

"A younger Palestinian scholar, Yezid Sayigh, shows by contrast that the political narrative can be reconstructed. Sayigh's monumental new history of the Palestinian national movement, Armed Struggle and the Search for State does this in all its bewilderingly intricate detail."

Printer-friendly version Send by email FULL TEXT One rarely looks forward with anticipation to new books on the Arab-Israeli conflict, but this volume is an important study of a subject that receives intense polemical interest. Without exaggeration, this work is probably one of the most comprehensive studies yet written about the Palestinian national movement. Scholars may find the book too unburdened by theory and academic jargon, but this quality also ensures its readership among lay Lebanese and Palestinians once it is translated into Arabic. Every chapter is important and tells the story that has to be told in detail. What Sayigh does in this book has never been done before: The book should have been titled more accurately as a military history of the Palestinian national movement. He succeeds in this tremendous task by mastering the intricate organizational relationships between and within all PLO organizations. A meticulous researcher, Sayigh is able to link the Palestinian story to its wider Arab and regional contexts. This major accomplishment is not only the product of sharp analytical skills and attention to detail, but also to very hard labor. The book is based on primary documents and political literature of the Palestinian people supplemented by numerous interviews with major and minor figures representing a variety of viewpoints and ideological strands in the Palestinian national movement. Refreshingly, the author is too knowledgeable to be swayed by his interviewees. More than a chronicle of the Palestinian national movement, the book offers an insightful critique of the path of armed struggle preached and practiced--albeit in deformed ways--by PLO organizations. Sayigh casually labels PLO acts "terrorist" pp. More surprising, an Israeli invasion of Lebanese territory is a "mission" p. There is much to criticize about PLO behavior, but it is indubitable that Israeli violent acts over the decades have caused the death and injury of far more innocent people than have those of the PLO. Furthermore, his account of Black September is quite sympathetic to the official Jordanian point of view, primarily blaming PLO organizations for the bloodshed and eviction not to mention murder of PLO fighters: While the author harbors some sympathy for the role of Abu Jihad pp. He almost sounds neutral, if such a thing is genuinely possible or laudable, about the "rights and wrongs" p. Sayigh presents a devastating critique of the military strategy--or lack thereof--of all PLO organizations. In chapter 8, he superbly reviews the path of Palestinian armed struggle in theory and practice. He correctly points out that the Palestinian political movement "lacked the single-minded determination to take the practice of armed struggle to the elevated position it occupied in formal doctrine and to develop its organization in a manner commensurate with the task" p. He laments the "absence of clear thinking on the form and requirements of establishing guerrilla authority" p. Sayigh also points out that a gap between "the polemical and instrumental approaches to armed struggle" p. Who can disagree with his criticisms of the destructively fatalistic attitude of PLO leaders such as the late Khalid al-Hassan, who considered the "suicide" of Israel as a "serious possibility" p. Similarly, who can disagree that the "PLO was slow to pay serious attention to the inner workings of Israeli society and politics" p. All those who are concerned about the political future of the Palestinian people would learn from this book. There is so much that is new and original here. While the quality of the chapters is consistently high throughout, the book appears rushed at the end, especially when the story picks up with the aftermath of the Israeli invasion of The assassinations of Abu Iyad and Abu al-Hawl, under very mysterious circumstances, are mentioned only briefly p. The book provides new information about the extent of the conflict between Arafat and Abu Jihad and how Arafat tried to undermine the power of every capable leader under his command. It is very impressive that a book of this size contains only a few errors and mistakes. None of those points, however, detracts from the overall validity of this book. The translation and transliteration of Arabic is near perfect, but one may suggest a few alterations and corrections: On the gender question the author is entirely insensitive despite a perfunctory reference in the acknowledgment section p. This comprehensive military history of the Palestinians leaves women totally outside its scope. For somebody who is a stickler for the name of every

male appointed to any major or minor post, it is astonishing that female appointees are referred to as "two women" p. Why not name them, and why not identify those women who played military roles like Layla Khalid and Maha Abu Khalil as hijackers and Dalal al-Mughrabi as commando leader, among many others? Documentation for the book is thorough and only a few places need further corroborative evidence: The book would have been easier to follow for the general reader if the author had used the noms de guerre of PLO leaders instead of their real names: It fills a gap in the political and academic literature, and the author has rendered a service not only to the scholarly community but also to the Palestinian people. The story, however, is a painful one, filled with defeats, frustration, betrayals, incompetence, massacres, and blunders. The author presents the information while suspending his judgment, for the most part.

Book Reviews Armed Struggle and the Search for State: The Palestinian National Movement, by Yezid Sayigh. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp.

During the peaceful two years after the Hudaibiyyah treaty, many converted to Islam, increasing the strength of the Muslim side. It was the breach of this treaty by the Quraysh [12] that triggered the conquest of Mecca. The operation was in response to attacks against Israel, including rockets strikes from Fatah and other Palestinian militias into the occupied West Bank. Black September In the late s, tensions between Palestinians and the Jordanian government increased greatly; heavily armed Arab resistance elements had created a virtual "state within a state" in Jordan, eventually controlling several strategic positions in that country. After their victory in the Battle of Karameh, Fatah and other Palestinian militias began taking control of civil life in Jordan. They set up roadblocks, publicly humiliated Jordanian police forces, molested women and levied illegal taxes – all of which Arafat either condoned or ignored. The Jordanian army inflicted heavy casualties upon the Palestinians – including civilians – who suffered approximately 3, fatalities. Two thousand Fatah fighters managed to enter Syria. They crossed the border into Lebanon to join Fatah forces in that country, where they set up their new headquarters. Abu Ali Iyad was executed and surviving members of his commando force formed the Black September Organization , a splinter group of Fatah. Fatah received weapons, explosives and training from the Soviet Union and some of the communist states of East Europe. China and Algeria also provided munitions. Lebanese Civil War Since the death of Eljamal in , the Palestinian cause had a large base of supporters in Lebanon. Although hesitant at first to take sides in the conflict, Arafat and Fatah played an important role in the Lebanese Civil War. Although originally aligned with Fatah, Syrian President Hafez al-Assad feared a loss of influence in Lebanon and switched sides. The primary component of the Christian militias was the Maronite Phalangists. Later that year, an alliance of Christian militias overran the Palestinian refugee camp of Karantina killing over 1, civilians. In , with strategic planning help from the Lebanese Army, the alliance of Christian militias, spearheaded by the National Liberal Party of former President Camille Chamoun militant branch, the noumour el ahrar NLP Tigers , took a pivotal refugee camp in the Eastern part of Beirut, the Tel al-Zaatar camp, after a six-month siege, also known as Tel al-Zaatar massacre in which hundreds perished. A force of nearly a dozen Fatah fighters landed their boats near a major coastal road connecting the city of Haifa with Tel Aviv-Yafo. There they hijacked a bus and sprayed gunfire inside and at passing vehicles, killing thirty-seven civilians. Despite the exile, many Fatah commanders and fighters remained in Lebanon, and they faced the War of the Camps in the s in their fight with the Shia Amal Movement and also in connection with internal schisms within the Palestinian factions. Fatah nominated Mahmoud Abbas in the Palestinian presidential election of In , Hamas won in nearly all the municipalities it contested. Because of this, the movement remains largely dominated by aging cadres from the pre-Oslo era of Palestinian politics. Several of them gained their positions through the patronage of Yasser Arafat, who balanced above the different factions, and the era after his death in has seen increased infighting among these groups, who jockey for influence over future development, the political line, funds, and constituencies. The prospect of Abbas leaving power in the coming years has also exacerbated tensions. One founding member, Faruq al-Qaddumi Abu Lutf , continues to openly oppose the post-Oslo arrangements and has intensified his campaign for a more hardline position from exile in Tunis. He has at times openly challenged the legitimacy of Abbas and harshly criticized both him and Mohammed Dahlan , but despite threats to splinter the movement, he remains in his position, and his challenges have so far been fruitless. Another influential veteran, Hani al-Hassan , has also openly criticized the present leadership. Foreign backing for different factions contribute to conflict, e. However, such overt breaks with the movement have still been rather uncommon, despite numerous rivalries inside and between competing local Fatah groups. Among the 14 preconditions were the release of all Palestinian prisoners from Israeli jails, freezing all Israeli settlement construction, and lifting the Gaza blockade. Deputy Foreign Minister of Israel, Danny Ayalon , said the conference was a "serious blow to peace" and "was another lost opportunity for the Palestinian leadership to

adopt moderate views. At least 70 new members entered the latter, with 20 seats going to Fatah representatives from the Gaza Strip, 11 seats filled by women the highest number of votes went to one woman who spent years in Israeli jails for her role in the resistance , four seats went to Christians, and one was filled by a Jewish-born convert to Islam, Uri Davis , the first Jewish-born person to be elected to the Revolutionary Council since its founding in . Elected to the central council was Fadwa Barghouti, the wife of Marwan Barghouti who was serving five life sentences in Israel for his role in terrorist attacks on civilians in Israel during the Second Intifada. Reconciliation process with Hamas A meeting of the Revolutionary Council was held in Ramallah from 18â€”19 October . Many important questions were discussed, including reconciliation with Hamas. Opinion was divided on this issue. Six new members were added to the Central Committee while 12 were reelected. The youth of the catastrophe shibab al-nakba are dispersed Life in the tent has become as miserable as death We, the sons of the catastrophe, are no longer willing to live this dirty, despicable life, this life which has destroyed our cultural, moral and political existence and destroyed our human dignity. Fatah is generally considered to have had a strong involvement in terrorism in the past, [6] [7] [8] [9] [10] though unlike its rival Islamist faction Hamas , Fatah is no longer regarded as a terrorist organization by any government. Fatah used to be designated terrorist under Israeli law and was considered terrorist by the United States Department of State and United States Congress until it renounced terrorism in . This name has since been applied more generally to Fatah armed forces, and does not correspond to a single unit today. Other militant groups associated with Fatah include: Plays a role akin to the Presidential Guard for senior Fatah leaders. A group formed by leading Fatah members in , following the events of the " Black September " in Jordan, to organize clandestine attacks with which Fatah did not want to be openly associated. These included strikes against leading Jordanian politicians as a means of exacting vengeance and raising the price for attacking the Palestinian movement; and also, most controversially, for "international operations" e. An armed militia active mainly until the mids. A branch of Fatah under the leadership of Marwan Barghouti, with roots in the activism of the First Intifada , which carried out armed attacks in the early days of the Second Intifada. The Brigades are locally organized and have been said to suffer from poor cohesion and internal discipline, at times ignoring ceasefires and other initiatives announced by the central Fatah leadership. They are generally seen as tied to the "young guard" of Fatah politics, organizing young members on the street level, but it is not clear that they form a faction in themselves inside Fatah politics; rather, different Brigades units may be tied to different Fatah factional leaders.

3: The "Fakhani Republic" : Armed Struggle and the Search for State - oi

Taking the much-vaunted 'armed struggle' as its connecting theme, it shows how conflict was used to mobilize the mass constituency, assert particular discourses of revolution and nationalism, construct statist institutions, and establish the legitimacy of a new political class and bureaucratic elite.

Roger Owen has fully revised and updated his authoritative text to take into account the latest developments in the Middle East. This book continues to serve as an excellent introduction for newcomers to the modern history and politics of this fascinating region. This third edition continues to explore the emergence of individual Middle Eastern states since the fall of the Ottoman Empire at the end of the First World War and the key themes that have characterized the region since then. In this insightful anthology, historians Marvin E. Gettleman and Stuart Schaar have assembled a broad selection of documents and contemporary scholarship to give a view of the history of the peoples from the core Islamic lands, from the Golden Age of Islam to today. With carefully framed essays beginning each chapter and brief introductory notes accompanying over seventy readings, the anthology reveals the multifaceted societies and political systems of the Islamic world. Selections range from theological texts illuminating the differences between Shiite and Sunni Muslims, to diplomatic exchanges and state papers, to memoirs and literary works, to manifestos of Islamic radicals. This newly revised and expanded edition covers the dramatic changes in the region since , and the popular uprisings that swept from Tunisia in January through Egypt, Libya, and beyond. The Middle East and Islamic World Reader is a fascinating historical survey of complex societies that "now more than ever" are crucial for us to understand. A timely work, it focuses mainly on sociopolitical texts dating from the rise of Islam to the debates concerning U. In this fully revised new edition, Kirsten Schulze brings us to a new understanding of the causes, course and consequences of the Arab-Israeli Conflict. Schulze analyses the dynamics of the violence and explores the numerous attempts at resolving the conflict. She assesses why, in the cases of Israel-Egypt in and Israel-Jordan in , negotiations succeeded in bringing about a lasting peace and why, in the cases of Israel, and the Palestinians, Syria and Lebanon, they failed to do so. Written in a clear and accessible style, this fully updated second edition: Paul Thomas Chamberlin Language: Oxford University Press Format Available: On March 21, , Yasir Arafat and his guerrillas made the fateful decision to break with conventional guerrilla tactics, choosing to stand and fight an Israeli attack on the al-Karama refugee camp in Jordan. They suffered terrible casualties, but they won a stunning symbolic victory that transformed Arafat into an Arab hero and allowed him to launch a worldwide campaign, one that would reshape Cold War diplomacy and revolutionary movements everywhere. After defeat in the war, the crushing of a guerrilla campaign on the West Bank, and the attack on al-Karama, Arafat and his fellow guerilla fighters opened a global offensive aimed at achieving national liberation for the Palestinian people. In doing so, they reinvented themselves as players on the world stage, combining controversial armed attacks, diplomacy, and radical politics. They forged a network of nationalist revolutionaries, making alliances with South African rebels, Latin American insurrectionists, and Vietnamese Communists. They persuaded the United Nations to take up their agenda, and sent Americans and Soviets scrambling as these stateless forces drew new connections across the globe. Find Your eBooks Here!

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