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Taber, Robert. *The War of the Flea*. London: Paladin, 1970. pp. 14-33.

Understanding Middle East Culture and the WOT

(from the "Irregular Warfare Message of the Week" archive)

Denouex, Guilain. *Urban Unrest in the Middle East: A Comparative Study of Informal Networks in Egypt, Iran, and Lebanon*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1993.

A real zinger. Great scholarship. Powerful analysis. If you understand the power of understanding networks in clandestine organizations (like insurgencies), then you will love this work's insights. If you recognize that the Middle East has a multitude of very idiosyncratic cultural structures, then this book provides you one lens through which to view them.

Gunaratna, Rohan. *Inside al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2002.

Sloppy, unorganized, but still extremely solid, this book provides an outstanding review of our enemy's organization early in this war. Rushed to press after the 9/11 attacks, Gunaratna, who was a serious scholar of AQ and terrorism before 9/11 made it hip, didn't have time to put the polish on it. Though success against AQ is quickly making some of this book less applicable, it remains an excellent resource for anyone trying to understand this organization. Its biggest shortcoming is some of his unsubstantiated claims: for whatever reason, he doesn't always cite

the exact origin of how he knows something, but readers shouldn't dismiss those claims as untrue, even if it does run against the grain of quality scholarship, especially given the pressure to get the book printed in the fall of 2001. His follow-up book should be even better...it's way late and I can't wait to get my hands on a copy.

Kepel, Gilles. *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam*. Translated by Anthony F. Roberts Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002.

The name says it all. Closest thing that I know of to a one-stop-shop for understanding this key tenet of our enemy's mobilization strategy.

Shlaim, Avi. *The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World*. New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 2001.

Bottom line: Israel is an issue everywhere in the Arab world. This book provides a great history and analysis of the conflict with what I think is a relatively objective presentation of both sides—something that is both very difficult and extremely rare in today's world. Knowing the background behind the Israeli-Palestinian struggle is important to understanding the social and political claims of all Arabs against Israel—whether you agree with them or not.

Wiktorowicz, Quintan, editor. *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2004.

Hot off the presses and highly acclaimed, this work applies the newest form of revolutionary theory (the theoretical study of how and why people revolt)—social movement theory—to Islamic-specific movements. Social movement theory examines revolutions from the organizational perspective, and since the key “organization” in revolutions is the resistance movement (within which resides the insurgency), I love this book's scope and analysis for what it offers today's army.