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The War for Palestine: Rewriting the History of 1948

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Introduction

In an earlier review in the IHR 'Reviews in History' series (number 154) of Avi Shlaim's *The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World* (London: Allen Lane, 2000), I pointed to the intense historiographical conflict raging over the formation of Israel in 1948, the cause(s) of the Palestinian refugee crisis and the nature of Israel's subsequent relations with its Arab neighbours. For those readers unfamiliar with the debate, the essential fault line is between those who say that Israel was in some measure responsible for the Palestinian diaspora in 1948 and the subsequent Arab-Israeli conflict, and those who argue that the Palestinian refugee crisis was not, fundamentally, Israel's fault and that chances for peace were scuppered not by Israel but by obstinacy on the part of the Arabs. The debate has shifted over time. Until the 1970s it was dominated by an 'old' or 'mobilised' Israeli history that portrayed a Jewish state under serious threat from the Arabs and so reluctantly forced into a series of wars of survival. This changed in the 1980s with the arrival of what became known as the 'new' or 'revisionist' historians - sometimes also called the 'critical sociologists' - who offered radically contrary perspectives on the formation of Israel, the causes of the Palestinian refugee crisis and the origins of the Arab-Israeli wars. These 'Young Turks', led by the likes of Simha Flapan, Benny Morris, Ilan Pappé and Avi Shlaim, set out to overturn received history.(1) They argued that the historiography on Israel had for too long been dominated by an approach that has sought to exculpate Israel from the charge that it stole Palestinian land and forcibly evicted the inhabitants.(2) While the conclusions of the 'new' historians were not necessarily pro-Palestinian, they stressed that Israel needed to take some of the

blame for the Palestinian refugee crisis, the Arab-Israeli wars and the failed peace of 1949, and that the image of Israel put forward by the 'old' historians was both misleading and determined by the political need to be pro-Zionist.

The debunking by the 'new' historians of long-held shibboleths provoked a furore among the 'old' historians (who now became the 'new old' historians) and the debate soon spilled over into the public domain. In articles and books, the 'new old' historians such as Shabtai Teveth and Anita Shapira counter-attacked. Aharon Megged charged the 'new' historians with writing history in the spirit of Israel's enemies; Efraim Karsh accused Morris and Shlaim of falsifying and recycling history.(3) Attack and counter-attack ensued as both sides slugged it out.(4) At the same time, some pro-Palestinian academics attacked the 'new' historians for not going far enough in their analysis; other Palestinian authors acknowledged the honest debate of the 'new' historians.(5) While the debate on both sides has become more nuanced, nonetheless it continues apace in scholarly and popular books, journals and films. The revision of Israeli school text-books to take into account the 'new' history suggests that the counter-attack on the 'new' historians is failing; it also raises the question of whether the epithets 'new' or 'revisionist' history themselves need revising as this approach to Israeli history becomes more mainstream and less of an iconoclastic historical fringe.(6)

Where does this edited volume fit in these history wars? With Avi Shlaim as one of the co-editors, an afterword by the Palestinian academic Edward W. Said, and essays by the likes of Benny Morris and Rashid Khalidi, the initiated reader will sense the 'new' history flavour even before opening the book. And s/he will not be disappointed as the contributions to this volume, wrapped around the seminal event of the formation of Israel in the 1948-9 'War of Independence', what for the Palestinians was the 'Catastrophe' - *al-Nakba* - of 1948, are very much in the 'new' history vein. The problem with edited collections is that essays can be disparate and varying in quality. Editors know this to be the case and so, typically, claim to have found some elusive, special cohesive glue for their volume. This adhesive frequently comes unstuck under closer scrutiny. For Shlaim and his fellow editor, Eugene L. Rogan, both scholars at the University of Oxford, the ongoing 'new' history versus 'old' history debate gives genuine linkage and binds the chapters, providing the reader with a central unifying strand and overcoming any charge that the collection lacks common purpose. The volume concludes with a pithy - perhaps polemical - afterword by Said.

To make sense of what is in this collection, this review will pose four questions. Firstly, what claims do the editors make in the introduction where they set out their stall? Secondly, what do each of the chapters contain, and what do they add to the debate on Israel and the Palestinians? Thirdly, how does Said's afterword tie these different essays together? Finally, are there any weaknesses to the collection?

(1)

In the introduction, the editors make three key points. Firstly, the war of 1948 was an immensely significant event for Israel and the Arab Middle East, worthy of continued study. As Rogan and Shlaim proclaim (p.1): 'No event has marked Arab politics in the second half of the twentieth century more profoundly. The Arab-Israeli wars, the Cold War in the Middle East, the rise of the Palestinian armed struggle and the politics of peace making in all of their complexity are a direct consequence of the Palestine War.' For the editors, the 1948 war was also formative in that it was the first serious challenge for the newly independent Arab states. How they reacted would determine the course of their subsequent histories. Secondly, the editors raise the question of how the 1948 war has been factored into the histories of Israel and the Arab states as part of the process of national identity building. It is argued that by rewriting history both sides have used the 1948 war as the seed to nurture particular national myths and narratives. The editors are keen to pursue the idea that historical 'facts' have been manipulated by elites through media such as history books. Thirdly, the editors emphasise the critical reappraisal of these national myths by the 'new' historians of the 1980s and locate their volume firmly in the revisionist trend in the Arab-Israeli conflict. These three themes resonate through *The War for Palestine: Rewriting the History of 1948*.

The core 'new' historian thesis of the volume under review is not groundbreaking. Rather, it builds upon and acknowledges a debt to earlier scholars, some of whom have contributed to this collection. To give these essays a new spin to the 'old' versus 'new' history debate, the editors make two claims. Firstly, they have

drawn together in one show case volume essays from historians on all the major participants in the 1948 war: Israel (Shlaim), Syria (Joshua Landis), Jordan (Rogan), Iraq (Charles Tripp), Egypt (Fawaz A. Gerges) and the Palestinians (Rashid Khalidi). There are also two chapters on the vexed question of the origins of the Palestinian refugee crisis which form another node of analysis (Benny Morris and Laila Parsons). In collecting together these Israeli, Arab and Western academics, the editors provide the reader with the latest 'new' history debates from a variety of perspectives in one handy volume. Secondly, the chapters open up new avenues of enquiry that will be pathways for more historical exploration. This is, if you like, revision within the revisionism as most of the chapters contain new ideas that will prompt further research to confirm or disprove what these authors have to say.

(2)

What do these chapters contain and what to they add to our understanding of the debate around the formation of Israel? In the two chapters on the origins of the Palestinian refugee crisis, Parsons disagrees with Morris's findings that the refugee crisis 'was born of war, not by design, Jewish or Arab.'(7) Rather, in a stimulating case study, Parsons looks at the interchange between the Israeli army (the IDF) and the Druze community in Galilee during the IDF's conquest of the region. For Parsons, Israeli policy towards the Druze helps us to understand the wider picture of Israeli policy towards the Palestinians. She attacks the argument that Israel's expulsions of Palestinians were essentially random and based on local factors and the actions of subordinate IDF commanders by showing how the IDF (which contained some Druze troops) left Druze villages unmolested, even when they had been fired on from these villages. For Parsons, the actions of the IDF in sparing the Druze show the grand design in an Israeli policy that would target one community perceived as a threat (the Palestinians) and leave alone another seen as a potential ally (the Druze) even when the former were pacific and the latter bellicose towards the IDF. Parsons also claims (p.67) that Morris made two errors in his earlier *The birth of the Palestinian refugee problem 1947-49* (1987): firstly, some Druze *did* fire on IDF - and lived to tell the tale; secondly, villagers from 'Amqa, expelled by the IDF, were not, as Morris claimed, Druze, but, in fact, Muslims, thus confirming Parsons' thesis that the IDF acted within a carefully structured plan in the 1948 war to drive out only the Palestinians so as to make a viable Zionist state (p.68): 'If you have a policy not to do something it implies that you also have a position on what you are doing.' The second part of Parsons' chapter moves the emphasis from the history itself to the writing of the history. In line with the 'rewriting history' theme detailed by the editors in the introduction, she claims that Israeli historiography and perceptions of the Druze were consciously skewed to create a common past to prove a Jewish-Druze friendship. This 'invention of tradition' has, of course, its own logic as if people are told they have a bond with another group this can well become a reality regardless of historical truth.(8)

Morris complements Parsons' analysis of Israeli relations with the Druze by concentrating on two discrete but interconnected areas of enquiry: pre-war Zionist transfer thinking on the Palestinians, and supposed atrocities by IDF troops during the 1948 war that were designed to drive out the Palestinian population of Galilee. While Morris provides some revision in his chapter, broadly speaking, the evidence he presents, as he himself admits, is in line with his earlier works such as *The birth of the Palestinian refugee problem 1947-49* (1987) and *1948 and After: Israel and the Palestinians* (1990). Morris concludes that there was a crystallisation of consensus among Zionist leaders on expulsion before the war. Having trawled through the Israeli archives, he then presents a nuanced if inchoate study of the claim that the IDF committed massacres of Palestinians. These findings, based on new archival research in Israel, will be presented in a fuller form in a planned revised version of *1948 and After*.

What of the other chapters? The co-editor, Rogan, concentrates on Jordan, the subject of his recent monograph.(9) As with Parsons, Rogan differentiates between historical 'facts' and the purposeful writing up of these 'facts' as history. Therefore, Rogan, unpacks how the Jordanian state created a particular narrative on Jordan's involvement in the 1948 war, what he terms the 'Jordanian loyalist' history, that emphasised Jordan's difficulties and valour in 1948 against tough odds. In contrast, an 'Arab nationalist' history based around Gamal Abd al-Nasir charged Jordan with deceit and greed as it colluded with Israel to divide Palestine. Using what primary sources are available, Rogan weaves the events of 1948 within this historiographical narrative to unpack fact and fiction. He does a good job of this and in doing so paints a

more sympathetic portrait of the actions of the Jordanian army - the Arab Legion - in the war of 1948. While in no sense being an apologist for the Jordanians, Rogan shows, amidst King Abdullah of Jordan's abundant treachery, just how difficult was the fight for the Arab Legion. While well trained and equipped by the standards of the other Arab protagonists, the Arab Legion was terribly overstretched and often outnumbered. In contrast to arguments elsewhere in this volume, Rogan argues that it is not clear that the Arab Legion had the military clout to save the Palestinian towns of Lydda and Ramla; neither was the rescue of the Egyptian forces trapped in the Faluja pocket a clear-cut operation. Nonetheless, Rogan is careful to detail the infighting between the Jordanians and Egyptians that torpedoed any chances of joint, effective military action. He also recounts the evident collusion between Israelis and Jordanians first described in Shlaim's *Collusion Across the Jordan: King Abdullah, the Zionist Movement and the Partition of Palestine* (1988). As Rogan shows, these were not politically correct times: the Jordanians were never fully reconciled to negotiating with Israel's Golda Meir (Meyerson), feeling that (p.117) 'optimal results would be had through direct meetings between reasonable *men*.' The Arab Legion's defence of the Jerusalem-Latrun line, where it battered the IDF in a series of tough actions, represents one of the few military high points for the Arabs in the 1948 war and shows what might have been possible had the disparate Arab armies united and acted in unison, something that this volume amply shows the Arabs failed to do.

The chapter by Tripp on Iraq, as with Rogan the subject of a recent book, seems, at first sight, odd as the spotlight is turned away from Palestine and put on domestic politics within Iraq.(10) However, as the reader delves deeper into the text interesting and relevant themes emerge that link up with the chapters on Syria and Egypt. Tripp outlines the impact of the war in Palestine on Iraq, one of the Arab states that sent troops to fight in the 1948 war. In doing so, he highlights the lack of synergy between the home front and the trenches that was so fatal for the Arab armies fighting the IDF. Tripp also throws the reader's attention forward to show how the Palestine war had a longer-term impact within the Arab world (p.128): '...the cause of Palestine created the basis of a language of legitimation within Iraqi politics that politicians ignored at their peril...It thus provided an opportunity for those in command of the state...to displace more radical languages of social revolution.' As with Jordan, Iraq manipulated events in Palestine for its own ends. Israel was, in some sense, an irrelevance but for what it could provide the ruling elite in Baghdad in terms of continued power. This, of course, was disastrous for the 'united' Arab attack on Israel as the Iraqi leaders used the preparations for a war in Palestine as a means to check rivals such as Abdullah of Jordan and the Palestinian leader, Hajj Amin al-Husayni - the 'Mufti of Jerusalem'. There were essentially two narratives at work (p.130): firstly, a symbolic, radical view on Palestine for public consumption; secondly, the reality of a pragmatic policy by Iraqi elites on Palestine that was designed to do nothing to rock the boat *within* Iraq. As with Jordan, Iraq was complicit in the avaricious partition of Palestine. In December 1947, Iraqi leaders visited Amman to tell Abdullah that Great Britain favoured the partition of Palestine (p.134). Iraq pledged support for this Jordanian take-over of parts of Palestine in the hope of some mutual gain.

The politicking within Iraq fed down the line to make the Iraqi army an ineffective tool for military operations. After making a derisory, failed attack near Beisan, the Iraqi army relieved the Arab Legion and settled into holding the line in the northern sector of the front in a phoney war that resulted in few casualties for either side. As Tripp proves, Iraqi military intervention summed up the uncoordinated nature of the attack on Israel: 18,000 men doing nothing sitting on the defensive in positions some 12 miles from the Mediterranean Sea from where they could cut Israel in half. With allies like these, did the Palestinians need enemies?

Shlaim takes up the baton of challenging the myth of an Israeli David versus an Arab Goliath in the 1948 war in his chapter on Israel and the Arab coalition in 1948. Developing themes from his recent *Iron Wall*, Shlaim gels with the arguments in the other chapters in the volume and slams into the David versus Goliath thesis so popular in the 'old' history. Shlaim does not pull his punches, arguing that the Arab coalition (p.82) 'was one of the most divided, disorganised and ramshackle coalitions in the entire history of warfare.' The fissiparous Arab bloc set Hashemites against anti-Hashemites in the Arab League; Abdullah of Jordan, keen to create a 'greater Syria' under his rule, schemed against the Syrians and others; King Faruq of Egypt looked on aghast at Abdullah's evident ambitions; all the while, the Palestinian leadership, such as it was, worked

against itself as different nodes of power jockeyed for position. As Shlaim concluded, as the Arabs attacked Israel (p.89) 'the politicians of the Arab League continued their backstage manoeuvres, labyrinthine intrigues and sordid attempts to stab each other in the back - all in the name of the highest pan-Arab ideals.'

Shlaim's chapter paints a broad brush across the canvas and his conclusions are sure to annoy the 'new old' historians (p.100): '...when one probes the politics of the war and not merely the military operations, the picture that emerges is not the familiar one of Israel standing alone against the combined military might of the entire Arab world but rather one of a remarkable convergence between the interests of Israel and those of Transjordan against the other members of the Arab coalition and especially against the Palestinians. My purpose in writing this survey was not to pass moral judgement on Israel's conduct in 1948 or to delegitimize Zionism but to suggest that the traditional Zionist narrative of the birth of Israel and the first Arab-Israeli war is deeply flawed.'

Gerges and Landis do for Egypt and Syria what Rogan and Tripp did for Jordan and Iraq. As Gerges argues, Egypt went to war for pretty much the same reasons as Jordan and Iraq: national self-interest. As with the other Arab states, the Egyptians had inadequate military means with which to realise their goals. The Egyptians misunderstood the power of the nascent Israeli army, foolishly referring to the IDF as nothing more than 'armed gangs' (p.155). Thus, Egypt went to war woefully unprepared, eager to fight Abdullah's pretensions to power as much, if not more, than the IDF. The military co-ordination of the Egyptians and Jordanians was dismal: while a rapidly expanding and effective IDF deployed for battle, Jordanian and Egyptian forces in southern Palestine/Israel squabbled over the size of the flags flying over their respective positions (p.164). As Rome burnt, the Egyptian army even mistreated local Palestinians.

Soon the Egyptians were encircled, leaving courageous Egyptian soldiers with inadequate leadership and equipment trapped at the mercy of the IDF. The Egyptian leadership was too proud to ask for help; Abdullah was delighted that the Israelis were humbling his main rival for power. The Egyptian high command was unaware of the seriousness of the plight of its army and so, as with the other Arab states, wrote their own shortcomings out of the histories of the war, preferring to blame everyone and everything bar themselves for the defeat. The Free Officers' Egyptian revolution of 1952 and the militarisation of Egyptian politics (p.100), themselves a product of the 1948 defeat, facilitated the rewriting of history as defeat could be blamed on the old monarchical regime. Quite how Nasir's post-1952 regime would explain defeats in 1956 and 1967 is another story. The defeat of 1948 sent a shock wave through the Arab world: there were coups in Syria, Faruk of Egypt was toppled and Abdullah was assassinated.

Landis's essay on Syria reiterates the infighting in the Arab camp with the real fight over whether Abdullah was going to create a 'greater' Hashemite empire at the expense of other Arab powers. As with Egypt, Syria was sure that the biggest threat came from an expanded, powerful Jordan, rather than a small Jewish state along a small strip of the Mediterranean. This fear of Abdullah led the Syrians, as with the Egyptians, to reject the Bernadotte peace plan of 1948 that would have prevented a total Arab defeat and limited the Palestinian refugee crisis. The reason for this rejection was that the peace plan would have legitimated Jordan's annexation of the west bank of the river Jordan. In military terms, Syria had little to offer as it had to rebuild its disloyal French-trained army before it could attack. This reduced military effectiveness. Worried by a coup from within the army, the Syrian leadership, according to Landis, emasculated the army. In the end, Syria attacked Galilee with a weak Arab Liberation Army of about 2500 men that advanced no great distance and was soon checked by the Israelis.

The last chapter to be discussed is Khalidi's which articulates the case for the Palestinians being fatally weakened by the British prior to the 1948 war, so much so that they were unable to make any meaningful contribution in 1948. Khalidi puts forward a strong argument that the British had paved the way for the Zionist triumph of 1948 with pro-Zionist policies and military repression of the Palestinians in the 1930s. This meant that when the war came in 1948, the Palestinians were reliant on other Arab powers. As has been seen, this was fatal for the Palestinians and led to years in the wilderness.

(3)

What of Said's afterword? Afterwords can be in the way of finishing a lovely meal and then being presented with another starter rather than the dessert that the diner is after. This is especially the case if the afterword is essentially there to sell the book by taking on some eminent scholar willing to put his or her name to a volume. Rogan and Shlaim have avoided this pitfall and, in fact, the afterword works extremely well in tying the historically based arguments in *The War for Palestine* with the current situation in the region. Said provides a lucid, passionate and policy relevant essay of some length (almost as long as some of the chapters) that shows how the history that Rogan and Shlaim have brought together has contemporary relevance. More than this, Said locates much of the current Israeli-Palestinian impasse to misunderstandings over the events of 1948. For Said, 1948 is a distinctively significant historical event. In the afterword, he takes the two histories discussed in this volume - one 'Israeli', one 'Arab' - and tries to bring them together and show not just the common ground but how they can be reconciled and made to work for future generations. This is all done with Said's typical penmanship and flourish, with a touch of the polemical. What is most striking about Said's afterword is the mismatch between his hopeful words born of a lifetime of study and reading in the academy, and the reality of the current violent impasse in the region. It is to be hoped that the plea of the academic is not drowned out by the reality of cannon fire as the sword triumphs over the pen, as too often happens in history.

(4)

There are criticisms that can be levelled against this volume and these might be issues that the editors will want to raise in their authors' response. One of the most noticeable weaknesses comes when the reader skims through the endnotes looking at sources used. It quickly becomes apparent that when it comes to primary sources - memoirs aside - only Britain, Israel and the USA provide archival material. This is not the fault of the editors or contributors to this collection - indeed it is acknowledged in the introduction (p.8) - but the gap left by the absence of Arab archives is sorely felt in any scholarship on a debate which has a reasonably full picture of one side - Israel - but less to say on the Arabs based on the original official documentation. (Indeed, 'new old' historians have attacked the 'new' historians for their lack of Arab sources, saying that more Arab sources are available.) The contributors to *The War for Palestine* do a good job of overcoming this deficiency by using Arab-language books, memoirs diaries and, in the case of Jordan, some printed primary material, but if and when the Arab governments do open their archives it will be interesting to see how much of the current debate will need to be revised in light of new findings from Arab documents.

On the theme of archival access, Morris raises the question of whether the Israeli archives have been 'weeded' (pp.49-50) to stonewall researchers searching for references to abuses by the IDF during the 1948 war. Morris might be right but it leaves a slightly conspiratorial feel to the scholarship that can be neither proved nor disproved - which is of course why conspiracy theories are so popular. This is most noticeable in the chapters by Morris and Parsons where both are forced to present the best case that they can based on, at times, circumstantial evidence. As Parsons confesses in her case study relying on only two villages (p.68): 'I have not found the smoking gun.' It is the connection between what the IDF were doing at the local level and what the central Zionist leadership were deciding that needs to be unravelled. If IDF abuses occurred were they centrally or locally directed? As Morris is well aware, the former suggest a policy of expulsion; the latter suggest undirected actions taken in the heat of battle or soon after by local commanders acting on their own initiative. Assuming that more information will emerge from the Israeli archives, further revisions of the 1948 war will be necessary. At the moment there is still a disjuncture between local IDF actions and central Zionist direction.

Two key players in the war of 1948 are absent from *The War for Palestine: Rewriting the History of 1948*: Lebanon and Great Britain. The absence of a chapter on Lebanon is acknowledged by the editors (pp.8-9) who lament that a chapter on Lebanon was impossible because of insufficient scholarship. The omission of a chapter on Great Britain is more puzzling. It might be that that Rogan and Shlaim wanted to focus on the immediate middle eastern states involved in the 1948 war but, as they well know, Britain, as the ex-colonial power, had a big part to play in what happened in 1948. A chapter on London's views and policies would have helped flesh out the insights and conclusions of the contributors to this collection.

In terms of the chapters, Khalidi's stands out, to use the current jargon, as the weakest link. It is a pity that

Khalidi's chapter on the Palestinians opens the volume as its central thesis, that the Palestinians were not presented with a level playing field before 1948 and so suffered when it came to a fight with the Zionists, while relevant, interesting and strongly argued, is simply not substantiated. Indeed, Khalidi's chapter raises more questions than it answers and is an example of the sort of apologia that the other authors in this volume are careful to avoid. To blame the Palestinians' lack of leadership in 1948 on events such as the Balfour Declaration seems misplaced and misleading. The Balfour Declaration of 1917 was, in a vague way, pro-Zionist. But Britain acted primarily out of national self-interest, supporting Jew and Arab in equal and unequal measure when it suited. Thus, in the 1939 White Paper, notwithstanding Khalidi's contrary argument, the British performed a volte-face, supporting the Arabs because they wanted their support against Germany and Italy in the Second World War. The fact is that what Britain did to the Arabs it did to the Zionists. It is more that the Zionists were far better at exploiting what was offered. Therefore, from 1936-9 the British successfully suppressed the Arab revolt in Palestine; from 1945-7, the British unsuccessfully suppressed Zionist terrorism in Palestine. Obviously, the context of the Arab revolt and the Jewish insurgency after the Second World War and the Holocaust was different but Khalidi never really presents a convincing case to prove that the real fault lay outside rather than inside the Palestinian community. Khalidi presents an interesting argument but the reader is left wondering whether the Palestinians still need to face up to their own shortcomings which left them reliant on an avaricious group of Arab states for support when it came to war in 1948 rather than blame external factors in the form of Britain and/or the Zionists.

Conclusion

These minor criticisms should not detract from the topicality, scholarship and interest provided by *The War for Palestine: Rewriting the History of 1948*. Anti-revisionists will doubtless attack the veracity of the finer details embedded in this volume. Was an expulsion policy around 'Plan Dalet' ever agreed before 1948? Are the IDF to blame for the Palestinian refugee crisis when Arab leaders acted so stupidly? Why attack Israel when the Arabs were just as bad, if not worse, in their behaviour to the Palestinians? While the 'new' historians certainly present Israel in a more hostile light, Rogan and Shlaim show how, at the end of the day, no-one emerges from the machinations of 1948 with much credit. Indeed, the reader of *The War for Palestine: Rewriting the History of 1948* is left rather shocked at the greed and complicity of the neighbouring Arab states who pretended they were acting for pan-Arab ideals. At least the Zionists, busy trying to forge a Jewish state out of the ruins of the Holocaust, had the excuse that the Arabs were the enemy and that without a substantial Jewish majority Israel was simply not viable.

The editors have attempted to address the issue of what really happened in 1948 but they have also tried to show how the subsequent writing of the history of 1948 needs to be challenged. They are to be commended for a scholarly, readable volume that will provoke more debate and, perhaps, a more honest examination of the histories of all the protagonists more than half a century after Israel's 'War of Independence'.

Notes

1. Benny Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem 1947-49* (Cambridge: CUP, 1987); Morris, *1948 and After: Israel and the Palestinians* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990); Morris, *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict*, 1881-1999 (London: John Murray, 2000); Ilan Pappé, *The Making of the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1947-1951* (London & New York: IB Taurus, 1992); Pappé (ed.), *The Israel/Palestine Question* (London & New York: Routledge, 1999); Simha Flapan, *The Birth of Israel: Myths and Realities* (New York: Pantheon, 1987); Avi Shlaim, *Collusion Across the Jordan: King Abdullah, the Zionist Movement and the Partition of Palestine* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1988); Shlaim, *The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World* (London, Allen Lane, 2000).Back to (1)
2. For a cogent summary of the 'new' historians' perspective see Avi Shlaim, 'The Debate about 1948', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 27, 1995, 287-304; also Bernard Wasserstein, 'Old historians and new', *Jerusalem Post*, 27 December 1999.Back to (2)
3. Aharon Megged, 'The Israeli Suicide Drive', *Ha-aretz Weekly Magazine*, 10 June 1994 quoted in Efraim Karsh, *Fabricating Israeli History: The 'New Historians'* (London: Frank Cass, 1997). See also Karsh's, *Fabricating Israeli History*, Preface to the Second Revised Edition, pp.xv-xxxix (London:

Frank Cass, 2000).Back to (3)

4. For instance Morris's review of *Karsh's Fabricating Israeli History* entitled 'Refabricating 1948' in Journal of Palestinian Studies, 27/2, Winter 1998, 81-95.Back to (4)
5. For instance Nur Masalha's essay 'A Critique on Benny Morris' in Ilan Pappé (ed.), *The Israel/Palestine Question* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999 (originally an article in *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 21/1, Autumn 1991, 90-7); Norman Finklestein, 'Myths, Old and New', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 21/1, Autumn 1991; and Morris 'Response to Finklestein and Masalha', in the same issue of *Journal of Palestine Studies*. Prominent Palestinian scholars such as Edward Said have acknowledged the work done by the 'new' historians: see http://ihr.sa.ac.uk/ihr/reviews/shlaimavi.html [2].Back to (5)
6. For a revision of schoolbooks, see Neil Caplan, review article, 'Zionism and the Arabs: Another Look at the "New" Historiography', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 36/2, April 2001, 348-9.Back to (6)
7. Morris, *Birth*, p.286.Back to (7)
8. From Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: CUP, 1984). Back to (8)
9. Rogan, *The Frontiers of the State in the Late Ottoman Empire: Transjordan, 1850-1921* (Cambridge: CUP, 1999).Back to (9)
10. Tripp, *A History of Iraq* (Cambridge: CUP, 2000).Back to (10)

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