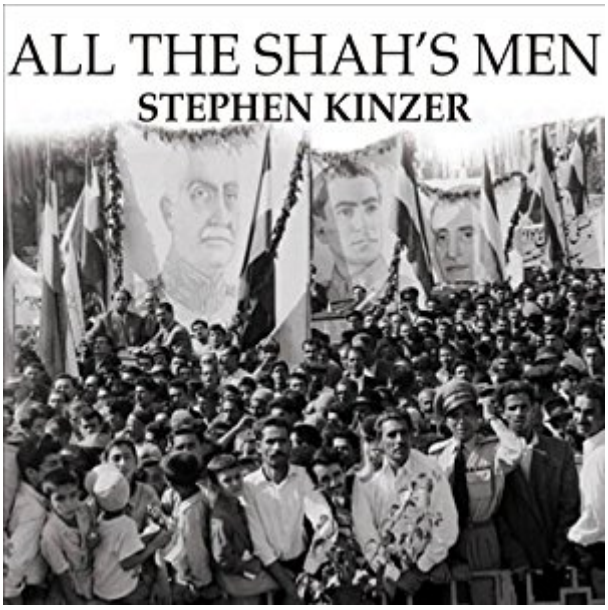
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All The Shah's Men: An American Coup And The Roots Of Middle East Terror



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Synopsis

Half a century ago, the United States overthrew the democratically elected prime minister of Iran, Mohammad Mossadegh, whose "crime" was nationalizing the country’s oil industry. In a cloak-and-dagger story of spies, saboteurs, and secret agents, Kinzer reveals the involvement of Eisenhower, Churchill, Kermit Roosevelt, and the CIA in Operation Ajax, which restored Mohammad Reza Shah to power. Reza imposed a tyranny that ultimately sparked the Islamic Revolution of 1979, which, in turn, inspired fundamentalists throughout the Muslim world, including the Taliban and terrorists who thrived under its protection. "It is not far-fetched," Kinzer asserts, "to draw a line from Operation Ajax through the Shah’s repressive regime and the Islamic Revolution to the fireballs that engulfed the World Trade Center in New York." --This text refers to the MP3 CD edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Stephen Kinzer has done a great job of reminding us that it is not only the Muslims that have screwed up the Middle East. America and Britain had a big role in creating the conditions we see today. While it is impossible to predict what would have happened if we had not deposed Mosaddegh and installed the Shah. Kinzer explains just how misguided our intervention in Iranian internal politics was and connects the dots leading to the hostage crisis and today’s bellicose posturing. It is too bad that a country with people who like and admire Americans is being governed by people who describe America as the great Satan, especially when the county was on a very different path. Maybe this study of our past blindness will open our eyes in the future, but I doubt it.

I have found this book to be most interesting and of particular significance given the political attitudes that so many members of Congress have taken... it is disturbing that too many members have no idea about the events that brought about the downfall of what might have been a monumental turning point between the US and Iran. One wonders how many members of that august body have any idea about what Stephen Kinzer has so accurately portrayed in "All the Shah’s Men" as well as his later book , "The Brothers" about Allen and John Foster Dulles.One can only wonder how many members of that august body have any idea what created that conflict . In the words of Pogo: "We have met the enemy and they is us" !

FTC NOTICE: Library BookREVIEW: ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“All the ShahÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s MenÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• serves as the second book I have read by Stephen Kinzer, and it was full of intrigue, micro-histories, and biographies that left me with the desire to research and read more about the Middle East as well as additional books by this author.It is not unusual for history books to discuss timelines and people; but, what I appreciated most in this text was KinzerÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s differing approach to historical data. He was generous with details about a significant array of people that were involved with multiple coups. There were names of people in his book that I did not recall seeing in other compendiums pertaining to Middle East history and/or Iran. Kinzer shared what their individual philosophies were and how they affected their decisions and the resulting behaviors.One challenge I experienced while reading this book, and that which prevented me from giving it five stars in lieu of four of them, was that there was too much going back and forth in history. A political leaderÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s history and interactions with others was/were very well described; but, at the end of that history, the reader was then re-introduced to a character at the beginning or middle of the previous history and all within the same chapter. Segmentation via a few extra and short chapters would have helped.Despite the back-and-forth of histories, Stephen Kinzer has a great way of making a reader take a look at a situation and evaluate what could have been done differently. Unfortunately, he waited until over 200 pages into the book for any analysis or extrapolation to occur. This was coupled with a whole series of ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“ifÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• and ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“ifÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• and ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“if-thenÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• and ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“if.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• In doing so, Kinzer inadvertently de-valued what he was trying to accomplish, and the history could no longer be evaluated as a reality. Thankfully I had already read another book called "Reset: Iran, Turkey, and America’s Future" by Kinzer, so I knew what he was trying to accomplish, and I didnÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t want him to think that this was lost on me. He wanted the reader to imagine how things could have been done differently; what would have

happened if one or all of these things did not occur?The author is also quite talented when it comes to creating imagery. He does this thoughtfully, purposely, and respectfully. Kinzer shares the details of his trip to Iran and his visit to MossadeghÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s final home. There are descriptions of colors, flowers, and buildings, and he places them in the context of what they experienced and looked like in history and how they had changed by the time of his visit. There is a certain romanticism about how he goes about interviewing people who were employees, villagers/neighbors, friends and family of Mossadegh. Stephen Kinzer makes it clear that with the Mossadegh name, there is a legacy, and there is a responsibility to keep the name pure.Purity and the instability of relationships were prevalent themes in this book. The intelligence that the American government received was not consistently pure. There were people who wanted to make a name for themselves and leveraged ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“The Cold WarÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• and its threat of spreading communism as a way to convince an American president that it was time to start supporting the British government in its efforts to take back IranÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s newly-nationalized oil company. Kinzer did a good job of ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“calling outÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• these people, namely The Dulles Brothers.There were good people on all sides who had good intentions, and they were coupled with individuals or groups filled with mal-intent, which ultimately led to a surpise coup of Mohammed Reza Shah and the promotion to leadership and ultimate power of and for the Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran. There were well-described changes in alliances that ultimately put the United States in an unsavory position with countries in the Middle EastÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â¦definitely an unfortunate stance and one that can hopefully be corrected.

The author sketches the political situation of Iran in the early 50’s in great detail. His account of the coup reads like a thriller. But unfortunately, the introduction and conclusion don’t do justice to the main body of the book.In his introduction, the author tried to summarize Iran’s history. However, his summary is too compact to still be accurate, and at times reads like a political pamphlet. In the conclusion, the author claims that "It is not far-fetched to draw a line from Operation Ajax trough the Shah’s repressive regime and the Islamic Revolution to the fireballs that engulfed the World Trade Center in New York." But his does little to support this claim. Sunni extremists like al-Qaeda consider Shia Muslims heretics. There might be a case to make to link the Islamic Republic to al-Qaeda attacks in the west, but it is not something that is self-evident, and a book that mentions "the roots of Middle East Terror" in its subtitle, should back-up such conclusions with evidence.But that said, the main body of the book gives a detailed and balanced account of the coup. It quotes extensively from original sources (mainly British and US intelligence documents) and often offers

different viewpoints on the same events and personalities. If you are interested in the coup, in Iranian politics and in the dirty realities of intelligence services, this book is highly recommended. If however you want to know about the "the roots of Middle East Terror", there are better books out there to read (like for example "The Siege of Mecca: The Forgotten Uprising in Islam's Holiest Shrine and the Birth of Al Qaeda", by Yaroslav Trofimov).

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