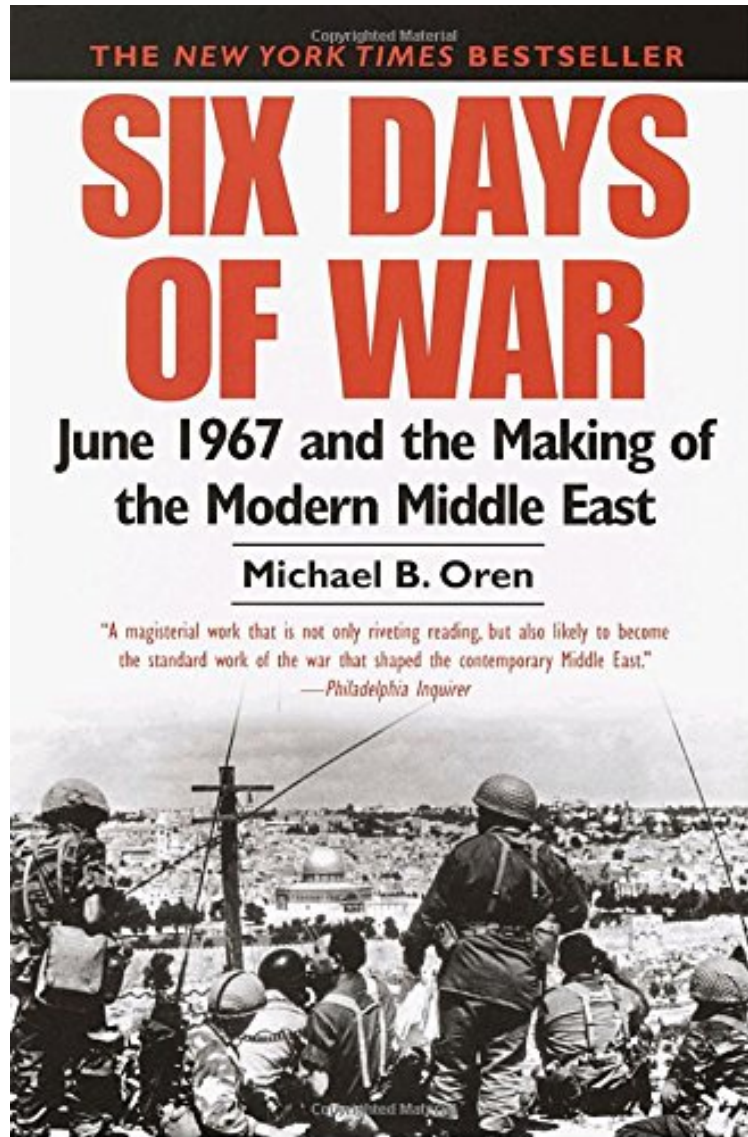


Six Days of War: June 1967 and the Making of the Modern Middle East

Michael B. Oren

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Michael B. Oren : Six Days of War: June 1967 and the Making of the Modern Middle East before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Six Days of War: June 1967 and the Making of the Modern Middle East:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Easy to follow By Kindle Customer Many historical works become

bogged down in the details, often putting up so many trees, the forest becomes non-existent, let alone unanswerable, a recent book I read on Douglas MacArthur being a good example, not here. Michael Oren has written a very easy to flow, yet very detailed, account of The Six Day War. Even with few maps in the book. it is easy to follow the maneuvers of that war although to truly appreciate the dynamics of the conflict in The Middle East one should seriously study maps of the region or visit the region. Of course, Mr. Oren only had to detail six days of war detail. The book also gives extensive detail to historical figures of the time, portraying Nasser more favorably than many perceive him, King Hussein as an easily duped and mianipulatable ruler, yet with an uncanny ability to survive, Dayan as a dangerous, to a democracy, military genius, Eshkol as an irrelevant figure, even as Israel's P.M. during the war, al-Assad as the despotic thug he was, and which he so well passed to his son. Aside from the attention to detail, without bogging down in the same, the book reiterates two well proven facts, one general, one specific: way too often, winning parties to a conflict stop short of mission completion, two, although the U.S. talks a good talk as regards it's support for Israel, Israel has every reason to believe that if Israel ever really needed the U.S. to be there for it, the U.S. would not.

10 of 10 people found the following review helpful. A comprehensive and generally unbiased look at a pivotal battle in the ongoing Middle Eastern conflict By Craig MACKINNON At first I was skeptical about this book. It's hard enough to get a balanced account of a battle without it skewing towards the victor, but then I heard the author is Jewish and he now lives in Israel (although he is of American descent). My thoughts were, how balanced can this account be? My fears were assuaged by the editorial reviews, and having read the book I can verify that it is as fair and balanced as possible, given the limitations placed on the author: namely, the lack of information forthcoming from the regimes that were on the losing side. I suppose this is understandable in the context of those governments - democracies like Israel (and the U.S.) declassify documents much sooner than other types of governments. This is further exacerbated by the fact that the leaderships of the losing countries are still in place - the Ba'ath Party in Syria, the industrio-military complex of Egypt, and the Hussein monarchy in Jordan. So, given that the account is scholarly and balanced, how does the book read? I was pleased to note that the author, Michael Oren, is an accomplished storyteller and the book mostly reads with all the spice and excitement of an early Tom Clancy novel. It flashes back and forth from the battlefield to the governments to the man on the street. More time must be spent on Israel, naturally enough, because the decisions were made by committees (when not made ad hoc on the battlefield). It takes some time to describe the arguments. In contrast, the facts that Egyptian decision-making structure was essentially non-existent, and that Jordan was an absolute monarchy, meant that there was little to report about internal politics in those countries. Oren is also adept at keeping an enormous cast of "characters" alive and in play - I never felt at a loss, even though this is the only book I've read on the conflict and was not even alive in 1967. This brings me two the first of my two criticisms of the book: there is not enough material on the actions of Syria and her government. Although Syria didn't do all that much fighting, they were certainly involved in both the diplomatic and military efforts. Even so, after having read the book I couldn't tell you the name of a single Syrian leader or general off the top of my head. This is stark contrast to the amount of time spent in the Tel Aviv, Cairo, and Amman. The second shortcoming is the length of the narrative describing the diplomatic efforts to resolve the crisis before the shooting started. Although necessary to fully describe the history of the conflict, did we really need to be told about every phone call between President Johnson and the Soviets? Every diplomatic overture from the U.N.? As such, pages 100-200 drag somewhat. We are ultimately rewarded by the quality of the narrative once the war begins, so ultimately it is worth the slog through the diplomacy.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Throws light on the past 65 years, and on current events By djda thorough, detailed telling of the occurrences of the 1967 Six-Day War in the Middle East. It was fascinating to learn of the behind-the-scenes diplomatic action, the personalities, and the politics involved. I was a teenager when this war was fought and I was closely following the news in the build-up of tensions, the reporting of the days of war, the astounding result (compared to the statements in the newspapers prior to the war), and the commentary afterward. Reading this book awakened a lot of memories, helped me to understand the realities behind the images, and to ponder the parallel tensions, personalities, and politics of our day.

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER The first comprehensive account of the epoch-making Six-Day War, from the author of *All* now featuring a fiftieth-anniversary retrospective Though it lasted for only six tense days in June, the 1967 Arab-Israeli war never really ended. Every crisis that has ripped through this region in the ensuing decades, from the Yom Kippur War of 1973 to the ongoing intifada, is a direct consequence of those six days of fighting. Writing with a novelists command of narrative and a historians grasp of fact and motive, Michael B. Oren reconstructs both the lightning-fast action on the battlefields and the political shocks that electrified the world. Extraordinary personalities Moshe Dayan and Gamal Abdul Nasser, Lyndon Johnson and Alexei Kosygin rose and toppled from power as a result of this war; borders were redrawn; daring strategies brilliantly succeeded or disastrously failed in a matter of hours. And the balance of power changed in the Middle East and in the world. A towering work of history and an enthralling human narrative, *Six Days of War* is the most important book on the Middle East conflict to appear in a generation. Praise for *Six Days of War* Powerful . . . A highly readable, even gripping account of the 1967 conflict . . . [Oren] has woven a seamless narrative out of a staggering variety of diplomatic and military strands. The New York

Times With a remarkably assured style, Oren elucidates nearly every aspect of the conflict. . . . Orens [book] will remain the authoritative chronicle of the war. His achievement as a writer and a historian is awesome. The Atlantic Monthly This is not only the best book so far written on the six-day war, it is likely to remain the best. The Washington Post Book World Phenomenal . . . breathtaking history . . . a profoundly talented writer. . . . This book is not only one of the best books on this critical episode in Middle East history; its one of the best-written books I've read this year, in any genre. The Jerusalem Post [In] Michael Oren's richly detailed and lucid account, the familiar story is thrilling once again. . . . What makes this book important is the breadth and depth of the research. The New York Times Book Review A first-rate new account of the conflict. The Washington Post The definitive history of the Six-Day War . . . [Oren's] narrative is precise but written with great literary flair. In no one else's study is there more understanding or more surprise. Martin Peretz, Publisher, The New Republic Compelling, perhaps even vital, reading. San Jose Mercury News

From Publishers Weekly This is the most complete history to date of the Six Day War of 1967, in which Israel entered and began its occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. While no account can be definitive until Arab archives open, Oren, a Princeton-trained senior fellow at Jerusalem's Shalem Center who has served as director of Israel's department of inter-religious affairs and as an adviser to Israel's U.N. delegation, utilizes newly available archival sources and a spectrum of interviews with participants, including many Arabs, to fill gaps and correct misconceptions. Further, Six Days of War is an attack on "post-Zionism": the school of politics and history that casts Israel as the author of policies that intentionally promote the destruction of Palestine as a separate entity and of Palestinians as a people, not least through the occupation that began with the 1967 War. By contrast, Oren convincingly establishes in an often engrossing narrative the reactive, contingent nature of Israeli policy during both the crisis preceding the conflict and the war itself. As Prime Minister Levi Eshkol held the Israeli Defense Forces in check that May, Operation Dawn, an Egyptian plan for a preemptive strike against Israel, came within hours of implementation. It was canceled only because Egypt's President Gamal Abdel Nasser feared it had been compromised. Israel's decision to seek its own security in arms was finally triggered, Oren shows, by Jordan's late accession to the hostile coalition dominated by Egypt and Syria. Geographically, the West Bank, then under Jordanian rule and occupation, cut Israel nearly in half. The military risk to Israel was unacceptable, Oren makes clear, in the context of a U.S. enmeshed in Vietnam and a West unwilling to act even in support of the status quo. Far from being a product of strategic calculation, Oren further argues, occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip was also contingent: the consequence of a victory so rapid and one-sided that even Israel's generals found it difficult to believe it was happening. Israel, having proved it could not be defeated militarily and now possessing something to trade, hoped for comprehensive peace negotiations in a rational-actor model. Oren notes that some initiatives for peace did in fact develop. He seems, however, trying to convince himself along with his readers. Oren puts what he sees as Israel's enduring weaknesses in relief: not arrogance, but self-doubt, self-analysis and self-criticism, all carried to near-suicidal degrees in 1967. Arab policy, by contrast, featured a confident commitment to erasing Israel from the map. The Six Day War shook that confidence, he finds, but did not alter the commitment. About the nature of Israeli policy since the war, the book says little, but finds that "for all its military conquests, Israel was still incapable of imposing the peace it craved." From Library Journal In perhaps one of the most valuable recent works on this subject, Oren, a scholar and Senior Fellow at the Shalem Center, Jerusalem, details events from the Six Day War known in the Arab world as Al-Naksah (the setback) or simply the June war. The book's value lies in its focus and extensive documentation of multilingual resources, including archives, newspapers, reports, books, interviews, and Internet sites. In addition, Oren covers the international, regional, and domestic implications of the war and uses maps to illustrate the geographical changes and military strategies. Many books, e.g., Ahron Bregman's Israel's War: 1947-1993, Tibi Bassam's Conflict and War in the Middle East, 1967-91, and Eric Hammel's Six Days in June, cover a broader period, rely heavily on analysis, or fall short of objectivity. While Oren also recounts some necessary historical context for understanding the war's catalysts and discussing its aftermath, he primarily focuses on the pivotal six days of conflict, dedicating a full chapter for each day. Predictably, the most controversial information is his new findings on an Egyptian top-secret plan that came very close to eradicating Israel's army and nuclear power plant. While this is an essential addition for academic libraries, the book's exhaustive documentary style makes it a lesser candidate for public libraries. Ethan Pullman, Univ. of Pittsburgh Lib. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. Powerful . . . A highly readable, even gripping account of the 1967 conflict . . . [Oren] has woven a seamless narrative out of a staggering variety of diplomatic and military strands. The New York Times With a remarkably assured style, Oren elucidates nearly every aspect of the conflict. . . . Orens [book] will remain the authoritative chronicle of the war. His achievement as a writer and a historian is awesome. The Atlantic Monthly This is not only the best book so far written on the six-day war, it is likely to remain the best. The Washington Post Book World Phenomenal . . . breathtaking history . . . a profoundly talented writer. . . . This book is not only one of the best books on this critical episode in Middle East history; its one of the best-written books I've read this year, in any genre. The Jerusalem Post [In] Michael Oren's richly detailed and lucid account, the familiar story is thrilling once again. . . . What makes this book important is the breadth and depth of

the research. The New York Times Book A first-rate new account of the conflict. The Washington Post The definitive history of the Six-Day War . . . [Orens] narrative is precise but written with great literary flair. In no one else's study is there more understanding or more surprise. Martin Peretz, Publisher, The New Republic Compelling, perhaps even vital, reading. San Jose Mercury News