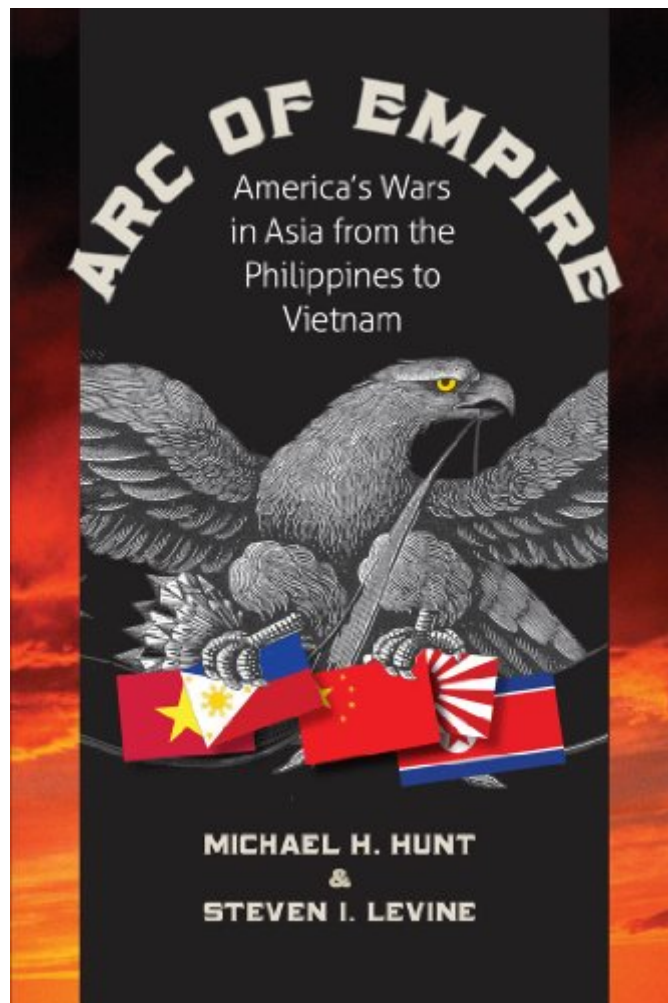




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Arc Of Empire: America's Wars In Asia From The Philippines To Vietnam



Synopsis

Although conventionally treated as separate, America's four wars in Asia were actually phases in a sustained U.S. bid for regional dominance, according to Michael H. Hunt and Steven I. Levine. This effort unfolded as an imperial project in which military power and the imposition of America's political will were crucial. Devoting equal attention to Asian and American perspectives, the authors follow the long arc of conflict across seventy-five years from the Philippines through Japan and Korea to Vietnam, tracing along the way American ambition, ascendance, and ultimate defeat. They show how these wars are etched deeply in eastern Asia's politics and culture. The authors encourage readers to confront the imperial pattern in U.S. history with implications for today's Middle Eastern conflicts. They also offer a deeper understanding of China's rise and Asia's place in today's world. For instructors: An Online Instructor's Manual is available, with teaching tips for using *Arc of Empire* in graduate and undergraduate courses on America's wars in Asia. It includes lecture topics, chronologies, and sample discussion questions.

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Customer Reviews

"Arc of Empire" is really several books in one. At its core is a survey of the four wars America fought

in Asia in the 20th century: the Philippines (against insurgents), World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. Unlike many military histories, the authors don't just tell the U.S. side of the story, but also consider the political goals and homefront attitudes of America's enemies. Better yet, the book analyzes these wars within the context of America's century-long attempt to fashion an Asian political order hospitable to U.S. interests and amenable to U.S. domination. Finally, the book is a polemic against the ignorance and hubris of American neo-colonialism, pouring scorn on Washington's habit of supporting dictators and wreaking destruction on alien peoples whenever it suits U.S. strategic goals (all in the name of "democracy" and "uplift"). Up to three million people died during the U.S. phase of Vietnam's war for independence. Only 55,000 of them were American GIs. Americans still mourn their loss, but it was tiny compared to the holocaust inflicted on the Vietnamese. How many Americans cry for them? While "Arc of Empire" doesn't break new historiographic ground, it is filled with wise reflections on America's role in Asia. I have only two real complaints: First, by framing its analysis around these four wars, the book neglects America's relations with other important Asian countries (such as Nationalist China, Indonesia, and Thailand). Second, although the authors define what they mean by "empire" very carefully, I'm unconvinced that it's a useful concept for understanding America's war against Japan or even the Korean War. Those conflicts seem unlike the Vietnam War and the counter-insurgency in the Philippines. Nevertheless, "Arc of Empire" is a fabulous book. Highly recommended.

Two really solid academics combine their skills to discuss the US's long history of warfare in Asia. It's a must read as the Obama administration "pivot" to Asia.

i would rate this book as average; not too much to distinguish it from some other political histories i have read; i thought it worthwhile but not an outstanding book by any means

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