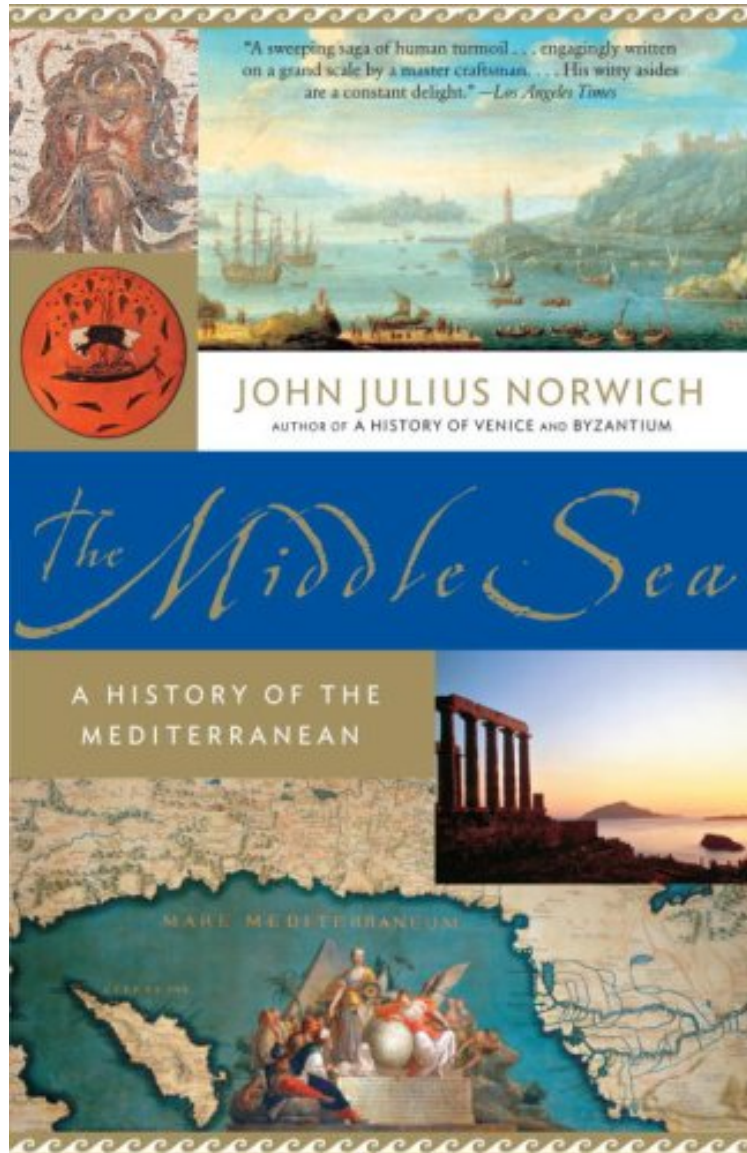


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## The Middle Sea: A History of the Mediterranean

*John Julius Norwich*

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**John Julius Norwich : The Middle Sea: A History of the Mediterranean** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Middle Sea: A History of the Mediterranean:

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Mediterranean, possibly the cradle of humanity, has seen the vicissitudes of the ages. This water way has been the corridor to new civilizations, and the road to glory and disaster for others. John Norwich has made a more than interesting, entertaining and informative read. He has awakened many readers to an era many 'westerners' have missed in their history classes. The events today, are reflected in history. It is a shame some of the world's leaders have not really studied history. Perhaps if they did, history would not have repeated itself. Norwich has written this book at a very appropriate time. It should be offered in every secondary school program. We need to know the world, as it was. And we must know what we may expect if we do not learn from past experiences (mistakes)! 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Kindle Customer This is an excellent resource book. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. good information but dry By Kathleen Anne Ten Wolde good information but dry.

This lively and dramatic book brings roaring to life the grand sweep of 5,000 years of history in the cradle of civilization. A wonderfully illustrated account of the civilizations that rose and fell on the lands bordering the Mediterranean, The Middle Sea represents the culmination of a great historian's unparalleled art and scholarship. John Julius Norwich provides brilliant portraits of the Phoenicians, the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Byzantines, the Arabs, the French, the Venetians, the Popes, and the pirates of the Gulf. Above all, he deftly traces the intermingling of ancient conflicts and modern sensibilities that shape life today on the shores of the Middle Sea.

From The New Yorker The Middle Sea, In his latest sweeping history, the author of "Byzantium" considers the "political fortunes" of the lands of the Mediterranean from the age of ancient Greece to the First World War. Taking as a starting point the region's unique geography, which seems to have been "deliberately designed" as a "cradle of cultures," he focuses on the rise and fall of civilizations through battles and their heroes, paying particular attention to the Christian and Muslim struggle for dominance. At times, the geographical framework feels arbitrary. The Mediterraneans bearing on the countries around it was not always as manifest as during antiquity; from 200 B.C. to 200 A.D., there was a higher density of commercial traffic than at any time in the following millennium. There are also some egregious omissions: art, social, and intellectual history are essentially passed over. But Norwich's focus plays to his strengths as a military historian, and he produces, over six hundred pages, a highly readable chronicle. Copyright 2006 Click here to subscribe to The New Yorker From Booklist The littoral lands of the Mediterranean Sea are Norwich's stage for surveying millennia of power politics. An experienced expositor (Paradise of Cities, 2003), Norwich is irresistibly readable in his emphasis on would-be empire builders to whom the Mediterranean offered both a tempting avenue for embarking on conquest and a dangerous seaway from which enemies would appear. Norwich purposely excludes, however, navigation and navies as well as physical geography from his narrative. He favors the dramas inherent in the succession of empires that have risen and fallen around the Mediterranean from antiquity to World War I. In particular, Norwich emphasizes the characters and motivations of rulers who have affected affairs and frames them in consistently pithy descriptions that are by turns empathic and caustic. Along with the opinion, Norwich, superbly erudite yet having a sense of popular taste, efficiently chronicles the major wars and results and occasionally argues for the importance of battles history has overlooked. A fine single-volume history suited to any collection. Gilbert Taylor Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved "A sweeping saga of human turmoil . . . engagingly written on a grand scale by a master craftsman. . . . His witty asides are a constant delight." Los Angeles Times Norwich's history of the Mediterranean is a cause for celebration. . . . A demonstration of his unrivaled narrative skills. . . . No one planning a simple vacation by the wine-dark sea can afford to leave this book at home." The Washington Post Book World "A sweeping history. . . . Highly readable. . . . Norwich's focus plays to his strengths." The New Yorker "As colorful as history can get. . . . [Norwich] spices his narrative liberally with entertaining anecdotes, deft portraits, and brisk judgments. The Economist