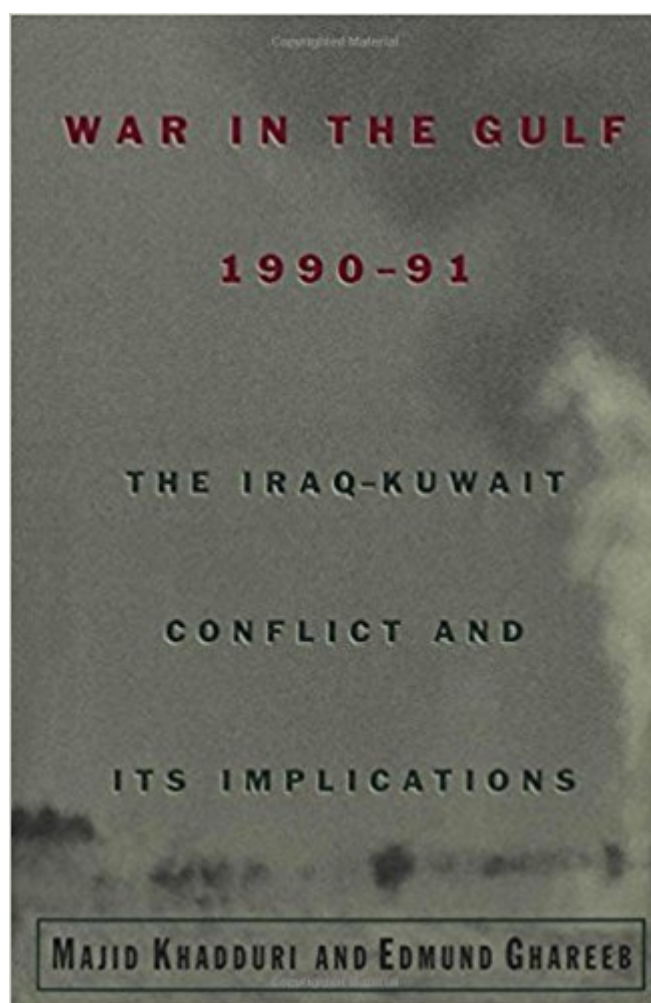


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War In The Gulf, 1990-91: The Iraq-Kuwait Conflict And Its Implications



Synopsis

For most Americans, the war against Iraq lingers in memory as a vast morality play, a drama offering ready made heroes and villains: a glowering dictator in military uniform, hapless Kuwaiti refugees with tales of persecution, plucky pilots with high-tech wizardry, and a defiant American president, ringing Churchillian as he drew a line in the sand. But this characterization of the war is greatly oversimplified, a one-dimensional portrait, lacking in context and nuance. In *War in the Gulf, 1990-91*, eminent scholars Majid Khadduri and Edmund Ghareeb paint a very different picture, one that brings historical depth to the portrait, and displays the actions of many of the participants in a new and revealing light. Khadduri and Ghareeb offer a far more accurate and complex portrait of the Iraq-Kuwait conflict, providing a wealth of background information not readily available before. They made a distinction between the differences between Iraq and Kuwait over frontiers, territory, and sovereignty and the method pursued by Iraqi leaders to resolve those differences. They explore, for instance, the history of relations between Iraq and Kuwait, revealing that Kuwait had once been a part of Basra (in southern Iraq) during the Ottoman rule, and only became a separate country while under British control (it was the British in fact who drew the much-disputed boundary line between Iraq and Kuwait). Khadduri and Ghareeb describe the many decades of struggle to resolve the boundary issue, examining the repeated attempts by other Arab states to mediate according to Islamic traditions of consultation and peaceful resolution within the faith. The authors also show how Saddam Husayn's war with Iran exacerbated the boundary tensions. Because of the decade-long war, Iraq badly needed oil revenue to repay wartime loans and to rebuild, but Kuwait persisted in pumping far beyond its OPEC quota, driving down prices, and costing Iraq billions of dollars of revenue. The book reveals how Kuwait spurned Arab attempts to mediate this clash over oil prices as well as the longstanding boundary dispute, frustrating efforts to resolve this crisis by peaceful means. In one particularly interesting section, the book examines the diplomatic talks during the early summer of 1990, both among various Arab nations (most notably, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Kuwait), and with Saddam Husayn and the United States (they show how messages from Washington and a visit by a congressional delegation lead by Senator Dole convinced the Iraqi leaders that they would be allowed to settle their problems with Kuwait without outside interference). Khadduri and Ghareeb carry us through to the present, exploring the war and its aftermath, from the uprisings against Baghdad, to the continuing U.N. sanctions, to the recent defections from Saddam's inner circle. *War in the Gulf* is a balanced, eye-opening account of one of the central events of recent years. It corrects the Western views of most reporting, explaining the frame of mind of the participants as no one has done before and causing us to examine anew such questions as

who was responsible for the conflict, and what might have happened if the United States had not intervened so rapidly.

Book Information

Paperback: 320 pages

Publisher: Oxford University Press (September 27, 2001)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0195149793

ISBN-13: 978-0195149791

Product Dimensions: 8.9 x 0.9 x 5.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars 2 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #2,525,988 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #68 in Books > History > Middle East > Kuwait #314 in Books > History > Military > United States > Operation Desert Storm #949 in Books > History > Middle East > Iraq

Customer Reviews

The swift onset of the Persian Gulf War took many observers (and many television viewers) by surprise. It had, historians Khadduri and Ghareeb note, been a long time coming, however. Kuwait had been artificially severed from Iraq at the end of British colonial rule in 1921, and Iraq had long been seeking access to Kuwaiti ports on the Gulf that, had it been granted, might have forestalled war. Carefully tracing the history of the 1990-91 conflict, the authors suggest that Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait followed a certain logic, but not an inevitable one, and that the Allied powers perhaps should have waited for a peaceful Iraqi withdrawal. Theirs is a controversial reading of history, but one that merits an audience. --This text refers to the Digital edition.

"Some historical events are so momentous that in the rush to judgement only a one-sided perspective emerges about their origin and causes. Such was the case in Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait and the subsequent Gulf War of 1991. With time, hopefully, some dare to soul search. That has happened with *The War in the Gulf*, a sobering and analytical retrospective that cuts through conventional cliches. Such quests are critical not merely to imbue the historical record with greater perspective, but also to see with greater clarity the road upon which those events have caused us to embark."--Christine Helms "This book offers a sympathetic and balanced analysis of the origins of the war which deserves to be read by policymakers and the media, for it underscores the very

different perceptions brought to the situation by the Islamic world and the West."--The Estimate

This is my favorite book on the Gulf War. Gives the Iraqi side of the battle which is something missing in most other accounts of the war. Also gives details of Saddam's invasion of Kuwait that no other book I read contains. Sober account of a war without all the propaganda and flag waving.

The book paints a full picture of the historical dispute between Iraq and Kuwait, which basically started in 1899 when the Kuwaiti royal family made secret deals with the British. It carefully goes over the personalities involved and how they tried to shape the situation. The reading can get slow at times if the reader is unaccustomed to the various spellings of Arabic names and locations, i.e. Husayn = Hussein, Makkah = Mecca. However, the information provided gives a clear insight to the logic of the Iraqi invasion of 1990 and subsequent Operation Desert Storm in 1991. Whether or not one agrees with the conclusions of the authors, it definitely is a wealth of information on the subject. This is a must read for all interested in Mid East politics.

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