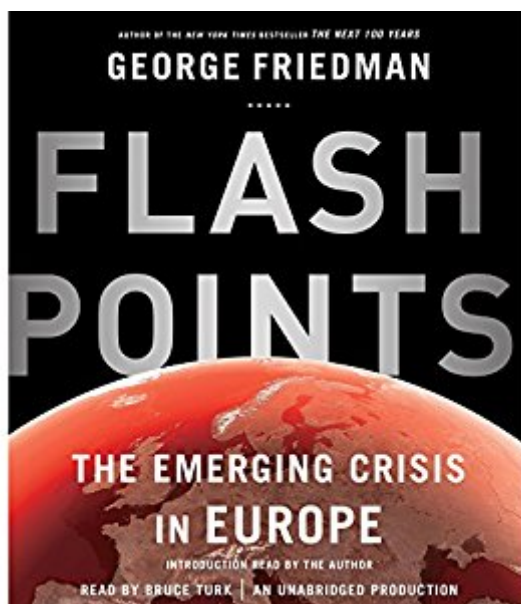


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# Flashpoints: The Emerging Crisis In Europe



## Synopsis

A major new book by New York Times best-selling author and geopolitical forecaster George Friedman (The Next 100 Years, The Next Decade) with a bold thesis about coming conflict in the world, this provocative work examines the geopolitical flashpoints - particularly in Europe - in which imminent future conflicts are brewing. George Friedman has forecasted the coming trends (politics, technology, population, and culture) of the next century in The Next 100 Years, and focused his predictions on the coming ten years in The Next Decade. Now, in Flashpoints, Friedman zooms in on the region that has, for 500 years, been the cultural hotbed of the world - Europe - and examines the most basic and fascinating building block of the region: culture. Analyzing the fault lines that have existed for centuries - and which have led to two world wars and dozens more conflicts - Friedman walks us through the "flashpoints" that are still smoldering beneath the surface and are on course to erupt again. In Flashpoints, George Friedman begins with a fascinating history of the events leading up to the horrific wars that nearly tore apart Western civilization - killing over 100 million people on the "civilized" European continent. Modern-day Europe, and the formation of the European Union, were designed to minimize the built-in geopolitical tensions that led to catastrophic war, but as Friedman shows with a mix of history and cultural analysis, those plans have failed. "Flashpoints" are now simmering as dangerously as in the early twentieth century. Zeroing in on half a dozen locations, borderlands, and cultural dynamics, George Friedman does what few historians can - he explains precisely how certain trends are unstoppable, and what the future holds... both in terms of conflict and also opportunity. Flashpoints also explains in riveting detail how events in Europe will affect the rest of the world.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Flashpoints: the Emerging Crisis in Europe is a very good overview of Europe with some interesting analysis. Mr. Friedman brings a unique perspective; his parents were Hungarian Jewish immigrants and they were deeply affected by the horrible plight of Jews during the War. The telling of his family's escape from a communist Hungary and their journey to the United States is a fascinating tale on its own. Beginning with Europe as it was just embarking on its naval exploration, Mr. Friedman explains Europe's insatiable desire to reach the riches of the far East. So commences major colonialism throughout the world stretching from Australia to North and South America, Africa and parts of Asia. Religion is examined also, not just Christianity but also Islam and the desire to conquer and convert. Skip forward to nineteenth and twentieth century Europe and there is a marrying of Industry, and ideas and colonial powers, but not everyone has an empire overseas. It is here that Mr. Friedman writes of the effects of liberalism, enlightenment and scholars and philosophers and Hitler and also the growing seeds of nationalism that were always brewing. Not only is Germany analyzed but other powers also, to include Russia and Britain. I found the historical overview of Europe essential to the Author's current analysis of Europe. It shapes his views and gives context to his observations. The EU and particularly Germany and France's relationship are front and center in his scrutiny of current problems of Europe. Europe has a long memory and this has shaped European politics. This comes across frequently in the author's conclusions. Russia is insecure, and so is France. Germany is mighty but now economically only.

As both a college instructor and writer, I consider Friedman one of the most original voices to be found today. While he doesn't have the following of many media friendly academics, much less the economic entertainment guru's, what he lacks in publicity is more than made up for in his stunning ability to recognize and interpret events which elude lesser minds. Friedman has a gift for blending the "what" with the "why"; those seeking the typical headline interpretation of events will likely feel frustrated as will those who believe history is nothing more than a glorified timeline of past events. Make no mistake about it, Friedman packs an immense amount of information in these pages. Typically, if I find one or two nuggets of information I consider it time well spent reading...my advanced reading copy of this book is filled with margin notes, underlining and so forth. Friedman is able to set the mind on fire with ideas, unique perspective and extremely intriguing

conclusions...many of which fly in the face of commonly encountered conclusions. While his work is easy to read, it is also time consuming - I find myself stopping frequently to reflect. Additionally, if you are not familiar with his other work, it might seem that he skips or glosses over certain concepts...I encourage those with interest to perform a web search and listen to some of his prior interviews or video's...the result is an even deeper appreciation for his sometimes subtle, but deeply insightful, findings. Last but certainly not least, his ability to weave the story of his family and the impact of these 'flashpoints' into the real life implications for individuals, states and nations takes this to the next level.

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