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RECENT BOOKS

ECONOMIC SEPARATION

The Economics of Palestine: Economic Policy and Institutional Reform for a Viable Palestinian State, edited by David Cobham and Nu'man Kanafani. London and New York: Routledge Studies in Development Economics, 2004. xvii + 293 pages. Index to p. 301. \$150.00 cloth.

Reviewed by Fadle M. Naqib

The Economics of Palestine features an introduction by the editors, plus ten papers and related discussions presented at the University of St. Andrews in August 2003. That workshop was financed by the British government's Department for International Development, and its participants included Palestinian, American, European, and Israeli economists who have been engaged in research on the economic conditions of the Palestinian territories under Israeli occupation. Each of the ten papers presents the author's optimal option for a future Palestinian state in such fields as trade, monetary, fiscal, financial, and labor arrangements and suggests schemes related to the refugees' problem, the future of the camps in Gaza, and the capacity of the future state to absorb returning Palestinian refugees residing outside the West Bank and Gaza.

Students of the Palestinian problem will be most interested in comparing this book with similar books containing papers presented in numerous conferences and workshops held in the early 1990s immediately after the launching of the Oslo peace process (see, for instance, Stanley Fischer et al., *Securing Peace in the Middle East* [MIT Press, 1994]). Gone is the euphoria of the earlier papers that promised major improvements in the economic condition of the Palestinian people as a result of the (presumed) economic integration of Palestine, Israel, and Jordan, to be followed later by their economic integration with the rest of the "new" Middle East. In fact, *The Economics of Palestine* adheres firmly to the principle of economic separation between Palestine and Israel as a necessary step to-

ward building a viable Palestinian state. It is true that the difference between the two perspectives is due, to a large extent, to the collapse of the Oslo process, but it is also true that the economists in this book have conducted more sober analyses based on realistic assumptions of actual conditions on the ground, which have not been altered despite a decade of economic conferences, summits, and books preaching economic integration under the banner of privatization, liberalization, and globalization.

This point is made very clear in the debate over the optimal trade regime between the future Palestinian state and Israel. The debate occupied several conferences and was the subject of many papers during the 1990s. Participants were divided into two camps: those who advocated a free trade area between the future state of Palestine and Israel and those who supported a closer relation fostered by a custom union (for representative examples, see Arie Arnon and Jimmy Weinblatt, "The Potential for Trade between Israel, the Palestinians, and Jordan" [Bank of Israel Discussion Paper, 1996]; Nu'man Kanafani, "Trade Relations between Palestine and Israel: Free Trade Area or Custom Union?" [Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute, December 1996]; and Arvind Panagariya and Ishac Diwan, "Trade Policy Options for the West Bank and Gaza Strip" [Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute, January 1997]). Most of the arguments were based on descriptive explications and anecdotal evidence and were not well grounded in economic theory or verified by suitable quantitative analysis. The excellent paper of Sébastien Dessus and Elizabeth Ruppert in this volume marks a welcome departure from this earlier practice. They analyze the trade regime choice from the vantage point of formal economic theory employing the relevant techniques of dynamic computable general equilibrium simulation. The results of their simulations show that, in accordance with Palestinian interests, neither the free trade area regime nor the custom union is an optimal choice for the future relationship between the Palestinian state and Israel. Rather, the optimal regime is that of nondiscriminatory trade, whereby trade relations with Israel are treated like other countries. Not surprisingly, this result, first reported in an earlier version of the

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paper (the July 2002 World Bank report, "Long Term Policy Options for the Palestinian Economy"), has received the vented wrath of some Israeli and Palestinian economists who oppose the idea of economic separation, including those influential in designing the Oslo economic arrangement known as the Paris Protocol.

Generally speaking, the other papers, especially those dealing with currency, fiscal, financial, and labor concerns are informative, well researched, and useful. The short paper analyzing the economic feasibility of building a new port of Gaza is a nice addition as it employs a theoretical model (incomplete contracts) that can be used in other areas related to the efficiency of major investments in the Palestinian context. Yet, in reading the book one is rather put off by the editors' unbearably cocky way of stating that "the core of the Palestinian refugee problem will find a solution within the geographic borders of the new state," implying both that millions of people will be denied their inalienable right to return to their homes that are now in Israel and that such a solution is a prerequisite for a peaceful resolution to the conflict. Do the editors really believe that denying Palestinian refugees their right to self-determination is a step toward peace?

POWER OF JINN NARRATIVES

Spirits of Palestine: Gender, Society, and Stories of the Jinn, by Celia E. Rothenberg. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2004. xii + 132 pages. Appendix to p. 135. Bibliography to p. 143. Index to p. 148. \$22.95 paper.

Reviewed by Lisa Suhair Majaj

Given the pressure of political realities, other dimensions of Palestinian experience often get short shrift. *Spirits of Palestine* provides a glimpse into the little-discussed realm of jinn, or spirit, possession. In her discussion of jinn stories recorded in the West

Bank town of Artas during 1995–1996, Celia Rothenberg provides a fascinating ethnography that also sheds light on the subtle workings of power within social and political contexts.

Rothenberg teaches religious and health studies at McMaster University; her previous publications include articles about Palestinians in the diaspora and the co-edited collection *Feminist (Re)Visions of the Subject: Landscapes, Ethnoscapes, and Theoriscapes* (Lexington Books, 2001). *Spirits of Palestine* brings together Rothenberg's interests in social geography, health, religion, and social transformation. Focusing on jinn narratives both as indicators of social relationships and as vehicles for negotiating power, tradition, personal circumstances, patriarchy, and occupation, *Spirits* probes the intersection of social, political, and spiritual realms. Although Rothenberg is careful not to deny the religious/spiritual aspect of these stories, she makes clear that they cannot be understood apart from the political and social economies that situate them: Even as they reflect a belief in another dimension, they provide an outlet for social and political critiques and point toward possible spaces for resistance.

Rothenberg locates herself—and stresses that her Palestinian interlocutors similarly located her—within a genealogy of female researchers in Artas, beginning with Finnish anthropologist Hilma Granqvist. Indeed, her original research was planned as a sequel to Granqvist's work on kinship relations—a plan quickly discarded when she heard her first jinn narrative. Although Rothenberg's dedication to her subject is evident, the book begins somewhat laboriously and would have benefited from a livelier and more focused approach. However, it picks up speed as Rothenberg teases out the insights jinn stories provide into gender relationships, women's and men's social realities, and Arab-Jewish relationships in a context of occupation. Drawing on the narratives she has collected and making some comparison to those reported by Granqvist, Rothenberg shows how jinn narratives break down distinctions between public and private spheres, literate tradition and popular lore, intellectual and emotional understandings of Islam, and women's and men's experiences, and how they provide ways of critiquing social facts taken for granted as "natural."

Although the Western medical framework posits spirit possession as a form of

Lisa Suhair Majaj writes on Arab and Arab-American literature and culture. Her co-edited books include *Intersections: Gender, Nation, and Community in Arab Women's Novels* (Syracuse University Press, 2002), *Etel Adnan: Critical Essays on the Arab-American Writer and Artist* (McFarland and Co., 2002), and *Going Global: The Transnational Reception of Third World Women Writers* (Garland Publishing, 2000).

mental illness, Rothenberg, like other commentators, sees possession as an idiom for self-expression that has “external and public significance” (p. 46) and which demonstrates a transgenerational concern with proper behavior. As she notes, in common parlance one “wears” a jinn; in the same way as clothing makes visible a person’s social identity, jinn possession makes visible codes of proper behavior and morality. Possession in these tales is often a consequence of breaching social or moral norms. But it also offers a means of renegotiating moral and social codes, especially in cases where ideology is overly rigid. Indeed, jinn stories bring to the surface “the schism between *what is* and *what should be*” (p. 125). For instance, although the *hamula*, or genealogically defined extended family, theoretically provides the primary source of social relationships, physical proximity and individual preference are just as important in creating social ties. Similarly, jinn stories provide ways of subtly defying the strictures of tradition. For instance, in one story Rothenberg relates, a girl who lost her virginity was said to be possessed and thus spared punishment. Other jinn stories provide commentary on the complex relationships between Arabs and Jews within an occupation context in which individuals may be imprisoned by or work with Israelis and in which families may be separated geographically by political borders. A chapter analyzing a case of possession by a Jewish jinn is especially fascinating: It makes evident the intersection of forces of patriarchy and Israeli domination in Palestinian women’s lives.

Rothenberg’s overarching thesis that jinn stories function as commentaries on power, whether patriarchal or political, makes it tempting—as she herself points out—to read a great deal into these stories. However, she is careful not to romanticize their potential. Although jinn narratives create a potential space for criticizing structures of power, these structures—especially of patriarchy and military occupation—cannot be dismantled easily. Yet spaces for resistance remain. For the reader seeking to understand both the texture of Palestinian life and the possibilities for resisting oppressive structures of power, Rothenberg offers an original perspective.

SELF-DESTRUCTION DISCOURSES

Suicide in Palestine: Narratives of Despair, by Nadia Taysir Dabbagh.

Northampton, MA: Olive Branch Press, 2005. xii + 245 pages. Appendices to p. 262. Index to p. 265. \$17.95 paper.

Reviewed by Sylvie Mansour

Nadia Dabbagh’s *Suicide in Palestine* focuses on the “suicide phenomenon” in Palestinian society in response to “increasing public discourse and concern [in Palestine] about reports of suicide which was seen as something new and alien” (p. 2) in 1997, implying that suicide was a growing phenomenon. But the value of the book goes far beyond the analysis of a temporal phenomenon. Rather, it looks in a very innovative way at two main dimensions of self-destructive behavior: what is to be found in public discourse and what is related to private life histories, taking into consideration religious and societal beliefs.

After putting suicide in the context of Western literature, Dabbagh examines past and present attitudes to death and suicide in the Arab world. She then focuses on the specific Palestinian context, looking at what could explain why people seemed to discover, in a state of quasi-panic, that suicide was a phenomenon in their community. She postulates that this moral panic happened when people started to realize that their steadfastness was to a certain extent a façade aimed at covering the despair buried deep inside. She also could have made the connection between this sudden interest in the phenomenon of suicide and the concerns that rose up around adolescents’ mental health in the aftermath of the first intifada: Countless articles in the media and workshops for social workers and counselors dealt with that issue. Adults were very worried about the fate of the youth of the intifada, their concerns based on a mixture of empathy for those children who had resisted the occupation and a desire to regain control over them, for they perceived the youths’ new found independence as a threat to traditional values. The only way to know whether panic in public discourse corresponded to an increase in the incidence of suicide would be to have statistics, so Dabbagh takes the reader on a breathless quest

Sylvie Mansour, a clinical psychologist who has worked in Lebanon and Palestine, is the author of *Des enfants et des pierres: Enquête en Palestine occupée* (Les livres de la revue d’études palestiniennes, 1988) and several articles on the mental health of Palestinian youths.

for epidemiological data (which also serves as a pretext to demonstrate how statistics are always partially socially constructed).

In the second part of the book, Dabbagh recounts thirty-one suicide narratives, analyzing the strong connection between private life and living under Israeli occupation. Based on her differential analysis of male and female life histories, she keeps her distance from an overly simplified view that tends too often to present Palestinian women as the main victims in society. Her book is especially admirable for two reasons. Young authors seldom are able to use an interdisciplinary approach with the skill that Dabbagh does. She uses concepts from psychiatry and psychology, epidemiological techniques, and anthropological methods without underplaying the contribution of any of those disciplines. She succeeds in giving a very comprehensive understanding of the “suicide phenomenon” in the Arab world in general and in Palestine in particular. She also addresses very sensitive issues without falling into the pitfalls of sensational stories of Palestinian “martyrs” or a unilateral description of Palestinian women’s distress.

Suicide in Palestine is the outcome of a doctoral thesis and consequently will be appreciated by scholars for its solid analysis and references. Furthermore, it is written in an engaging style, enlivened with accounts of a desperate quest for statistics that sometimes holds the reader spellbound: “When I went to the Old Archive everyone laughed and said that no one goes there. I was even told that there were rats. When I finally got the key and went in it was a complete shambles and I could hardly get in . . .” (p. 107).

The suicide narratives also allow the reader to understand what the Israeli occupation really means in the everyday life of Palestinians. The phenomenon of suicide is analyzed in the context of Palestinian identity and of the “ripple effect of war.”

In 2006, one still has to give up the idea of gathering systematic data on suicide rates and suicidal attempts in Palestine. Local newspapers or other media do not seem to be especially interested in the issue anymore. But mental health workers regularly have to deal with the open expression of their patients’ suicidal ideas, as if some kind of equilibrium between steadfastness and despair has been reached, allowing for the acknowledgement of the psychological suffering of families confronted with still worsening life conditions.

A STRUGGLE TOLD IN VOICES

Peace under Fire: Israel/Palestine and the International Solidarity Movement, edited by Josie Sandercock, Radhika Sainath, Marissa McLaughlin, Hussein Khalili, Nicholas Blincoe, Huwaida Arraf, and Ghasan Andoni. Foreword by Edward Said. New York: Verso Books, 2004. xxii + 297 pages. \$22.00 paper.

Reviewed by Zachary Wales

In the same way that the International Solidarity Movement (ISM) marks a sign of our times, its first book builds on a trend pioneered by Howard Zinn’s *Voices of a People’s History of the United States* (Seven Stories Press, 2004). As a collection of individual accounts, it does not attempt to derive a perfectly consistent voice from a popular movement. Rather, this carefully orchestrated narrative is precisely what the ISM, as with any mass movement, was meant to be: the sum of its voices. The decision to record history through a compilation of essays, e-mails, letters, diary entries, interviews, and newspaper reports is raw, audacious, and anything but simple.

This point is made early in the collection’s foreword by the late Edward W. Said, who wrote, “there is a wide discrepancy today between our cultures and societies and the small group of people who now rule these societies.” In today’s growing body of progressive thought—at least for those who choose to access it—there is the tacit understanding that media institutions are failing us, that societies and cultures are governed remotely by their more privileged counterparts, that thoughts and lives are political currency, and that we are ever more disconnected from the common human on the other side of our *New York Times*.

How then to bridge this gap coherently, particularly in the pandemic ignorance over the occupation of Palestine? To this end, *Peace under Fire* was not constructed haphazardly. The collection plots the ISM’s history from its beginnings to the present in a show-don’t-tell fashion that lends preference to testimony over self-identification. For it is only after a great many hardships and a handful of victories that a social movement can give itself a name—and even this

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is a simplification. Just as no brilliant nonfiction is scripted, the essence of a successful movement lies in its testament.

This is evident in the way that the ISM's history attests to the course of the second intifada. For instance, several days after Ariel Sharon walked into al-Haram al-Sharif, a contingent of Palestinians and internationals peacefully took over an Israeli military outpost in Bayt Sahur near Bethlehem. The event culminated with a Canadian planting a Palestinian flag atop the garrison's watchtower, giving birth to a concept that simultaneously emboldens the ISM and inflicts it with irony: had the flag bearer been Palestinian, he would have been shot. After all, what later would become the signature strategy of non-Palestinian ISM members—ushering children and medical workers to safety by virtue of an orange vest that connotes "international + death = bad publicity"—is among the ugliest tableaux of the intifada: the exploitation of perceived humanity. But this too is taken to task, as the narrative progresses from the confession by Nancy Stohlman as she cashes in on her international status to abandon the besieged Church of the Nativity, "I am crying and ashamed . . . like a rat fleeing from a sinking ship" (p. 68), to the reaction of Alice Coy in Gaza, after Israel's murder of Rachel Corrie and Tom Hurndall, "I am still in shock at losing my second friend in under four weeks. I feel like a Palestinian" (p. 245). Taken in its entirety, *Peace under Fire* is the statistical law of large numbers unfolding before the reader's eye; as with the variability of an infinite succession of coin tosses, the identities of foreigner and local, Jew, Muslim, and Christian meld into a common thread.

That said, *Peace under Fire*'s editors do a notable job of organizing the narrative so that it does not become the white noise of victimhood. Not only are the sections distributed geographically, covering some of the most essential historical locations—Jenin, Nablus, Rafah, the Muqata in Ramallah—but they take stock of the qualitative dimensions of occupation: checkpoints, refugee camps, the apartheid wall, the business end of an M-4. In reading these accounts, one is struck by the variegated cultural identities of ISM members and how their respective consequences in this line of activism depend on their being Palestinian, Israeli, or American, to name only a few. No sooner does one discover a universal link than it is quickly torn away by the severe racial overtones of Israel's project. Regardless, one comes away with

distinct memories of individuality: Huwaida Arraf's "infectious sense of total calm," Neta Golan's acid defiance to her own authorities, and Jeremy Hardy's self-deprecations, "Palestinian women have a way of looking at you that says, 'Are you uniquely stupid, or is it a male thing?'"

Peace Under Fire's table of contents could be modified and an index might prove beneficial, not to mention that the epilogue from the Israeli reservist Daniel Dworsky could be complemented by the voices of contemporary refuseniks—but these matters are for later editions, which will have to include the ongoing campaign in Bil'in, of course. For now, this work documents that common thread, where the experience of trauma sublimates into hope, anger, stupefaction, humor, longing, and anything but silence, as that is where the cause ends.

REVISIONIST TAKE ON OSLO BREAKDOWN

Israel/Palestine: How to End the War of 1948, by Tanya Reinhart. New York: Seven Stories Press, 2002. 235 pages. Appendix to p. 243. Notes to p. 265. Index to p. 278. \$11.95 paper.

Reviewed by Eric Hooglund

Like the American scholar Noam Chomsky, Tanya Reinhart has an established academic reputation as a teacher of linguistics and a solid political reputation as a courageous activist and intellectual who does not shy away from speaking truth to power. For Reinhart, who is an Israeli, speaking truth, as this book compellingly demonstrates, means challenging the official Israeli version of the Oslo process and its breakdown after the July 2000 Camp David meeting between Palestinian Authority president Yasir Arafat and Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak. And, more important, it means exposing the treatment of Palestinian civilians by Israeli military forces after that breakdown, especially during the reoccupation of the West Bank in 2002.

Reinhart believes that the Oslo agreements created "false expectations" among Palestinians and many in the West, and even among most Israelis, that the occupation of

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the West Bank and Gaza would end and a new era of peace would begin (pp. 13–16). But Reinhart was skeptical from the outset, warning as early as May 1994 in an essay in *Ha'Aretz* (translated from the Hebrew and reprinted on pp. 236–43) that the then just-concluded Gaza-Jericho First agreement was the beginning of a period of apartheid. Subsequently, her fears proved percipient and the expectations of others proved false because the Israeli governments after 1994 did not dismantle any of the Israeli settlements in the Palestinian occupied territories but, on the contrary, expanded them. In effect, 50 percent of the land in the West Bank was reserved for Israeli settlements and other activities. Furthermore, Israel did not treat Arafat and the Palestinian Authority as equal negotiating partners but rather as instruments through which to heighten its own “domination and control” (p. 18).

By 2000, what Barak hoped to achieve at Camp David was to secure Arafat's approval for all the Israeli evasions and violations of Oslo that had been taking place for nearly seven years. Thus, even though the Israelis presented no map or other document to the Palestinian team, they succeeded in cultivating the myth of Palestinian responsibility for the failure of the talks, saying that Arafat had refused to accept Barak's “historical concession” on such issues as Jerusalem and the return of Palestinian refugees. In reality, says Reinhart, “Barak had not moved an inch” in terms of compromising on these or other issues (pp. 38–39). But Barak proved his “mastery of schemes of deception” (p. 61) in terms of controlling the media depictions of Camp David. This was not the first time, for Reinhart reminds us how skillfully he had used the same tactics in regard to the failed negotiations with Syria in 1999 (pp. 61–77). In effect, Barak shares a “common worldview” with Ariel Sharon, although he was more politically astute than Sharon in dealing with diplomats and the media, at least up through Camp David.

After the Camp David negotiations, however, it was Sharon who trumped Barak and emerged as the top politician in Israel. Sharon did this by exploiting “one of the most sensitive areas in the Middle East,” the Haram al-Sharif/Temple Mount complex in East Jerusalem (p. 88). When in September 2000 he announced his “elementary right” to visit a Jewish holy site, Barak unwisely compiled with “this provocation” by sending hundreds of Israeli troops “to accompany Sharon and crush any sign of protest” on the

part of Palestinian worshippers (p. 93). The incident precipitated the al-Aqsa intifada and the massive Israeli response that resulted in over 100 Palestinians killed and over 7,000 injured in the first five weeks of the conflict. The Israeli media depiction of the uprising as an existential struggle for the state—in effect, “the second half of 1948”—so blinded most Israelis to the true nature of the conflict that they saw themselves as the victims, not the Palestinians whose lives, homes, and infrastructure were being destroyed (pp. 106–11).

After Sharon became prime minister in early 2001, the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories deteriorated to the benefit of Israeli control over the lives of the population. Sharon's aim, writes Reinhart, was to destroy the Palestinian Authority (PA) and the rule of Yasser Arafat, in effect, to undo the “historical mistake” of Oslo (p. 129). Arafat was useful as long as he had collaborated with Israel to maintain security in the occupied territories in place of Israeli forces. Once he demanded real independence for the Palestinians, he was, as Sharon put it, “no longer relevant” (p. 131) and thus was rebranded as a terrorist. A year after assuming office, Sharon was ready to complete the destruction of the PA and launched Operation Defensive Shield, a military offensive for the reoccupation of the West Bank towns that had been evacuated in the mid-1990s (pp. 148–80).

Reinhardt wrote this book soon after the spring 2002 re-occupation of the West Bank, and thus she does not deal with developments such as the Gaza Strip disengagement plan or the separation wall, which undoubtedly she would see as stark physical evidence of her concerns that Israel is creating an apartheid regime in which the Palestinians are confined to tiny, noncontiguous Bantustans. Her solution for a just end to the terrible conditions under which the Palestinians lived in 2002—and continue to live today—is a complete and unilateral Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories and the establishment of a fully sovereign, equal, and independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza.

POLITICALLY ENGAGED TOURISM

Palestine and Palestinians: Guidebook, by the Alternative Tourism Group. Bayt Sahur: Alternative Tourism Group, 2005. 425 pages. Appendix to p. 436. Index to p. 444. \$30.00 paper.

Reviewed by Ilan Pappé

It is difficult these days to think of Palestine as an ordinary tourist attraction. For those who choose to visit it as "Israel" and continue to deny the existence of Palestine or the Palestinians, it is indeed full of tourists' resorts and sites of religious pilgrimages and of Jewish heritage. For some Europeans, whose charter flights take them directly to the Gulf of Aqaba, "Israel" is the city of Eilat on the way to the Sinai. However, ever since the outbreak of the first intifada, "political" or "ideological" tourists appeared. These people come with prior knowledge and with a desire to help, or at least to be informed. Even if they are not all hard-working volunteers in the International Solidarity Movement, they still are willing to invest time in listening to lectures, attending workshops, and even helping a bit while they are in Palestine or in Israel.

Until now, this group of tourists and visitors did not have any "tourist guide" to help them. The book under review is the ultimate guide for such a brand of committed tourist and activist. It would be wrong, however, to limit the definition of this book to a mere aide for the inquisitive tourist of modern day Palestine, for it breaks new ground in two very significant ways. First, it treats Palestine, from the river Jordan to the Mediterranean, as one subject matter for the visitors. It is through such a perspective that one can appreciate that Israel stretches over almost 80 percent of Palestine and that in 1948 al-Dawayma, today in the West Bank, and Tantura, today in Israel, suffered in a similar way from massacres carried out by Israeli forces.

Second, the book connects very smoothly and concisely the past and the present. It tells the tourist what can be seen and what could have been seen had it still been there. The present map and the erased map of Palestine are the contexts in which places are visited and discussed. Some illustrations in the guide, despite its compact format, give the readers a taste of this juxtaposition of a Palestinian past that was wiped out and a new Israeli reality that took its place.

The book's first eighty pages are devoted to the land's history, including its natural and cultural histories. It is based on the most updated analyses appearing in recent years.

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These debunk successfully the Zionist historiographical narrative. Thereafter, however, the orderly structure is lost, although this actually makes for a better text. Its value is that it reflects the admixture of emotions, impressions, and reactions one feels when one visits Israel and Palestine. Biographies of famous Palestinians, some of them assassinated by the Israelis during the second intifada, with the local history of a village are located next to famous poems, recommended cuisine and restaurants, and a guide to religious sites. This cacophonous display resonates with the uneasy coexistence between normalcy and abnormality in the land, people striving to lead an ordinary life under occupation or discrimination and against the bitter memories of the past; sometimes they succeed, sometimes they do not. The guide thus at times impresses upon the reader that what Palestine and the Palestinians have to offer is good food, beautiful locations, and intriguing cultural gems. But these attractions are accompanied by assassinations, house demolitions, checkpoints, roadblocks, and the exile from 1948 until the present.

The most telling example of this blend of joy and death, feast and catastrophe is on page 353 of the guide. At first it seemed to me to be a serious editorial fault. Opposite the story about the Tantura massacre in May 1948 there is a picture of a wedding. Like so many photographs in this guide, it has no caption. Initially, one could not think of a greater contrast than that between the massacre and the marriage ceremony. A closer look at the picture, however, shows a bride and a groom walking away from their loved ones, who remain behind a border crossing, separated by a group of UN observers. This could be a typical wedding scene in the occupied Golan Heights, where the Druze community was divided in 1967 by the Israeli occupation and where weddings cannot be attended by all those invited; worse, the couple has to choose which side of their families they must leave forever, as they opt whether to live on the Syrian side or in the occupied Israeli side of the Golan.

Apart from this disorganized and reflective presentation of Palestine and the Palestinians today, the guide also has practical information for anyone wishing to tour the country while being aware of the difficulties of movement in some areas and the relative accessibility of certain other destinations. For example, it has a very detailed and useful section on the current procedures in the Israeli airport—a site where, in my

experience, a random policy of harassment can make a trip to Israel and Palestine a nightmarish experience. The good advice in this section could certainly ease the passage of those most likely to face harassment: Americans of Arab origin or Europeans who are likely to be treated by the Israeli authorities as potential peace activists, the worst crime in Israel today.

As someone who was born in Israel, I am especially appreciative of the direct and unequivocal language used throughout the book. There is no wish to hide things or to beautify them—this is a guide that wants Palestine to be transparent, and this is most needed now when this reality is totally distorted in the Western media. Right now, the land craves the tourists who would be the future ambassadors of its current misery and messengers of solidarity with the people who struggle to shrug off the occupation and its horrors. This guidebook is for them.

BUYING FOR ZION

Between Capital and Land: The Jewish National Fund's Finances and Land-Purchase Priorities in Palestine, 1939–45, by Eric Engel Tuten. London: Routledge-Curzon, 2005. *Israeli History, Politics, and Society Series*, no. 40. xiv + 152 pages. Appendix to p. 177. Notes to p. 218. Bibliography to p. 240. Index to p. 248. \$115.00 cloth.

Reviewed by Walter Lehn

This book is a welcome addition to the limited but growing body of studies of the Jewish National Fund (JNF) by independent researchers, supplementing an extensive in-house literature by JNF staff and supporters. Chapter 1 is a brief but well-written summary of the establishment, incorporation, land acquisitions, and other activities of the JNF between 1901 and 1939. Chapters 2–5 detail the problems and accomplishments of JNF land acquisition in the political and economic setting at that time in Palestine, 1939–45. Chapter 6 provides a brief conclusion.

The setting in Palestine, directly affecting the activities of the JNF, included the 1936–39 Arab Revolt, the Peel Commission's 1937

investigation of its causes and recommendation to partition Palestine, the 1939 White Paper, inter alia, limiting Jewish immigration and land purchases, and the consequent 1940 Land Transfer Regulations.

In addition to the problems deriving from the setting, the “greatest challenge the JNF faced during the war [World War II] (and up to 1948) was to maintain financial solvency while . . . purchasing as much land as possible” (p. 45) and preparing it for Jewish settlement. To cope with the inadequacy of funds, the JNF felt that it had no alternative but to increase borrowing; one result was that debt service for fiscal 1940 accounted for 52 percent of its expenses (pp. 26–27), a surprisingly large fraction. During the same period, 59 percent of JNF income from “donations, wills and living legacies” came from the United States (p. 46). For fiscal 1941, of JNF similar income, 64 percent came from the United States and 30 percent from (in descending order) England, South Africa, Palestine, and Canada—a total of 94 percent from these five countries (p. 50).

In preparation for the foreseen partition of Palestine, the JNF purchased lands in areas where it held no lands, in effect staking out a claim (the Hulah and Naqab/Negev regions), and others where existing settlements needed strengthening (p. 25). To increase funds for land purchases, the JNF in 1940–41 devised a Joint Land Purchase Scheme (JLPS) and a Farm City Scheme (FCS). Under the JLPS, the JNF and a private individual agreed to purchase land and to register it in agreed fractions for the two owners; if the individual later wished to withdraw from the agreement, the JNF would purchase the land and the funds invested by him/her would become a loan to the JNF to be repaid over a period of time specified in the agreement. Under the FCS, a donation was made to the JNF to purchase land and entitled the donor to a 49-year lease for a 2.5 dunam plot, on which the donor agreed to build a house after the war (pp. 20–22). Although initially apparently successful ventures, the JLPS was ended in 1945 while the FCS was terminated after the establishment of Israel in 1948.

Of these two schemes, the JLPS was for the JNF a unique venture. Under it, the JNF functioned as an agent for a private purchaser, and some of the land purchased became private, not national land. Tuten notes that though some JNF officials had misgivings about the scheme, “others . . . believed the short-term advantage of having more

Walter Lehn, a professor emeritus at al-Najah National University, Nablus, is the author of *The Jewish National Fund* (London: Kegan Paul International, 1988).

capital for JNF land purchase outweighed the potential long-term disadvantage of losing plots of lands to private ownership" (p. 22). These actions and objectives, however, did not involve merely advantages or disadvantages; they were arguably in violation of limitations imposed on the JNF by its Memorandum of Association, clause 3, sub-clauses 1, 3, 6, and 11. If this is an example of the willingness of the JNF to circumvent its legal obligations in pursuit of what it viewed as its overriding objective, it is not unique. For example, the JNF did not hesitate to establish wholly owned subsidiaries to accomplish what it explicitly was prohibited by its Memorandum of Association from doing, a subject not mentioned by Tuten.

Of the three parties involved in Jewish land purchases and settlement—the Zionists, the Mandate government, and the Palestinian Arabs—very little in this study is heard from the last one. Tuten's study is based predominantly on Zionist and Mandate government sources; thus, the impact of JNF activities on the Palestinian Arabs is ignored.

The typography is good, with few errors that are not obvious. An example of the latter is on p. 6, where endnote numbers 34 and 35 are missing (along with some text?). The endnotes, however, are given on p. 184. In summary, despite obvious limitations in time (six years) and scope (many JNF activities are not mentioned), Tuten's study is a noteworthy addition to the research available on the JNF.

POLITICAL USE OF HISTORY

Israel's Holocaust and the Politics of Nationhood, by Idith Zertal. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. Cambridge Middle East Studies 21. 208 pages. Biographies to p. 216. Glossary to p. 222. Bibliography to p. 230. Index to p. 236. \$30.00 cloth.

Reviewed by Mark Chmiel

In late summer of 2005 on the order of Ariel Sharon's government, several thousand Israeli settlers departed the Gaza Strip. In protest, some settlers donned Star of David patches, which Jews had been forced to

wear under Nazi domination. Settlers, among them Holocaust survivors and their children, contended that withdrawal would lead to another Holocaust.

Such an assertion of persecution and victimization in terms of the Holocaust has a long history, according to Israeli writer Idith Zertal in her recently translated book from Hebrew, *Israel's Holocaust and the Politics of Nationhood*. Zertal's work explores the growing reliance upon Holocaust discourse in Israel. As she candidly states, "Politicians, journalists, and historians let themselves speak out in the name of the Holocaust dead. They/we all use Holocaust images for their/our purposes. Some of these images are threatening, others are trivial, all are distorting" (p. 197).

Because, as Zertal says, the Holocaust period provides "inexhaustible reservoirs of images, arguments, and assertions," Israeli political groups have battled one another to monopolize control of interpretation of those reservoirs, thereby gaining an inestimable symbolic power to advance their own agendas (p. 42). And in seeking to speak for the murdered millions and interpret the significance of their deaths, Israeli leaders and intellectuals have been ready to remember selective parts of the European Jewish story and ignore other aspects that do not suit their purposes. One example of how the Holocaust was deployed in the 1940s and 1950s was the "Zionization" of the Warsaw Ghetto fighters, Zertal argues, "by cloaking the rebels in the mantle of Zionism and transforming them into Palmach fighters, accidentally snared in the spheres of the Diaspora" (pp. 30–31).

In the 1950s, the remembrance of the Holocaust gradually became institutionalized in Israel. But it was the Jerusalem trial in 1961 of Nazi bureaucrat Adolf Eichmann that laid the groundwork for the prevalence of Holocaust discourse in Israel. Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion sought a most dramatic pedagogic goal from the spectacle of the trial: to teach the younger generation of Israelis and the world what the Nazi persecution was and, consequently, to establish the legitimacy of the necessity for the Jewish state. At the time of the trial, Moshe Dayan, then minister of agriculture, spoke frankly about the connection between the Nazi genocide and Israel: "What is becoming clear at the Eichmann trial is the active passivity of the world in the face of the murder of the six million. There can be no doubt that only this country and only this

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people can protect the Jews again against a second Holocaust. And hence every inch of Israeli soil is intended for Jews only" (p. 109).

Zertal links that watershed trial with the 1967 war, especially the weeks preceding Israel's attack, as "the first test and application of this Holocaust discourse in the context of Israel's wars" (p. 92). Because of the bellicosity of threats coming from Arab leaders in the weeks before the war, Israelis and many Jews worldwide feared an imminent catastrophe. Israeli commentators regularly equated Egypt's Gamel Abdel Nasser with Hitler. There was also growing opposition from some Israeli elites to Prime Minister Levi Eshkol's seeming vacillation before the threat. Then out of power, Ben-Gurion zeroed in on the neuralgic issue facing the Israelis: "A war of annihilation. None of us can forget the Holocaust that the Nazis inflicted on us. And if some Arab rulers declare day and night that Israel must be annihilated—this time referring not to the entire Jewish people in the world, but to the Jews living in their land—it is our duty not to take these statements lightly" (pp. 119–20).

With regularity thereafter, the Holocaust horrors from European geography would be transposed to the Middle East conflict, as Israeli leaders characterized the perceived security threats from Arabs and Palestinians as tantamount to the possibility of utter destruction, Nazi-style. Zertal identifies two different Israeli camps mobilizing the Holocaust for political ends: "Whereas the central, hegemonic Holocaust discourse of the labor movement applied the images of the Holocaust and Nazism in particular to external enemies—mainly for purposes of fostering Israeli power and the ethos of its justice—Holocaust images employed by the opposing right wing were applied to the adversary within, the political rival" (pp. 168–69). Indeed, Israeli settlers mounted furious rhetorical campaigns against any negotiation with their enemies, whether that involved Begin's departure from Sinai or Rabin's participation in the Oslo process after 1993. Rabin's assassin was seen by some supporters as cut from heroic cloth like the Warsaw Ghetto fighters. About the settlers, Zertal observes, "In their world, where meaning is turned inside out, which projects on to others, the conquerors become the conquered, the persecutors are turned into the persecuted, wrongdoer into the victim, and this inverted order received the supreme seal of Auschwitz" (p. 193).

The book, published in Israel in 2002, ends with the aftermath of the Rabin murder. One hopes for an additional chapter in any future second edition to chronicle the continued use of the Holocaust vis-à-vis the Palestinians under the administrations of Netanyahu, Barak, and Sharon. While Zertal wrote the following in reference to the Rabin assassination, her challenge can be applied to the ongoing Israeli occupation of Palestinian land as well: "In order to confront evil and overcome it, it was necessary, first and foremost, to be capable of looking it in the eye, and not to stand before it in dazzled awe, nor to fall silent in shame or to invest energies in a search for consoling myths" (p. 206).

WISHING AWAY IDEOLOGY

The Myths of Zionism, by John Rose. London: Pluto Press, 2004. x + 205 pages. Notes to p. 215. Bibliography to p. 221. Index to p. 232. \$22.95 paper.

Reviewed by Oren Yiftachel

Already at the outset of this book, the author confidently claims that "Zionism is held together by a series of myths . . . a package of false notions which undermine its claims on the Jewish religion, history, anti-Semitism, and above all, its justification for aggressive and very dangerous political posturing in the land of Palestine" (p. 1). Following this assertion, John Rose takes up the task of debunking Zionism's major myths, concluding, inevitably and equally confidently, that "Zionism is the problem; its removal is a precondition for peace in the Middle-East. It is the precondition for Arab-Jewish reconciliation in Palestine" (p. 201).

Rose's main efforts are directed toward challenging several components of the mainstream popular Zionist narrative, which begins with a glorious epoch of biblical kingdoms, followed by forced exile and centuries of diasporic suffering, and culminating with the Nazi Holocaust. This sorry plight was only reversed—à la Zionism—by a national "awakening," propelling Jews to "return" to their ancient homeland and to construct a democratic and peace-seeking state.

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Rose's path through Zionist myths proves uneven in its quality. In several parts, he provides a serious, credible, and rich account of Jewish history. Various chapters in the book analyze perceptively the rise of Zionist and Palestinian nationalisms, the making of Jewish colonialism, and the current position of Israel as an aggressive American client state.

Rose is at his best when painting diverse and rich pictures of Jewish histories, from the destruction of the Second Temple and later in the Arab world and in industrializing Europe. The analysis of Jews' diverse forms of integration into Arab society and the changing economic and political role of Jews in Eastern Europe are excellent, both dispelling the myth of ancient and irrational hatred against the Jews. The insights into the making of the Balfour Declaration and the early connections between Zionism and British colonialism also are illuminating.

Throughout the book, Rose makes no bones of his contempt for Zionism, and he sprinkles the text with a range of derogatory terms to describe Jewish nationalism and politics. While a certain normative position is inevitable in the social sciences, Rose overplays his card, and the blatant anti-Zionist wrapping does the book a disservice by lessening the credibility of his often nuanced discussion.

Beyond the anti-Zionist wrapping, Rose's account is also less impressive in several parts of the book, where he relies heavily on the works of a small number of scholars, only to repeat their arguments. In such manner, he borrows openly from the works of Beshara Doumani, Noam Chomsky, Avi Shlaim, and Edward Said and presents critical accounts of the Zionist endeavor with which most readers would be familiar—Israel is not an innocent peace-seeking democracy, established in an empty land, but a dispossessive settler state and an aggressive regional actor, working in close cooperation with imperial interests, first British and French and later, of course, American. The ongoing occupation and colonialism of Palestinian lands, he observes, are premised on a convenient agreement in silence between successive American administrations and expansionist Israeli governments.

On a more principled level, there are several problems with Rose's approach, of which two stand out. First, Rose overlooks the important diversity of Jewish nationalisms. By representing Zionism—that is, the movement for Jewish self-determination in Israel/Palestine—as a single, unidirec-

tional force, Rose diverts from his own previous accounts of Jewish multiplicity and plurality. This is a serious flaw for a book on Zionism, which is indeed a powerful national movement, with no shortage of messianic, colonialist, and racist faces, but it is more than that. There are significant humanist, liberal, secular, and even bi-national streams within Zionism, all conveniently ignored by Rose. Israeli politics during the last two decades has become an arena of vicious struggles between these streams—highlighted by the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin—principally over the meaning of Zionism.

Second, Rose appears to be taking too seriously the cultural and discursive trends dominating Western academia. Hence, he is convinced that Zionism is “held together” by a “pile” of myths and that their unpacking would shake its foundations. But this perception misreads contemporary Zionism which, like most national movements, is a massive daily practice, within a dominant set of institutions, powers, and materialities. Most Israeli Jews have not become Zionists because of ideology or historical interpretation, but rather through necessity. Most of them were driven into Palestine/Israel as refugees or forced migrants, constructing only in retrospect a narrative of “historical right” or “return to the homeland.” For the vast majority of Israeli Jews, especially those born in the country, Zionism is therefore a taken-for-granted ethno-national identity, which gives meaning to their daily existence, quite removed from its foundational myths.

The challenge is therefore to transform Zionism and not wish it away, as does Rose. Granted, the nature of Zionism since 1948 means that the very term evokes a range of negative images, especially in the Arab world. But calling for its destruction is an easy intellectual option, bordering on political and moral escapism. The real and difficult task for people seeking peace and justice for the Palestinians is to turn what I have termed the Israeli “ethnocracy” from a colonial and racist regime to a democracy. The way forward, in my opinion, must be charted through a bi-national vision, within which Zionist (Hebrew) and Palestinian (Arab) identities, which form a basic framework for people's collective life in Israel/Palestine, would be secured through mutual recognition and equalizing political, legal, and economic arrangements. The building of bi-national frameworks, institutions, and visions (either accompanying or superseding

a two-state political settlement) is likely to blunt gradually the aggressive edge of both national movements and to assist in democratizing and decolonizing Zionism. To be sure, this task must be accompanied by a rereading of history and by a construction of new (Zionist and Palestinian) narratives. But this must be conducted as a foundation not for destroying the aspiration of one side, but for rebuilding a peaceful future of the two peoples sharing a common homeland.

HASHEMITE POLITICS

Nationalist Voices in Jordan: The Street and the State, by Betty S. Anderson. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005. x + 205 pages. Notes to p. 243. Bibliography to p. 269. Index to p. 288. \$55.00 cloth; \$22.95 paper.

Institutions and the Politics of Survival in Jordan: Domestic Responses to External Challenges, 1988–2001, by Russell E. Lucas. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005. SUNY Series in Middle Eastern Studies. xv + 156 pages. Notes to p. 171. Bibliography to p. 180. Index to p. 185. \$65.00 cloth.

Reviewed by Waleed Hazbun

The term “the Arab street” has long been subject to misuse and abuse in Washington policy debates, media commentary, and analysis by “Middle East experts.” Anyone wishing to utter, or alternatively to dismiss, this phrase first should read Betty Anderson’s engaging history of mid-20th century Jordanian politics. Her study focuses on the urban areas where the politics of the “Arab street” became manifest. As locations of rapid social transformation, these spaces saw the development of communities and institutions that were critical to shaping feelings of national identity. In the 1950s, these were dominated by expressions of Arab nationalism that challenged the existing regional order as well as the legitimacy of the British-backed Hashemite monarchy and its version of national history in Jordan.

Anderson’s sympathetic portrayal of these ideological currents centers around

the rise, brief moment in power, and eventual destruction of the Jordanian Nationalist Movement (JNM), a collection of Arab nationalist and leftist parties. She seeks not only to suggest an alternative nationalist narrative for Jordan, but also to illuminate our view of “the Arab street” by contextualizing the rise of these political and ideological movements within the lived experiences of their participants. Drawing on published memoirs and personal interviews as well as contemporary media reports, Anderson traces in rich detail the intellectual development of the Jordanian and Palestinian urban middle classes who provided the main social support base of the JNM. While noting the diversity of the JNM—which included Nasserists, Ba’thists, other Arab nationalists, and communists—Anderson draws on the participants’ own words to outline the common elements of their alternative vision for the country. These movements defined their nationalism in pan-Arab terms, which they felt provided solutions “to not only the boundaries of the region, but also the very real socioeconomic problems present within them” (p. 132). They believed “that once unity was achieved, the socioeconomic problems attending imperialism” as well as the Palestinian issue “would also be eliminated” (p. 133).

The narrative builds to a climax in the mid 1950s as the young King Hussein ascends the throne during the rise of Arab nationalist mobilization across the region, driven by the popularity of Nasser’s assertive Arab nationalist challenge to the regional order and aided by his *Sawt al-Arab* radio broadcasts. Popular opposition to Jordan joining the British and American-backed Baghdad Pact manifested itself in large street protests and strikes that engulfed Amman beyond the capacity of the Hashemite regime to control. Anderson describes how “through raw street power” (p. 165) the nationalist movement succeeded in preventing Jordan from joining the cold war security alliance, in forcing Hussein to dismiss the British officers in the Jordanian military, and eventually in winning his agreement to allow Sulayman al-Nabulsi to form a nationalist-led government.

The nationalist moment, however, was short lived. After the Nabulsi government sought to push Jordanian foreign policy toward Arab unity while rejecting the American anti-communist Eisenhower Doctrine, the king pushed back and destroyed the JNM. In the wake of an apparent military coup attempt, over which controversy

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remains, Hussein rallied his loyalists, imposed martial law, and banned political parties as well as “all forms of political expression” (p. 185).

Anderson notes the missteps and inherent limits of the JNM, fragmented as it was between numerous parties and personalities. A more critical lesson is that even as the JNM represented dominant political trends in the country, it quickly learned that “street politics did not translate well into the halls of government” (p. 187). She also could have considered the inherent contradictions between the tasks of state building and a nationalist movement held together not by territorial attachments or mass organization but by an ideological commitment to a revisionist regional geopolitical imaginary. Anderson concludes that, nevertheless, this era of urban mobilization forced the Hashemite state to incorporate the urban areas by providing social services. Eventually, Hashemite state building and nationalist narrative construction was successful in expanding the social support base and legitimacy of the regime to the point that the Hashemites even convinced many “that they were the true nationalists” (p. 204).

While Anderson’s story covers an era before the Hashemite state was fully institutionalized, Robert Lucas gives us an intricate analysis of the institutional dynamics of Jordan’s liberalization experiment launched in the wake of the spring 1989 riots. These riots posed a new sort of threat to the Hashemite regime. At a time of economic crisis, these protests broke out across East Bank towns, long viewed as the regime’s core support base, in response to the implementation of an IMF-backed structural adjustment program. Facing a potential challenge to regime legitimacy and stability, King Hussein launched a political opening that included surprisingly fair elections in the fall of 1989 followed by the signing of a “national charter” that re-legalized political parties.

Scholars have since debated if this “experiment” was the first step along a path that will eventually lead to democracy or simply represented the construction of a façade to deflect domestic discontent and international criticism. By focusing on the details of institutional rules governing three critical elements of civil society—political parties, the parliament, and the press—Lucas allows readers to formulate a complex answer to this question.

In the early 1990s, with a parliament dominated by Islamists, leftists, and Arab

nationalists and backed by an increasingly unshackled media, Jordan experienced a period of vibrant political debate. While lacking the authority to change the course of government policies, the opposition was able to delay the implementation of structural adjustment and to ask “embarrassing questions” about Jordan’s foreign policy. Lucas provides a useful history of the arc of the liberalization experience, which in 1993 reached a turning point. With elections slated for the fall, King Hussein decreed changes in the election law. Lucas carefully explains these changes, the public debate about them, and how they led to the election of a more pliant and regime friendly parliament that eventually allowed for the easy ratification of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty in 1995. Thus began the era of what Lucas terms “deliberalization.”

While Lucas implies that shifts in the course of political reform have been determined by external events and foreign policy choices (as well as a commitment to economic reform), which remain the exclusive purview of the monarchy, he convincingly outlines three critical factors that help explain the success of the institutional tactics used as part of the monarchy’s survival strategy. These include keeping the opposition fragmented while limiting the costs to the regime’s coalition and maintaining its unity. Lucas also argues that the regime was more “resourceful” than the opposition in its use of the constitutional rules. These guidelines also help identify the brief moments when the opposition was able to contest the regime while playing by the agreed rules. Often implied in his analysis is that the regime was able to force political actors to choose between playing by the regime’s (increasingly undemocratic) rules or face political marginalization or repression. At each point the regime successfully modulated the rules to maintain enough incentives to attract just enough (increasingly unthreatening) participation to avoid a crisis of legitimacy.

Lucas clearly displays how the Hashemite regime has developed institutional mechanisms to counter and contain political mobilization against unpopular policies, such as the normalization of relations with Israel. Missing from the text, however, are the voices “from the street,” which now should be expanded to include the Internet, regional satellite television, informal Islamist networks, and other spaces of political discourse and expression. These have largely been excluded from formal institutionalized

politics but are critical for understanding contemporary political life in Jordan even if it's unclear how and when they might manifest themselves as a challenge to the Hashemite regime.

SHORTER NOTICES

The Palestine-Israel Conflict: A Basic Introduction, by Gregory Harms with Todd M. Ferry. London and Ann Arbor: Pluto Press, 2005. xxi + 182 pp. Appendices to p. 189. Notes to p. 211. Suggested reading to p. 215. Select bibliography to p. 215. Index to p. 230. \$19.95 paper.

Freelance writer Gregory Harms, the major contributor to the book, and archeologist Todd Ferry have teamed up to produce a short work that tackles nothing less than the history of Israel/Palestine during the past 2,000 years. Their goals are to provide a short, readable history of the region and the conflict for average "[p]eople who have three kids and work forty-plus hours a week" (p. xiv). Having said this, they mercifully restrict their discussion of ancient times to their first section, "Background History," which goes up to the period of the Ottoman Empire. Section two, "Pre-Conflict," deals with anti-Semitism, Zionism, and the British Mandate. The final section, "Conflict," discusses the Palestinian-Israeli conflict (and wider Arab-Israeli conflict) from the 1947 UN partition plan to the road map.

The authors have largely succeeded in providing an approachable, balanced guide for the perplexed public. The informality of the style of writing in the book also will assist the generalist. The appendices provide a chronology, factual data on Israel/Palestine, and, curiously, a listing of the prime ministers of Israel. The book also contains several maps.

MRF

Speaking the Truth: Zionism, Israel, and Occupation, edited by Michael Prior. Foreword by Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Northampton, MA: Olive Branch Press, 2005. 254 pages. \$17.95 paper.

The overall thrust of this collection of articles is that Israeli-Palestinian peace and reconciliation ultimately can be achieved only through a painful, but necessary, process of "speaking the truth." The foreword, written by Nobel Peace Laureate

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, underscores this point by comparing the situation in Israel/Palestine with that of apartheid-era South Africa.

The eleven articles were written by contributors from Israel, Palestine, the U.S., the U.K., and Ireland and are grouped in three sections: "Historical Perspectives," "Contemporary Moral Perspectives," and "The Future." While some deal with secular topics, such as Ilan Pappé's "State of Denial: The *Nakbab* in Israeli History and Today" and Naseer Aruri's "The Right of Return and its Detractors," most of the articles deal with religious topics. Examples include Duncan Macpherson's "Politics and Multi-Faith in the Holy Land: A Challenge for Christians"; Jean Zaru's "Theologising [*sic*], Truth and Peacemaking in the Palestinian Experience"; and Stephen Sizer's "The International Christian Embassy, Jerusalem: A Case Study in Political Christian Zionism."

MRF

A Concise History of the Middle East, 8th Edition, by Arthur Goldschmidt Jr. and Lawrence Davidson. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2006. xvi + 448 pages. Chronology to p. 465. Glossary to p. 498. Bibliographic Essay to p. 528. Appendix to p. 532. Index to p. 559. \$45.00 paper.

A Concise History of the Middle East, aimed at the reader generally unfamiliar with the region, focuses on the history of the Middle East since the advent of Islam with the heaviest emphasis as of the late nineteenth century. This is the eighth edition of *A Concise History of the Middle East*; the most significant changes from the previous edition are the addition of an author, Lawrence Davidson of West Chester University, and a chapter covering the "war on terror" and post-9/11 developments in the region. The text has been updated and expanded throughout to reflect recent scholarship and eighteen one-page biographies of prominent individuals—including Haj Amin al-Husayni, David Ben-Gurion, and Yasir Arafat—have been added.

In a refreshing style, on matters where Davidson and Goldschmidt hold differing views, each point of view is presented openly to the reader. For example, in "The Contest for Palestine (Redux)" section of the added chapter, the authors write:

Professor Goldschmidt believes that both parties bear a share of the blame for what Israelis call "the

situation" and Palestinians "the al-Aqsa Intifada." He argues that responsible leadership has broken down on both sides, giving extremists the upper hand. Professor Davidson believes the main problem is that Israel's leaders have a greater desire to hold lands (primarily the West Bank) than to attain a lasting and equitable peace. (p. 439)

This tactic not only maintains the appealingly familiar tone of the book, but also encourages readers to approach the Middle East with some understanding of the variety of interpretations of historical events. In all, *A Concise History of the Middle East* remains a thoughtful, critical, and readable introduction to the history of the region.

AW

The Great Syrian Revolt and the Rise of Arab Nationalism, by Michael Provence. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005. xiv + 153 pp. Notes to p. 189. Bibliography to p. 204. Index to p. 204. \$21.95 paper.

The thesis of this book is that the Great Syrian Revolt of 1925 played a seminal role in the formation of Syrian Arab consciousness, a consciousness created not by urban intellectuals and elites, but by subaltern groups like peasants, workers, and army veterans. Going even further, historian Michael Provence (University of California, San Diego) argues that the revolt, the longest lasting anti-colonial insurrection of the interwar period in the Mandated Middle East, was influential in stimulating popularly formed nationalisms elsewhere in the region. In so doing he anchors the genesis of such movements in the actions of nonelite actors, not in the imaginations of colonized elites.

Chapters include "The Hawran Frontier"; "Mobilizing the Mountain"; "Mobilizing the City"; "The Spread of the Rebellion"; "The Politics of Rebellion"; and "Epilogue and Conclusions." Using French Mandatory records, memoirs, and other primary and secondary sources, this short book locates several features of modern Syrian history—the significant role of military officers in the country's politics, the ever present heavy presence of security apparatus, and class conflict between urban elites and rural actors—in the revolt. Provence's book will inform scholars focusing on the 1936–1939 Arab Revolt in Palestine as well as the formation of modern Palestinian nationalism.

MRF

Challenging Empire: How People, Governments, and the UN Defy U.S. Power, by Phyllis Bennis. Foreword by Danny Glover. Northampton, MA: Olive Branch Press, 2006. xvii + 257 pp. Notes to p. 276. Index to p. 286. \$18.00 paper.

Phyllis Bennis (Institute for Policy Studies, Transnational Institute) looks at the ways that international public opinion and the firm stance of governments can work to empower the United Nations and to resist American imperial aims. It does so by looking in particular at the worldwide effort to stop the war in Iraq, a movement that culminated in the massive pro-peace demonstrations that took place on every continent (including Antarctica) on 15 February 2003. The book gives expression to a situation described by the *New York Times* in 2003: there are now two superpowers, the U.S. and world opinion. Indeed, Bennis states that her book is aimed at helping "the tripartite internationalism [people, governments, the U.N.] that challenged the beginning of the Iraq war" (p. xvii). She believes that this "is still an important model, though it will require work to reclaim and recapture that moment" (p. xvii).

After discussing each corner of the tripartite internationalism that seeks to check U.S. imperialism, the author then discusses the ways that these three can "intersect." Bennis ultimately argues that to change U.S. policy, activists need to change their governments' actions, and governments in turn must unite under the rubric of an empowered United Nations to check U.S. ambitions. For those interested in the minutiae of history, the endnotes contain, among other things, a full list of cities that witnessed demonstrations on 15 February 2003.

MRF

The Lives of Rain, by Nathalie Handal, with a foreword by Carolyn Froché. Northampton, MA: Interlink, 2005. xi + 64 pages. Notes to p. 66. About the author to p. 67. \$15.00 paper.

The Neverfield, by Nathalie Handal. Northampton, MA: Interlink, 2005. viii + 57 pages. Afterword to p. 59. Works cited

to p. 60. About the author to p. 61. \$12.00 paper.

These two books of poetry are by Nathalie Handal, a Palestinian woman whose life in the diaspora includes living in cities and towns on three different continents, as well as on islands in the Caribbean. The instability of Palestinian diasporic life shows up in her long, three-part poem, *The Neverfield*, which scholar Lisa Suhair Majaj describes in the book's afterword as "a personal quest for identity and belonging" (p. 58). *The Lives of Rain* is a collection of thirty-nine poems, all of them short with the exception of the last one, "Amrika" (pp. 57–64). But the poems in *The Lives of Rain* comprise a unified theme, one that Carolyn Forché describes in the foreword as a "radical displacement and uncertainty, moving continent to continent, giving voice to the Palestinians of the diaspora in the utterance of one [who is] fiercely awake and compassionate" (p. vii). In addition to being an accomplished poet, Handal has written numerous plays and a short story, directed theater productions, and compiled anthologies of Arab-American diaspora literature, Middle Eastern poetry, and Arab women poets.

EH

Modern Arabic Fiction: An Anthology, edited by Salma Khadra Jayyusi. New York: Columbia University Press, 2005. xix + 1,056 pages. \$59.50 cloth.

This massive tome is a genuine literary treasure trove, with English translations of short stories by more than 135 Arab fiction writers whose work was published during the twentieth century (pp. 73–800). It also includes excerpts from significant novels (pp. 801–1,056) by over 25 writers, several of whom also wrote short stories, examples of which are included in the preceding part. Salma Jayyusi's long introduction (pp. 1–70) provides a context for understanding the role of fiction in Arab folklore (primarily an oral tradition) and classical literature (ca. 650 to 1100 C.E.) and surveys the development of modern fiction in the form of mass-produced, printed books beginning in the late nineteenth century. Many early Arabic novels were translations of European novels, but they were not as popular as Arabic short stories, which developed as a distinct genre of fiction during the first half of

the twentieth century. Short stories, which tend to focus on the everyday problems of contemporary life, remain popular, although original novels in Arabic have emerged as an important literary genre and have "gained ascendancy over the short story in the past few years" (p. 33).

This anthology is deliberately pan-Arab, with representative writers from every Arab country as well as fiction from the three communities of Palestinians: those in the diaspora; those living in Israel as citizens; and those living in the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The Palestinian fiction writers included in the book are Samira 'Azzam (d. 1967), Liana Badr, Zaki Darwish, Huzama Habayib, Emile Habiby (d. 1996), Akram Haniyyah, Ghassan Kanafani (d. 1972), Mahmoud al-Rimawi, Mahmoud Shaheen, Muhammad 'Ali Taha, Faruq Wadi, Layla al-Atrash, Jabra Ibrahim Jabra (d. 1994), and Ibrahim Nasrallah.

EH

Arab-Americans in Michigan, by Rosina J. Hassoun. Discovering the Peoples of Michigan Series. Arthur W. Helweg, Russell M. Magnaghi, and Linwood H. Cousins, series eds. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2005. 61 pp. Appendices to p. 66. Notes to p. 73. Further reference section to p. 78. Index to p. 84. \$11.95 paper.

This short work details the history of Arab-Americans in the state of Michigan, traditionally one of the largest concentrations of persons of Arab heritage in the United States. Author Hassoun, an adjunct assistant professor of anthropology at Michigan State University, discusses the community's history of immigration, settlement, and adjustment to American life. Chapter titles are "Introduction and Demographics"; "The Origins of Arab Americans in Michigan"; "Understanding General Patterns of Arab Settlement"; "Selected Histories by Geographic Areas"; "The History of Arab Immigration to Southeast Michigan"; and "Special Topics Concerning Arab Americans in Michigan."

MRF

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