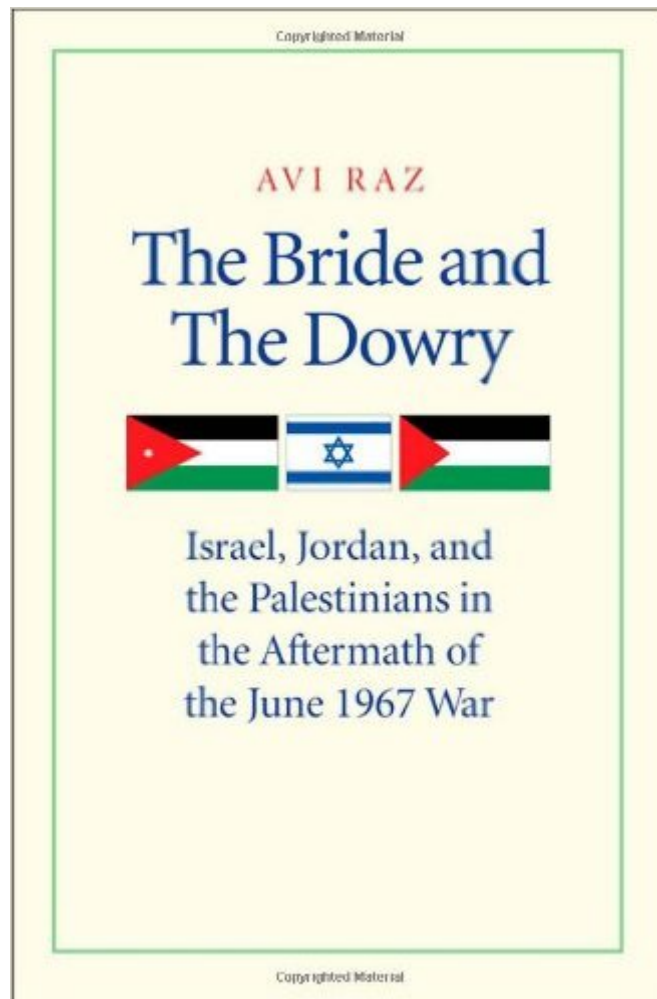


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The Bride And The Dowry: Israel, Jordan, And The Palestinians In The Aftermath Of The June 1967 War



Synopsis

Israel's victory in the June 1967 Six Day War provided a unique opportunity for resolving the decades-old Arab-Zionist conflict. Having seized the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the Sinai Peninsula, and the Golan Heights, Israel for the first time in its history had something concrete to offer its Arab neighbors: it could trade land for peace. Yet the political deadlock persisted after the guns fell silent. This book asks why. Avi Raz places Israel's conduct under an uncompromising lens. His penetrating book examines the critical two years following the June war and substantially revises our understanding of how and why Israeli-Arab secret contacts came to naught. Mining newly declassified records in Israeli, American, British, and United Nations' archives, as well as private papers of individual participants, Raz dispels the myth of overall Arab intransigence and arrives at new and unexpected conclusions. In short, he concludes that Israel's postwar diplomacy was deliberately ineffective because its leaders preferred land over peace with its neighbors. The book throws a great deal of light not only on the post-1967 period but also on the problems and pitfalls of peacemaking in the Middle East today.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a book on the aftermath of the 1967 war. The author has an excellent command of the source material and manages to bring something close to seeming new to a topic that was long ago written to death. Its best in its study of the options available to and choices made in terms of Israeli foreign policy in the aftermath of the war. The book is particularly good at pointing the disconnect between public statements and private actions of many of those at the top of Israeli politics such as

Dayan and Eshkol. The whole thing sort of leaves an impression that future historians should almost entirely discount or disregard the public statements of these people in gaining understanding of events. The fault in the book that the author lacks an appropriate detachment. He often wants to preach rather than just letting events speak for themselves. He also sometimes sees deliberate action in decisions when there was none. Rather than seeing a coordinated cynical policy, it would be equally possible to see a weak, divided "national unity" government full of individuals out for themselves whose "decisions" were often the result of the government as a whole not being able to make decisions. He has a mastery of the sources but his tendency to editorialize undermines the book. His statement at the end of the book in that the inequality in the outcome of the 1967 war allows for an account of its aftermath to be unequal is a foolish and self-destructive thing to say. On the positive side, he doesn't confine the narrative to just events in Israel or perhaps Egypt/Syria (as many books have done). Jordan and the whole range of Palestinian leadership is covered as well. In terms of the United States, his ideas are on occasion rather odd.

Raz Dva TriThe cover of the book is superb. It shows well that the Arabs of the Eastern Palestine (the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan) and the Arabs of the Western Palestine (Arab Authority with the seat in Ramallah) share the same flag and the same national colors. After all, there are East and West Banks in Palestine bisected by the River Jordan. The author proclaims his intention to "avoid value-laden phrases" but he does not keep his promise and he brings his terminology in sync with his Oxford masters who allow him to reside and write volumes in their midst. His book cannot be considered a serious research project since even the border between Palestine (Transjordan, later Jordan) and the Saudi Arabia in 1948 is not shown correctly. The author writes a lot about the assassinated Aziz Shenhadeh without much investigation in his roots. Mr. Shenhadeh was an Anglican; his ancestors converted from the Greek Orthodox faith when the British came to the Middle East. He was not "forced to flee from Jaffa to Ramallah" as Avi Raz wants us to believe. The Shenhadeh family owned a great summer home in Ramallah. Aziz could stay in Jaffa in the winter 1948-1949. Yet Mr Shenhadeh was an ethnic Greek who aspired to be a leader of Muslim Arabs in the hills of Judea and Samaria. In his post-1967 negotiations with the Palestinian Jews leading the winning State of Israel, he "made it appear as gaining support in his quest towards the independent state on the West Bank." But another prominent Jerusalem family led by Anwar Nuseibeh--a Muslim whose victorious ancestors were close to Prophet Muhammad-- had another opinion.

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