

## Contemporary Geography of Israel

This concise volume, **Geography of Israel** (Israel Program for Scientific Translations, Jerusalem; Davey, New York, 1964. 341 pp. Illus. Maps. \$7.50), by Efraim Orni and Elisha Efrat, which is the first contemporary geography of Israel to appear in English, is divided into four sections: The Country and Its Regions (geological, geomorphical, and topographic); Climate, Vegetation, and Wildlife; Human Geography; and Economy. The first section includes Arab Cisjordan and Transjordan, as well as modern Israel; the second covers only Cisjordan in addition to Israel; and the third and fourth sections deal with Israel exclusively. Although the volume is liberally illustrated (109 photographs and diagrams and 30 maps), some of the photographs have suffered in the reproduction process. Neither the illustrations nor the unnumbered tables are indexed; nor, regrettably, is the text footnoted or keyed to the excellent bibliography.

In its attempt at comprehensiveness, this work gives inadequate treatment to certain aspects of the country's human and economic geography. More of a problem, however, is the fact that although the first two sections are fine examples of a geographical treatise, the last two are for the most part a handbook of historical, demographic, and economic facts, rather than human geography (save for an excellent piece on rural settlement forms).

*Geography of Israel* therefore falls short of the objectives of a truly regional geography work. The part of the book that deals with physical geography does treat with the distribution and association of phenomena in their areally interrelated framework; and it does so concisely and meaningfully—skillful interpretations are drawn, for example, of the distributional interrelationships of soils and vegetation, landforms and settlements,

climate and crops, and landforms and hydrology. Even in a country as small and densely populated (297 persons per square mile in 1962, projected to 518 by 1980 to 1982) as Israel, the variegated landscape maintains a prime role in fashioning settlement patterns and land use. This explains not simply the emptiness of the desert and the crowding of the coastal plain but, in some areas, the differences in crop use (red sands for citrus, terra rossa for vegetables and fodder) and urban locations (formerly tied to foothills and now to coastal roads).

The chapter on archeological and historical background is well handled and will prove quite useful. It points, perhaps ironically, to the fact that Israel's current center of gravity along the coastal plain harks back to the heritage of Phoenicians, Philistines, Greeks, Romans, and Crusaders. The Arabs of Jordan in the eastern interior of Cisjordan and in Transjordan are more properly the heirs of the Turks, the Arabs, and the Ancient Israelites, as shown in the map of the Kingdoms of Israel under Jeroboam and Judah under Rehoboam. The part dealing with contemporary history has little, however, of what might be termed historical geography. It suffers from being overly brief and contains a number of omissions (for example, no reference to the roles of Britain and France during the period of the 1956 Sinai campaign; to certain educational problems, particularly at the secondary level; or to the large amount of formerly Arab-owned land now held by the Custodian of Abandoned Property).

The portion on demography would have been strengthened by the use of maps and by fuller discussion of the distribution of the Jewish and non-Jewish population, and of the different socioeconomic groups within the Jewish community. The fact that the Arab population has significant concentrations in the Galilee and along the

Jordan border (the Little Triangle) and is growing  $2\frac{1}{2}$  times as rapidly as the Jewish populace helps to explain the recent and large-scale Jewish settlement planning efforts in these areas.

The section on the economy is disappointing. It is overly descriptive, save for a good treatment of the water resources picture. Of necessity, Israel is perhaps more concerned than any other country about the problem of water conservation. Even the National Water Carrier Scheme, which has become so controversial an issue in Arab-Israeli relations, cannot solve beyond 1970 the anticipated rise in water needs.

As the authors observe, unconventional methods in desalinization and in the use of solar energy and atomic power are a subject of the highest priority in research and development efforts. The discussion of agriculture and industry is too much of a catalog of fact, with absence of reference to what is one of Israel's most fundamental clashes over the allocation of investment capital for agricultural and industrial purposes, protagonists of the former citing Zionist ideology and defense, and those of the latter citing land and water conservation and return on investment.

That this volume is of great value to those seeking information on Israel is indisputable. To say that it does not fulfill the role of a full and definitive work on regional geography does not so much detract from its value as point to a need that has yet to be filled.

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### Psychological Tests

**Psychological Tests and Personnel Decisions.** Lee J. Cronbach and Goldine C. Gleser. University of Illinois Press, Urbana, ed. 2, 1965. xiv + 347 pp. Illus. \$7.95.

For this second edition the authors have reproduced "all the original material with minor editorial improvements" and represented "the more recent developments in the field by adding a bibliography, a chapter surveying recent