

Palestinian Arab state from Palestinian Arab participation, thus bringing the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation into discussions with Israel to insure the process remains dynamic. But by all means do not disengage from the overall process in the face of procedural distractions.

This is an impressive array of logical composition, persuasive perception, and cogent ideas.

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Cooley, John K. *Payback: America's Long War in the Middle East*. Washington, DC: Brassey's (US), 1991.

Payback is an examination of US foreign policy towards the Middle East in the aftermath of the Iranian revolution. The central focus of this work is the US confrontation with radical Islamic forces in Iran, the Gulf, and Lebanon. While most of the work involves Iran and Lebanon, the final chapters deal with the US confrontation with Iraq. As such the book is a useful contribution to the analysis of US foreign policy and renders the exceptionally valuable service of putting the Desert Storm crisis into a well-reasoned historical context.

One of *Payback's* most useful aspects is its detailed presentation of what Cooley calls the "secret war" between Iran and the United States. If the full scope of this conflict is "secret," this is only because groups identified in the Western press as "pro-Iranian" or "Iranian-inspired" would be better characterized as Iranian controlled. Cooley is not the first author to make this point, but he may have done the most professional job of documenting it. The destruction of the US embassy in Beirut, the murder of 241 marines, and the kidnapping of US nationals in Lebanon occurred at Teheran's orders. Other spectacular acts of terrorism that were planned by the Iranians failed by narrow margins. At least one US hostage abducted in Lebanon was imprisoned in Teheran while others were interrogated by Iranian Revolutionary Guards in Lebanon.

Cooley also does a good job of documenting and explaining the naval clashes between Iran and the United States in the Gulf, including the repeated sinkings of Iranian speedboats by US warships ensuring their own protection. He has also analyzed Iranian efforts to overthrow pro-Western Arab regimes in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and elsewhere. Any problems understanding the US tilt toward Iraq prior to Desert Storm can be at least partially explained by examining the US confrontation with Khomeinism.

In making his presentation, Cooley draws on his long experience in the region and also quite frequently cited US intelligence sources. As a former

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Pentagon correspondent for the *Christian Science Monitor*, Cooley is aware of the range of foreign policy tools at the disposal of the US. As a former Middle East correspondent, he is also aware of the environment in which those tools must be employed. The work is spiced with many personal stories which generally improve the quality of the presentation.

A minor problem with *Payback* is that the writing style tends to drift into the overly dramatic upon occasion, using phrases such as “drawn daggers” and words such as “wimps.” Khomeini is portrayed as absorbed with malicious glee over the deaths of Americans, and the now disgraced brother of Syrian President Assad is portrayed at one point as earning “brownie points” with the US. Perhaps Cooley wishes to emphasize that this is to be a popular book as well as a professional one, and many of his observations are worthy of consideration by a wider audience.

Nevertheless, while Cooley has a number of tactical recommendations as to how the US could have protected its interests, it is not clear that he has presented an alternative set of foreign policy principles. The US clearly should have gathered better intelligence, built better embassy fences, and not launched bombing raids when the sun would be in the pilot’s eyes. On a higher level all serious US observers agree that greater efforts should have been made to prevent Saddam Hussein from acquiring nuclear and chemical weapons. Yet, should the US have refrained from helping Iraq on other levels when Iran was sending what Cooley calls the “wind of hate” across the Middle East? Should the United States have deemphasized its ties with Israel or Saudi Arabia because of shortcomings Cooley points out. These hard questions do not seem to be answered in a clear or consistent way and at times one is not sure whether Cooley has implied an answer or not.

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Rezun, Miron. *Intrigue and War in Southwest Asia: The Struggle for Supremacy from Central Asia to Iraq*. New York: Praeger, 1992.

Books on Southwest Asia, more so than studies on the Middle East, pursue the themes of intrigue, conspiracies, and the “Great Game.” Miron Rezun’s book is no exception to this rule. Since it was written at a time when *Perestroika*- and *Glasnost*-related events were heightening the omnipresent fissiparous tendencies in the Central Asian region of the USSR, the author seemed to have decided to include two chapters on the Central Asian political movements — one on Basmachism/Turanism and the other on the issue of rising Islamic consciousness. The latter movement is handled in a peripheral manner, however. The remaining main chapters (excluding introduction and epilogue) deal with Afghanistan, Iran, and Iraq.