

## BOOK REVIEWS

Ben-Rafael, Eliezer. *Israel-Palestine: A Guerrilla Conflict in International Politics*. Westport, Connecticut and London: Greenwood Press, 1987.

The banal aphorism, what goes around comes around, is certainly appropriate with respect to the book under review. Literature on "guerilla" warfare and low-intensity conflict is, again, in vogue as it was during the Vietnam era. Unfortunately for the contemporary reader who is not familiar with the intensive social science research done during that period, reading *Israel-Palestine* will only serve to confuse while those who are conversant in the relevant work of the 1960s will now be disappointed.

Ben-Rafael makes a distinction between the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, an inter-communal dispute, and the Arab states-Israeli conflict, the inter-state/regional controversy. In the attempt to develop a theoretical model of guerrilla warfare because, the author argues, none exists, there is an attempt to delineate forms and levels of violence, which is certainly a correct methodological procedure. However, what is presented appears in such a confusing manner that it contributes little to our understanding of the phenomenon. Rather than employing a simple and straightforward approach to develop a scheme for the study of low-intensity and low-level conflict, a great deal of wide-ranging material is compressed along with the use of jargon-laden language. In fact, there is an outright failure on the author's part to set forth clearly a thesis with the appropriate operationalization of key terms and concepts. It appears that a cross-cultural comparison is used although the theme featured is clearly a case study.

The book's theme focuses on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in the Administered/Occupied Territories, that is, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and the Golan Heights with the temporal setting from 1967 to the early 1980s. Data for the study were collected by the author in personal interviews, in-field surveys, plus PLO materials seized by the IDF following the Israeli incursion into Lebanon in 1982.

Ben-Rafael claims that the Palestinian Arabs failed to institutionalize a cohesive governing structure when they had the opportunity after World War I because of that community's non-acceptance of the League of Nations' Mandate over Palestine. Hence, the author presumes a Palestinian affinity towards western governing institutions although the community was recognizably Muslim in its make-up and, therefore, not culturally aware of traditional western values and institutions.

The discussion on violence during the mandatory period tends to focus on Palestinian Arab-initiated acts against the Palestinian Jewish community. However, an important aspect of the pattern of violence is not examined, that is, Arab-Arab violence. Indeed, during the Arab revolt (1936-1939) more Palestine Arabs were killed intra-communally

than by the British military and Jewish colonists combined. In addition, the material devoted to an analysis of politics within the Palestinian Arab community makes but brief mention of the role of families and clans. Without greater emphasis on Palestinian Arab social structure there can not be, in this reviewer's estimation, a proper appreciation of that group's use of violence. From a historical perspective, violence by Palestinians has frequently been a method of either maintaining family dominance in the community or attempting to shift smaller groups' loyalties.

The sources employed to support the study are overwhelmingly official Israeli documentation or Israeli scholarship; certainly a strong Israeli orientation is in evidence. While the origin of the source material is not in question, the validity of the conclusions can be more easily called into question. There is, to be sure, a candid examination of Israeli administrative practices in the West Bank which have had the impact of disrupting the lives of Palestinian Arabs.

Perhaps the most significant contribution can be found in the appendices and bibliography. In the former, one can find data detailing discrete and collective violence initiated by the PLO in the Administered/Occupied Territories and internationally during the period of 1967-1981. Overall, however, there is insufficient material that supplements the work of Bard O'Neill's *Revolutionary Warfare in the Middle East: The Israelis vs. The Fedayeen* (Boulder, Colorado: Paladin Press, 1974) to warrant a favorable recommendation for this book.

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Amstutz, J. Bruce. *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation*. Washington: National Defense University, 1986.

*Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* is thick, interesting, and loosely organized. While neither the best nor the most complete book on Afghanistan, it remains a valuable addition to the literature on Afghanistan and is likely to have something of value for most students or researchers.

The book's throw weight - 383 pages of text, 31 of appendices, 107 of notes and sources - give it scope for completeness. The author, who was senior diplomat in the U.S. embassy in Kabul after the killing of Ambassador Dubs in 1979, has also wisely focused primarily on the events leading to, and flowing from, the Soviet invasion. Of these, the war itself receives the bulk of attention. This is especially welcome, as many of the books on Afghanistan have put their emphasis more on the pre-invasion period, where there was greater opportunity for access to sources.