in a deadly embrace for decades. Successive American presidents from both parties have pursued narrow short-term interests in the South Asian nation, and many of the resulting policies proved counterproductive in the long term, contributing to political instability and a radicalized public. This background has helped set the stage for the global jihad confronting much of the world today. In *Deadly Embrace*, Bruce Riedel explores the forces behind these developments, explaining how and why the history of Pakistan-U.S. relations has unfolded as it has. He explains what the United States can do now to repair the damage and how it can avoid making similar mistakes in dealing with extremist forces in Pakistan and beyond. Riedel is one of America's foremost authorities on U.S. security, South Asia, and terrorism, and he helped to craft President Obama's 2009 speech referring to the Pakistan-Afghanistan borderlands as the most dangerous region of the world. He follows up *The Search for al Qaeda*, his influential 2008 analysis of the terror network's ideology and leadership, with a sober, authoritative, and sometimes alarming look at the history, importance, and current role of Pakistan, epicenter of the global jihad movement, beginning with the history of U.S.-Pakistan relations since the partitioning of the subcontinent in 1947. The relationship between Pakistan and America is a fascinating yet muddled story, meandering through periods of friendship and enmity, symbiosis and distrust: it's no wonder that people in both nations are confused. *Deadly Embrace* explains how the United States, on several occasions, actually helped the foes of democracy in Pakistan and aided in the development of the very enemies it is now fighting in the region. The book seeks to unravel this paradox, revealing and interpreting the tortuous path of relations between two very different nations, which remain, in many ways, stuck with each other.

Islam

Reconciliation: Islam, Democracy, and the West

by Benazir Bhutto

Just days prior to her assassination, the late former prime minister of troubled Pakistan completed the manuscript of this book, which held great personal importance to her. Its importance extends beyond the writer's own sense of purpose and accomplishment, however, because it is a vastly significant document for anyone seeking to understand the nature of past and contemporary Islam and its current interface with the West. The reconciliation to which the book's title refers is Bhutto's chief thesis: "two critical tensions . . . must be reconciled to prevent the clash of civilizations"—the first of these tensions is internal to Islam (extremism vs. moderation) and the second involves Islam's relations with the non-Islamic world (confrontation or cooperation). Her intense, learned discussion of the concept of jihad, her careful explication of the Qur'an's true position on women's equality, and her helpful pointing out of the theological differences between Sunni and Shia Muslims, among other relevant and eloquent analyses, lead her to insist that "democracy and Islam are not only compatible but mutually sustaining." Within a chapter on the history of the relatively new country of Pakistan lies an autobiographical section in which the author details her terms in office as prime minister and the difficulties she was personally and purposefully handed by her adversaries. This book is an eloquent plea, a passionate admonition, that reconciliation as she has outlined it must indeed occur.

The Crisis of Islam: Holy War and Unholy Terror

by Bernard Lewis

To locate the origins of anti-American sentiment, Islamic scholar Lewis maps the history of Muslim anxiety towards the West from the time of the Crusades through European imperialism, and explains how America's increased presence in the region since the Cold War has been construed as a renewed cry of imperialism. In Islam, politics and religion are inextricable, and followers possess an acute knowledge of their own history dating back to the Prophet Mohammed, a timeline Lewis revisits. By so doing, the bestselling author of *What Went Wrong?* is able to cogently investigate key issues, such as why the United States has been dubbed the "Great Satan" and Israel the "Little Satan," and how Muslim extremism has taken root and succeeded in bastardizing the fundamental Islamic tenets of peace. Lewis also covers the impact of the Iranian Revolution and American foreign policy towards it, Soviet influence in the region and the ramifications of modernization, making this clear, taut and timely primer a must-read for any concerned citizen.

What Went Wrong?: The Clash Between Islam and Modernity in the Middle East

by Bernard Lewis

A concise and timely survey of how Islamic civilization fell from worldwide leadership in almost every frontier of human knowledge five or six centuries ago to a "poor, weak,

and ignorant" backwater that is today dominated by "shabby tyrannies ... modern only in their apparatus of repression and terror." He offers no easy answers, but does provide an engaging chronicle of the Arab encounter with Europe in all its military, economic, and cultural dimensions. The most dramatic reversal, he says, may have occurred in the sciences: "Those who had been disciples now became teachers; those who had been masters became pupils, often reluctant and resentful pupils." Today's Arab governments have blamed their plight on any number of external culprits, from Western imperialism to the Jews. Lewis believes they must instead commit to putting their own houses in order: "If the peoples of Middle East continue on their present path, the suicide bomber may become a metaphor for the whole region, and there will be no escape from a downward spiral of hate and spite, rage and self-pity, [and] poverty and oppression." Anybody who wants to understand the historical backdrop to September 11 would do well to look for it on these pages.

Islamic Imperialism: A History

by Efraim Karsh

Middle East scholar Karsh surveys for a general audience the region's Islamic political past. Parallel to his narrative, Karsh frequently contrasts the universalistic proclamations of Islam with cycles of imperial consolidation and fragmentation. After recounting the Prophet Muhammad's religious-political establishment of Islam, and the discord about his legacy that continues today, Karsh narrates the battles over Muhammad's caliphate that eventuated in the Umayyad and Abbasid Empires. Karsh's commentary often looks forward to contemporary ideologues of Islam who ransack history to justify grievances. In Karsh's coverage, the irruption of the Crusaders into the Levant hardly provoked a jihad to eject them; that occurred, in his account, through politically ordinary processes of empire building, eventually by the celebrated Saladin. Islamic unity and zeal, however, had always to be affirmed by reestablishers of the caliphate, a theme Karsh incorporates into his chronicling of the rise and decline of the Ottoman Empire, the distribution of its territories after World War I, and varieties of pan-Arabism prevalent after World War II. An informative foundation for further exploration of Islamic history.

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ramifications of modernization, making this clear, taut and timely primer a must-read for any concerned citizen.

Islam: A Short History

by Karen Armstrong

Readers seeking a quick but thoughtful introduction to Islam will want to peruse Armstrong's latest offering. In her hallmark stylish and accessible prose, the author of *A History of God* takes readers from the sixth-century days of the Prophet Muhammad to the present. Armstrong writes about the revelations Muhammad received, and explains that the Qur'an earned its name (which means recitation) because most of Muhammad's followers were illiterate and learned his teachings not from reading them but hearing them proclaimed aloud. Throughout the book, Armstrong traces what she sees as Islam's emphasis on right living over right belief. Armstrong is at her most passionate when discussing Islam in the modern world. She explains antagonisms between Iraqi Muslims and Syrian Muslims, and discusses the devastating consequences of modernization on the Islamic world. Unlike Europe, which modernized gradually over centuries, the Islamic world had modernity thrust upon it in an exploitative manner. The Islamic countries, Armstrong argues, have been "reduced to a dependent bloc by the European powers." Armstrong also rehearses some basics about Islamic fundamentalism in a section that will be familiar to anyone who has read her recent study, *The Battle for God*. A useful time line and a guide to the "Key Figures in the History of Islam" complete this strong, brisk survey of 1,500 years of Islamic history.

Muhammad

by Karen Armstrong

In a meticulous quest for the historical Muhammad, Armstrong first traces the West's long history of hostility toward Islam, which it has stigmatized as a "religion of the sword." This sympathetic, engrossing biography portrays Muhammad (ca. 570-632) as a passionate, complex, fallible human being--a charismatic leader possessed of political as well as spiritual gifts, and a prophet whose monotheistic vision intuitively answered the deepest longings of his people. Armstrong (*The Gospel According to Woman*) refutes the Western image of Muhammad as an impostor who used religion as a means to power, an attitude encapsulated in a psychotic dream episode in Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*. Denying that Islam preaches total intransigence, she finds in the Prophet's teachings a theology of peace and tolerance. The "holy war" urged by the Koran, in Armstrong's reading, alludes to each Muslim's duty to fight for a just, decent society. She draws significant parallels between the spiritual aspirations of Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

The Shia Revival: How Conflicts within Islam Will Shape the Future

by Vali Nasr

Have those seeking to make sense of Middle Eastern politics by concentrating on radical Islam neglected the long-lived intra-Islamic confrontation between Sunnis and

Shiites? If so, this book offers compelling corrective reading. Nasr provides a succinct summary of Shiite religious precepts and practices and of how Sunnism differs from Shiism, theologically and sociologically. He identifies and locates the different Shiite communities and then, with a good mix of broadbrush interpretative history and anecdotal detail, sketches the history of Sunni-Shiite confrontation from Lebanon to South Asia, making a strong case for the depth of this divide. At the same time, he does not suggest some sort of incipient Shiite International -- the important differences among Shiite communities and the limits of transnational Shiite political loyalties are clear. Still, the thrust of this broad-ranging and detailed, but still eminently readable, account is that the recent political gains of the Shiites may be ushering in a major, perhaps even tectonic, shift in the larger Middle Eastern political landscape.

Destiny Disrupted: A History of the World through Islamic Eyes

by Tamim Ansary

We in the west share a common narrative of world history—that runs from the Nile Valley and Mesopotamia, through Greece and Rome and the French Revolution, to the rise of the secular state and the triumph of democracy. But our story largely omits a whole civilization that until quite recently saw itself at the center of world history, and whose citizens shared an entirely different narrative for a thousand years. In *Destiny Disrupted*, Tamim Ansary tells the rich story of world Command Recommend Reading List history as the Islamic world saw it, from the time of Mohammed to the fall of the Ottoman Empire and beyond. He clarifies why our civilizations grew up oblivious to each other, what happened when they intersected, and how the Islamic world was affected by its slow recognition that Europe—a place it long perceived as primitive and disorganized—had somehow hijacked destiny. Entertaining and enlightening, *Destiny Disrupted* also offers a vital perspective on current conflicts.

Saudi Arabia

Inside the Kingdom: Kings, Clerics, Modernists, Terrorists, and the Struggle for Saudia Arabia

by Robert Lacey

Lacey delves into the paradoxes in Saudi society—where women are forbidden to drive but are more likely to attend universities than men—and why this nation yielded most of the terrorist team on September 11, Osama bin Laden and one of the largest group of foreign fighters sent to Guantánamo from Afghanistan. Lacey's conversational tone and anecdotal approach to storytelling and analysis gives us a vivid portrait of personal and political life in Saudi Arabia's public and personal spheres, the traditions that govern everyday life, the country's journey from relative liberalism on the tide of extreme oil wealth in the 1980s to a resurgence of traditionalism. Lacey shows us a land where the governing dynasty gives rehabilitated Guantánamo returnees an \$18,000 stipend toward their marriage dowry, and 15 young girls died in a schoolhouse fire in 2002 because they were not properly veiled, and religious police forbade them to escape and prevented firefighters from entering the burning building. Lacey's eye for sweeping

trends and the telling detail combined with the depth, breadth and evenhandedness of his research makes for an indispensable guide.

Jordan

Our Last Best Chance: The Pursuit of Peace in a Time of Peril

by King Abdullah II

When a dying King Hussein shocked the world by picking his son rather than his brother, the longtime crown prince, to be the next king of Jordan, no one was more surprised than the young head of Special Operations, who discovered his life was in for a major upheaval. This is the inspirational story of a young prince who went to boarding school in America and military academy in Britain and grew up believing he would be a soldier. Back home, he hunted down terrorists and modernized Jordan's Special Forces. Then, suddenly, he found himself king. Together with his wife, Queen Rania, he transformed what it meant to be a monarch, going undercover to escape the bubble of the court while she became the Muslim world's most passionate advocate of women's rights. In this exceptionally candid memoir, King Abdullah tackles the single toughest issue he faces head-on- how to solve the Israeli-Palestinian standoff and reveals himself to be an invaluable intermediary between America and the Arab world. He writes about the impact of the Iraq war on his neighborhood and how best to tackle Iran's nuclear ambitions. Why would a sitting head of state choose to write about the most explosive issues he faces? King Abdullah does so now because he believes we face a moment of truth: a last chance for peace in the Middle East. The prize is enormous, the cost of failure far greater than we dare imagine.

Iraq

The Gamble: General David Petraeus and the American Military Adventure in Iraq, 2006-2008

by Thomas E. Ricks

Anyone who read *Fiasco*, Thomas E. Ricks's superb, bestselling account of the Iraq War through 2005, and has followed the war since has likely noticed that many of the heroes of that devastating book, the officers and analysts who seemed to understand what was going wrong in the war when the rest of the political and military leadership didn't, have since been put in charge, starting with General David Petraeus, the cerebral officer who took command in Iraq and led what became known as "the surge." Ricks, the senior Pentagon correspondent at the Washington Post, has stayed on the story, and he returns with his second book on the war, *The Gamble: General David Petraeus and the American Adventure in Iraq, 2006-2008*. As good (and influential) as *Fiasco* was, *The Gamble* may be even better, telling the remarkable story of how a few people inside and outside the Pentagon pushed the new strategy through against opposition across the political spectrum and throughout the military top brass, and then, even more remarkably, how soldiers put the difficult plan into action on the ground and managed to sharply reduce the chaotic violence in Iraq. But the story doesn't end there, and Ricks's

bracing conclusion--that the American military, like it or not, will still have a necessary role in Iraq for years to come--makes it likely that this may not be the last book we have from him on the subject.

The Shi'is of Iraq

by Yitzhak Nakash

This is a superb study of Iraq's Shia majority. Based on remarkable scholarship, the book brings to life a whole political community that has often been seen as a mere appendage of the larger Shia population in Iran. . . . This study is a potent reminder of the power of the modern state to shape and control even such basic social phenomena as religious identity and its expression. – William B. Quandt, *Foreign Affairs*. Nakash's account of the process of community formation in Iraq has fascinating implications for modern Middle Eastern history. In that broad historical revolution which is the settlement of the Middle Eastern tribes, we can see that the agents were: Sufism in most of the Sunni countries; fundamentalist Islam in Arabia; and Shi'ism in Iraq and Iran. In each case, the primitive Islam of the tribes takes on a new form as an accompaniment to a fundamental change in economic and social life.

Israel

Raid on the Sun: Inside Israel's Secret Campaign that Denied Saddam the Bomb

By Rodger Claire

From the earliest days of his dictatorship, Saddam Hussein had vowed to destroy Israel. So when France sold Iraq a top-of-the-line nuclear reactor in 1975, the Israelis were justifiably concerned—especially when they discovered that Iraqi scientists had already formulated a secret program to extract weapons-grade plutonium from the reactor, a first critical step in creating an atomic bomb. The reactor formed the heart of a huge nuclear plant situated twelve miles from Baghdad, 1,100 kilometers from Tel Aviv. By 1981, the reactor was on the verge of becoming “hot,” and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin knew he would have to confront its deadly potential. He turned to Israeli Air Force commander General David Ivry to secretly plan a daring surgical strike on the reactor—a never-before-contemplated mission that would prove to be one of the most remarkable military operations of all time. Written with the full and exclusive cooperation of the Israeli Air Force high command, General Ivry (ret.), and all of the eight mission pilots (including Ilan Ramon, who became Israel's first astronaut and perished tragically in the shuttle Columbia disaster), *Raid on the Sun* tells the extraordinary story of how Israel plotted the unthinkable: defying its U.S. and European allies to eliminate Iraq's nuclear threat. In the tradition of *Black Hawk Down*, journalist Rodger Claire re-creates a gripping tale of personal sacrifice and survival, of young pilots who trained in the United States on the then-new, radically sophisticated F-16 fighter bombers, then faced a nearly insurmountable challenge: how to fly the 1,000-plus-kilometer mission to Baghdad and back on one tank of fuel. He recounts Israeli intelligence's incredible “black ops” to sabotage construction on the French reactor and

eliminate Iraqi nuclear scientists, and he gives the reader a pilot's-eye view of the action on June 7, 1981, when the planes roared off a runway on the Sinai Peninsula for the first successful destruction of a nuclear reactor in history.

Afghanistan

Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia

by Ahmed Rashid

Afghanistan's position as a crossroads in Central Asia made it part of the 19th-century Great Game of imperialism and brings it to international strategic prominence once again. Rashid is a correspondent for the Far Eastern Economic Review who has covered Afghanistan's changing fortunes since the 1978 Soviet invasion. In his second book, he covers the origin and rise of the Taliban, its concepts of Islam on questions of gender roles and drugs, and the importance of the country to the development of energy resources in the region. His account of the Taliban's origins among the Pashtun refugees in Pakistani camps and their minimal education in Koranic schools from poorly educated teachers explains their lack of knowledge of the history and culture of their own country and of what it means to govern. The failed state that is now Afghanistan threatens to destabilize its neighbors by exporting both drugs and extremist views. Unlike Peter Marsden's *Taliban: War Religion and the New Order in Afghanistan* (Oxford Univ., 1998), this new work emphasizes the international implications of the Taliban and its government. A lucid and thoroughly researched account, it is recommended for academic and most public libraries.

Descent into Chaos: The U.S. and the Disaster in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia

by Ahmed Rashid

Long overshadowed by the Iraq War, the ongoing turmoil in Afghanistan and Central Asia finally receives a searching retrospective as Rashid (Taliban) surveys the region to reveal a thicket of ominous threats and lost opportunities—in Pakistan, a rickety dictatorship colludes with militants, and Afghanistan's weak government is besieged by warlords, an exploding drug economy and a powerful Taliban insurgency. The author blames the unwillingness of American policymakers to shoulder the burden of nation building. According to Rashid, the U.S. invaded Afghanistan and subsequently refused to commit the forces and money needed to rebuild it; instead the U.S. government made corrupt alliances with warlords to impose a superficial calm, while continuing to ignore the Pakistani government's support of the Taliban and the other Islamic extremists who have virtually taken over Pakistan's western provinces. With his unparalleled access to sources—constantly berated [Afghan President] Karzai for his failure to understand the usefulness of political parties—Rashid is an authoritative guide to the region's politics and his is an insightful, at times explosive, indictment of the U.S. government's hand in the region's degeneration.

The Only Thing Worth Dying For: How Eleven Green Berets Forged a New Afghanistan

by Eric Blehm

The early, relatively heroic days of the conflict in Afghanistan are memorialized in this engrossing if glamorized war saga. Blehm (*The Last Season*, a B&N Discover Award winner) follows the exploits of Capt. Jason Amerine's Special Forces team Alpha 574, which choppered into Afghanistan in November 2001 to help future Afghan president Hamid Karzai organize anti-Taliban insurgents in the south. The team's mission—to turn chaotic and perpetually stoned Pashtun tribesmen into effective soldiers—seems impossible and, ultimately, proved unnecessary. Indeed, according to Blehm's account, the Green Berets' worst enemies were other Americans; meddling CIA honchos and army brass, a do-nothing Marine officer, and the air force spotter who mistakenly called in an air strike on 574's position, with ghastly results. The author overplays the comradely bond between Karzai and Amerine, who come off as a latter-day Washington and Lafayette, but doesn't quite succeed in wringing a military epic out of what was essentially a turkey shoot. Still, Blehm's warts-and-all account of the U.S. military machine in action is full of tension, color, and real pathos.

The Places In Between

by Rory Stewart

We never really find out why Stewart decided to walk across Afghanistan only a few months after the Taliban were deposed, but what emerges from the last leg of his two-year journey across Asia is a lesson in good travel writing. By turns harrowing and meditative, Stewart's trek through Afghanistan in the footsteps of the 15th-century emperor Babur is edifying at every step, grounded by his knowledge of local history, politics and dialects. His prose is lean and unsentimental: whether pushing through chest-high snow in the mountains of Hazarajat or through villages still under de facto Taliban control, his descriptions offer a cool assessment of a landscape and a people eviscerated by war, forgotten by time and isolated by geography. The well-oiled apparatus of his writing mimics a dispassionate camera shutter in its precision. But if we are to accompany someone on such a highly personal quest, we want to know who that person is. Unfortunately, Stewart shares little emotional background; the writer's identity is discerned best by inference. Sometimes we get the sense he cares more for preserving history than for the people who live in it (and for whom historical knowledge would be luxury). But remembering Geraldo Rivera's gunslinging escapades, perhaps we could use less sap and more clarity about this troubled and fascinating country.

Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia

by Rashid Ahmed

This is the single best book available on the Taliban, the fundamentalist Islamic regime in Afghanistan responsible for harboring the terrorist Osama bin Laden. Ahmed Rashid is a Pakistani journalist who has spent most of his career reporting on the region—he

has personally met and interviewed many of the Taliban's shadowy leaders. Taliban was written and published before the massacres of September 11, 2001, yet it is essential reading for anyone who hopes to understand the aftermath of that black day. It includes details on how and why the Taliban came to power, the government's oppression of ordinary citizens (especially women), the heroin trade, oil intrigue, and—in a vitally relevant chapter—bin Laden's sinister rise to power. These pages contain stories of mass slaughter, beheadings, and the Taliban's crushing war against freedom: under Mullah Omar, it has banned everything from kite flying to singing and dancing at weddings. Rashid is for the most part an objective reporter, though his rage sometimes (and understandably) comes to the surface: "The Taliban were right, their interpretation of Islam was right, and everything else was wrong and an expression of human weakness and a lack of piety," he notes with sarcasm. He has produced a compelling portrait of modern evil.

Yemen

Dancing on the Heads of Snakes

by Victoria Clark

Yemen is the dark horse of the Middle East. Every so often it enters the headlines for one alarming reason or another—links with al-Qaeda, kidnapped Westerners, explosive population growth—then sinks into obscurity again. But, as Victoria Clark argues in this riveting book, we ignore Yemen at our peril. The poorest state in the Arab world, it is still dominated by its tribal makeup and has become a perfect breeding ground for insurgent and terrorist movements. Clark returns to the country where she was born to discover a perilously fragile state that deserves more of our understanding and attention. On a series of visits to Yemen between 2004 and 2009, she meets politicians, influential tribesmen, oil workers and jihadists as well as ordinary Yemenis. Untangling Yemen's history before examining the country's role in both al-Qaeda and the wider jihadist movement today, Clark presents a lively, clear, and up-to-date account of a little-known state whose chronic instability is increasingly engaging the general reader.

The books and additional publications of interest in the U.S. Naval Forces Central Command/U.S. Fifth Fleet/Combined Maritime Forces Reading List were selected based on criteria to enhance professional development among service members assigned to the U.S. Central Command Area of Responsibility. The selection of these books and publications should not be construed as an explicit or implicit endorsement by the U.S. Navy for these particular books and publications, or the authors' or publishers' views or interpretations.