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of the world and then figure out how those lenses interact with the situational incentives they face. The result would be a clearer understanding of how experience shapes learning. Still, this is a careful, informative, and thoughtful book, and well worth the time of interested scholars.

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The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World *by Avi Shlaim. New York, W.W. Norton and Co., 2000. 670 pp. $32.50.*

Despite some twenty years of scholarship by Israeli new historians like Avi Shlaim and many others, there continues to be a vast gap between the received mythology on the Arab-Israeli conflict and the amply-demonstrated historical facts. To be sure, in Israel the gap is narrowing, for the cumulative weight of the evidence has become so great that it is finding its way into the media and the school curriculum, and it is increasingly informing enlightened public debate over the ongoing conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. Unfortunately, the Israeli new history has had much less of an impact in the United States, where automatic "pro-Israel" views continue to dominate public discourse. "Pro-Israel," because knee-jerk American acceptance of many of Israel's worse impulses contributes to the ongoing deterioration of Israeli security, moral standing, and even the health and stability of Israeli domestic society.

Avi Shlaim, an Israeli historian teaching at Oxford, is one of the leading new historians; his earlier scholarship meticulously demonstrated that Israeli intransigence, ideological rigidity, and territorial expansionism prevented peace settlements with Jordan and Syria in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Shlaim's work was one of the major inspirations for the new generation of Israeli scholars who have been reexamining the mythology. Now Shlaim has extended his analysis to cover the entire history of the Arab-Israeli conflict through 1998. Based on a comprehensive review of the vast secondary literature, examination of Israeli, British, and American declassified documentation, and extensive interviewing of key policy makers, *The Iron Wall* is a powerfully-argued, elegantly written, and magnificent work of scholarship.

Among the book's major findings and arguments are the following: Contrary to the myth of Israeli defensiveness and Arab expansionism, the major early leaders of Israel, especially David Ben Gurion and his disciples (for example, Moshe Dayan) were clearly expansionist. Although Ben-Gurion accepted the 1947 UN partition plan for Palestine, he did so only as a temporary tactical expedient and continued to covet the Negev desert, the Sinai peninsula and the Gaza strip, Jerusalem, the West Bank, southern Lebanon, and the Golan Heights. In the years to come, much of these territorial goals were realized—at the cost of continuous war with the Palestinians and the Arab world. Contrary

to the myth that it is the Arabs who have blocked peace settlements, it has been Israel that has been responsible for various lost opportunities for peace. In great detail, Shlaim reviews the history of Israeli territorial expansionism, provocations, escalation, avoidable wars, and squandered diplomatic openings. The two key issues—to this very moment—have been Israeli unwillingness to compromise on its territorial demands and on a fair solution to the Palestinian problem. Contrary to its myth of "purity of arms," Israel has deliberately and ruthlessly targeted civilians throughout its history in defiance of the basic norms of morality in warfare: against Jordanian, Egyptian, and Syrian villages in the 1940s and 1950s, and especially in the Israeli invasions of Lebanon in 1978, 1982, and 1996. In all these cases the purpose has been to send neighboring populations and their governments a message: they should not support or harbor activist Palestinian political and guerrilla movements.

In the view of Shlaim and this reviewer, both the basic Zionist and the Palestinian case are persuasive. As Shlaim concludes: "The moral case for the establishment of an independent Jewish state was strong, especially in the aftermath of the Holocaust. But there is no denying that the establishment of the State of Israel involved a massive injustice to the Palestinians . . . a debt that must at some point be repaid" (p. 598). If a majority of the Israeli public comes to acknowledge this debt—and despite the ongoing violence that is the direction in which things are going—it will be in no small part because of the courageous, unswerving devotion to truth exemplified by Avi Shlaim and his Israeli colleagues.

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The Web of Politics: The Internet's Impact on the American Political System *by Richard Davis. New York, Oxford University Press, 1999. 225 pp. Cloth, $39.95; paper, $18.95.*

Informative and easy to read, this book describes the uses of and adaptations to the Internet by the participants in political communication in the United States. Chapters are devoted to news media organizations and their audiences, interest groups, candidates in campaigns and elections, government officials (the three branches are covered in one chapter), and ordinary Internet users.

The format of these chapters is to describe each development, give examples, then extrapolate to predictions of the future. Thus, the "Electronic Lobbying" chapter covers the way interest groups are using the Internet in their relations to their members, the mass public, and policy makers. This variously entails educating, persuading, recruiting, mobilizing, and lobbying.

Some of the data come from original research by the author: content analysis, surveys, and interviews. But the sites of only three Usenet groups are con-