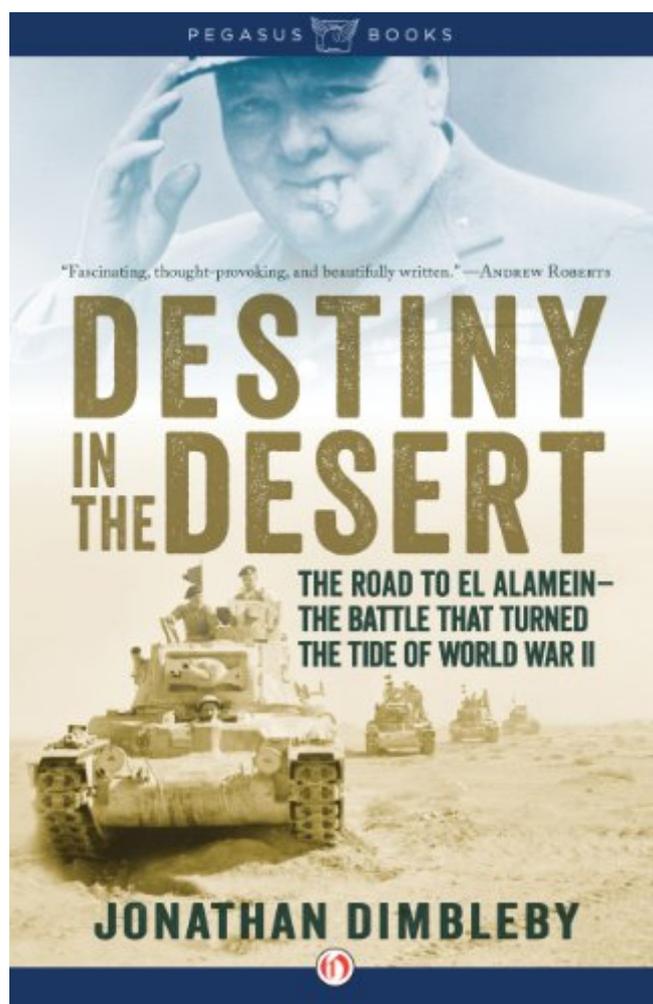


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Destiny In The Desert: The Road To El Alamein: The Battle That Turned The Tide Of World War II



Synopsis

A superior history of the North African campaign and the British WWII victory that Winston Churchill called the end of the beginning (Booklist). It was the Allied victory at the Battle of El Alamein in November 1942 that inspired one of Churchill's most famous aphorisms: "This is not the end, it is not even the beginning of the end, but it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning." And yet the true significance of this iconic episode remains unrecognized. In this thrilling historical account, Jonathan Dimbleby describes the political and strategic realities that lay behind the battle, charting the nail-biting months that led to the victory at El Alamein in November 1942. It is a story of high drama, played out both in the war capitals of London, Washington, Berlin, Rome, and Moscow, and at the front, in the command posts and foxholes in the desert. *Destiny in the Desert* is about politicians and generals, diplomats, civil servants, and soldiers. It is about forceful characters and the tensions and rivalries between them. Drawing on official records and the personal insights of those involved at every level, Dimbleby creates a vivid portrait of a struggle which for Churchill marked the turn of the tide and which for the soldiers on the ground involved fighting and dying in a foreign land.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This rigidly chronological narrative displays an odd streak of hostility toward several of its chief

actors. While it is fluently written, the book provides little new information and plenty of unnecessary old information, such as "Adolf Hitler died by his own hand in his fuhrerbunker". "Destiny in the Desert"'s back cover proclaims that the book "show[s] how the climax of the desert war - previously dismissed as peripheral and a waste of ordinary lives - was a tipping point in British fortunes". However: (1) numerous other authors have already made this case (e.g., Stephen Bungay and Niall Barr, both cited in the acknowledgements); and (2) Dimbleby generally does not prove the case anyway. For example, he writes of Churchill comparing victory in Tunis with victory at Stalingrad "This was hyperbole of an extravagance which should have brought a blush to the cheek of even [Churchill]". An author truly disputing the "peripheral" nature of the desert war could point to factors such as: (1) The Axis forces losing similar numbers of men and quantities of material in Tunis versus Stalingrad. (2) Victory in Tunis leading rapidly to the expulsion of Italy from the Axis forces. The book is heavily critical of Churchill, and more so of Montgomery. Inter alia, the author faults Montgomery for: (1) Fighting a battle of attrition - despite the military logic for such an approach, and the fact that the Army of the Nile lost fewer troops to death, wounds, or captivity in Alamein 3 than the AfrikaKorps.

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