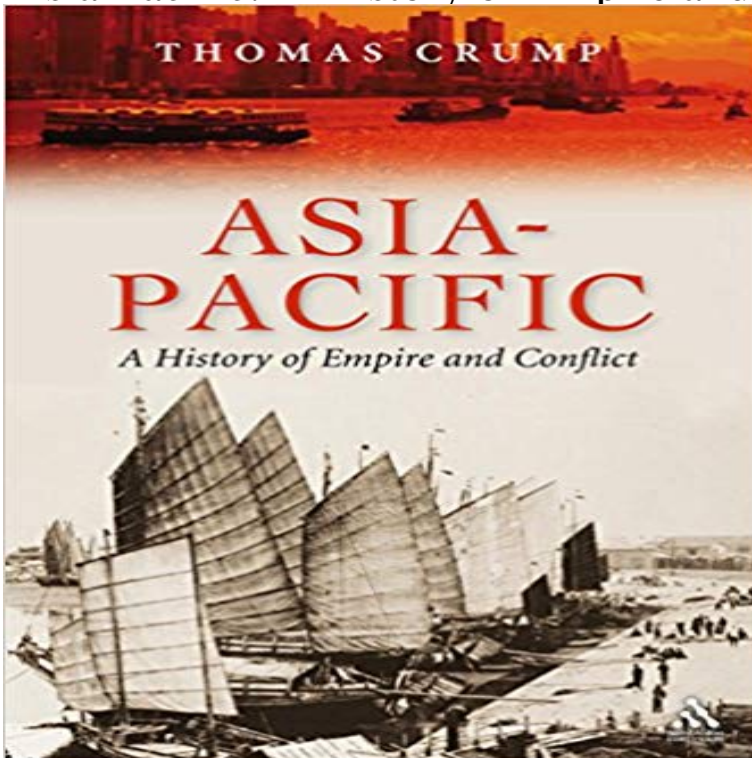


Asia-Pacific: A History of Empire and Conflict



Asia-Pacific is the first authoritative history of a region rich in history, riven with conflict and central to our world today. The political backdrop was informed by China, from the fall of its Empire at the beginning of the 20th century through to Mao Zedong's revolution. The aftermath of World War II saw a radical transformation in what is often known as The Ring of Fire.

Japan, defeated, lost its Empire and armed forces. The war between North and South Korea added a crucial twist, with world-wide repercussions still being felt a half century later. Long-standing European colonial Empires, British, Dutch and French crumbled in South East Asia, as new nations demanded independence, with varying degrees of conflict and violence - culminating in the long Vietnam War. The year 1975 was a watershed. Mao Zedong and Ho Chi Minh had died, leaving the way open to dialogue and rapprochement between the East and West. The strained relations between China, and the Soviet Union - part of Mao's legacy - together with the eventual Soviet collapse left the US as the major beneficiary. But most importantly, the major countries of the region have been largely at peace for over 30 years and are enjoying the fruits of this peace - unprecedented levels of commerce and foreign investment has made the region the driving force in the world economy and increasingly central to the politics of globalization. Yet this peace is tentative, with the rumblings of discontent always audible. Thomas Crump has written a fascinating modern history which will further our understanding of a region that has shaped our past and will continue to shape our future.

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