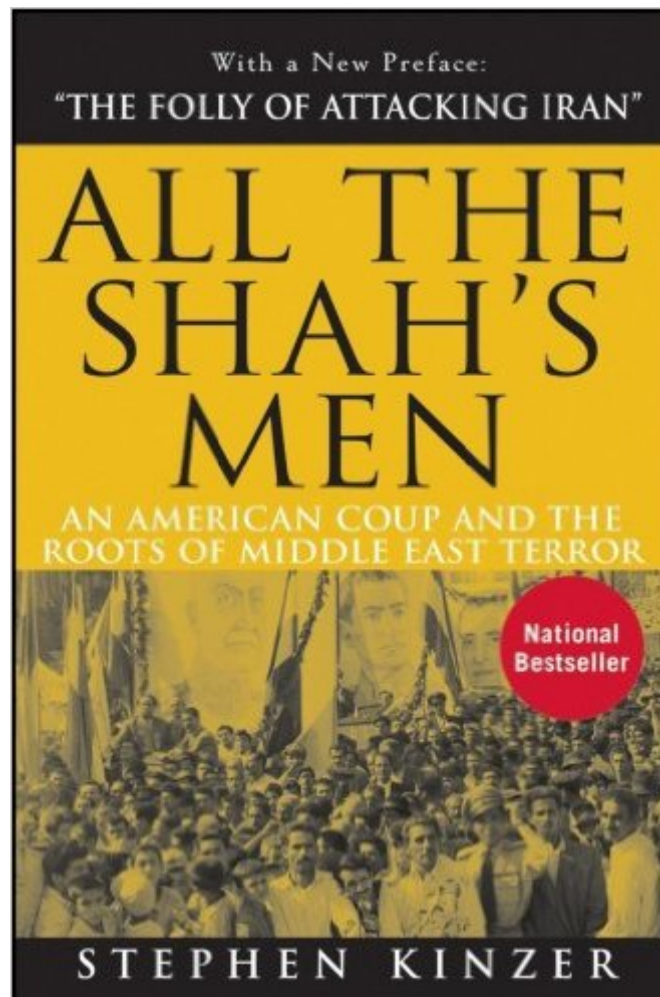


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All The Shah's Men: An American Coup And The Roots Of Middle East Terror



Synopsis

With a thrilling narrative that sheds much light on recent events, this national bestseller brings to life the 1953 CIA coup in Iran that ousted the country's elected prime minister, ushered in a quarter-century of brutal rule under the Shah, and stimulated the rise of Islamic fundamentalism and anti-Americanism in the Middle East. Selected as one of the best books of the year by the Washington Post and The Economist, it now features a new preface by the author on the folly of attacking Iran.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

It is impossible to read this book without feeling sympathy for the Iranians and their leader, Mossadegh Mohammad, for whom Stephen Kinzer has special affection, and without developing a sense of distaste first at the British, and then at their accomplices, the Americans. All the same, it is also impossible not to cast a doubt on the book's main conclusion-that the US-led coup in Iran in 1953 lies at the root of Middle East terror. Stephen Kinzer, a veteran reporter for the New York Times, is no stranger to American coups, having contributed to the writing of the history of the CIA coup in Guatemala in 1954. In "All the Shah's Men," Mr. Kinzer chronicles another coup, one that preceded Guatemala and laid the foundation for America's thinking that coups can be a useful and effective tool of foreign policy. The book narrates the history of foreign involvement in Iran that culminated in the toppling of Mossadegh Mohammad and the re-coronation of Reza Shah as Iran's leader. Mr. Kinzer goes back centuries to choreograph the details of foreign involvement in Iranian politics, and pays particular attention to the last century and a half: in 1872, for example, Nasir

al-Din Shah offered a most sweeping concession to Baron Julius de Reuter to, among others, exploit Iran's natural resources, a privilege revoked a year later. After that came other concessions, extended and then revoked, agreed and then renegotiated, on oil and other business. What made the landscape explosive was the resignation, in 1941, of Reza Shah, Iran's king, and the subsequent emergence of Mossadegh, and a person who rested much of his political fortune on the nationalization of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Corporation (in 1951).

This book is my favorite over the last 2 years, and I read more than 50 books every year (about one book per week). My only complaint is that the title of the book should have mentioned Mossadegh....something like, "The Story of Mossadegh: How the British and the CIA Destroyed a Great Soul and a Great Nation." All the Shah's Men are not important - history will forget them, at most in a few decades. Mossadegh's legend will grow with time, just like those of Socrates or Mother Teresa. Mossadegh was to the Iranians, what Gandhi was to Indians, or what Martin Luther King was to the African Americans. It's just a matter of time - the current Islamic govt. in Iran is too afraid of the democratic ideals that Mossadegh represented. Sooner or later Mossadegh will occupy the place in history that he rightfully deserves - there will be many more books, movies, and who knows even future revolutions inspired by him. Many thanks to Stephen Kinzer for publishing an accurate account of how Churchill's and Eisenhower's short term oil interests and communophobia ruined a budding democracy in a great historical land. Note that the book was just published in 2003 and a lot of material was inaccessible until very recently. Iran or Persia was home to Rumi, the great sufi mystic, and Zoroaster, the great spiritual teacher. Iranians are moderate people, representing the best values of Islam. Yet, a typical American's assessment of Iranians is that they are fanatic zealots and hate the whole western culture. And maybe there is some truth to that. But have you ever wondered why Iranians became so disgusted and suspicious of the Americans and the British. Read this book.

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