

1961

The Political and Social Significance of Islam

E. Salem

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review>

Recommended Citation

Salem, E. (1961) "The Political and Social Significance of Islam," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 14 : No. 2 , Article 3.
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol14/iss2/3>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Naval War College Review by an authorized editor of U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. For more information, please contact repository.inquiries@usnwc.edu.

THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF ISLAM

A lecture delivered
at the Naval War College
7 November 1960

by

Professor E. Salem

Though one day before the election one is tempted to talk American politics, let us try to concentrate on an entirely different subject. My subject requires me to talk about Islam in fifty minutes. This is a hard task.

First of all, I would like to emphasize the fact that the world consists of diverse cultural groups, and that the world will continue to consist of diverse cultural groups for a long time to come. I am not therefore a believer in the bipolarization of the world, at least on a cultural level. Consequently, Islamic culture will continue to be important, irrespective of the political destiny of the Muslim World. Whether the Muslim World goes communist or democratic the probability is that it will remain in a special sense Islamic. Therefore it is important to examine Islam as a culture and to refer to the historical process that brought it about.

The modern history of the Near East starts with the march of Alexander the Great on Asia. He sought to "Westernize" the East. From Alexander's conquest of the East the process of Hellenization began. The Greek (Western) culture and the Asiatic cultures gave forth to a new culture of universal relevance. In the midst of this Hellenistic fusion Christianity developed as a universal religion concomitant with the universal Hellenistic culture. Christianity developed in this culture and assumed its forms. Its ideology and its doctrine (ex. concept of the trinity) were formulated

under the discipline of Greek philosophy and Eastern religiosity.

In a very important sense Islam may be considered an Arabian response to the cultural challenge of the Hellenistic world in the north. As the Hellenistic world had its order and ideology, so did the Arabs hope to formulate through Islam their own order and ideology. Muhammad of Arabia had an entirely different experience than that of Jesus, the citizen of the Roman Empire. The Roman Empire had order, law, peace, and organization, but was lacking in spiritual content. Christianity filled the spiritual vacuum. It had no need to venture into the political, economic and legal realms. The Arabian Peninsula, on the other hand, had no centralized government, no peace and very little order. The prophet of Islam had to deal with all these issues. Christianity was purely spiritual because Rome had offered everything else. Muhammad was called upon by necessity to furnish everything. He had to introduce or better "fashion" a new law, a new organization and a new state. Unlike Christianity Islam is not only a religion, but a community bound together by religious, legal, social, economic and political patterns, all conceived and ordered by the Islamic moral imperative. The Christian ethos is spiritual, teleological; that of Islam is spiritual and mundane at the same time. The difference between the founders reflects itself in the two religions. The Islamic community still exists as a community of sentiment, of brotherhood among all the Muslims; and the Islamic moral imperative remains the most unifying factor among the four hundred million Muslims in the world. Muhammad was more impressed with the image of Moses than with that of Jesus, and like Moses he established a warlike community dedicated to victory and to the conversion of the world into the true faith. Unlike Christianity which is the religion of the humble, Islam is the religion of the warrior and of the general. Muhammad organized the Islamic community and gave it a political structure and an

ideological content. It took the overarching ideology of Islam to unite the Arabs, but having unified them it sent them into the world as conquerors to realize in less than a century one of the greatest feats in human history. Under the banner of Islam the Arabs had established an empire that was at one time larger than the Roman Empire at its zenith. It extended from Morocco in the west to India in the east. Having reached the Atlantic, the Arab general rode his horse into the ocean exalting, "By Allah, if there is still further land to the west I shall conquer it for Allah and his prophet." The Muslims conquered Spain and all the major islands of the Mediterranean, plus the heel of Italy. Gradually Islam expanded into Africa and deeper into Asia until it reached Indonesia. Islam had finally settled on the major desert belt of the world, astride the two ancient continents. The character of this desert belt is largely nomadic. The thesis that Islam is designed to appeal to the nomadic rather than to the agriculturist mind is exceedingly important, but it is outside our topic.

The startling military victory of the Arabs confirmed the Islamic belief that Allah was destined to give victory to the Muslims, as the religion of al-haqq (the right) Islam must prevail. Islam is the last revelation of Allah to man. It is essentially the same revelation that was delivered to Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus. The Muslims believed that the followers of these revered prophets had corrupted the revelations. As a last resort Allah revealed the true religion to Muhammad clearly and decisively. The Quran is the sum total of these revelations. Islam therefore does not necessarily contradict the earlier revelations but corrects and completes them. The Quran was revealed to Muhammad through the angel Gabriel between the year 610 and 632 when the prophet died. The Old and the New Testaments were written by many authors. The former embodied the literature of the Jews, the latter consisted of epistles and letters written long after the death of Jesus. They were

corruptible. To the Muslims no such corruption was possible with respect to the Quran. As possessors of the true religion the Muslims became the chosen people of God precisely as the Jews once were. The victory of the early Muslims confirmed their belief in the superiority of Islam, and this belief is still strongly adhered to by the Muslims. Not only was the expansion military and geographical, but cultural as well. From the 8th to the 13th Centuries the Arabic culture was the world culture. The greatest books in medicine, mathematics, astronomy, geography, theology, etc., were written in Arabic. The Muslim scholars broadened through research and inquiry most of the known fields of knowledge. The Arabs received their intellectual ferment from the Greeks, the Syrians, the Persians and the Indians. The Arabic culture assimilated the diverse knowledge of the Near Eastern nations, elaborated on them and gave them an Islamic garb. In the 13th and the 14th Centuries Europe began to translate from Arabic into Latin. Arabic manuscripts on science, theology and philosophy were rendered into Latin by Jesuit scholars and by Jews, namely in Sicily and Spain. Since the Catholic Church erected an iron curtain between the Byzantine Empire and itself, Europe was virtually cut off from the classical Greek heritage. It was through the Muslims (the neutrals in the Christian conflict) that Gothic Europe and the Hellenic World had met. When Greek knowledge reached Europe it was already modified by Islam and carried an unmistakable Islamic flavor. Had it not been for the Arabic medium the European Renaissance would have most likely been delayed. Many important elements of Western culture derive their origin from this classical Arabic culture. In medicine, literature, philosophy, music and the sciences, the West owes a great deal to the Muslims. Algebra, chemistry and the zero are Arabic words. As naval men, you know, I believe, that the following naval words are of Arabic derivation—admiral, arsenal cable, sloop, average, corvette and tariff. The numerals you now use and which have

replaced the Roman numbers came to you through the Arabs. Imagine writing the present budget of the United States in Roman letters! Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologia* is greatly influenced by the writings of the Ibn Sina and of al-Ghazzali. Dante's *Divine Comedy* carries the unmistakable stamp of Arabic Sufism. Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* and Boccaccio's *Decameron* and other masterpieces of European literature were heavily influenced by Arabic writings.

I would like to emphasize, with respect to international relations, that no culture is an island, and that all great cultures are greatly interdependent. This has been particularly true of the ancient Near Eastern cultures, the Greek, the Arabic and the Western. After the Arab culture had attained its height, it began to decline. This is a natural historical process. Why does it happen? Many reasons are given, but none is really too convincing. Life is born, it flourishes and then declines. What is true of life is true of nations and cultures. When the Arabic culture declined, the Arabs did not completely wither from the scene of history. When a culture declines its energy is usually channeled into other directions. The Arabic culture inclined into the magic, mystery and authority of the traditional East. The humanistic, the scientific and the rational declined, and the Muslim Arabs dwelled on the narrower aspects of religion as Christian Europe did in the Dark Ages. Throughout the period of decline the spirit of Islam was preserved by the Sufi orders, the mystics of Islam. As a result of the vivid Muslim Western confrontation in the 19th Century, Islam began to rejuvenate. The 19th Century shook Islam from its lethargy. The Muslim World which for centuries had been victorious, even on European ground, was now on the defensive. Russia was the hunting ground of the Muslim Ottomans. To them the beardless infidels of Europe were inferior people whom they enslaved and employed in the army and the administration. The Muslim who was victorious in the

past, and who was confident of possessing the perfect religion, and therefore destined to rule in Allah's name, found himself rapidly collapsing. The first serious defeat the Turks suffered was in 1774 when they were defeated by the Russians. The famous treaty of Kuchuk Kainarji marks the beginning of the actual decline of the Ottoman Empire. Something fantastic had happened. Islam was on the defensive, and the infidels—the dirty infidels (as they were called by the Muslims)—through the manipulation of science and of new weapons, were on the march. The West was invading Islam, but it is against Islamic law for Muslims to fall under the rule of non-Muslims.

There is nothing in Christianity which says that a Christian should not be colonized by a Muslim, but there is a great deal in Islamic law that compels the Muslim if he is colonized by an outsider to either leave his "colonized" home and emigrate to the land of Islam, or to resist until Islam is victorious and a Muslim ruler is restored. After the Industrial Revolution, Europe began to expand rapidly, and the land of Islam itself became figuratively the "hunting ground" of Europe. In 1830 the French attacked Algeria; in 1881 they took Tunisia; in 1911 they took Morocco; in the same year Italy invaded Libya, the only patch left in North Africa. Egypt was under British administration since 1882. By the end of the 19th Century the periphery of the Arabian Peninsula, from Aden to Kuwait, became British protectorates. Faced with this humiliation Islam reacted by attempts to reform itself and to rejuvenate the Islamic spirit. Islam is searching for ways and means to restore its dignity and power as it is under legal and moral obligation to do.

The first attempt was to reform Islam. In the 19th Century a movement of modernization of Islam took place. This movement is still going on. The second response to the Western intrusion was to nurture a feeling of nationalism, and Arab nationalism is best viewed as an Islamic response to the Christian Western

intrusion. Arab nationalism is deeply Islamic and any attempt to picture it otherwise is based more on fiction than on living observation. Nationalism, therefore, is the modern response of Islam to the Western challenge. Nationalism need not be spiritual, and Islam does not make it necessary that it should be so. Therefore nationalism, as it exists today, is an Islamic reaction to restore the dignity and the power of the Muslim world. Unity of the Muslim world is almost impossible at this age, but political and administrative unity is not obligatory under Islamic law—dignity and power are. Therefore, the aim of the Muslim reaction would not be essentially to restore the unity of the Muslim world—that is important, but not the most important—but the first objective is to restore the dignity and power of the Muslim and to preserve his cultural ethos from the corrosion of Western and Eastern ideologies that now flood the world. In this context nationalism is a healthy thing and its ideology, though influenced by outside forces, remains basically Islamic. In the Arab world all ideology, be it socialistic, communistic, or western democratic, is justified on Islamic ground. The Quran, like the Bible, is flexible and subject to modernistic, progressive interpretations. There is nothing wrong with Islam that the Muslims cannot fix. The need, therefore, is for great Muslim scholars to perform this task and to persuade the Muslims of the validity of this new approach. The Muslims are attempting to restore the Islamic culture in a new form. In working for that goal they do not hesitate to borrow Western methods, techniques and attitudes. They will use every alien factor if it promises to rejuvenate the Islamic spirit and ethos.

It is possible for the Arabs to become Communist, but they will remain essentially Muslim-Arab Communists. If they become democratic they become essentially democratic Muslim Arabs. Whatever form they assume it must incorporate the Arab and the Islamic. There is no such thing as a world ideology that applies equally

everywhere. Each country, though it Westernizes, will most likely preserve its cultural distinctness. This is what is taking place in the Arab World today and I see no other alternative. It will be tragic if Arab ideology becomes completely Western or Eastern. An entirely alien ideology strips the Arab culture of its inner passion—its *élan vitale*. An ideology may be influenced by outside forces, but it must be grounded in the culture which it is supposed to serve. No effort should be spared, therefore, in encouraging the restoration of the Islamic culture in a new form. Grants to Islamic universities, to young Muslim scholars to work in Islamic fields, deserve to be encouraged.

To say that Islam is an obsolete religion is to confess ignorance of Islamic culture. Classical Islamic culture incorporated foreign ideas and attitudes and assimilated them into the Islamic scheme of things. It is quite possible that the new Islamic culture will do the same. Now the modern reaction of the Muslims to the West is serious and is therefore worthy of infinite soul-searching. In his relations with the West, the Muslim suffers from an unfortunate psychology. Muhammad in the Quran recognizes Jesus Christ as a prophet. His mother, Mary, is highly revered by the Muslims. There is ample room for Jesus and for Christianity in Islam, but there is no room at all in Christianity for Muhammad. The Prophet was annoyed with the Christians because they did not accept his prophecy. He craved for recognition, but recognition was not forthcoming, and the Quran reflects the psychological agony of Muhammad. The characteristic features implied in the psychology of the rejected still disturb the subterranean conscience of the Muslim. The Muslim wants to be recognized by the Christian as possessor of the true revelation. He is anxious to hear the Christian speak favorably of Islam, of its prophet, of its great culture. Instead of praise he heard vindictive language from the West. Muhammad had been portrayed as an

imposter, a liar, and up until the 18th and 19th Centuries Western scholars referred to the Prophet of Islam with highly unflattering words. Muhammad is utterly misunderstood in the Western culture. Working under this psychology a Muslim would like a communion of souls; he wants to be more understood and appreciated on his own grounds. It would be more worth while for the future President of the United States to speak sympathetically of the Islamic world and the Islamic culture than of the "Middle East" and the "Near East." These latter terms convey externality and reveal the shallow and selfish interests of the foreign powers in the defense, the oil, and the routes of the area. But Muslims like to be thought of in terms of Islam. The Muslim likes to be appreciated on his own cultural ground as a man who lives, dies, suffers and has something to contribute to the world. He would like to be looked at culturally rather than, incidentally, as a man who lives in an area that is of strategic value to the powers. How to appreciate the Muslim, how to commune with him on the deepest cultural level—this is the challenge to Western leadership.

In addition to this psychological element there is the question of imperialism. (Whether you like to tone it down and call it "colonialism" or "protection" or even "assistance" or not is your right.) Whatever you choose to call it, imperialism relegates the Muslim to an inferior political position and aggravates his agony. He is in a rage against the imperialist powers, namely the Christian Europeans—the filthy infidels. In his enmity to the West he is justified by religion as well as by political rationale.

Whether Algeria was backward, diseased or ignorant when France invaded it is immaterial. The material question is that this is an Islamic culture whose values were disturbed by an external, arrogant culture, and the Islamic response would be naturally one of negation—one of "you get out." This manifested

itself in nationalism—a natural and healthy manifestation. There is no need to criticize it; it is something to describe. Nationalism is naturally a negative reaction against the foreign powers—"get the foreigners out; let us reestablish our cultural identity." The question is not one of development and of material welfare; it is one of identity. This is the greatest issue. A Tunisian who is educated in France and knows little besides French culture returns to Tunisia and calls for the rejuvenation of the Arab Islamic culture because this is the only culture he can identify himself with. He is an alien to France as I am an alien to America, and he would like to identify himself with his own culture, with his own community. Nationalism may also be considered a movement of restoration of Muhammadan identity. What is going on in Africa? Every African nation would like to develop its own, even pagan, values because it likes to have its identity on authentic firm grounds, and not to be merely a reflection of a Western culture. It is a question of identity and to the Muslim the only identity he knows is an Islamic identity. Hence we have from now on to hear more and more about Islam, and the more the Muslims progress the more they will explore the Islamic element and recreate it in a modern garb. Islam is quite adept at that.

Western imperialism has intensified anti-Western feeling. It is most unfortunate that America, the land that had no association with imperialistic designs in the Islamic World, has allowed herself to be associated with the "hated imperialists." America has suffered by virtue of its association with Israel, and indirectly with France towards Algeria, and by failing to clearly associate itself with the emerging classes in the Muslim World. Thus the anti-Western feeling that characterized nationalism, has by association included America. The anti-Western feeling may turn out to be a phase in the development of nationalism. As nationalism gets more stable and attains its objectives and as Muslims become more confident and

secure, they will undoubtedly become less negative. This is the lesson of history. Meanwhile the Muslim World is trying to develop itself as fast as it can by a process called modernization, or more frankly, Westernization.

Westernization is now a process of universal relevance. Everyone is Westernizing. Communism (whether you like it or not) is one form of Westernization. So China is in a sense Westernizing. What is meant by Westernization? This means the use of the rational method, of industry, of techniques, of efficiency for mobilizing the forces of society towards progress—towards material, economic progress, for improving the economic lot of the masses. The concept of "progress" towards "bigger and better" things for everybody is something new in history. Progress in this sense is the spirit of our age. It is a contagious spirit. Whether it is the communizing influence, or the Western democratic influence, the objective is really the same—it is to explore as much as possible the social and economic forces of the society and to use them for human needs—for human material needs. You are doing that, and theoretically the Russians are doing the same. The Muslims are in the same boat. They are all Westernizing. It is extremely superficial to think that Westernization means that they are going to become Westerners. In a sense they are Westernizing to oppose the West. It is logical. No culture is more hated and more emulated than Western culture. You borrow the achievements of your enemy to strengthen yourself. The Muslim does not want, nor does he expect, to be an image of America. When President Eisenhower says that he would like to have the American ideals spread throughout the whole world, he is speaking of unrealizable goals. When Chairman Khrushchev speaks about Communism universalizing itself, he is committing the same error. Previously, Christianity and Islam failed to attain that goal. Their failure is the unlearned lesson. Every cultural group has its own image, has its own ideas, and the last thing it

wants to do is to be a reflection of you or of Russia. I hate to become a sheer reflection of my American wife. If this were to happen then adieu to my dignity, my identity and my roots. The question is ultimately one of roots. Every culture wants to revive its roots, and enhance its identity. Westernization is used as the means to that end. Westernization is being used in Turkey, but Turkey is more Islamic now than it was under Mustafa Kemal Ataturk in the twenties. Ataturk collaborated with Lenin to prevent the Western imperialists, the Greeks, the British and the French from dividing Turkey. He collaborated with the Communists to preserve the Turkish ethos. Now the Turks are collaborating with the West to safeguard the same goal. Saladin was great because he checked the march of the Crusaders in the world of Islam. As Saladin used the second Rome (Byzantium) against the Western invaders, so is Nasir now making a common cause with the third Rome (Russia) against the modern Western "crusaders." But as Saladin was no lover of the Byzantines, so Nasir is no great lover of Communism. Nasir, like Saladin, is interested in only one thing, the restoration of power and dignity to his Islamic community. In so doing he can better live with his conscience as a good Muslim.

The Islamic community must remain free and independent. It must nurture the Islamic virtues and live fully under the moral imperative of Islam, not only to secure happiness in this life, but to attain eternal salvation on Judgment Day. To the Muslim, then, his salvation has social and political requisites that can only be fulfilled in a strong, well-integrated community. This is a basic fact. This is why it is absolutely necessary for a Muslim country to be independent, for a Muslim to restore his cultural identity and his concept of dignity and power. All the slogans of Arab nationalism are Islamic; they cannot be otherwise. Therefore, a process of Westernization or of secularization, is really of no danger to Islam, but it is the only weapon left to Islam to pull itself

by its bootstraps as it were, and to restore its former identity and its old power. Islam as a culture was highly flexible. It all depends on the great interpreters of Islam. In the Quran Muhammad says, "You may marry one, two, three or four, but if you feel that you cannot do justice among them, marry only one." A modern interpreter says, "Muhammad knew that you cannot do justice except to one woman, and he was actually exhorting the Muslims to be monogamous." Thus one institution is reformed without departing from Islam. Muhammad said that the rich must help the poor. On the basis of this teaching the reformer is willing to introduce socialist or progressive taxation in Islam. There is ample ground in the Quran for intellectual freedom, and for humanistic adventures, if only the Muslim is ready for them. The cultural problem of the Muslim is primarily not one of religion, but of education, one of producing the right thinkers and the right scholars who can delve into Islam and modernize it. There are many superficial attempts now, but there will be deeper ones in the future, and Islam will be restored in a new form.

The emerging Islamic culture need not be isolationist. There is room in Islam for international cooperation, for international peace, for international law. In this respect Muhammad was a highly enlightened and foreseeing prophet. This is the reason why in reforming Islam the reformer returns directly to Muhammad rather than to those who imitated him later. Speaking as a Christian (I am a Greek Orthodox, a fossil group that has survived Islamic conquest) I feel it is the duty of Christianity to help Islam rejuvenate itself. It is good for Western culture to have other cultures in the world prosper and flourish on their own grounds. It would be good to encourage the idea of Islamism rather than Middle Easternism which really means nothing. In so doing one reaches more into the heart and soul of the Muslim peoples.

A lecture like this delivered extemporaneously and oratorically can have no summary, but I will be happy to answer any questions you may wish to raise.

BIOGRAPHIC SKETCH

Professor Elie A. Salem

Present Position: Assistant Professor of Middle East Studies, The Johns Hopkins University

Schools:

1950 American University of Beirut, B.A. degree
1951 University of Cincinnati, M.A. Political Science
1953 The Johns Hopkins University, Ph.D. degree in
Political Theory and Islamics

Career Highlights:

From 1954 to 1956, Mr. Salem taught public administration and general education at the American University of Beirut and also served as Secretary General of the Arab Public Administration Conference.

Since September 1956, Mr. Salem has been teaching at the School of Advanced International Studies of The Johns Hopkins University in the capacity of Assistant Professor of Middle East Studies.

In 1959, Mr. Salem received a grant from the Social Science Research Council to do research in the Middle East on Arab political institutions. After spending eight months in the area Mr. Salem returned to his teaching post at the School of Advanced International Studies. At present he is writing a book on "Arab Politics and Ideology," which should be ready for publication in the summer of 1961. Mr. Salem has written a number of books on various subjects.

In addition, Mr. Salem has participated in numerous television and radio programs on the Middle East, and has lectured in academic, professional, social centers, including the University of Delaware, the Foreign Service Institute, the Naval War College, and the Army Intelligence School.

RECOMMENDED READING

The evaluation of books listed below include those recommended to resident students of the Naval War College. Officers in the fleet and elsewhere may find them of interest.

The inclusion of a book or article in this list does not necessarily constitute an endorsement by the Naval War College of the facts, opinions or concepts contained therein. They are indicated only on the basis of interesting, timely, and possibly useful reading matter.

Many of these publications may be found in ship and station libraries. Certain of the books on the list which are not available from these sources may be available from one of the Navy's Auxiliary Library Service Collections. These collections of books are obtainable on loan. Requests from individual officers to borrow books from an Auxiliary Library Service Collection should be addressed to the nearest of the following special loan collections:

Chief of Naval Personnel,
(G14)
Department of the Navy
Washington 25, D.C.

Commanding Officer
U.S. Naval Station
(Attn: Station Library)
San Diego 36, California

Commandant FOURTEENTH
Naval District (Code 141)
Navy No. 128
Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, California

Commander Naval Forces,
Marianas
Nimitz Hill Library, Box 17
Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, California

U.S. Naval Station Library
Attn: Auxiliary Service Collection
Building C-9
U.S. Naval Base
Norfolk 11, Virginia

BOOKS

Atkinson, James D. *The Edge of War*. Chicago: Regnery, 1960. 318 p.

Very adroitly and effectively Mr. Atkinson has recognized and analyzed Communist strategy in its deadliest form. Similarly, he has portrayed what he contends to be a failure on our part to view the East-West conflict in its proper perspective—i.e., no war and no peace. One of his basic points is that the American way plays the game fundamentally aboveboard and according to the rules, and the Soviets play to win, no matter how base or immoral the strategy employed.

In concluding, the author has tried to make the American people and their leaders understand the Communist challenge—and its meaning—and accept it; to make them understand and accept the challenge of unconventional warfare in the continuing no war, no peace atmosphere.

Seth, Ronald. *Two Fleets Surprised*. London: Geoffrey Bles, 1960. 201 p.

Two Fleets Surprised is an accurate, highly readable account of the naval action between elements of the Italian and British navies at Cape Matapan, off the coast of southwest Greece. Written in detail, and with sufficient technical data to hold the interest of the professional man-of-war man, it presents the strategic and tactical aspects leading to and employed during the sea battle. Included in the description are eyewitness accounts of the surprise suffered by, and later actions of, the two Italian cruisers destroyed in a night action of three minutes' duration. The remarks concerning communications, sea-air coordination and tactics employed make this book well worth a careful reading.

Baruch, Bernard M. *The Public Years*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1960. 431 p.

In this second book of memoirs, Mr. Baruch relates his association with great and near-great persons and his involvement in national and international affairs. His comments on past events, while profiting from the vantage of hindsight, are penetrating and sound. This account portrays the keen insight and wisdom of Bernard Baruch in surveying the momentous years between Presidents Wilson and Truman, and reveals the sage advice which he provided to those in positions of authority relative to the social, economic and military affairs of this nation.

Hydeman, Lee M. and William H. Berman. *International Control of Nuclear Maritime Activities*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1960. 384 p.

International Control of Nuclear Maritime Activities is one of the first published works in a complex and acutely important new area of international law. It is extremely well written and easy to read and contains a wealth of information resulting from the comprehensive research efforts of the authors.

Payne, Donald G. *Red Duster, White Ensign*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1960. 260 p.

This account of the convoys to Malta during World War II is a series of narratives on various convoys and related military action from the summer of 1940 to the summer of 1942, illustrating the resilience of sea power in the face of apparently overwhelming opposition and difficulties. The role of carrier aircraft in protecting shipping from land-based air and the relative successes of remote control versus on-the-scene command of convoys and escorts is discussed in detail.

Courlander, Harold. *Shaping Our Times*. New York: Oceana, 1960. 242 p.

In a very clear and concise manner the author traces the United Nations from its inception to the present time, and demonstrates by use of abbreviated case histories how the various organs of the United Nations have functioned, both within and outside the context of the Charter. He indicates where the United Nations has succeeded and does not hesitate to point out its failures and shortcomings, showing by example how various forces in the world have tended to influence the position of specific nations and regional groups. This book is recommended to anyone who is interested in a short primer on the United Nations.

Ching-wen, Chow. *Ten Years of Storm*. New York: Holt, Rinehard and Winston, 1960. 323 p.

The author of *Ten Years of Storm* was a high official of the Chinese Communist Ministry of the Interior for eight years before he fled to Hong Kong in 1957. As Lin Yutang says in the foreword, "Here at last is a book by a Chinese who knows the true story of the Communist regime. The facts presented make the story believable, even though he is a Chinese talking about China." One of the important conclusions he draws from his long look at the Chinese Communist state is that the Westerners are foolish to pin their hopes on "Maoist" heresy. Peiping has a motive for every bit of information it gives the West. It may well be that the much-discussed Sino-Soviet dispute is a Communist gambit to enhance Khrushchev's stature as a peace-seeker. Mao will postpone any major quarrels with the socialist fatherland until the capitalist West is buried deep. On that point he is inflexible. He will not overly antagonize the helpful Soviets while China remains poor and underdeveloped, which will be considerably longer than some naive Westerners suppose. Chow discusses very freely and in detail, giving names, the series of fronts, movements,

struggles and liquidations by which the Communists achieved absolute sway. Though it is practically impossible for a Westerner to grasp the details and Chinese proper nouns, this book is convincing in its authenticity. The author concludes by discussing the weaknesses of the Communist regime and the hopes for China. There may yet be a great leap forward by those who have nothing to lose and their humanity to regain.

Ismay, Hastings L.I. *The Memoirs of General Lord Ismay*. New York: Viking, 1960. 488 p.

This autobiography covers the life of General Ismay from his initial service in India in 1902 until his retirement in 1957, the most emphasis being on the World War II period. It is a very clear description of the central direction of the war by one who was "in the middle of the web" as Churchill's Chief of Staff. General Ismay worked continually with the principal British and American leaders and attended the main wartime conferences at Moscow, Washington, Yalta, Cairo and Teheran. His reporting appears to be straightforward and factual, does not indulge in personalities and tells of his own involvement with modesty. Churchill's figure, as it should, permeates the narration of decisions and events. The writer includes portraits of the major Allied leaders but is somewhat noncommittal about the contributions of General de Gaulle, possibly reflecting Churchillian sentiments on the "cross of Lorraine" which the Prime Minister bore. In his reporting of the associations with the Russians, the reader may detect the influence of future events, for he appears to have foreseen the nature of the postwar East-West relations. This autobiography is very easy reading and is of interest to one desiring a brief account of the central direction of the war—the organization, the decisions and the personalities involved.