



A History of Modern Israel

By Colin Shindler

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The state of Israel came into existence in 1948. Colin Shindler's book traces Israel's history across sixty years, from its optimistic beginnings - immigration, settlement, the creation of its towns and institutions - through the wars with its Arab neighbours, and the confrontation with the Palestinians. Shindler paints a broad canvas which affords unusual insights into this multicultural society, forged from over a hundred different Jewish communities and united by a common history. Despite these commonalities, however, Israel in the twenty-first century is riven by ideological disputes and different interpretations of 'Jewishness' and Judaism. Nowhere are these divisions more revealingly portrayed than in the lives and ideologies of Israel's leaders. Biographical portraits of Ben Gurion, Israel's first prime-minister, Yitzhak Rabin, whose assassination is still a traumatic memory for many Israelis, and the controversial Ariel Sharon, offer fascinating examinations of those who have led the country to where it is today.

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A History of Modern Israel By Colin Shindler Bibliography

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Editorial Review

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A History of Modern Israel offers a more sober view of Israeli politics and history. Shindler traces the evolution of contemporary Israel from its idealistic origins to its unenviable position as Middle East hot spot. Thankfully, he abstains from partisan cheerleading to provide a balanced historical overview of development of the modern Israeli state. Especially interesting is his thorough analysis of the intrafaith differences that have contributed to increasing polarization among various groups of Israeli citizens. --Margaret Flanagan

Review

"Colin Shindler's history of Israel is a major contribution to our understanding of the country and the turbulent area in which it is situated. It is scrupulously balanced and thoroughly researched. In sharp contrast to much current discussion of the Middle East, Shindler's study cuts through the slogans and propaganda that have come to shape debate on both sides to offer clear and compelling insight into Israel's development. We are all in his debt." - Professor Shalom Lappin, Kings College, University of London

"Colin Shindler's outstanding book is a model of judicious scholarship. It is so comprehensive, it will transform our understanding of the history of the entire Middle East." - Anthony Julius, Birbeck College, London University and Mishcon de Reya

"Colin Shindler understands Israel from the inside. There are few who can tell the complex story of Israel's sixty years with such clarity and such depth. This is a remarkable work." - Professor Tudor Parfitt, SOAS, University of London

"Comprehensive, lucid, and full of insights; this is a book that will reward each reader with its wisdom and balance." - Sir Martin Gilbert

"...as a chronicler of missed opportunities, wrong turnings and might-have-been moments, it provides a blow-by-blow account ... an important voice at this time and worth consulting." - Chartist

"The ups and downs of Israeli democracy over the past 60 years are chronicled in Colin Shindler's readable, comprehensive but concise A History of Modern Israel... Shindler's book, like Morris's, will set the standard for some time for excellent scholarship shedding light on Israel's history, both bright and dark sides." - The Australian

"Shindler's recount of Israeli history is one that enables the reader to understand the social and political cleavages that make up Israel of 2008 while looking back at 1948. It is that lens that would help any student of the Arab-Israeli conflict to not repeat history but learn how to move Israel forward toward the next 60 years." - The Jerusalem Post

"This timely book, which appears as the Jewish state celebrates its 60th anniversary, is an informative account of the history of Israel. Recommended." - Choice

About the Author

Colin Shindler is Reader in Israeli and Modern Jewish Studies at the University of London.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Carol Frazier:

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