



# The Birth of Israel: Myths and Realities

*Simha Flapan*

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## **The Birth of Israel: Myths and Realities** Simha Flapan

In this ground-breaking and controversial history of the founding of Israel, noted Israeli scholar and peace activist Simha Flapan gives us the first true account of one of the most momentous political events of the century. The official story is well known: the Zionists welcomed the partition of Palestine into an Arab and a Jewish state; the Arabs rejected partition and launched a war to drive the Jews into the sea; the Palestinians fled Israel despite the efforts of Jewish leaders to get them to stay; after Israel's miraculous victory in 1948, its hand was extended in peace, but not a single Arab leader responded. *The Birth of Israel* exposes these "historical truths" as propaganda myths that have misguided Israeli policy to this day. Drawing on recently declassified material - from David Ben Gurion's war diaries to the minutes of secret meetings - Flapan reconstructs the real events of that critical time. He demonstrates that the Zionist leadership accepted partition purely as a tactical strategy, that their intention was always to establish a homogeneous Jewish homeland in most, if not all, of Palestine. Flapan shows, furthermore, how these objectives shaped Israeli actions: their expulsion of the Palestinians, their exploitation of the 1948 war for territorial gain, and their refusal to make any concessions that might have brought about accommodation. Flapan's lucid analysis sheds light on the figures and events of that time: Ben-Gurion emerges as Begin's forerunner, the "just" war of 1948 as the precursor of the debacle in Lebanon. Eye-opening and bold, full of unsettling revelations, *The Birth of Israel* offers fresh hope for understanding the tragic Arab-Israeli stalemate, and for moving towards a solution.

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One of the books, "The Birth of Israel: Myths and Realities" by Simha Flapan, is viewed by Middle East specialists here as militantly anti-Zionist, a book designed to erode one of the major Western perceptions of the Israeli-Arab conflict - the notion that Israel has always held itself to a higher moral standard than its neighbors did. "It was a complex human situation," Mr. Pipes said of the birth of Israel. "Mistakes, evil and virtue existed on both sides, though perhaps not in equal proportion." "All this interest in the 1948 period," Mr. Pipes said, "is due to the fact that the Arab-Israeli conflict has gone back to where it was. Flapan, S. (1987). The birth of Israel: Myths and realities. New York, NY: Pantheon. Google Scholar. Goodman, H. (2011). The anatomy of Israel's survival. Toronto, ON, Canada: McClellan and Stewart. Google Scholar. Jay, M. (Ed.). Israel: The Alternative. The New York Review of Books. Google Scholar. Kogan, I. (1998). The black hole of dread: The psychic reality of children of holocaust survivors. In J. Berke, S. Pierides, A. Sabbadini, & S. Schneider (Eds.), Even paranoids have enemies: New perspectives on paranoia and persecution. London, England: Routledge. Google Scholar. The Idea of Israel traces how segments of Israeli society and academia eventually came to grips with their country's history. This is a process beginning with early anti-Zionists on the Marxist left, through the emergence of a new generation of demythologizing Israeli historians, to a period Pappe describes as post-Zionist, ending in what he says is the present-day neo-Zionist reality. Mood, not movement. Post-Zionism, which involved a widening critique of Zionism from many academic perspectives, including the disciplines of sociology, literary and art criticism, philosophy and political science

The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: A Bibliography – Patrick S. O'Donnell (2018) This compilation is marked by two conspicuous constraints: largely (i.e., with a few important exceptions) books only, in English. Abbas, Mahmoud (Abu Mazin). *Through Secret Channels: The Road to Oslo* – Senior PLO Leader – Abu Mazin's Revealing Story of the Negotiations with Israel. Reading, UK: Garnet, 1995. Abowd, Thomas Philip. *Colonial Jerusalem: The Spatial Construction of Identity and Difference in a City of Myth, 1948-2012*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2014. Abraham, Matthew. *The Birth of Israel: Myths and Realities*. New York: Pantheon, 1987. Fleischmann, Ellen I. *The Nation and Its New Women: The Palestinian Women's Movement, 1920-1948*. The Israeli collective memory (and its various subtypes) has changed over the years. Initially, after 1948 when the State of Israel was founded, it was highly distorted and biased in favor of the Israeli-Jews. As time passed, however, mostly since the 1970s, this memory has changed, to become less biased as well as more accurate and critical. This process took place in a larger context of the Israeli-Jewish repertoire of the conflict, which includes, aside from the collective memory, the ethos of the conflict and its collective emotional orientation. This chapter reviews the process that the I... Flapan, S. (1987). *The Birth of Israel – Myths and Realities*. New York, NY: Pantheon Books. Google Scholar. Kimmerling, K. (1983). Since this time numerous Israeli scholars have entered the discussion around the birth of... This article traces the debate surrounding the “new historians” which has continued in Israel since the release of Simha Flapan's work *The Birth of Israel: Myths and Realities* in 1987. Since this time numerous Israeli scholars have entered the discussion around the birth of the State of Israel, representing a large array of viewpoints, factual findings and conclusions. The paper investigates the wider implications of this debate within Israel and how it has profoundly affected not only the way Israelis view their past but, just as importantly, how they look to their future. Do you want to

Simha Flapan, Birth of Israel - Myths and realities, Pantheon Books 1987. Not new historiography, formed backbone of Passfield white paper and anti zionist bunt. New historiography rests on defective evidence, no arab sources. Israeli War of Independence, flight of pal Arabs, should be examined in context of 1929, 1936-39 arab riots and 1937 peel plan, 1939 white paper, 1941 land ordinance, yishuv efforts to increase immigration and the holocaust - historical foreshortening and attempt to disconnect birth of israel from experience of the jewish people. The Idea of Israel traces how segments of Israeli society and academia eventually came to grips with their country's history. This is a process beginning with early anti-Zionists on the Marxist left, through the emergence of a new generation of demythologizing Israeli historians, to a period Pappe describes as post-Zionist, ending in what he says is the present-day neo-Zionist reality. Mood, not movement. Post-Zionism, which involved a widening critique of Zionism from many academic perspectives, including the disciplines of sociology, literary and art criticism, philosophy and political scien



