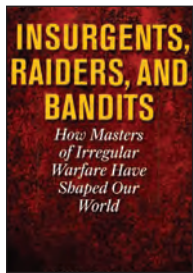


Insurgents, Raiders, and Bandits: How Masters of Irregular Warfare Have Shaped Our World

Arquilla, John. *Insurgents, Raiders, and Bandits: How Masters of Irregular Warfare Have Shaped Our World*. Chicago, IL: Ivan R. Dee, Publisher: 2011. Hardcover: 336 pages. ISBN-10: 1566638321/ISBN-13: 978-1566638326.

Review by COL (Ret) Warner "Rocky" D. Farr, MD, MPH

Dr John Arquilla is the professor of defense analysis at the Naval Postgraduate School and an internationally recognized military historian, defense analyst, and security policy consultant. *Foreign Policy Magazine* lists him as "one of the top 100 thinkers." He blends these considerable skills together in this not only well-researched but also well-written treatment of a subject of interest to us all: "the great captains of irregular warfare." These 18 case studies show that such masters



of guerrilla warfare share common traits, which include adaptive personalities, steadfastness under adversity, and the effective use of "modern" means of warfare suitable for small formations, such as swarming and decentralized command. Many names among the 18 may be unfamiliar to you.

He covers Special Operations Forces (SOF) practitioners varying from behind-the-lines fighters like Nathan Bedford Forrest, Orde Wingate, and T. E. Lawrence to full-scale heroes of national liberation movements like Yugoslavia's Josip Broz (Tito) and Vietnam's Vo Nguyen Giap. These unconventional warriors demonstrate repeatedly how outgunned and outnumbered forces can still prevail against overpowering conventional enemies. His examples set insurgents and irregular warfare within a true historical context, and he then lets his narrative unfold from hero to hero.

Offering 18 convincing examples, like George Crook, who took on powerful insurgent Native American leaders, he covers a wide historical range. Dr Arquilla's battles take place in locations on the wilderness frontier of the French and Indian War (Robert Rogers) to today's contemporary Chechnya (Aslan Maskhadov). Nathanael Greene combined conventional and irregular methods to frustrate a superior-sized British enemy during the American Revolution. Giuseppe Garibaldi

mobilized insurgents to put his stamp on a united, independent Italy. Vo Nguyen Giap, a schoolteacher turned general, excelled at using adversary strengths against them. Indian Phoolan Devi, the only woman on Arquilla's list, was a social bandit and accomplished guerrilla who for years eluded India's soldiers and police. What do all these combat commanders have in common? Resilience under adversity, flexible approach, and ruthless execution. The author points out that irregular war has a single law: *win*. He concludes that irregular leaders can be defeated, but such a victory's costs are invariably high.

Other notables covered in this book who may be unfamiliar to you include Francisco Espoz y Mina (lead Spanish guerrillas against Napoleon), Denis Davydov (lead Russian guerrillas against Napoleon), Abd el-Kader (lead Algerian guerrillas against Charles X of France), Christiaan de Wet (Afrikaner Boer who fought against the British), Charles Lockwood (lead American submarine warfare against Japan), and Frank Kitson (British counterinsurgency expert who fought against the Mau Mau, in the Malaya insurrection, and in Northern Ireland). I cannot finish this review without mentioning my personal favorite among the 18: the German Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck who danced the British all over south-east Africa in World War I and was the inspiration for the movie "The African Queen."

"*Insurgents, Raiders, and Bandits*" is a great overview of irregular warfare for the student, academic, and military reader. It well illustrates the shared common characteristics of all: an acute appreciation for strategy and policy, the use of adaptive leadership, and continuing tactical innovation. The author adds to his academic strengths enjoyableness in a book that reads less like history and more like an SOF adventure story. If you are intellectually engaged with the problems of SOF irregular warfare in the past, present, or future, you should read this book.