

Counterterrorism Bookshelf:

Twenty New Publications on Israeli & Palestinian Issues

Reviewed by Joshua Sinai

This column consists of capsule reviews of recent books about Israel, the Palestinians, and related subjects from various publishers. This special focus is intended to help analysts to better understand the trends in the histories of Israel and the Palestinians, the internal and external terrorist challenges facing them, and the components that may be required to formulate effective counterterrorism and conflict resolution strategies to solve their long conflict.

Simon Anglim, *Orde Wingate: Unconventional Warrior from the 1920s to the Twenty-First Century* (Havertown, PA: Pen & Sword/Casemate, 2014), 240 pp., US \$ 50. [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-783-46218-6.

This is a detailed, extensively researched, and comprehensive account of Major General Orde Wingate (1903-1944), one of the most influential and controversial military commanders in the British Army during the period between the First and Second World Wars. Basing his account on Wingate's official and private papers, as well as those of his contemporaries, the author provides a guide to Wingate as a military commander within the larger context of how his theories about strategy and tactics, insurgency and special operations are applied to contemporary military warfare doctrines. Numerous fascinating details about Wingate's personal life and their influence on his military career are revealed, including that T.E. Lawrence (also known as "Lawrence of Arabia"), considered one of the originators of the use of guerrilla warfare by regular armies, was his distant relative through his father's side (p. 29) Wingate served in Palestine from 1936 to 1938, beginning as a British intelligence officer (GSO I) and eventually becoming commander of the irregular Special Night Squads (SNS), which he was responsible for establishing, and which cooperated with the Jewish *Haganah* in fighting the Palestinian insurgents. One of Wingate's doctrinal innovations during this period was to replace the *Haganah's* previous doctrine of "static defence of [Jewish] settlements...by one of pre-emptive action against the terrorists," which he accompanied by "moving ambushes' of British troops and JSP [Jewish Supernumerary Police]..." (p. 68) Recognizing that "counter-insurgent operations, more perhaps than any other type, are driven by intelligence," Wingate's 'Night Squads' ultimately proved effective at reducing the rate of Palestinian Arab attacks against Jewish and British targets, including dislocating their "gangs from their village bases..." (p. 88) The author concludes that it was through Wingate's doctrinal innovation in forming specialist forces and 'government gangs' that became "standard counter-insurgent practice in several armies," particularly the British and Israeli special operations forces (p. 88).

Jon Diamond, *Orde Wingate: Leadership, Strategy, Conflict* (Long Island City, NY: Osprey Publishing, 2012), 64 pp., US \$ 18.95 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-84908-323-2.

This well-written and concise account of the life and military operations of Major General Orde Wingate also includes numerous illustrations. With regard to Wingate's innovative guerrilla/counter-guerrilla tactics, the author writes that Wingate believed that by employing "cunning and deception, coupled with a tendency towards the unorthodox," "Given a population favourable to penetrate, a thousand resolute and well-armed men can paralyze for an indefinite period, the operations of 100,000 [larger military force]," culminating in "obtaining superiority at the decisive point" to overcome an adversary's "numerical advantage" (p. 56).

Samuel M. Katz, *The Ghost Warriors: Inside Israel's Undercover War Against Suicide Terrorism* (New York, NY: Berkley Caliber, 2016), 432 pp., US \$ 27. [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-59240-901-3.

This is a fascinating, highly detailed insider account of the roles and operations of Israel's elite special forces' largely undercover war against Palestinian terrorists between October 1, 2000 and April 30, 2008 (also known as the al Aqsa Intifada). One of the especially noteworthy contributions of this book is the author's revelations (while abiding by Israeli censorship guidelines) about the nature, leadership, composition, weapons, and operations of these undercover units, which included three types of special forces: (1) the Arabic-speaking undercover units known as 'Mista'aravim' ("Speakers"), who stealthily infiltrate Palestinian areas dressed as local inhabitants in search of high-value Palestinian targets wanted by Israeli intelligence; (2) an IDF undercover unit, known as Duvdevan (Hebrew for "Cherry"), some of whose paratrooper operatives were also fluent in Arabic; and (3) the *Ya'mas* (Hebrew acronym for undercover unit) units of the Border Guard, the paramilitary arm of the Israel National Police. Much of the book focuses on the work of the *Ya'mas* units, which operated separately in three different regional sectors: one in the West Bank, another in the Jerusalem region, and the third in the Gaza Strip. What is especially interesting about the *Ya'mas* units is that they included specialized conscripts as well as officers from Israel's minority communities of Druze and Bedouins, who were native Arabic speakers and understood the Palestinians' "customs, mind-set, nuances, and vulnerabilities." (p. xii) The counterterrorist operations of these special forces units, with the activities of the *Ya'mas* units especially highlighted, are discussed in dramatic fashion in their areas of operations in the West Bank, Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip. In a postscript, the author concludes that one of the primary contributions of Special Forces, such as the *Ya'mas*, "in the forefront of Israel's counterterrorist efforts" was "to provide the political echelon the quiet and the capacity for make decisions from a position of strength" (p. 371). Although the book's coverage focuses on the period of the al Aqsa Intifada, its discussion of these Special Forces units is highly relevant to understanding how they likely operate in the current period, where the Palestinian Intifada has assumed a completely different character, with the Internet's social media sites playing a larger role in radicalization, recruitment and mobilization of their relatively young terrorist operatives. The author is a New York City-based veteran journalist on Middle East security issues, including terrorism and counterterrorism, having published more than twenty books on these subjects.

Shlomo Avineri, *Herzl's Vision: Theodor Herzl and the Foundation of the Jewish State* (Katonah, NY: BlueBridge, 2014), 304 pp., US \$ 22.95 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-933-34698-4.

This is one of the finest political biographies of Theodor Herzl, (1860–1904), an Austro-Hungarian journalist, playwright, and polemicist (in the best sense), who was one of the founders of modern political Zionism. Among his greatest contributions to Zionism was his publication of *Der Judenstaat* (The Jewish State) in February 1896. This was followed by his leading role in establishing the World Zionist Organization at the First Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland, which was held in August 1897, as the organizational vehicle to promote Jewish migration to Palestine in order to establish a Jewish state. As discussed by the author, when *The Jewish State* was published, its "radical, sweeping" message aroused great international acclaim, but also controversy, as it argued that due to pervasive anti-Semitism and other factors, the Jewish people should leave Europe for Palestine, their historic homeland, where they would create a state of their own (although Argentina was also proposed as a possible state). While many secular Jews who were part of revolutionary movements allied themselves with Herzl, it also "frightened and even revolted" many Jews. (p. 113) Among its strident opponents were the "Establishment Jewry," who opposed his radical and utopian ideas as a threat to their efforts to further integrate Jewish communities in Western

societies, and also the ultra-Orthodox Jewry which regarded his Zionist program as an apostate rebellion against God, since only God's will would guide Jewish destiny.

As a political biography, the book primarily focuses on Herzl's political writings and diplomatic efforts to bring about the establishment of his envisioned Jewish State. Herzl's greatest contribution, the author writes, was his transformation of "the idea of a Jewish state from one bandied about by a small coterie of educated but marginal Jews to an item on the international political agenda, a position which it keeps to this day" (p. 259). The author, Shlomo Avineri, a Professor of Political Science at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, is one of Israel's leading political philosophers.

Theodor Herzl, *The Jewish State* (New York, NY: Penguin Books/Great Ideas, 2010), 112 pp., US \$ 6.98 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-0-141-19290-1.

To understand the ideological origins of Zionism, it is essential to read its founding books, articles and pamphlets. The Jewish State is one of the Zionist movement's most influential pamphlets – yet, interestingly, it is also little read or understood in the contemporary period, which is unfortunate because, firstly, its arguments for the need of a "Jewish State" are still relevant to the current period, and, secondly, they are so "liberal" in the best Western sense that they need to be highlighted in order to understand the disparity between what the State of Israel was intended to be, according to Herzl's original vision, and what it has become over the years. Of particular interest is Herzl's advocacy of a state that would be based on "the best modern constitution possible," which he envisioned as "a democratic monarchy and an aristocratic republic," (p. 84) and would be guided by the "theory of rationality" (p. 77) and "the application of scientific methods." (p. 80) In what is especially pertinent to the current period of intense conflict in Israeli society between secular forces and far-right, ultra-nationalist religious extremism, Herzl called for eliminating any theocratic tendencies, because "Faith unites us, knowledge gives us freedom. We shall therefore prevent any theocratic tendencies from coming to the fore on the part of our priesthood. We shall keep our priests within the confines of their temples in the same way as we shall keep our professional army within the confines of their barracks....But they must not interfere in the administration of the State which confers distinction upon them, else they will conjure up difficulties without and within" (p. 87). With regard to dealing with potential neighboring enemies once the Jewish State is established [i.e., in Palestine], Herzl, as a utopian, believed that its economic prosperity would diminish their opposition to such an entity in their midst (p. 96).

Ahron Bregman, *Cursed Victory: A History of Israel and the Occupied Territories* (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2015), 352 pp., US \$ 15.43 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-0-141-01723-5.

This comprehensive account of Israel's conflict with the Palestinians covers the period from the June 1967 War, when Israel defeated its Jordanian, Syrian and Egyptian adversaries to conquer the territories of the West Bank (including East Jerusalem), the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights, and the Sinai Peninsula, until 2014. With Israel giving up the Sinai Peninsula as part of its 1979 peace accord with Egypt, and with Israel unilaterally withdrawing from the Gaza Strip in August 2005, much of the discussion focuses on Israel's approach to managing the conflict with the Palestinians in the West Bank, although the wars with Hamas in 2008-09, 2012, and 2014 are also covered. With regard to the Israeli counterterrorism campaign, the author criticizes it for overly relying on coercive measures, "by forcing [the Palestinians] to live in squalor and without hope, Israel hardened those under its power, making them more determined to put an end to the occupation by violent means..." (p. 308) To resolve the conflict, the author recommends "direct

negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians, whereby the parties agree to establish a Palestinian state to live side by side in peace with Israel.” (p. 314) To influence the Israeli government to adopt more conciliatory responses, the author recommends that the Palestinians launch “a non-violent Gandhi-style third intifada against the occupation” which would be accompanied by international “boycotts on products and services emanating from Jewish settlements on the occupied territories” (p. 315). Dr. Bregman is a professor in the Department of War Studies, King’s College London.

Ari Shavit, *My Promised Land: The Triumph and Tragedy of Israel* (New York, NY: Spiegel & Grau, 2013), 464 pp., US \$ 28.00 [Hardcover], US \$ 17.00 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-0-385-52170-3.

This is a highly interesting and well-informed account by a veteran Israeli journalist of what he perceives to be some of the external and internal trends affecting—and, most importantly, also transforming—the state of Israel after being some 65 years in existence. As he explains, despite great economic, technological, and military progress over the years, now “Many Israelis [are] not at ease with the new Israel that [is] emerging” (p. xiii). This is expressed in five different core apprehensions: “the notion that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict might not end in the foreseeable future; the concern that Israel’s regional strategic hegemony is being challenged; the fear that the very legitimacy of the Jewish state is eroding; the concern that a deeply transformed Israeli society is now divided and polarized, its liberal-democratic foundation crumbling; and the realization that the dysfunctional governments of Israel cannot deal seriously with such crucial challenges as occupation and social disintegration” (pp. xiii-xiv). These “core apprehensions” are discussed through the author’s journalistic tour of modern Israel, including interviews with leading Israeli intellectuals and politicians.

Yuval Elizur and Lawrence Malkin, *The War Within: Israel’s Ultra-Orthodox Threat to Democracy and the Nation* (New York, NY: The Overlook Press, 2013), 240 pp., US \$ 15.95 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-4683-0825-9.

This is a comprehensive account of the internecine conflict in Israel between the country’s largely secular society and minority ultra-Orthodox Jewish communities over the character of the state from its establishment in 1948 until the current period. The ultra-Orthodox Jewish community (also known as “Haredim” – those who “tremble at the word of God”) number an estimated 800,000 in Israel (about 15 percent of the Jewish population), but, as discussed in this volume, they regard themselves as the only authentic adherents of the Jewish religion so they rigidly resist any infringement on their strict religious observances, including having their educational institutions incorporate modern subjects such as mathematics, science, literature or history, as well as refusing to serve in the country’s compulsory-based military – all the while continuing to receive state subsidies for their religious institutions and population. To elaborate on these issues, the volume’s chapters cover topics, which are highly contentious in Israeli society, such as their demographic concentrations in Jerusalem and their aggressive actions against the city’s non-observant Jews; their resistance to increasing the role of civil legal institutions (such as civil marriage and divorce, religious conversion into Judaism, and the enforcement of religious regulations over food and groceries, etc.) at the expense of their favored theocratic-based laws; the enforcement of transportation restrictions on the Sabbath; their refusal to abolish their discriminatory laws against women; their refusal to allow more modern interpretations of Jewish religious laws to be officially practiced (and, thereby, also funded) by less Orthodox movements, and the increasing involvement by some of their adherents in far-right, militant, and anti-State settlement activities in the West Bank. In the concluding chapter — “How Will the War End?”—the authors observe that several factors are already serving to

weaken the ultra-Orthodox community, such as new laws that permit what are termed ‘Modern Orthodox’ rabbis to also perform marriage ceremonies, the increasing entrance of ultra-Orthodox men into the country’s labor force and certain higher educational institutions that teach modern subjects, and resistance by the secular political parties to continue subsidizing their religious studies as their primary form of “employment.”

Hillel Frisch, *Israel’s Security and Its Arab Citizens* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 228 pp., US \$ 110. [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-107-01097-0.

This well-researched book examines the relationship between the Israeli Jewish state and its Arab minority (estimated at numbering 20 percent of the overall population) through an exploration of how the Jewish state has treated its Arab minority against the background of regional and local threats facing Israel. As the author explains, “I will try to justify the argument that Israel’s relationship to its Arab minority is largely informed by a sense of threat and security fears. These emanate from the strategic environment in which the dominant community is a majority within its own state yet a threatened precarious minority in the region” (p. 3). To examine these issues, the book’s chapters cover topics such as an historical overview of Israel’s security profile and the relations between the state and its Arab minority; the impact of Israel’s victory in the 1948 War on its Arab citizens (e.g., what the Arab community considers as their *Nakba* – “Day of Catastrophe”); the nature of the Arab community’s domestic politics; the involvement of militant activists in the Arab community in extra-parliamentary organizations and terrorism; the relations between the Arab community and their Palestinian counterparts, including their attitudes towards the larger Arab world; and the balancing by Israel of the Arab community’s political demands vis-à-vis its security requirements. Although one might disagree with one of the author’s conclusions that over time “Israel’s relationship with its Arab citizens has become more liberal, due in large part to the unintended consequences of economic liberalization,” or that “Israel’s quest for security, which has mandated the liberalization of its economy and its technological prowess, has paradoxically had positive ramifications on Israel’s Arab citizens” (pp. 181-182), because since this book was published the relations between Israel and its Arab citizens have deteriorated to one of the lowest points in recent years, the conceptual framework and the topics discussed in this book still serve as an important contribution to the analysis of these issues in the current period. The author is an Associate Professor in the Department of Political Studies and Middle East Studies at Bar-Ilan University and a Senior Research Associate at its BESA Center for Strategic Studies.

Robert Slater, *Rabin: The Biography – 20 Years After* (KIP – Kotarim International Publishing, Ltd., 2015), 480 pp., US \$ 21.50 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-965-7589-13-7.

In 1977, Robert Slater, an American journalist who immigrated to Israel in 1971, wrote his first biography of Yitzhak Rabin, one of Israel’s great military commanders during the periods of pre-independence and early statehood (including serving as IDF chief-of-staff during the June 1967 War and as Defense Minister from 1984-1990 in the National Unity Government), and as Prime Minister (1974-77; 1992-1995). In this updated biography, which draws on extensive interviews with Rabin’s associates and family, the author covers Rabin’s political career up to his assassination by a far-right wing Jewish extremist in November 1995, including assessing his lasting impact on Israeli politics and national security. In terms of Rabin’s contribution to Israeli national security, the author discusses his role in countering and sinking the *Altalena* on June 21, 1948 – the ship that the former right-wing Jewish underground’s militants had sailed to the shores of Israel with an illegal shipment of arms – which the newly established Israeli state had regarded as

an attempted *putsch* against it – which Rabin, as the site’s military commander, “never had any doubt about the correctness of the government’s action in taking up arms against fellow Jews. To him, the principle of statehood was at stake, and the *Irgun* was challenging the principle. The *Altalena* had been a threat to the legal government and that could not be tolerated” (p. 90).

Interestingly, while being regarded as Israel’s “Mr. National Security,” Rabin was also a peacemaker, with his first peace initiative occurring in October 1976 when, as Prime Minister, he made a secret visit to Morocco “to encourage King Hassan to persuade Egypt to enter peace negotiations with Israel over a permanent arrangement” [which eventually resulted in the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty in 1979] (p. 266). Rabin’s approach to countering the first Palestinian intifada, which began in 1987, also underwent change, as Mr. Slater writes that “Despite tough measures, Rabin was growing increasingly frustrated at their ineffectiveness,” because “the unrest was no passing phenomenon; something far more deeply rooted was occurring in the territories,” and that [also echoing the current period of impasse between the right-wing Israeli government and the Palestinians] “This time the unrest reflected genuine Palestinian despair, in not being able to end Israeli rule” (p. 338). With the Rabin-led Labor Party winning the June 1992 Knesset elections, Rabin was then able, together with his ally Shimon Peres, the Foreign Minister, to enter into secret talks with the Yasir Arafat-led Palestine Liberation Organization that resulted in the signing of the historic Oslo Peace Accords in September 1994. As a pragmatist, Rabin understood that despite the PLO’s history of terrorism, “peace you make with your enemies, including despicable enemies...but I have to see also the comprehensive picture. We have to take risks” (p. 438). After completing his manuscript, Mr. Slater died in March 2014 in Jerusalem, several months before the book was published.

Dan Ephron, *Killing A King: The Assassination of Yitzhak Rabin and the Remaking of Israel* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 2015), 304 pp., US \$ 27.95 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-0-393-24209-6.

This is a comprehensive, detailed and authoritative account of the two-year-long plot that led to the assassination by Yigal Amir of Yitzhak Rabin, Israel’s Prime Minister, on November 5, 1995, within the larger context of Rabin’s efforts to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through the Oslo Accords, and the impact of the assassination on future prospects for peace between the Israelis and Palestinians. There is much to commend in this excellent journalistic account, such as the biographical and religio-psychological profile of Amir as a conflict- and guilt-ridden individual who was torn “between [his] longing for sensual and emotional satisfaction and his commitment to a religious and ideological way of life” (pp. 36-37), which ultimately drove him to regard himself as “empowered...to judge for himself – to ‘fathom God’s Will’ – whether political leaders were honoring the Bible or violating it” (p. 39). Also interesting is the revelation that Amir’s brother [who was also imprisoned for his role in the assassination plot] had recommended his reading of Frederick Forsyth’s thriller *The Day of the Jackal*, which was “a fictional account of a right-wing group’s effort to assassinate French President Charles de Gaulle over his decision to end the war in Algeria and withdraw French forces” (p. 93) – which influenced his own assassination plot.

Of special interest to counterterrorism tradecraft is the author’s detailed account of how the Jewish Division of the Shabak (Israel Security Agency – Shin Bet) was aware of the general threats posed by the country’s militant Jewish extremists. In response, the Shabak planted two types of informants within this extremist community: professional career agents, who are trained in undercover work, but whose “infiltration” of militant groups takes time, and “purchased” informants, “people recruited from within particular communities or political groups whose credibility as activists was already established. These insiders would often deliver much better information but they could be difficult to control” (p. 139). The author then discusses how Shabak had tried to use these two types of informants to gather intelligence about potential

terrorist plots against Rabin and other mainstream leaders, with Avishai Raviv, one of their “purchased informants,” and others who were close to Amir, picking up “noise” about his assassination intentions, yet somehow the security service was not able to “connect the dots” in order to preemptively arrest him.

Rabin’s assassination, according to the author, played a large role in reversing the achievements of the Oslo Accords, since “The Israeli settlement movement, which had viewed Rabin’s Oslo Accord as an act of treachery, had more than doubled in size since his assassination and greatly expanded its political power” (p. 244). Politically, the Israeli parliament “also included a record number of Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox Jews – who form the country’s two fastest-growing communities and whose views on the issues of war and peace are consistently hawkish” (pp. 244-245). The author, who lives in New York City, had previously served as the Jerusalem bureau chief for *Newsweek* and the *Daily Beast*.

Asaf Siniver, *Abba Eban: A Biography* (New York, NY: Overlook Duckworth, 2015), 464 pp., US \$ 40.00 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-4683-0933-1.

This is a well-written and extensively researched biography of Abba Eban (1915-2002), one of Israel’s greatest and most erudite diplomats and politicians, who had served (among his numerous positions) as the country’s Foreign Affairs Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Ambassador to the United States, and Ambassador to the United Nations. A Cambridge University graduate and a don (by the age of 23), he also served as a major in the British Army in Egypt and Palestine during World War II, and settled with his wife in Palestine when the war ended. Eban was also a prolific author of highly-acclaimed books on diplomacy affecting Israel, including an autobiography. Eban’s assessment of the nature of Israeli society and the impact of its occupation of the West Bank in the late 1980s was especially prescient in its relevance to the contemporary period. As described by the author, “wherever Eban turned he saw doom and gloom. He blasted the permeation of superstition, intolerance, and xenophobia in Israeli society and politics. He warned that the continuing occupation of 1,500,000 Palestinians weighed no less heavily on the rulers than the ruled” (p. 352). The most feasible solution, according to Eban, was “partition of the land” into two states, Israel and Palestine (p. 353). Finally, in a prophetic warning issued in 1998, after Benjamin Netanyahu had been in Prime Minister for two years and the peace process with the Palestinians had stalled, Eban concluded that “I do not say that the success of the peace process will lead to utopia. I do, however, declare that the failure of the peace process would lead to an inferno of explosive antagonisms and volcanic hatreds. Generations might have to pass before anybody would attempt such a peace project again” (p. 357). The author is an Associate Professor in International Security in the Department of Political Science and International Studies at the University of Birmingham, UK.

Charles D. Freilich, *Zion’s Dilemmas: How Israel Makes National Security Policy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012), 336 pp., US \$ 49.95 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-0-8014-5104-1.

This is an innovative theoretical conceptualization of national security decision-making processes in Israel, which is applied to a series of case studies. As discussed by the author (a former deputy national security advisor in the Israeli Prime Minister’s Office, and currently a Senior Fellow at the Belfer Center, Harvard Kennedy School and a political science professor at both Harvard University and Tel Aviv University), his model “is structured around three primary causal factors, or independent variables, which result in five major decision-making pathologies, the dependent variables.” (p. 2) The independent variables are the external threat environment facing Israel, the country’s proportional representation electoral system (which causes political fragmentation and generally unstable coalition governments), and the weak nature of the

country's decision-making bureaucratic institutions. The dependent variables' five pathologies consist of (1) an excessive focus on a short-term rather than a medium and long term planning process, which results in "an absence of sufficient forethought and policy planning"; (2) a highly politicized decision making at the cabinet level; (3) a "degree of semiorganized anarchy" in government, with a relatively weak Prime Minister granted "few formal prerogatives" in his ability to govern; (4) an informal and "highly idiosyncratic" decision-making process, with insufficient coordination and integration between different ministries; and (5) "an unusual degree of influence" on the process of national security decision-making by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), with a corresponding weakening of the civilian national security agencies (pp. 3-4). With this conceptual framework forming the book's first part, the second part consists of its application to six case studies: Camp David I's peacekeeping process with Egypt (1977-1979), decision-making over the future of production of the Lavi fighter aircraft (1980-1987), the invasion of Lebanon (1982), the unilateral withdrawal from Lebanon (2000), the second Camp David summit's Israeli-Palestinian negotiations (1999-2000), the disengagement from the Gaza Strip (2005), and the second Israel – Lebanon/Hizballah War (2006). One of the author's conclusions is that, as a result of the problems in Israel's decision-making processes, "As issues have become more complex and the cost of error has grown, Israel's ability to improvise and make decisions sequentially has decreased" (p. 245).

Yagil Levy, *Israel's Death Hierarchy: Casualty Aversion in a Militarized Democracy* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2012), 269 pp., US \$ 60. [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-0-8147-5334-7.

Using Israel as a case study, this is an innovative conceptual framework for analyzing what the author terms as a "death hierarchy," which concerns how a state prioritizes the risking of its soldiers in battle according to their social placement in society. This "death hierarchy" is prioritized in three ways. In the first, the author begins with the basic assumption that it is the responsibility of a state to protect itself from violent threats by managing "its citizens' lives and deaths by encouraging individuals to be willing to sacrifice their lives for their country" (p. 5). Still as part of the first prioritization, the author hypothesizes that Israel's formulation of a "death hierarchy" has changed over the years from risking "the lives of soldiers drawn mostly from the secular middle-class groups" to protect its citizens to the emergent category of soldiers drawn from the lower classes (p. 6). This "devaluation of the right to protect" the country by those in a "privileged social position," the author contends, has been caused by "the decline of external threat [and] the ascendancy of a market society that devalued military sacrifice," resulting in a "drop in the motivation to sacrifice among the privileged groups," and thereby increasing the rate of "lower classes" in the fighting ranks. (p. 8) In the second prioritization, the author hypothesizes that with the "increasing legitimacy to use force and decreasing legitimacy to sacrifice, the IDF's ethical code of conduct in the fight against terror was modified" (p. 164) with protecting Israeli soldiers' lives "given higher priority than the obligation to avoid injury" not only to the disadvantage of enemy combatants but to their civilians, as well. This led to a vast leap in the ratio of adversary fatalities, for example, from one to nine in the Al-Aqsa Intifada to one to nineteen or one to thirty-three in later Israeli military campaigns (p. 165). In a third prioritization, as part of the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA), the IDF has been transformed into "a technology-intensive force," with weaponized drones, as one example, used to remotely target adversary forces, thereby reducing the risk of fatalities and injuries to the ground forces.

With regard to changes in the social composition of the IDF, the author points out that it is being realigned, with the country's religious elements attaining greater representation in the combat units. The impact of this development is discussed in the author's new book, *The Divine Commander*, reviewed below.

Yagil Levy, *The Divine Commander: The Theocratization of the Israeli Military* [In Hebrew] (Tel Aviv, Israel: Am Oved Publishers Ltd., 2015), 448 pp., US \$ 36.90 [includes shipping] [Paperback], ISBN: 978-965-13-2524-3. [Available from <http://www.ludwigmayer.com/booknav-The-Divine-Commander-Levy-Yagil-ARTS-31396.html>]

This is an important analysis by a leading Israeli expert on civil-military relations (who serves as a professor of political science and sociology at the Open University of Israel) about how the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) have been undergoing a process of “religionization” and “theocratization,” with the military’s previously largely secular character weakening as it is accompanied by a greater intervention and pressure by religious rabbis to stamp their particular right-wing ultra-religio-nationalist ideology and practices on the military. Following an overview of how these trends have grown over the years (particularly since the 1970s), the author then explains the specific manifestations of these “religionizing” and “theocratizing” trends in the IDF. These include a deliberate attempt by religious right-wing military academies to mobilize their adherents into IDF regular and elite units, with the resultant demographic changes in the makeup of the force trending toward a greater proportion of right-wing religious soldiers and officers in military ranks; placing the right-wing rabbis into a position where they could order their adherents in the IDF to refuse orders by their commanders to evacuate Jewish settlements in the West Bank; and, in an already well integrated force, insisting on instituting “male only” military units to the exclusion of female soldiers, delegitimizing women in their professional opportunities for advancement, particularly in combat units, and even boycotting entertainment events that feature female soldiers (pp. 248- 297). Of greatest concern, the author argues, is that these “religionizing” and “theocratizing” processes are not only weakening civilian control over the military, with “the entrance of external supervisory players, in this case the rabbis of the *hesder* [religious schools that combine pre-military service training] and religious military academies, who operate directly against the military” to advance their religio-nationalist agendas (p. 363), but are also alienating the country’s women, particularly if the military is seen as failing to provide them opportunities for military service equality (p. 381).

Interestingly, the author points out that this “religionization” trend is largely confined to the IDF’s ground and mechanized forces, as opposed to the Air Force, which is still largely secular in its demographic composition (p. 225/p. 357).

It should be pointed out that while the IDF still retains much of its secular nature, the religious and “theocratizing” trends that the author highlights, while on the ascendancy, are the subject of numerous articles and reports in the Israeli media, and are considered to be part of the overall increasing “religionization” of Israeli politics and society, but with the secular forces still attempting to counter these worrisome trends.

Hopefully this important book, which is only available in Hebrew, will be translated into English so that a wider readership will be able to benefit from its numerous insights and findings.

Lena Jayyusi, (Ed.) *Jerusalem Interrupted: Modernity and Colonial Transformation 1917–Present* (Northampton, MA: Olive Branch Press, 2015), 700 pp., US \$ 60. [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-56656-787-9.

The contributors to this richly illustrated edited volume examine the changes in the history and landscape of Jerusalem from 1917 to the present period, with a primary focus on how it has impacted the city’s Arab residents. An extensive collection of archival sources (such as historical photographs, paintings, literature, crafts, attire, and newspapers), oral histories, and contemporary field work (including urban

studies), are utilized to discuss Jerusalem's rich social and cultural history from a Muslim and Christian Arab perspective, as well as their perception of how Israeli policies have affected the city's Arab character, all of which are essential in understanding the factors that need to be considered in resolving Jerusalem's component within the larger Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Further complicating any attempts to resolve the Jewish – Arab conflict over Jerusalem's future, Ahmad Jamil Azem, in his chapter on "The Israeli Redefinition of Jerusalem," observes that "internal Israeli ideological and political disagreements are themselves affecting the process of modernizing the city, and... minimize the ability of successive Israeli governments to develop the distinct political-nationalist (Zionist) identity for the city to which they have aspired. Indeed, Jerusalem has served on many occasions as a center of polarization within Israeli society, itself" (p. 312).

Michele Penner Angrist, (Ed.) *Politics & Society in the Contemporary Middle East* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2013), 550 pp., US \$ 35. [Paperback], ISBN: 978-1-58826-908-9.

The contributors to this highly informative volume—which is intended to serve as a primary textbook for college/university courses in Middle East studies—discuss the political dynamics in the contemporary Middle East in general and country by country. Following the editor's introductory overview, the volume is divided into three parts: the first part discusses the contemporary dynamics in terms of governments and oppositions, the impact of international politics on the region, the region's political economy, civil society, and the interplays between religion, personal identity, and gender and politics. The second part presents case studies on Algeria, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Turkey, with each of these chapters organized in accordance with the first part's general themes. The final part, also by the editor, presents the volume's conclusions in terms of trends and prospects for the region.

For the purpose of this review column, the volume's chapters on Israel, by Alan Dowty, and Palestine, by Nathan J. Brown, are relevant. Why is Israeli society so polarized politically? Dr. Dowty, an expert on Israeli politics, explains that, while remaining a vibrant, competitive democracy, Israel is "deeply divided between a secular, modernizing, more dovish half and a more traditional, conservative, hawkish half" (p. 314), and that "Underneath the seeming stability, however, were signs of a basically confrontational view of politics..." (p. 320). Finally, protest movements in Israel were similar to the "Arab Spring unrest elsewhere in the Middle East, including the importance of social networking, the predominance of youth, and the role of economic grievances" (p. 321).

With regard to Palestine (defined here as the territories of the West Bank controlled by the Palestinian National Authority and the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip), Dr. Brown, an authority on Palestinian politics, points out that while "political opposition has existed since the beginning of the PNA... political competition is not well institutionalized," with no elections held since 2006, and that its political system "has fragile, weak, and decaying institutions" (p. 401). One of the factors contributing to the prevalence of Islamism in Palestinian political discourse, as exemplified by Hamas, is that "large Islamist social movements and sometimes political parties often form the most effective political opposition" (p. 410). As to future trends, Dr. Brown points to the "youthful Palestinian activists" who are working "to emulate Egyptian and Tunisian youth by generating a new movement that would press for political change" (p. 415).

Mustafa Kabha, *The Palestinian People: Seeking Sovereignty and State* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2014), 399 pp., US\$ 68.50 [Hardcover], ISBN: 978-1-58826-882-2.

This is a comprehensive, well-informed, and balanced account of the origins and evolution of Palestinian nationalism and politics from the First World War until around 2012 (the height of the Arab Spring). Following the author's introductory overview, the chapters cover topics such as the opposition by Palestine's Arab population to Zionism and the British Mandate, particularly during the period of 1936 to 1948; the impact on the Palestinians of Israel's military defeat of the Arab forces in the 1948 War; the establishment of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in May 1964; the conflictual relations between the Palestinians (and their armed groups) and Jordan in the 1950s and 1960s (as well as with Lebanon in the 1970s and 1980s); the PLO's international relations in the 1990s; the attempted reconciliation with Israel through the Oslo Peace Accords; the struggle between Fatah and Hamas; and the impact of the Arab Spring on future trends in Palestinian politics and nationalism.

There is much to commend in this book. One is the author's formulation of a three triangles model to depict how Palestinian history has been shaped over the years: firstly, an external triangle, based on the superpowers, the Arab countries, and the state of Israel; secondly, a national identity triangle, based on a pan-regional Arab dimension, a national-Palestinian dimension, and the political-Islamic dimension; and, thirdly, an internal, social triangle, based on the traditional leading families, who are gradually being overtaken by working classes, as well as the youth (pp. 361-362). Another is its contribution to understanding new trends in Palestinian nationalism and politics—which is one of the preconditions for formulating effective counterterrorism and conflict resolution strategies. Here, the author observes that “a Palestinian reconciliation is not imminent, and neither is the reunification of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank under a single authority. Moreover, the possibility of national unity that would enable a uniform representative leadership that could negotiate on behalf of the Palestinians does not seem feasible. Each of the current leaders of the two blocs has resolved to be victorious, each pulling in their own direction, and therefore it may be assumed that only the emergence of a new leadership, free of the residues of violent struggle characteristic of the relationship between the two movements to date will be able to lead the Palestinian people toward the light at the end of the tunnel” (pp. 343-344).

The author, a prominent Israeli Arab political scientist and historian, teaches at the Department of History, Philosophy, and Judaism at the Open University of Israel.

Mark Levine and Gershon Shafir, (Eds.) *Struggle and Survival in Palestine/Israel* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2012), 472 pp., US \$ 34.95 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-0-520-26253-9.

The contributors to this edited volume examine the biographies of more than two dozen exemplary Israeli and Palestinian individuals who were [as explained on the book's back cover] “embedded in, but also empowered by their [respective] social and historical contexts” in order to better “understand both struggle and survival in [such] a troubled region.” Although some of the volume's writing is overlaid with academic jargon, such as referring to a biographical subject as a “human agency” or their contribution to society as “marginal and subaltern voices” (p. 4), the discussion of many of their biographical subjects does reveal interesting and important insights into their respective societies over a 120 year period from the Ottoman Empire at the turn of the century until the contemporary period. The individuals whose biographies are discussed range from Haim Amzalak, a Jewish Sephardi entrepreneur and British Vice-Consul, and Wasif Jawhariyyeh, an Arab musician in “old Jerusalem” in the Ottoman period, several Palestinians who were

dispossessed by Israeli statehood in 1948–49, to Palestinians and Israelis who had expressed themselves in different ways on the conflict between these two peoples.

Of particular interest to this review column's discussion are the chapters that present the biographies of several Palestinian and Israeli terrorists. What were their motivations to conduct their terrorist operations? For two Palestinian suicide terrorists (Nael Abu Hilayel and Maher Hubashi), Bader Araj, the chapter's author, it was "a mixed religious and retaliatory motivational logic" and a means to liberate their homeland (pp. 381-382). Moreover, in what this reviewer considers as overly uncritical, Mr. Araj claims that these two suicide bombers and others he had examined "could not be characterized as suffering from any form of mental illness or psychopathology or from deprivation" (p. 382). Finally, both were not lone wolves, and the author accurately portrays their attacks as part of a "collective action, requiring the involvement of several individuals to carry out various tasks, including collecting detailed information about the target and the best time and way for the attacker to enter Israel, driving the bomber to the target, making a suicide belt, videotaping the bomber reading his or her last will, and declaring responsibility" (p. 380).

The chapter by Michael Feige on Yigal Amir, the Jewish terrorist who assassinated Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in November 1995, presents a well-rounded psycho-biography. Amir was an ultra-Orthodox/nationalistic zealot, filled with "sentiments and hatred for 'the other'"—in this case not only the Palestinians but any Israeli who promoted an Israeli-Palestinian peace agreement (p. 387). Socio-economically, he was a lower-class *Mizrachi* whose family had originally immigrated from Yemen, and even despite his upwardly mobile university education, he still belonged "to the wide ethnic fringes of the [right-wing] ideological settlements" (p. 390). It was such factors that likely drove him to seek "glory" in his extremist community as Rabin's assassin.

Mark Levine and Mathias Mossberg, (Eds.) *One Land, Two States: Israel and Palestine as Parallel States* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2014), 296 pp., US \$ 29.95 [Paperback], ISBN: 978-0-520-27913-1.

The contributors to this well-argued and balanced volume, who are Israeli, Palestinian, and Swedish experts on conflict resolution, examine a new multi-dimensional framework for resolving the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, based on two parallel states that would coexist peacefully with each other. This project, known as the Parallel States Project (PSP), began in September 2008, culminating in an international conference that was held in October 2010 at Lund University, Sweden, under the auspices of the Swedish Foreign Ministry, where this volume's chapters were first presented. The volume's chapters cover different aspects of the concept of parallel states as they apply to resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, such as an overview of the parallel states concept, how the Israeli and Palestinian states that would emerge from the peace process would cooperate, for instance, in economic, judicial, and security matters; how the currently intransigent role of religion could be transformed from an obstacle to reconciliation; and the necessity for both Israelis and Palestinians to "think outside of the box" to conceptualize a new peaceful future for both peoples.

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