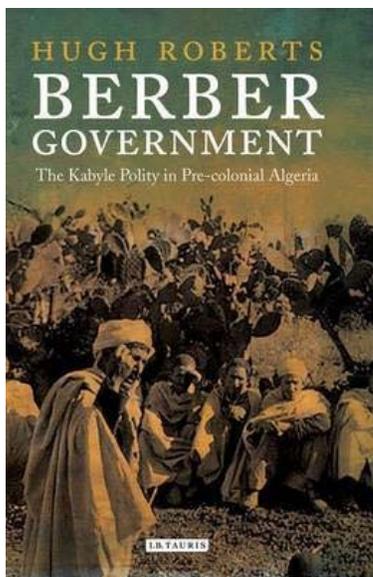


Brief Reviews, Spring 2018



Berber Government: The Kabyle Polity in Pre-Colonial Algeria. By Hugh Roberts. London: I.B. Tauris, 2017. 329 pp. \$45, paper.

The modern Berber (Amazigh) identity movement has recently achieved constitutional recognition of *Amazighité* as an integral component in both Moroccan and Algerian national identities, with Tamazight being recognized as an official language, alongside Arabic. But translating these achievements into real change faces formidable obstacles.

Kabyle Berbers in Algeria and the French diaspora continue to play crucial intellectual and cultural roles in Kabyle and Berber identities. Kabyles, two-thirds of Algeria's Berbers (who altogether make up

approximately 20-25 percent of the country's total population), have played a part at key junctures of Algerian history: French colonial rulers and scholars recognized their distinctiveness, viewing them as less "Islamic" and more "European," and thus candidates for association with *Algérie française*. Kabyles also played outsized roles in the Algerian war of independence and make up a good portion of the country's professional classes and some of the political elite; their home territory in the mountains east of Algiers has also been the focus of repeated unrest and opposition to the ruling military-bureaucratic oligarchy.

Roberts, a foremost authority on Algerian history and politics, rejects both essentialist "timeless Berber" and colonialist manipulation explanations of *Berberité* in favor of historical and anthropological analyses. He situates the evolution of collective Kabyle identity and political culture in the centuries pre-dating France's conquest of Algeria in 1830. Roberts uses a variety of sources—field experiences; a deep understanding of Kabyle village and tribal-based society; French colonial ethnographies; contemporary Arabic and Ottoman perspectives, and the writings of intellectual luminaries including Ibn Khaldun, Durkheim, Masqueray, Gellner, Bourdieu, and a number of Kabyle scholars, including Si Amar Boulifa and Mouloud Gaïd—to produce his own synthesis.

The author methodically unpacks historical episodes and politicized controversies—for example, the decision in 1748-49 to abolish women's inheritance rights, against Qur'anic strictures—that were

deemed as “proof” in French eyes, and among some Muslims, that the Kabyles’ attachment to Islam was superficial. He advances the argument that the Kabyle Muslim polity that grew in the century before the French conquest was a republic with functioning institutions, “founded on consent, [with] a mode of legitimation predicated on a principle of political representation, a procedure of public deliberation and decision-making that was respectful of public opinion, a corpus of man-made law that carried authority, and rudimentary political parties.”

Roberts argues that periodic Kabyle resistance and opposition to the autocratic, independent Algerian state have been based on the constitutional tradition that originated in the pre-colonial Kabyle polity and survived the ravages of French colonialism. He suggests that modern Kabyle activists place too much emphasis on identity issues, which Algerian authorities grudgingly accommodate, and not enough on their own tradition of democracy and law-bound government.

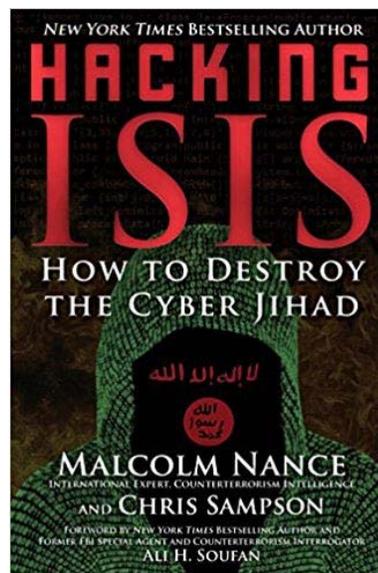
Berber Government is a tour de force, a major and valuable piece of scholarship.

Bruce Maddy-Weitzman
The Moshe Dayan Center
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Hacking ISIS: How to Destroy the Cyber Jihad. By Malcolm Nance and Chris Sampson. New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2017. 320 pp. \$27.99.

Nance and Sampson announce in the first chapter of *Hacking ISIS*: “We are waging a war against terrorism on many fronts in the physical world, but the darkest of all is the cyber world—a shadow battlefield.”

The authors are respectively a former naval officer, MSNBC terrorism analyst, and executive director of the non-profit Terror Asymmetrics Project on Strategy (TAPSTRI) and a terror and political media director at



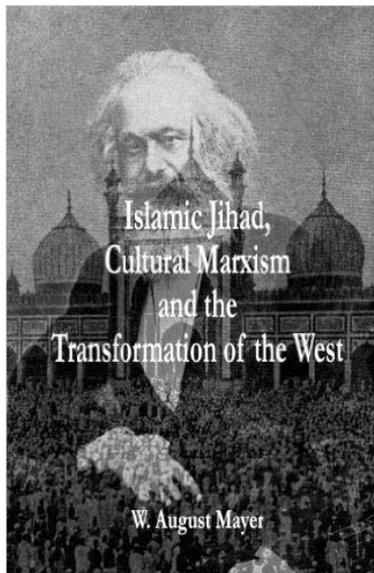
TAPSTRI. They explain that soon after the Islamic State (ISIS) captured Mosul in 2014, a Tunisian named Fathi ben Awn ben Jildi Murad al-Tunisi—*nom de guerre* Abu Sayyaf—became the ISIS information technology specialist. He assembled a “four to seven terabyte offline central database” containing all the financial and personnel records necessary to run the Islamic State. The “key to the Caliphate,” as the authors call it, even had the “mobile phone numbers, Twitter handles, Facebook accounts, and social media links” of every ISIS member. According to the authors, the U.S. Delta Force killed Abu Sayyaf in a May 17, 2015 raid and recovered his “key to the Caliphate,” which has helped to dismantle ISIS.

The book includes a history of ISIS, a history of the “cyber jihad,” catalogues of what the authors call “Hackers, Wannabees & Fembots,” and numerous explanations of how ISIS hacks and is hacked. It concludes by arguing that as ISIS loses control of territory, “the by-product will be a less centralized terror group that will rely much more on inspiring terror attacks rather than planning them and deploying cells.” What the authors call a “Ghost Caliphate” will live on as its leaders decamp to a “small remote

area in Yemen, the central Sahara, or a hidden corner of Somalia.” Nance and Sampson warn that ISIS “will use advanced [computer] tools rather than Kalashnikovs, propaganda in place of bombs, and, like the 9/11 hijackers, they will someday be poised to conduct an asymmetric war at the place, time, and with the methodology of their choosing.”

Although Nance’s first book, *An End to Al-Qaeda: Destroying Bin Laden’s Jihad and Restoring America’s Honor*¹ was an anti-Bush diatribe riddled with shame for America’s “fallen honor,” *Hacking ISIS* is a more sober and useful analysis.

A.J. Caschetta
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Islamic Jihad, Cultural Marxism and the Transformation of the West. By W. August Mayer. San Francisco: Pipeline Media, 2016. 209 pp. \$14.95, paper.

In this in-depth study, Mayer recounts how three pivotal figures in Europe, Karl

¹ New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2010.

Marx; Antonio Gramsci, the Italian communist theorist; and Theo Van Gogh, the Dutch film maker murdered by an Islamic terrorist, changed the trajectory of civil society and by extension Western civilization.

He calls the merging of Marxism and Islamism an “unholy alliance” whose aim is to dismantle and destroy Western civilization. Islamists share the same goals as the left, to subvert and destroy civil society and the established order. Both ideologies seek to foment revolution to overturn the established order and replace it with their radical utopian vision. Ideologues such as Marx and Sayyid Qutb, the founder of modern Islamism, were motivated by antipathy toward Western values and democratic freedoms, which Marx perceived as materialism and Qutb as immorality.

Mayer believes “both of these philosophies must be viewed as enemy threat doctrines” and calls Marxism “the sharia of the left.” The author warns that “when nations lose their souls, their days are numbered.” Mayer shouts out a wake-up call about the disintegration of democracy and provides the intellectual arsenal to combat it.

Beila Rabinowitz
Militant Islam Monitor

Jihad and Islam in World War I: Studies on the Ottoman Jihad on the Centenary of Snouck Hurgronje’s “Holy War Made in Germany.” Edited by Erik-Jan Zürcher. Leiden, NL: Leiden University Press, 2016. 353 pp. \$59, paper.

Dutch scholar Christiaan S. Hurgronje published a book during World War I, *The Holy War “Made in Germany”* that blamed the German co-founder of modern Islamic studies, Carl Heinrich Becker, for World War I’s German-Ottoman jihad. A century later, contributors to this multi-author volume confirm his point.

That jihad attempted to mobilize Muslims against Europe's colonies even though this represented a genocidal threat to non-Muslim minorities living in Muslim ruled areas. The kaiser and his Islamic scholars had discussed this problem since 1908 but saw no way to stop the deadly side effects against the Armenians and other minorities, such as the Jews. This was no regional jihad, like that against the Ottomans and British in Sudan in 1881, or local jihads against Russians in Iran in 1910, or Italians in Tripolitania in 1911; it was a full-bore interfaith war coalition.

Among the most important chapters is that by M. Şükrü Hanioğlu, who writes of a double jihad: the Ottoman global jihad for the Sunnis and the kaiser, and the regional Shiite jihad beyond Iraq to defend Istanbul's provinces. Critical to these was the Egyptian Sunni Abd al-Malik Hamza, who published the first Arab theory of Islamism in 1917.

Hanioğlu names a dozen Shiites who issued jihad fatwas against the Allies, among them Mustafa al-Kashani. Even earlier, in Iran in 1915, as-Sayyid Hibat ad-Din Muhammad ash-Shahrastani issued a jihad fatwa. That German scholars were behind it is clear: Helmut Ritter of the Sixth Army in

Baghdad translated it from Persian to German; Becker conveyed it to Berlin where Martin Hartmann and Carl Brockelmann checked the translation, and the Berlin journal *Die Welt des Islams* printed it.

After World War I, this jihad concept deeply affected Muslim politics as Muslims adopted and refashioned it in many variations, as did Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, who adapted it in the 1979 Islamist revolution in Iran.

Jihad and Islam in World War I adds greatly to a new area of research.

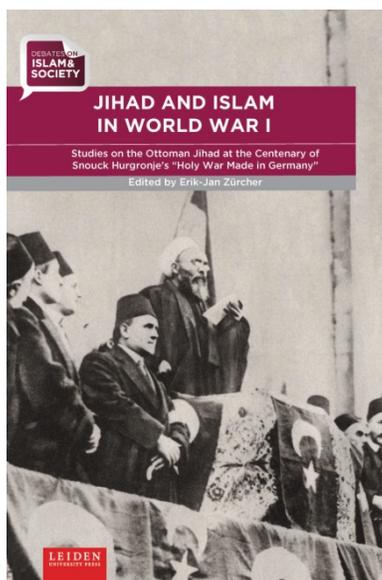
Wolfgang G. Schwanitz
Middle East Forum

[Racing Against History: The 1940 Campaign for a Jewish Army to Fight Hitler.](#) By Rick Richman. New York: Encounter, 2018. 251 pp. \$25.99.

The *when* campaign to do *what*, one might ask? The reader is excused if the subtitle does not ring a bell, for Richman, a lawyer, talented author, and formidable researcher, has resurrected the failed and now-obscure effort to mobilize American Jews to create a fighting force against Nazi Germany.

On the surface, he relates a story about three grandees of Zionism—Chaim Weizmann, Zeev Jabotinsky, and David Ben-Gurion—who traveled to the United States in a single year, 1940, to rouse the world's largest, richest, and freest Jewish population to concern itself with the horrors underway in Europe and to respond by supporting a Jewish army. Each of the three met with frustration because of a prevailing American mood of isolationism and a Jewish leadership fearful of getting out too far in front of general opinion.

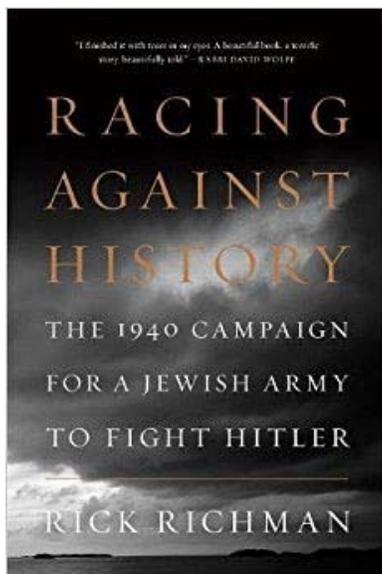
But Richman's real story is that of a heroic and visionary Jabotinsky, 59, then at the peak of his rhetorical and organizational powers, versus not only the other two Zionist



leaders, both too timid, but also against what a Jabotinsky assistant, Benjamin Akzin, more broadly called the “Society of Trembling Jews.” Jabotinsky had already organized the Jewish Legion as part of British forces in World War I; now he foresaw something of the terrible fate awaiting European Jewry, an insight even his most distinguished contemporaries (Louis Brandeis, Abraham Cahan, David de Sola Pool, Stephen Wise) were unable to fathom and furious at him for even discussing. Jabotinsky could have organized the noble, important, and necessary reality of a Jewish army drawn from the ranks of refugees, residents in Palestine, and others, but he died suddenly in August 1940 while visiting a Jewish self-defense camp in upstate New York. With him, died that army.

Richman’s tale reverberates with implications for today when again a “trembling” Jewish establishment prefers to remain within the polite consensus than to have the imagination and drive to take on pending disasters. Be polite, they say, be patient, and things will work out. That approach failed in 1940. Will it work today?

Daniel Pipes



The Syrian Refugee Crisis in Lebanon: The Double Tragedy of Refugees and Impacted Host Communities. By Robert G. Rabil. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2016. 127 pp. \$75.

Rabil’s brief book discusses the inundation of refugees from Syria into Lebanon and their impact on the host country’s demography, stability, security, and infrastructure. His well-researched book considers the long-term implications for Lebanon of close to two million Syrian and Palestinian refugees who constitute about one-third of the country’s population and who jeopardize its survival as a state.

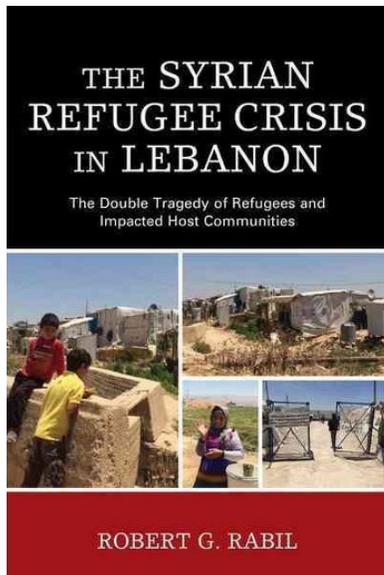
With the goal of painting “a clear picture of the unfolding double tragedy taking shape in Lebanon,” Rabil focuses on the consequences for a country that has still not yet recovered from the trauma of a protracted civil war (1976-90) and extensive foreign meddling. The new Syrian refugees also add to the burden of the unresolved 70-year-old Palestinian refugee question.

The Syrian Refugee Crisis in Lebanon provides excellent statistics about the pace of Syrian refugee arrival in Lebanon, their geographical distribution, and living conditions. Rabil notes with alarm the deplorable conditions of Syrian refugees in Lebanon’s most vulnerable regions, in the Biqaa and the north. He attributes their impoverishment to the sheer magnitude of the refugee problem, lack of foreign funding, an unsympathetic Lebanese government, and sluggish bureaucracy. The refugee influx has affected every corner of Lebanon.

Despite its usefulness, the book has one major fault: Nearly one-third is allocated to refugees and terrorism. Terrorism cannot be overlooked, but the fact remains that Lebanon is among the safest countries in the Middle East. Its record combating terrorism compares favorably with many European countries, probably because it is not a primary target for Islamist groups. Rabil

establishes this by showing the scant linkages between Syrian refugees and terrorist organizations. But it would have been more useful to focus on the untoward effects of the refugees on the delicate Lebanese political formula.

Hilal Khashan
American University of Beirut



The Yom Kippur War: The Epic Encounter That Transformed the Middle East (Revised and Updated). By **Abraham Rabinovich.** New York: Schocken Books, 2017. 608 pp. \$20, paper.

Rabinovich's book, originally published in 2004, remains the most informative, readable, and coherent presentation on the Yom Kippur War. The author presents a riveting account of the intensity of the war, deftly shifting from the narrative of overall operations to searing individual accounts of combat without disrupting the flow of strategic and tactical operations.

In this updated version, Rabinovich enriches his account with startling

revelations from newly available sources, such as the identification of the son-in-law of former Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser as an Israeli spy. Other revelations deepen the culpability of Israeli intelligence and top officials: Jordan's King Hussein not only personally warned Israeli prime minister Golda Meir that an attack was imminent but, later in the war, asked her to refrain from an all-out attack against Jordanian forces on the Golan Heights. Bugging devices installed on Egyptian communications centers by Israeli commandos prior to the war went unused since Israeli intelligence resolutely maintained that no attack was possible until certain conditions were met. This mindset became known as *hakonseptzia* (the "concept").

Rabinovich also reveals the early despair that infected many in the Israeli chain of command, with Chief of Staff David Elazar lamenting that the war could not be won, and Defense Minister Moshe Dayan advocating a nuclear "demonstration."

The Yom Kippur War brilliantly captures the nature of the 1973 war.

Norvell B. DeAtkine
Holden Beach, N.C.

