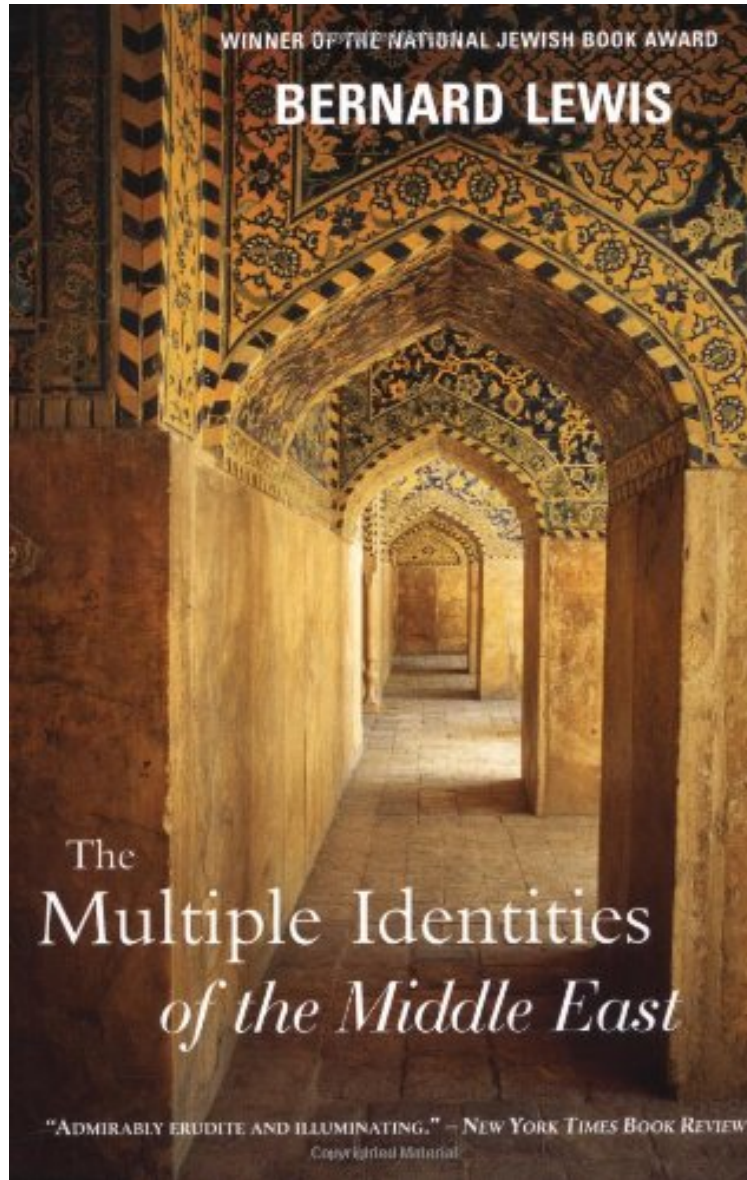


(Free) The Multiple Identities of the Middle East

The Multiple Identities of the Middle East

Bernard Lewis

*DOC | *audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF | ePub*



DOWNLOAD



READ ONLINE

#943108 in Books 2001-01-30 2001-01-30 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.00 x .50 x 5.201, .44 #File Name: 0805211187180 pages | File size: 16.Mb

Bernard Lewis : The Multiple Identities of the Middle East before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Multiple Identities of the Middle East:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Excellent survey of the Middle East By D. Tafe Excellent survey of the Middle East, focusing on the various ways by which the people identify themselves. Lewis presents an eye-opening case for looking at the Middle East not according to geographical boundaries (which were in many cases

imposed by European powers), but by religious and cultural bonds which reach much farther back in history than the creation of present borders. Although written well before 9/11 this study is still most relevant and informative, especially in light of the most recent campaign by ISIS. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Thoroughly disappointed Mr. Bernard Lewis. By Jim A Melki Perhaps the most disappointing book on the Middle East I have ever read. I bought this book because it was written by Bernard Lewis. The book is very dry and offers no ground breaking insight or knowledge into the subject matter. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Anil C. Great source to understand the cultural diversity in the Middle East region

The Middle East is the birthplace of ancient civilizations, but most of the modern states that occupy its territory today are of recent origin, as are many key concepts of communal and individual identity and loyalty that the peoples of the region now confront. In *The Multiple Identities of the Middle East*, eminent Middle East historian Bernard Lewis elucidates the critical role of identity in the domestic, regional, and international tensions and conflicts of the Middle East today. Examining religion, race and language, country, nation, and state, Lewis traces the rapid evolution of the identities of the Middle Eastern peoples, from the collapse of the centuries-old Ottoman Empire in 1918 to today's clash of old and new allegiances. He shows how, during the twentieth century, imported Western ideas such as liberalism, fascism, socialism, patriotism, and nationalism have transformed Middle Easterners' ancient notions of community, their self-perceptions, and their aspirations. To this fascinating historical portrait, Lewis brings an understanding of the region and its peoples, as well as a profound sympathy for the plight that the modern world has imposed on them. The result is an invaluable tool in our understanding of an area that is of increasing global importance and concern today.

.com *The Multiple Identities of the Middle East* by Bernard Lewis is a sharp diamond of a book. It cuts to the essence of how identity has traditionally been experienced by people in the Middle East, how Western political concepts have altered Middle-Eastern notions of identity, and how these imported Western ideas have inflamed political conflicts in that region. "The primary identities are those acquired at birth," Lewis writes. The first determiner of identity is blood, the second is place, and the third is religious community, which for many is "the only loyalty that transcends local and immediate bonds." Lewis adds, "The second broad category of identity is that of allegiance to a ruler," and notes that these two categories of identity were the only ones that existed until modern times, when the Middle East came under the influence of Europe. Now, he says, "a new kind [of identity] is evolving" between the two traditional categories that existed before. This is "the freely chosen cohesion and loyalty of voluntary associations, combining to form what is nowadays known as the civil society." In nine brief chapters describing these various elements of identity, and the pain and empowerment that has come from their revision, Lewis ranges widely over the recent history of inter-Arab and Arab-Israeli conflicts. He solves no problems with this book, but he does clarify them as well as anyone has. *The Multiple Identities of the Middle East* is the kind of book that can reframe a reader's entire orientation to a subject, infusing one's perspective with empathy beyond anything an outsider to the region could possibly muster on his or her own. --Michael Joseph Gross From Library Journal Lewis is a noted expert in Middle Eastern history, religion, and culture who has authored a number of authoritative works, including *The Cambridge History of Islam* in its several editions. His new work should be required reading for all Westerners who have any serious interest in understanding how the history and religion of this dynamic area have led to very different interpretations of such traditional Western notions as nation, citizenship, and patriotism. Lewis ably communicates the primary importance of Islam in forming the core personal identity for area Muslims. This relatively uniform identity does not mean, however, that Islam has survived without the rise of numerous schisms or competing visions of Islam and its relation to the state. While the influence of Islam remains strong on most Muslims, Lewis maintains that several Muslim states, such as Egypt, have forged more of a nation state-type polity than others. The reader will appreciate even more how the State of Israel fits into this m?lange and why it has been so extremely difficult to build a lasting peace in the Middle East. Strongly recommended for all public and academic libraries. A Stephen W. Green, Auraria Lib., Denver Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Kirkus s An enlightening, if occasionally repetitive, study of the uniquely complex notion of identity in the Middle East. Lewis, professor emeritus of Near Eastern studies at Princeton University (*Cultures in Conflict: Christians, Muslims, and Jews In the Age of Discovery*, 1994, etc.), proposes that religion, rather than nationality or citizenship, has been the main determinant of identity in the Middle East. Westerners, maintains Lewis, have great difficulty understanding this concept and mistakenly view the current struggles among Serbians and Muslims in the former Yugoslavia as primarily national and ethnic. Because contemporary Western observers do not consider religion significant to identity and because they philosophically and psychologically separate church and state, they ``will tend to see or seek a non-religious explanation for ostensibly religious conflicts." Though there have always been both ethnic nations and political states in the Middle East, the prominent Orientalist feels that neither had been exclusive factors in determining identity or directing loyalty. Patriotism and nationalism, argues Lewis, are recent 20th-century Western imports to the Middle East. In fact, when nationalist ideas first surfaced in this region, they were denounced by many as ``divisive and irreligious." It was even argued that nationalism was introduced to the Islamic

world by "arrogant infidels," particularly Jews, in an attempt to cause disunity among the Arabs. Also, Lewis sees a constant flux of various identities affecting those in the Middle East. In Egypt, for example, a Cairene Muslim may perceive of himself as an Egyptian, as an Arab, and as a Muslim. His ties to his Muslim brothers in Bangladesh are likely to be greater than those to his Coptic next-door neighbors. Lewis perceives the present Arab world as a "mosaic" of separate nation-states, still evolving, where one's primary identification does lie with the state, however recent or artificial its creation by the colonial powers. A provocative exploration into the Middle Eastern psyche with both cultural and political significance. -- Copyright 1999, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.