

extreme forms of force during the Intifada,” (p. 17) and goes on to describe Israeli air strikes on Palestinian civilians and Palestinian martyrdom operations (p. 18). In conclusion, without understanding the particular colonial context, its structures, and the circumstances under which Palestinians live, it is difficult to understand why Palestinian men and women would use their bodies as a site “to kill yourself in your enemy.”

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***The Idea of Israel: A History of Power and Knowledge***, by Ilan Pappé. London: Verso, 2014. 335 pages. \$26.95 cloth, \$19.95 paper, \$9.99 e-book.

#### REVIEWED BY GIL HOCHBERG

In his latest book, Ilan Pappé wrestles with the question: “Was the Israeli academy an ideological tool in the hands of Zionism or a bastion of free thoughts and speech?” (p. 2). Tracing the role played by Israeli academics as well as writers, public intellectuals, and filmmakers in creating, imagining, advancing, or challenging “the Idea of Israel,” Pappé provides a thorough survey of the Israeli field of historiography along with its educational and cultural extensions.

The first three chapters focus on the pillars of Zionist thought and the representations of the 1948 war in both academic and artistic texts. Chapters 4 and 5 explore the first generation of Israeli critics of Zionism from the 1960s and 1970s, while chapter 6 deals with the second wave of Israeli objectors and the emergence of post-Zionism in the 1990s. Chapter 7 centers on the manipulation of Holocaust memory within Israel and is followed by a chapter about Arab Jews and the Ashkenazi establishment. The final two chapters offer a postmortem of post-Zionism and outline the rise of what Pappé calls neo-Zionism in Israeli knowledge production.

Unlike Pappé’s earlier books (*The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* being the most renowned), *The Idea of Israel* does not advance a new historical argument or engage with new archival documents. Rather, the book reads more like a textbook, in bringing together many examples, names, and anecdotes to form a coherent picture of the evolution of the main Israeli schools of thought and the leading cultural trends from 1948 to the present, namely Zionism, post-Zionism, and neo-Zionism. In this sense the book is likely to appeal primarily to readers who are less familiar with the ins and outs of Israeli academia and culture, but even those who are familiar are likely to find Pappé’s elegantly narrated account useful and stimulating.

With each phase of ideological development, a different (if related) configuration of imagination gives birth to new images through which the idea of Israel is articulated: from

early Zionist portrayals of Zion as an empty land, through post-Zionist exposures of Israeli war crimes, to neo-Zionist justification of such crimes as politically necessary. Pappé spends much of the book highlighting the plurality of Israeli dissent, from the late 1960s until the year 2000, when he marks the death of the Israeli Left and the gloomy rise of neo-Zionism.

One of the most interesting chapters in this regard is dedicated to the important activities and writings of Matzpen, the anti-Zionist Jewish communist movement, and its offshoots. Matzpen was established in 1962, and by 1970 its members had splintered into three different anti-Zionist groups: the Workers' Union, the Revolutionary Communist Alliance (RAC), and later the Red Front. However, members of these radical groups—like Maxim Ghilan, Akiva Orr, Oded Pilavsky, Moshe Machover, and Udi Adiv—either left Israel or were exiled after being accused of collaborations with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and other Palestinian groups.

As such, the critique of Zionism from within the Israeli academy and cultural circles did not last long. Emerging in the early 1970s and growing substantially in the early 1990s with the birth of Israel's New Historians, this internal critique began to fade by the year 2000 and came to a complete standstill in 2002 with the outbreak of the second intifada. If "the 1990's were a decade in which the entire idea of Israel was questioned" (p. 127), the next decade marked the birth of a "new consensual interpretation of Zionism" (p. 257). And by 2010, Pappé notes, there is hardly any trace of post-Zionism. Instead, Israel begins to pass apartheid-like legislation, of the kind it had not known in the past (p. 271). The first of such legislation was the Nakba Law of 2009. While it initially proposed the arrest of anyone who commemorated Israel's Independence Day as a day of mourning, lawmakers changed the law due to international pressure. Under the revised law, governmental funding would be permanently denied to any organization, school, or group commemorating the Nakba. Other laws that (indirectly or less so) targeted Israel's Palestinian citizens followed: in 2011 the Israeli government amended the Citizenship Law of 1952, enabling it to revoke the citizenship of anyone suspected of terror or spying. The same year, the government passed a law allowing Jewish Israelis to ban Palestinian citizens from living in their communities on the basis of Palestinians' "social suitability," that is to say ethnicity (p. 273).

But why was the success of post-Zionism so short-lived? How could such a hopeful era and new vision be so rapidly abolished? One explanation provided by Pappé is that unlike the fundamental break between early Zionism and post-Zionism, the break between post-Zionism and neo-Zionism was, from "a purely factual standpoint," hardly recognized (p. 277). In other words, the change from post-Zionism to neo-Zionism did not require a new understanding of reality in terms of historical narratives or facts. All that was required (and social and political pressure played a key role here), was a change in interpretation: what post-Zionists saw as abuse of human rights, war crimes, and manipulation of history, neo-Zionists viewed as normal and even justified actions.

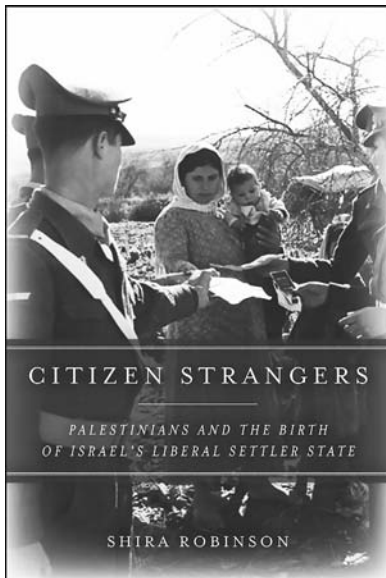
Pappé is critical of his Israeli colleagues, like Benny Morris and Ilan Gur-Ze'ev, who became, in his words, neo-Zionists, but he is not cynical. He depicts the conditions leading some of his colleagues in this unfavorable direction: the Oslo peace negotiations failed and with that failure much of the optimism that characterized the Israeli Left in the 1990s faded; the outbreak of the second intifada led to the spread of fear and mistrust throughout Israel, enabling the government and other right-wing forces to silence and threaten dissenting voices and unite Israeli Jews behind a "reinvigorated Zionist consensus" (p. 276).

The sudden flip-flop of so many post-Zionists, however, remains baffling: What made them turn their back on their own ideas? What was it about the second intifada that brought about such a drastic right-wing turn among Israelis? Pappé's final chapters grapple with these questions but they remain open and could benefit from further critical examination. All in all, while admittedly critical and pessimistic, the book provides an excellent overview of the Israeli field of knowledge production and its relationship to the making of (the idea of) Israel.

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***Citizen Strangers: Palestinians and the Birth of Israel's Liberal Settler State***, by Shira Robinson. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2013. 330 pages. \$85.00 cloth, \$24.95 paper and e-book.

REVIEWED BY LORENZO VERACINI

*Citizen Strangers* makes two valuable interventions in the field of Palestine studies. On the one hand, Robinson importantly adds to the sparse literature on the history of the relationships between the Palestinian “minority” and the State of Israel in the first ten years of its existence. On the other, this book provides a comparative analysis straddling Palestine and Israel studies and settler colonial studies. This review concerns the latter contribution.

Addressing dilemmas and contradictions, the book outlines how Israel's approach to governing the Palestinians that remained within its jurisdiction after 1949 was unsystematic, even if consistently callous. The very decision to extend a citizenship that wasn't to the Palestinian minority was a means to an existential end: keeping some Palestinians in was accepted in order to keep most out. As international recognition was essential to Israel but predicated on accepting all refugees, the state granted citizenship to some Palestinians in exchange for admission to the United Nations. Especially valuable is Robinson's argument that because “Israel could not safeguard its wartime gains without enlisting considerable numbers of Palestinians to help” (p. 81), extending citizenship was one result of Palestinian resistance. Furthermore, the responses of the post-1948 Palestinian minority, traumatized and shattered, shifted and alternated between accommodation, avoidance, and even resistance depending on local opportunities. Robinson follows these developments with careful attention.

The book has also a wider aim: “to restore empire to the history of post-1948 Israel, and post-1948 Israel to the history of modern imperialism” (p. 3). To do so, the author develops the notion of a liberal settler state. This category fundamentally challenges received interpretations of the