



The Birth of Israel: Myths and Realities (Hardcover)
by [Simha Flapan](#)

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Editorial Reviews

From Publishers Weekly

The author of *Zionism and the Palestinians, 1917/1947* offers a cogent, controversial analysis of Israel's propaganda structures and the policies of the crucial formative years between 1948 and 1952. Utilizing Ben-Gurion's war diaries and other government archives, Flapan, former director of Arab affairs of Israel's left-wing Mapam party, posits that the 1948 War of Independence was not an inevitability forced upon a helpless Israel. He maintains that the socialist Zionist leadership who accepted Ben-Gurion's view that the Jewish state should be demographically homogeneous and geographically as extensive as possible not only encouraged and executed the expulsion of Palestinian Arabs but thwarted the creation of a Palestinian Arab state through a secret agreement with Abdallah of Transjordan. The annexation of the territory allocated for a Palestinian state was to be a first step in achieving Abdallah's dream of a British-supported Greater Syria; and, according to Flapan, the Arab states aimed not at liquidating the Jewish state but at preventing the implementation of this agreement. This disturbing work bears witness to the futility, and unconscionability, of addressing political problems by military means.

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From Library Journal

With the assistance of the recently published War Diaries of former Israeli Prime Minister David Ben Gurion and Israeli and Palestinian unpublished materials, Flapan attempts to debunk a number of Israeli-held beliefs regarding the historical development of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Joining other Israeli revisionist historians (e.g., Tom Segev, 1949: the first Israelis, LJ 2/1/86), he casts Ben Gurion as the villain, who sought not compromise with the Palestinians but unmitigated geographical aggrandizement. Flapan attacks as "myth" the belief that Israel was threatened by the massive Arab neighboring armies and that Palestinians voluntarily left their homes. Though bound to create controversy, this is essential for those interested in Middle Eastern history or the politics of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Sanford R. Silverburg, Political Science Dept., Catawba Coll., Salisbury, N.C.

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