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The Arabs: Journeys Beyond the Mirage

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ing the NATO alliance in depth and understanding the varying issues and perspectives that will shape its future—and thereby the future security of the United States.

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Archer, Clive and Scrivener, David, eds. *Northern Waters*. New York: Barnes and Noble, 1986. 240pp. \$37.50

Northern Waters is a collection of papers on security and resource issues affecting an area within the latitudes of 60°N to 80°S and longitudes 40°E to 90°W. This encompasses the islands of Arctic Canada, Greenland, Iceland, the Faroes, the Shetlands, Jan Mayen, and Svalbard, as well as the mainland of Norway, reaching to the Kola Peninsula, and including the adjacent seas.

At a glance, one can quickly see that the papers discuss an area of considerable strategic interest to the United States in general and the U.S. Navy in particular. They are written by various people from the region. Editors Archer and Scrivener provide an introduction that puts the articles in context and, further, joins the resource and security issues. They make three points:

- Since the northern waters protect areas of transit, they are important for the transportation of economic resources.
- There are resources within the region of the northern waters that are of great strategic value.

- Political actors in the area are able to make a deliberate connection between resource and security issues.

In many ways this book is a primer on the area as well as the issues. Subjects such as law of the sea, resource endowment and exploitation, transportation of resources, new military technologies (including an interesting discussion of satellites), contrasting military strategies and political perspectives (both internal and external), and the control of conflict are addressed. A modest amount of regional history provides a useful background. Because this book is a compilation of separate papers, a particular subject tends to be covered in its entirety in that one discourse. This makes it convenient to pick up the book and read only that in which you are interested.

What *Northern Waters* does best is give to an area, that is to most of us nothing but cold, barren land and seascape, a life and vibrancy that puts strategic discussions into a context. The treatment of Svalbard in the discussion on the "Soviet Union and Northern Waters" is particularly good. On balance, it is a valuable collection of papers that deserves the attention of strategists and planners concerned with East-West strategy in general and the northern latitudes in particular.

J.S. HURLBURT
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Lamb, David. *The Arabs: Journeys Beyond the Mirage*. New York: Random House, 1987. 333pp. \$19.95

In this book, David Lamb sets out to answer the question he posed in preparation for his Los Angeles Times Middle East correspondent assignment: "If I want to understand the Arabs, not just their politics, where do I go. . . . Who are they?" While any one volume would be insufficient to answer fully this over-large question, the author comes very close to providing a very comprehensive look at the people "beyond the mirage" of Arab politics, U.S. Middle East policy, oil politics, etc.

Beginning with a look at the people of Cairo and the plight of modern Egypt, Mr. Lamb then takes the reader on a tour of the Middle East based largely on his personal experiences there during the momentous years of 1981-85. His descriptions of Lebanon, Libya, terrorism, Islam, religious fundamentalism, the Palestinians, oil and the Gulf States, and the challenge of modernization are written in a tight, easily read, journalistic style which is filled with graphic images of people, places, and phenomena of the Arab Middle East. His successful attempt to add flesh and color to a region, which in many cases is described in the cold, hard logic of geopolitics, is a useful tool for one wishing to understand the Arabs.

In writing this description, Mr. Lamb has used the journalists' method of simplification. This could prove frustrating to some readers, but—as in his description of the evolution of Islam—he has in most cases provided the reader with an accurate account without the burden of minutiae.

Certainly, more detailed, thorough, and scholarly works on the world's third monotheistic religion abound, but they are not read by the average American, and misunderstanding persists.

The real strength of this book is that it is simple enough to catch and hold the average reader's interest, but detailed enough to inform accurately about numerous aspects of what is to many a totally alien and mystifying Middle Eastern culture. Lamb tries to adhere to the advice given him by many Arabs: "Understand our culture for what it is, not for when it fails to measure up to Western standards." In fact, there are several portions of this book (Lebanon, Palestine) which could be considered to be too pro-Arab.

The book is weakest where Lamb dabbles in political analysis. For example, he is obviously concerned about international terrorism but falls into the trap of minimizing its moral impact by comparing terrorist death statistics with U.S. traffic fatalities. Similarly, while providing a highly illuminating view of both the cunning and the tunnel vision of Muammar Qaddafi ("a good study for a psychiatrist"), Lamb again goes on to minimize the long-term political impact of terrorism. His prescription for the problem also indicates a lack of in-depth political analysis of the field: revivifying the peace process; balancing U.S. policy in the Middle East; reducing U.S.-Soviet competition; and covert assassination of terrorist leaders. The first three recommendations are commendable

but his political analysis would have been far more convincing had he enumerated practical ways in which to accomplish them and had he also explained in detail why these methods have not worked as yet.

Lamb has, however, successfully avoided the pitfall of expanding this book into coverage of all Muslims and thereby confusing the issue of "who practices Islam," with "who (and what) is an Arab." He adhered admirably well to the central focus of the book: where the Arabs came from, what drives them, and what challenges they are likely to face in the future—all with a view to producing something to be read and understood by the layperson.

I would not recommend this as a comprehensive sourcebook on the Middle East but, if complemented by a study of Israel and Iran, it would certainly provide a good start. For the Middle East scholar, it will be unsatisfying from the standpoint of serious political description, but it will provide a potpourri of verbal images to enliven his understanding of the region.

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Parrot, Bruce. *The Soviet Union and Ballistic Missile Defense*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1987. 121pp. \$17.95

Tucker, Robert W. et al. *SDI and US Foreign Policy*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1987. 126pp. \$19.50

In *The Soviet Union and Ballistic Missile Defense*, Bruce Parrot analyzes Soviet ballistic missile defense (BMD) capabilities, deployments, and policy statements by tracing the evolution of Soviet policies toward BMD. Parrot's work is a useful and much needed addition to the small body of literature currently available on Soviet BMD policy. *SDI and US Foreign Policy* is a collection of essays by Johns Hopkins University professors Robert W. Tucker, George Liska, David P. Calleo, and the late Robert E. Osgood. The authors examine the implications of SDI *vis-à-vis* U.S.-Soviet relations and NATO.

In *The Soviet Union and Ballistic Missile Defense* Parrot uses inductive reasoning and protocol evidence to examine and compare Soviet military and civilian publications on U.S.-Soviet relations and strategic defense. Soviet public statements are also tested against Soviet weapons development for possible political deception. Parrot argues that there are serious BMD policy disagreements in the Soviet Politburo. He claims there are two contending policy lines and interservice rivalries in the military. Supporters of the first policy line—such as the patrons of Brezhnev and now Gorbachev—aver that détente with the West is necessary so that more economic resources can be channeled away from the military and into additional high technology projects, thereby closing the East-West technology gap and improving Soviet economic performance.

According to Parrot, Gorbachev's Politburo patrons are attempting to