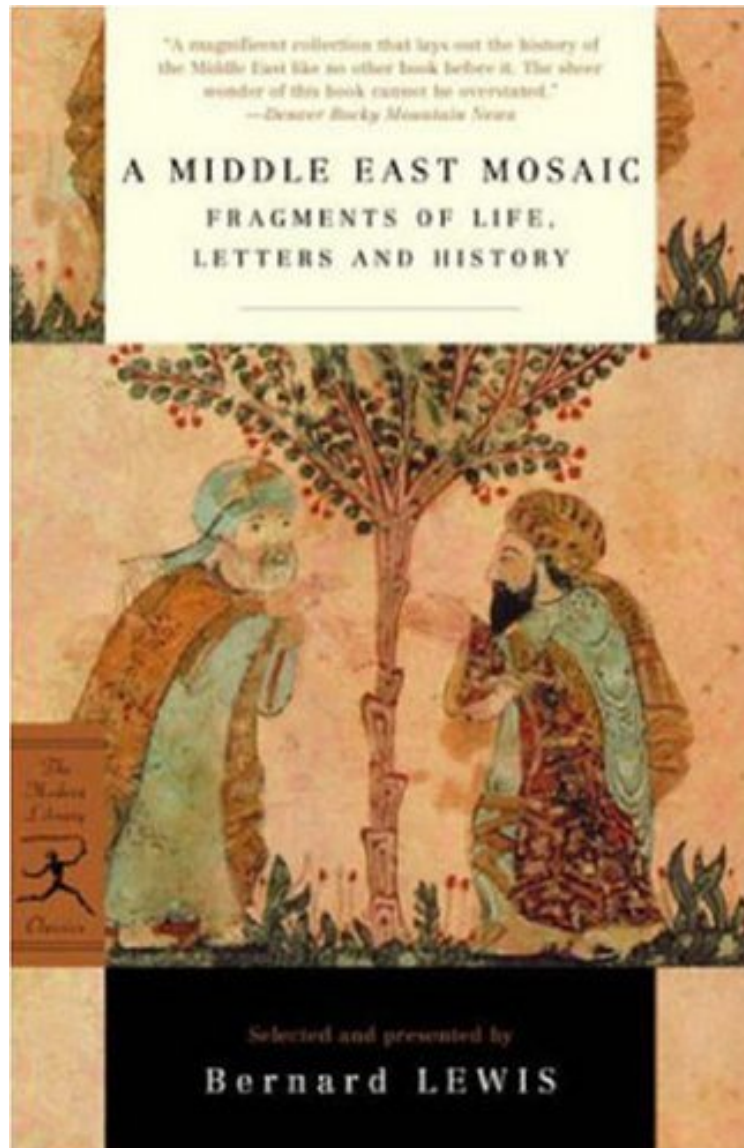


(Download pdf) A Middle East Mosaic: Fragments of Life, Letters and History (Modern Library Classics)

## A Middle East Mosaic: Fragments of Life, Letters and History (Modern Library Classics)

Von Bernard Lewis

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**Von Bernard Lewis : A Middle East Mosaic: Fragments of Life, Letters and History (Modern Library Classics)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Middle East Mosaic: Fragments of Life, Letters and History (Modern Library Classics):

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen1 von 2 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich.

Informative Compilation of Primary Sources Von Ein Kunde Dr. Lewis has written yet another informative compilation about the Middle East. I only wish that he could have included more about Sultan Bayezid II and his acceptance of the Spanish Jews expelled by Ferdinand and Isabel; the Afghan Jewish community in Herat; or the travels of Joseph Wolf, 1795-1862.

Kurzbeschreibung In times of war and in peace, from the earliest days of the Roman Empire to our own, Westerners have journeyed to the lands of the middle east, bringing back accounts of their adventures and impressions. Yet it was never a one way exchange. From the first Arab embassy to the Vikings in the 9th century to the internet musings of the Taliban, A Middle East Mosaic collects a rich, boisterous literature of cultural exchange. We see the American Revolution through the eyes of a Moroccan Ambassador and the French Revolution through a series of Imperial Ottoman proclamations. We find surprising portraits of Napoleon ("a brigand chief"), TE Lawrence and Ataturk. We learn what George Washington and Machiavelli through t of Turkish politics and hear Flaubert and Thackeray rail against eastern crime and punishment. We peer into Voltaire's business correspondence and follow the footsteps of Mark Twain, Richard Burton, Gertrude Bell and Ibn Battutta, the Marco Polo of the east. Great discoveries are recorded - an Egyptian Ambassador is introduced to electricity and dismisses the spectacle as "frankish trickery;" another pronounces the invention of a secure mail system most useful for assassinations. We enter the harem with a 16th century organ maker and emerge with Ottoman reform. It was not until the sixteenth century that the first middle eastern rulers entered into diplomatic relations with European rulers, but trade often precede diplomatic relations. Business men from the days of the crusades against Saladin to the oil prospecting of Samuel Cox and his descendents have seen great possibilities in the markets of the middle east. And throughout the centuries we have been united by war. We witness the outbreak of the Crimean war with Karl Marx and enter Egypt with Napoleon. We observe Arab customs with George Patton and visit Baghdad and Cairo with George F. Kennan in the second world war. When Usama bin Ladin rails against "Jews and crusaders" occupying the holy land, he is rehearsing a grievance with a long history. This symphony of voices, full of wit and wisdom, spite and wonder, suspicion, befuddlement and occasional insight, is ordered and explained by our foremost living historian of the middle east. The fruit of a lifetime of scholarship and erudition, A Middle East Mosaic is a dazzling capstone to a brilliant career. In a spirited reappraisal of western views of the east and eastern views of the west over the last two thousand years, Bernard Lewis gives us a brilliant over-view of 2,000 years of commerce, diplomacy, war and exploration. This book is a delight, a treasury of stories drawn from letters, diaries and histories, but also from unpublished archives and previously untranslated accounts. Diplomats and interpreters, slaves, soldiers, pilgrims and missionaries, princes and spies, businessmen, doctors and priests all pour forth their stories of the people and events that shaped history. A Middle East Mosaic cannot fail to appeal to anyone with an appetite for history and a curiosity about the vagaries of cultural exchange. From the Hardcover edition. de Drawing on a long career of reading and reflection, the distinguished Middle East historian Bernard Lewis here gathers documents that illuminate more than two millennia of interactions between the Arab and European worlds--encounters laden with misunderstanding and prejudice on both sides. Four major phases mark this long period, Lewis writes: the Hellenization of the Arab world after the conquests of Alexander the Great; the expansion of the Roman empire into the region; the rise of Christianity; and, finally, the supremacy of Islam. These four cataclysmic changes, he writes, served to "obliterate the religions, the cultures, the languages and, to a large extent, even the nations of the ancient Middle East," replacing them with a faith and a culture that crossed national lines. The Europeans who encountered the Arab world brought home wildly inaccurate stories of these supposedly savage people. Lewis quotes a Byzantine scribe, for instance, who reported that the Arabs worshiped Aphrodite, and the Anglo-American leader Alexander Hamilton, who wrote disdainfully of "Asiatic despotism and voluptuousness." Arab observers returned the sentiment, decrying what they perceived to be European indolence and lack of religious conviction, and holding that the farther north one traveled, the greater the "stupidity, grossness, and brutishness" one encountered. Lewis's intriguing anthology provides ample evidence that these misapprehensions of long ago linger today, as the descendants of "Franks" and "Saracens" continue to grapple with one another for regional supremacy. Anyone seeking a greater understanding of the Middle Eastern past and present will benefit from reading his pages. --Gregory McNamee.com Drawing on a long career of reading and reflection, the distinguished Middle East historian Bernard Lewis here gathers documents that illuminate more than two millennia of interactions between the Arab and European worlds--encounters laden with misunderstanding and prejudice on both sides. Four major phases mark this long period, Lewis writes: the Hellenization of the Arab world after the conquests of Alexander the Great; the expansion of the Roman empire into the region; the rise of Christianity; and, finally, the supremacy of Islam. 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