



## **The War for Palestine: Rewriting the History of 1948 (Cambridge Middle East Studies)**

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By all accounts, the 1948 Palestine war was one of the most significant milestones in the modern history of the Middle East and remains one of the most intractable conflicts of modern times. Israelis call the 1948 war "The War of Independence" while Arabs call it al-Nakba or the disaster. The conventional Israeli version portrays 1948 as an unequal struggle between a Jewish David and an Arab Goliath, as a desperate, heroic, and ultimately successful battle for survival against overwhelming odds. In this version all the surrounding Arab states sent their armies into Palestine to strangle the Jewish state at birth and the Palestinians left the country on orders from their own leaders and in the expectation of a triumphal return. Since the late 1980s, however, a group of "new historians" or revisionist Israeli historians have challenged many of the claims surrounding the birth of the State of Israel and the first Arab-Israeli war. The present volume was conceived as a contribution to the ongoing debate about 1948. The War for Palestine brings together leading Israeli new historians with prominent Arab and Western scholars of the Middle East who revisit 1948 from the perspective of each of the countries involved in the war. The result is a volume that is rich in new material and new insights and which enhances considerably our understanding of the historical roots of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Eugene L. Rogan is a Lecturer in Modern History of the Middle East, Fellow of St. Anthony's College, and Director of the Middle East Centre at the University of Oxford. He is the author of *Frontiers of State in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Cambridge, 2000) and co-editor of *Village, Steppe, and State: the Social Origins of Modern Jordan* (St. Martin's, 1995). Avi Shlaim is a Professor of International Relations and Fellow of St. Anthony's College, University of Oxford, and he is also the Director of Graduate Studies in International Relations. He is the author of several books, the most recent one being *The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World* (Norton, 1999). Professor Shlaim is a frequent contributor to newspapers and a media commentator on Middle Eastern affairs.

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