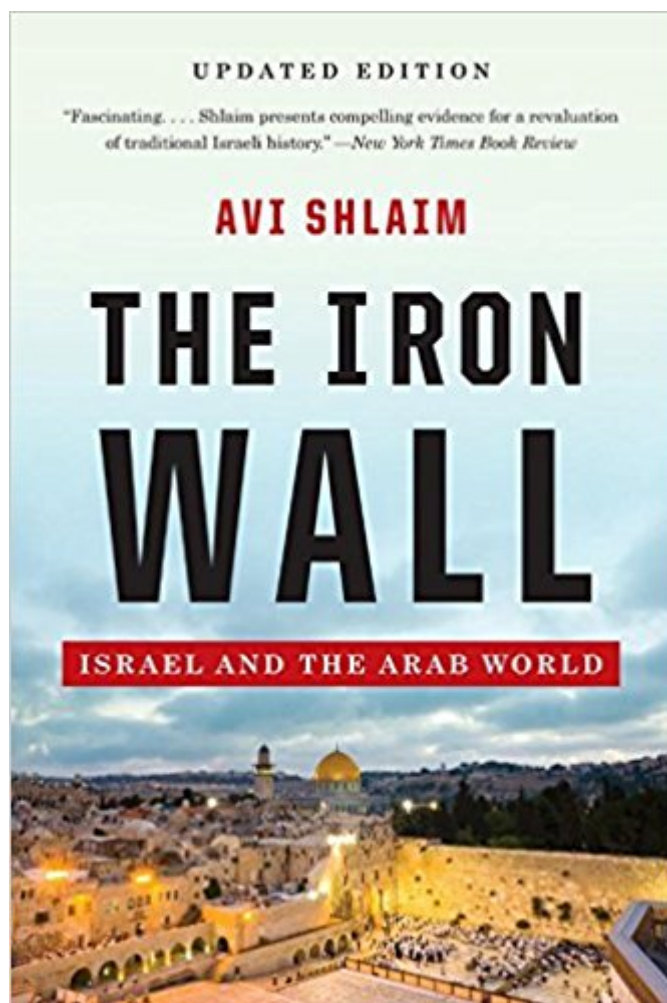


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The Iron Wall: Israel And The Arab World (Updated And Expanded)



Synopsis

“Fascinating. . . Shlaim presents compelling evidence for a revaluation of traditional Israeli history.” —New York Times Book Review For this newly expanded edition, Avi Shlaim has added four chapters and an epilogue that address the prime ministerships from Barak to Netanyahu in the “one book everyone should read for a concise history of Israel’s relations with Arabs” (Independent). What was promulgated as an “iron-wall” strategy — building a position of unassailable strength — was meant to yield to a further stage where Israel would be strong enough to negotiate a satisfactory peace with its neighbors. The goal still remains elusive, if not even further away. This penetrating study brilliantly illuminates past progress and future prospects for peace in the Middle East.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“Shlaim’s usual appreciation for complexities and contradictions and his keen sketches of the principal Israeli actors make this very readable book one of the best and most illuminating accounts of Arab-Israeli relations in years.” —Yaron Ezrahi, Foreign Affairs
“A powerful overview of 50 years of policy.” —Milton Viorst, Washington Post

Avi Shlaim is a professor emeritus of international relations at the University of Oxford. He was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 2006. His books include *Lion of Jordan: The Life of King Hussein in War and Peace*; *War and Peace in the Middle East: A Concise History*; *The Iron Wall*:

Israel and the Arab World; and Israel and Palestine: Reappraisals, Revisions, Refutations. He lives in Oxford.

Every American should read this book! Democrat, Republican, Independent. An informative, brilliant, critical history of Post-1948 Israel, it's politics, policies, and wars.

Excellent Overview of Palestine and Israeli Policy. One of the best overviews. Takes everything chronologically so things fit into context Not as repetitious as many.

Avi Shlaim, *The Iron Wall, Israel and the Arab World* delves into the Arab-Israeli conflict from the assertion of Israeli independence, however it also briefly yet descriptively and informatively discusses the concept of Zionism and its roots including excerpts from Herzl and Jabotinsky. From its use of Jabotinsky early in the book, Avi Shlaim uses his essay discussing an Israeli Iron Wall of power superiority (generally hard power) throughout the whole book to essentially provide and analysis, analogy and comparison of Israeli policy towards its Arab neighbours, the broader Arab world and the international community itself. People may unfairly brandish Avi Shlaim as a revisionist historian in a negative sense: I would argue the opposite. Yes he is a revisionist historian but in a positive sense. His writings are neither ideological or partial towards the Arabs and emotional. This book is the work of a realist who is fair, concise and factual. He addresses longstanding propagandised facts by adhering to the use of largely primary sources. He dispels the notion of "There is no one for Israel to talk to on the Arab side", "Israel is a David state while the Arabs are Goliath" and "Israel best serves its security interests in the contemporary geo-political situation by using raw power as its basis for negotiations". Revisionism is often far more reliable than historians from the time: They do not have the emotional and political connection to politics of the period rendering them more so impartial and factual than others. Israel has a long history of creating facts on the ground to best suit the national interests of the Greater Israel ideology, however, Shlaim delves into the complexities of these factoids and discusses the power relationship between the Arabs and Israel in an inquisitive manner. He constantly brings up Israeli-American relations basing them on reality. American support for Israel is not 100%, as some will have you believe. Unfortunately the book didn't delve into the political situation between Israel and Clinton's America to an extent which was necessary. It would have been a good use of an additional 6-7 pages if he addressed Clinton's extension of domestic politics to foreign policy, which allowed AIPAC to infiltrate Congress and his government increasing the support for Israeli policy towards

Palestine and the Arabs. Altogether however it is one of the more interesting recollections and revisions of Israel history you will read- while at all time making good use of largely Israeli sources and primary sources.

Thanks for a very good product.

Some reviews of Shlaim's "Iron Wall" suggest incorrectly that it explains the roots of Arab-Jewish conflict over Palestine. In fact the book offers only a 27-page "prologue," insightful and well written but largely based on secondary and tertiary sources and far too limited in scope. So far the best work on this topic remains the somewhat formal and pedantic first 129 pages of Kimmerling's and Migdal's "Palestinian People." Shlaim's book provides notably concise summaries, so effective that the first one or two pages of each chapter provide enough information for a first reading of the book.

very informative, I like this book very much. Would encourage everyone to read The Iron Wall.

This book was extremely informative. What I particularly enjoyed about it was that it didn't have a bias. It presents history for what it is.

Hard to read, not because it is not well written but because it stirs up so much indignation. Worth the effort though if you want to be able to respond intelligently to your pro-Zionist acquaintances.

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