The Quiet Revolution in the Teaching of Zionist History:
A Comparative Study of Education Ministry Textbooks on the 20th Century

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Introduction

This study represents the first part of a comprehensive research project conducted by The Shalem Center on the subject of public school curricula and textbooks in Israel. Since 1997, the Center’s Israeli Textbook Project has been examining the material being taught in the general state schools, which constitute the central stream of the Israeli educational system. The Project has focused on those subjects which have the greatest impact on the character and culture of Israel, including history, geography, civics, literature and Bible.

The aim of the present study is to document the changes that have taken place in educational materials relating to the history of Zionism, the Holocaust and the State of Israel since the Ministry of Education’s adoption of a new history curriculum for junior high schools in 1995. The previous curriculum, adopted in 1975, set guidelines for the teaching of history in grades 6-9, in which students learn about world history and Jewish history from the biblical period until the second half of the twentieth century.

The new curriculum was formulated by a committee appointed by the Ministry of Education in 1991 and chaired by Prof. Moshe Zimmermann of the Hebrew University Department of History. Until the appointment of the Zimmermann committee, the teaching of history in grades 6-9 had been aimed at presenting an overview of Jewish history, together with an extensive treatment of the nations and ideas with which the Jewish people came into contact. The program of study developed by the committee shifted the focus of instruction, with the result being, in Zimmermann’s words, that “the [Jewish] people and the state appear in the curriculum, but certainly not as a subject of primary importance.”

Today, sixth- to ninth-grade students across the country are taught from new textbooks that have been approved by the Ministry of Education in accordance with this curriculum.

Ninth grade is the crucial year for learning about the history of Zionism and Israel. History classes during this year are devoted to the twentieth century, including the history of the Zionist movement since 1918, the rise of Nazism and the Holocaust, and the story of the State of Israel up to the present day. This study, therefore, examines the ninth-grade textbook published by the Ministry of Education in 1999, A World of Changes, which was edited by Danny Ya’akobi, a member of the history staff at the ministry’s Curriculum Division until the book’s publication. It should be noted that private individuals and research institutions also write textbooks for use in Israeli schools; two such textbooks have been published for teaching ninth-grade history.

In order to understand the new developments reflected in A World of Changes, a systematic analysis was carried out comparing it with the ministry’s previous series for the ninth grade, published in the 1980s. This series comprised five separate booklets which, taken collectively, cover the period of 1918-1967, and which are most appropriately viewed as a single textbook. In addition, at the end of the present study a number of
observations are made, not from a comparative perspective, concerning how *A World of Changes* addresses a number of key events in Israeli history during the last three decades.

In accordance with accepted research methodology in the field of textbook analysis, this study makes use not only of textual comparisons, but also compares the “proto-text” that appears, such as maps, photographs, and illustrations.

**Principal Findings**

Among the principal findings of the study, most noteworthy is the significant reduction in space allotted in the new textbook for the classic “Zionist narrative” covering the story of Zionism, the Holocaust and the State of Israel. In the old books, these subjects accounted for two-thirds (67%) of the total material, whereas in *A World of Changes* their share was reduced to less than one-third (30%). As a result of this change, many subjects once considered fundamental to teaching Zionist history were removed or reduced to insignificance: The illegal immigration of Jews to Palestine is covered in two half-sentences, and the armed struggle against the British in four words; no mention whatsoever is made of key events and figures such as the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, Hannah Senesh, Berl Katznelson, Chaim Weizmann's activities as president of the Zionist Organization, and Menahem Begin’s efforts as head of the Irgun and, after statehood, as leader of the opposition in the Knesset. Similarly, the new book has no photographs of David Ben-Gurion, the ceremony at which statehood was declared, Jewish fighters during the War of Independence, or the liberation of the Old City of Jerusalem in the Six Day War.

**Sources**

To enable readers to examine the study’s sources themselves, citations are provided from the six relevant textbooks, which includes the five booklets from the previous series, plus the new textbook:


*The First Twenty Years of the State of Israel* (Jerusalem: Ministry of Education and Culture, 1989). Referred to as *Years*. 

A World of Changes (Jerusalem: Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport and Ma'alot Publishers, 1999). Referred to as World.

Notes

1. For further discussion of this study and related research on curricula and textbooks, see Azure 10, to be published in autumn 2000.


5. Examination of the Ministry of Education textbooks is especially important because they generally represent the future trends in textbook writing, and because they exercise influence on other textbooks, on the content of in-service training sessions for teachers, and on the demands that the Ministry of Education places upon the schools. This focus also facilitates the comparative methodology of the study, since the Ministry of Education has produced comprehensive textbooks that are parallel to one another: From the mid-1980s until the end of the 1990s, the ministry produced one series of textbooks for ninth-grade history, and as of today it publishes a single textbook that is parallel to that series.
1. Chaim Weizmann, president of the Zionist Organization for most of the period from 1921 to 1946, receives no mention in the new textbook for his activities during this period.

- On the White Paper of 1922 (*Zionism*, p. 76)
- His attitude towards Aliya in the 1920s (*Zionism*, p. 94)
- Praised in a speech by Lloyd George (*Zionism*, p. 34)
- Rescuing German Jews (*Zionism*, p. 102)
- On the Peel Commission (*Zionism*, p. 161)
- The Biltmore Plan (*Silver*, p. 58)
- Promise from Churchill to establish a Jewish state (*Silver*, p. 63)
- His support for cooperation with the British (*Silver*, p. 68)
- His opposition to the armed struggle against the British (*Silver*, p. 77)

No references in the book.
2. David Ben-Gurion’s activities as leader of the Jewish community in Palestine prior to statehood are mentioned only twice in the new textbook.

- The establishment of the Hechalutz Aliya movement (*Zionism*, p. 42)
- Aid to settlements in the north (*Zionism*, p. 84)
- His role in the leadership of the Yishuv (*Zionism*, p. 122)
- On the Arab Revolt of 1936 (*Zionism*, pp. 131, 140)
- Establishment of a Jewish defense force (*Zionism*, p. 143)
- On the Peel Commission (*Zionism*, p. 161)
- On the plan to partition Palestine (*Zionism*, pp. 164-165)
- Opposition to the White Paper of 1939 (*Zionism*, pp. 178, 184)
- Illegal immigration to Palestine (*Silver*, pp. 17, 19, 24)
- Policies during World War II (*Silver*, pp. 8, 16-17)
- The Yishuv confronts the Holocaust (*Silver*, p. 44)
- On political struggle versus armed rebellion (*Silver*, pp. 57-59)
- The *saison* (*Silver*, p. 63)
- On British foreign policy in the Middle East (*Silver*, p. 68)

“The Zionist movement’s arguments for the right to establish a national homeland in the land of Israel were succinctly formulated by David Ben-Gurion in 1930. He claimed that this right was recognized by international law, and that it was a consequence of a number of factors.” [excerpts from a speech by Ben-Gurion follow]

(*World*, p. 97)

“In October 1945, Ben-Gurion met with General Eisenhower in order to formulate a joint policy on displaced persons, [and] to enable representatives from Palestine to provide vocational training and to organize them.”

(*World*, p. 144)
continued from previous page

• The Jewish Resistance Movement (the united movement of the Hagana, Palma,
Irgun and Lehi) (Silver, p. 71)

• Military preparations for the War of Independence (Silver, pp. 105-106)

• Operation Nahshon (Silver, pp. 141-142)

3. The new textbook contains no photographs of David Ben-Gurion. There are,
however, pictures of Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin, Franklin Delano Roosevelt,

David Ben-Gurion
(One of three pictures shown; Silver, p. 157)
4. Berl Katznelson is not mentioned at all in the new textbook.

- On the role of the Histadrut (*Zionism*, p. 46)
- His evaluation of the Third Aliya (*Zionism*, p. 53)
- On the policy of self-restraint in combatting the Arab revolt (*Zionism*, p. 132)
- On the use of force (*Zionism*, p. 181)
- On the White Paper of 1939 and illegal Jewish immigration to Palestine (*Silver*, p. 19)

No references in the book.
Illegal Jewish Immigration to Palestine, 1939-1948

5. The defiance of British efforts to prevent the immigration of Jews to Palestine in the years prior to Israel’s independence is mentioned only twice in the new textbook; no details are provided.

- Illegal immigration in the wake of the White Paper of 1939 \((\text{Zionism, p. 183; Silver, p. 7})\)
- Illegal immigration by sea \((\text{Silver, pp. 18-22, 35-36})\)
- Illegal immigration by land \((\text{Silver, pp. 23, 37})\)
- Illegal immigration after the Holocaust \((\text{Silver, pp. 80-82})\)
- The Exodus \((\text{Silver, pp. 85-86})\)
- British efforts against illegal immigration \((\text{Silver, pp. 82-84, 86-87})\)
- Impact of the illegal immigration on the Zionist enterprise \((\text{Silver, pp. 87-88})\)

“Immigration certificates were issued by the Mandatory authorities, who provided only a small number of them, which did not meet the demand. For this reason, most efforts to bring Jews to the land of Israel were built on illegal methods.”

\((\text{World, p. 144; emphasis added})\)

“In the Yishuv, calls for Britain to change its policy on Palestine grew louder. This demand was accompanied by actions: Illegal immigration activities on the one hand, and acts of violence on the other.”

\((\text{World, p. 160; emphasis added})\)
6. There are no pictures in the new textbook of illegal Jewish immigration.

Illegal immigrants being forced onto a transport ship for deportation (Silver, p. 84)

The illegal immigrant ship Max Nordau, captured by the British while filled well beyond capacity (Silver, p. 83)
7. The new textbook makes no mention of the persecution of Jews in the Soviet Union prior to the establishment of the State of Israel.

“At that time, the yevektzia, a bureau of Jewish affairs within the framework of the Communist Party, was established. It appeared that a new era had dawned in the life of the Jewish community in the Soviet Union… but before long the Communist regime, which had from the outset declared war on organized religion, began its assault on Jewish national and religious institutions. As early as 1919, orders were given to dissolve the Jewish communities and confiscate their property, as well as to close down all institutions of Tora study. From the early 1920s on, the teaching of the Hebrew language and Jewish history were banned; soon thereafter, there began a systematic destruction of Jewish national culture. Hebrew authors and Zionist activists were hunted down and persecuted; many fled the country, and others were exiled to labor camps… In the 1930s, Yiddish culture declined, and even Jewish organizations that were created by the regime (such as the yevektzia) were shut down… Hopes for Jewish cultural autonomy were dashed by the harsh reality that repressed any nationalist aspiration and undermined the very foundations of Jewish national existence. The Jewish community was on the verge of disappearing.”

(Superpowers, pp. 31-36)

“The Communist revolution that took place in Russia in 1917—a revolution which raised the banner of civil equality—led to an improvement in the situation of the Jews. In the summer of 1919, an edict was issued banning anti-Semitic activities, and the Jews were promised equal rights. And in fact, many Jews enthusiastically supported the Communist regime, at least in its early days. In the 1920s, the prevailing view among Communists in the Soviet Union was that various minority groups should be allowed cultural autonomy. In this context, the Jewish department of the Communist Party, the yevektzia, was established. The yevektzia was dismantled in the early 1930s.”

(World, p. 38)
Armed Resistance Against the British, 1945-1947

8. Underground operations of the Jewish military organizations—the Palmah, Hagana, Irgun, and Lehi—after 1945 were described in depth in the old textbook; in the new textbook, they are relegated to less than one sentence.

- The establishment of the Jewish Resistance Movement (*Silver*, p. 71)
- Operations of the Palmah (*Silver*, p. 72)
- The Jewish Resistance Movement’s reaction to the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry (*Silver*, pp. 72-73)
- Intensification of the struggle (*Silver*, pp. 74, 94)
- The British response and the “Black Sabbath” (*Silver*, pp. 74-77, 96)
- Blowing up of the King David Hotel (*Silver*, pp. 77-78)
- The hangings at the Acre prison (*Silver*, pp. 91-92)
- The Irgun breakout at the Acre prison (*Silver*, pp. 92, 95)
- Operations of the Lehi (*Silver*, p. 96)
- Summary of operations and their impact (*Silver*, pp. 92-93)

“In the Yishuv, calls for Britain to change its policy on Palestine grew louder. This demand was accompanied by actions: Illegal immigration activities on the one hand, and acts of violence on the other.”

(*World*, p. 160; emphasis added)
9. Menahem Begin is mentioned for the first time in the new textbook in the context of his becoming prime minister after the elections of 1977. The fact that he was head of the Irgun underground operating against the British prior to statehood, and that he was leader of the political opposition in Israel for decades, receives no mention.

- The Irgun proclaims the start of its revolt against the British (Silver, pp. 61-63, 65)
- The hangings at the Acre prison (Silver, p. 91)
- The *Altalena* Affair (Silver, p. 174)
- Leader of the Herut party (Years, p. 16)
- Opposition to Holocaust reparations (Years, p. 16)

No references in the book prior to 1977.

10. The old textbook described the 1947 UN resolution favoring the establishment of a Jewish state as an event of great historical significance for the Jewish people. The new textbook reveals only that the UN vote was cause for rejoicing in the Yishuv, without any discussion as to its importance.

“The voting on the partition plan took place in an atmosphere fraught with tension… The motion was approved… and so, thirty years after the Balfour Declaration was issued—thirty years in which the Jewish people underwent the most horrific of holocausts, while at the same time building for itself, through tireless efforts, the infrastructure for the creation of a Jewish state—the nations of the world confirmed the Jewish people’s right to establish in its homeland a sovereign state.”

(Silver, pp. 97-100)

“The excitement and tension in the Yishuv reached its peak… When it became clear that the motion had carried, thousands took to the streets in celebration.”

(World, p. 161)
11. The new textbook has no photograph of the ceremony at which the Declaration of Independence was read and the State of Israel proclaimed.

David Ben-Gurion proclaiming the establishment of the State of Israel  (Silver, p. 159)
12. In the old textbook, the Declaration of Independence was presented in an abridged form, leaving out the passage proclaiming equal rights for all citizens. In the new textbook, the Declaration is abridged as well; only this time, it is the section describing the history of the Jewish people and its connection to the land of Israel that is left out.

“The land of Israel was the birthplace of the Jewish people. Here their spiritual, religious and political identity was shaped. Here they first attained statehood, creating cultural values of national and universal significance, and giving the world the eternal Book of Books.

After being forcibly exiled from their land, the Jewish people kept faith with it throughout their dispersion, never ceasing to pray and hope for their return to it, and for the restoration of their political freedom there.

In the year 5657 (1897), at the summons of the spiritual father of the Jewish state, Theodor Herzl, the First Zionist Congress convened and proclaimed the right of the Jewish people to national rebirth in its own country. This right was recognized in the Balfour Declaration of November 2, 1917, and re-affirmed in the Mandate of the League of Nations which, in particular, gave international sanction to the historic connection between the Jewish people and the land of Israel, and to the right of the Jewish people to rebuild its national home.

...
The Declaration of Independence (continued)

required the inhabitants of the land of Israel to take such steps as were necessary on their part for the implementation of that resolution. This recognition by the United Nations of the right of the Jewish people to establish their state is irrevocable.

This right is the natural right of the Jewish people to be masters of their own fate, like all other nations, in their own sovereign state.

Accordingly we, members of the People’s Council, representatives of the Jewish community of the land of Israel and of the Zionist movement, are here assembled on the day of the termination of the British Mandate over the land of Israel, and, by virtue of our natural and historic right, and on the strength of the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly, hereby declare the establishment of a Jewish state in the land of Israel, to be known as the State of Israel.”

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(Silver, pp. 158-159)

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The State of Israel will be open to Jewish immigration and to the ingathering of the exiles. It will foster the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants. It will be based on freedom, justice and peace as envisioned by the prophets of Israel. It will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex. It will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture. It will safeguard the Holy Places of all religions. And it will be faithful to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.”

(World, pp. 163-164)
13. In the old textbook, the War of Independence against the Arab states was discussed in detail over 17 pages. In the new textbook, it takes up two brief paragraphs.

(Silver, pp. 160-176)  
(World, p. 164)

14. The story of the War of Independence in the old textbook was accompanied by a map, which showed arrows pointing towards the center of the country, representing the invasion routes of the five Arab armies. This map does not appear in the new textbook; instead a similar map appears—but with arrows pointing in the opposite direction, indicating the routes that Palestinian Arab refugees took when leaving the country.

The invasion  (Silver, p. 166)  
The Palestinian refugees, 1948  (World, p. 162)
15. The account of the War of Independence in the old textbook was accompanied by twenty photographs showing the heroism and suffering of the Jewish side. In the new textbook, there is only one photograph from the war—that of Palestinian refugees.
Palestinian refugee children in Jordan, 1949 (World, p. 164)
The Origins of the Palestinian Refugee Problem

16. The old textbook did not address the fact that some Palestinian Arabs were expelled by Jewish forces in the course of the War of Independence, while the new textbook addresses it briefly.

“In the course of implementing Plan D, large numbers of Palestinians left their homes. The reasons for their departure were varied, and differed from village to village. In some cases it was out of a desire to get away from the battle areas, out of a sense of panic which set in among residents when they learned of the extent of the military defeats, or as a result of rumors of the impending slaughter that was to befall the civilian population. There were also towns where the Jewish forces carried out expulsion operations. Families hastily packed up whatever belongings they could carry and were compelled to leave their homes.”

(World, p. 163; emphasis added)

17. The old textbook did not include a photograph of abandoned Arab villages being resettled by Jews.

No photographs in the book.
The Sinai Campaign, 1956

18. According to the old textbook, Israel launched the 1956 Sinai Campaign because of existential threats. In the new textbook, no such threat to Israel’s security is described.

“In 1956, a number of developments caused Israel to change its policy toward Egypt: Terrorist incursions and border skirmishes with Egypt increased in frequency and intensity following the Egyptian-Czechoslovakian arms deal, and in April nearly took on the dimensions of all-out war.

In July, Egyptian President Abdel Nasser declared the nationalization of the Suez Canal, a step that seriously harmed longstanding French and British interests in Egypt. The diplomatic relations between the two Western powers and Egypt continued to deteriorate, and a secret French-Israeli arms deal was signed, which led to Israel’s receiving large quantities of advanced French weaponry (aircraft, tanks, artillery, etc.).

In October, final preparations for war got under way. Jordan, which suffered greatly from Israeli reprisal operations, joined forces with the Egyptian-Syrian military alliance, and the three countries formed a unified military command. At the same time, secret contacts were being held to bring Israel into a British-French military operation against Egypt.

On October 29, 1956, Israel took Egypt by surprise by dropping a battalion of paratroopers into the Mitla Pass (in the western Sinai Peninsula, on one of the most important land routes leading to the Suez Canal). Over the next three days, Israeli forces advanced into the Sinai and surrounded most of the Egyptian forces positioned there.”

(Years, p. 66)

“Two different approaches developed among Israeli policymakers. The first, to which Ben-Gurion and Moshe Dayan, then IDF chief of staff, subscribed, was that in order to ensure security, it was necessary to escalate the military conflict up to the brink of war. The second, to which Moshe Sharett, the foreign minister, who had been prime minister in 1954-1955, subscribed, was to maintain a policy of restraint and preserve the image of Israel as a peace-loving country. The disagreements at the highest echelons eventually brought about the exclusion of Sharett from positions of leadership. Ben-Gurion decided to put his approach into practice, and he accepted the offer of Britain and France to conduct a joint campaign against Egypt. The war in Sinai broke out in 1956.”

(World, pp. 178-179)
The Sinai Campaign, 1956 (continued)

19. The old textbook attributed to the Sinai Campaign clear diplomatic and military achievements, of which the new textbook makes no mention.

“With hindsight, it turns out that despite the pullback [from Sinai], the Sinai Campaign yielded important, positive results over the next 10 years:

A. The Straits of Tiran remained open, and the passage of ships to Eilat continued unhindered. The port of Eilat developed, serving as a launching pad for strong commercial ties with many African and Southeast Asian countries. An oil pipeline was laid from Eilat northward, which supplied oil for most of Israel’s domestic fuel needs.

B. The *fedayeen* raids, which had harassed the southern settlements, came to a halt, and the Egyptian-Israeli border became quiet.

C. The Sinai Peninsula remained demilitarized *de facto*. With one exception, the Egyptians refrained from introducing forces into Sinai which had an offensive potential, and stationed troops there primarily for border defense.

It can also be added that Israel’s military victory in the Sinai Campaign restored its deterrent power, gave the IDF confidence in its own abilities, and provided it with an opportunity to learn lessons, which helped make it more powerful in the future.

“Following the Sinai Campaign, a period of relative calm ensued, although the threat to Israel’s existence had still not been removed.”

(*World*, p. 179)
An important diplomatic result of the Sinai Campaign was a positive change in the United States' attitude towards Israel. Following the IDF pullback from Sinai, the United States began to sell arms to Israel. With time, relations between the two countries became increasingly close. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that as a result of the Sinai Campaign, Israel's power and status were strengthened, and the country enjoyed a ten-year period of tranquility.

(Years, p. 67)
20. The new textbook describes the events leading up to the Six Day War without mentioning a series of belligerent actions taken by the Arab side, including Nasser’s decision to close the Straits of Tiran, leaving the impression that Israel precipitated the war.

“In early 1965, the Fatah organization commenced an armed struggle against Israel, and, with the backing of the Syrian government, it began to carry out terrorist attacks in various parts of the country. Syria, for its part, began earthworks to divert the headwaters of the Jordan River, frequently shelled Israeli towns and disrupted the agricultural work in the fields along its border. The IDF responded with reprisal measures, culminating in an air strike on the Syrian water-diversion project (July 1966) and the downing of six Syrian MiG fighter planes (April 1967).

Egypt and Syria signed a mutual defense pact in November 1966, and, following the downing of the Syrian MiGs, Egyptian President Abdel Nasser decided to act in accordance with this agreement. From this point, a clear path led to the outbreak of the Six Day War.

Under the pretext that Israel was amassing military forces on the Syrian border, Egypt began on May 15, 1967 to move troops into the Sinai, deploying them in offensive positions near the Israeli border. On May 18, Nasser demanded that the UN Emergency Force be withdrawn from Sinai (this force was deployed, it will be recalled, in the wake of the Sinai Campaign), and the Secretary General of the UN acceded to his demand. The rapid escalation which led inexorably to the explosion had now begun. Following the removal of the UN forces, Israel began a partial call-up of army reservists in

“Military tensions rose in May 1967. Following Israel’s downing of Syrian jets on the northern border, the Egyptians decided to amass forces along the border and threaten the security of the country. Israel responded with an extensive call-up of reserve forces. The ‘waiting’ period began. As the military was placed on higher alert, diplomatic attempts were being made to defuse the tension, but these efforts failed. In the end, the government decided to launch a surprise attack on the Egyptian forces in the Sinai.”

(World, p. 179)
order to shore up the defenses on its southern frontier. The Egyptians deployed paratroopers in Sharm a-Sheikh, and on May 22, Nasser proclaimed the closing of the Straits of Tiran to Israeli vessels. Israel had on numerous occasions warned that the closing of the Straits of Tiran would be viewed as a \textit{casus belli}, and responded now with an intensified call-up of reservists. At the same time, the government of Prime Minister Levi Eshkol decided to engage in diplomatic activity as well, in order to find a political solution to the crisis. But the situation continued to deteriorate: Egypt continued to move troops into Sinai and positioned Palestinian forces along the border in the Gaza Strip. The tension along the Gaza border continued to mount, with many incidences of burning of fields, shooting and shelling of settlements. A Syrian delegation arrived in Cairo, and it was decided that the Syrian army would prepare to attack in coordination with the Egyptian army. On May 30, Egypt signed a mutual defense pact with Jordan, and within a few days a similar pact was signed between Egypt and Iraq. Egyptian commando units were dispatched to Jordan, and Israel felt the siege around it tightening.

Throughout this period (which came to be known as the ‘waiting period,’ or the ‘period of alert’), the mood in Israel was sullen and grim, and there was a growing realization that no alternative existed to a preemptive strike that would decide the war in Israel’s favor. After the Straits of Tiran were closed, the President of the United States asked Israel to delay any military response, and after a week the U.S. reiterated its request that Israel wait a while longer in order to allow a diplomatic solution to the crisis to be found. Israel also wanted to show the world that
The Six Day War, 1967 (continued)

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it was not trigger-happy. However, as the days passed without a solution, pressure mounted on the government to make a decision. On June 1, as a result of heavy public pressure, the government was expanded to form a national unity government, and on the morning of June 5, 1967 the Israeli Air Force conducted a surprise attack on the Egyptian air bases. Thus began the Six Day War.”

(Years, pp. 68-70)

21. In the old textbook, the unification of Jerusalem in 1967 was presented as the result of a war which Israel did not want, which involved some of the most heroic battles in Jewish history, and which ended with the return of the Jews to the Western Wall. None of this appears in the new textbook.

“With the eruption of war on the Egyptian front, the Jordanians began to shell West Jerusalem. Israel warned King Hussein not to join in the war, but he did not heed the warning… thus, the war broke out on this front as well… On the night between June 5 and June 6, paratroopers broke through Jordanian lines in northern Jerusalem in fierce battles at Ammunition Hill and in the area of the Rockefeller Museum, and on the morning of June 7... they broke through the Lion’s Gate into the Old City. The battle for Jerusalem ended beside the Western Wall.”

(Years, pp. 72-73)

“The armies of Jordan and Syria joined the war afterwards… Israel captured large territories… including East Jerusalem from the Jordanians… After the war, the government of Israel decided to annex East Jerusalem, including the Old City, to Israel.”

(World, p. 179)
22. The old textbook highlighted the Jewish significance of the unification of Jerusalem with a photograph of Yitzhak Rabin, Moshe Dayan and Uzi Narkis entering the Old City. The only photograph of the war in the new textbook is of an Israeli armored vehicle at the Kalandia Airport, under a sign in Arabic.
23. The old textbook contained 7 pages describing the Warsaw Ghetto uprising and other acts of Jewish resistance to the Nazis. The new textbook does not mention a single act of Jewish resistance in Europe.

- The Warsaw Ghetto uprising  \((War, \text{ pp. 194-197})\)
- The Vilna Ghetto uprising  \((War, \text{ p. 192})\)
- The Bialystok Ghetto uprising  \((War, \text{ pp. 192-193})\)
- The Jewish partisans  \((War, \text{ pp. 197-198})\)
24. The new textbook does not include a photograph of Jewish resistance to the Nazis.

No photographs in the book.
The Attitude of the Allies Towards the Holocaust

25. The old textbook included 3 pages describing the Allies’ awareness of the destruction of European Jewry, and their inaction during the war despite this knowledge. The new textbook, on the other hand, depicts the Allies’ position on assisting the Jews in a positive light.

“A report on this subject was written by a committee appointed by United States Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau (in late 1943) to investigate the delay in efforts to save the Jews of France and Romania. In order to avoid accusations of prejudice, the Jewish Morgenthau appointed three Christians to this committee. The following are excerpts from the report:

… State Department officials not only neglected to use the official means at their disposal in order to save Jews from Hitler, they even employed these same means in order to prevent saving these Jews. Not only did they fail to cooperate with private organizations in the efforts of these organizations to carry out their own [rescue] plans, but they took steps to prevent the implementation of those plans.”

(An excerpt from three pages; War, p. 190)

“Announcement of the Allies, December 1942:

When the extent of the mass murder of the Jews became known, Britain, the United States, the Soviet Union, and other nations that were fighting Nazi Germany issued the following statement:

The regime in Germany, not content with depriving people of their most basic human rights, is now putting into practice Hitler’s intention, which he has repeated many times, of annihilating the Jewish people in Europe… [The Allies] utterly and completely condemn this animalistic policy of cold-blooded extermination. They hereby proclaim and state that these acts serve only to solidify the determination of all freedom-loving nations to defeat the barbaric Hitlerian tyranny. They hereby reiterate their sacred determination to make certain that those guilty of these crimes will not go unpunished.”

(World, p. 137)
Hannah Senesh and the Paratroopers

26. The old textbook described the deeds of Hannah Senesh and the other Yishuv paratroopers dropped behind Nazi lines during World War II. The new textbook makes no mention of them.

- Hannah Senesh and the paratroopers, text and photographs (Silver, 39-41)

- Hannah Senesh's poem:

  Happy is the match that burned,
  and started the fire.

  Happy is the fire that burned
  in the depths of the heart.

  Happy were the hearts that knew
  how to stop beating with honor.

  Happy is the match that burned,
  and started the fire.

  (Silver, p. 40)
The Holocaust

27. The old textbook included explicit photographs of mass murder at the hands of the Nazis, and of survivors as walking skeletons on the verge of death. Explicit photographs of this type are absent from the new textbook.

A. The Mass Extermination (1941-1945)

Burning houses (War, p. 150)

Execution (War, p. 151)

On the way to death: From the selection to the gas chambers (War, p. 181)

[German soldier shooting mother and child] (War, p. 179)

The electric fence (War, p. 157)

Gas chambers: Hundreds of Jews would be led into chambers such as this one. When the iron door was shut, a soldier would toss the canister of gas into a special pipe on the roof. (War, p. 182)
Auschwitz concentration camp  \(\text{World}, \text{p. 136}\)

Raid on the Warsaw Ghetto, 1942. Most of the ghetto’s residents were transferred to a death camp. \(\text{World}, \text{p. 136}\)

Ovens for cremating bodies in the Dachau concentration camp  \(\text{World}, \text{p. 140}\)
The Holocaust (continued)

B. Survivors

Inside the barracks (War, p. 156)

Dutch boy at the end of the war (War, p. 146)

Jewish women liberated from a concentration camp (World, p. 144)

Jewish mother and daughter after the war (World, p. 144)
Developments Since 1967

The old series of textbooks, published in the 1980s, ended its account of Israeli history with the year 1967. The new textbook, on the other hand, continues the story of Israeli and world history up to the mid-1990s. However, the new book omits a number of critical events in the history of Israel over the last three decades.

28. Yitzhak Rabin. Although Yitzhak Rabin's contribution to the peace process is described extensively in the new textbook, there is almost no description of his numerous achievements on behalf of Israel's security, to which he dedicated the greater part of his life. Except for one brief mention in a sidebar on the page describing his assassination (World, p. 271), his career in the Palmah and the IDF and his tenures as defense minister are not mentioned. Even the coverage of the Six Day War fails to mention that Rabin was IDF chief of staff during the war, or that he became a national hero following Israel's victory.

29. Shimon Peres. Shimon Peres is first mentioned in the description of the peace process. There is no mention of his decisive contribution to the building of Israel's security: The procurement of weapons from Europe during the War of Independence, the construction of the reactor at Dimona in the early 1960s, and his courageous decision as defense minister to send IDF units to free hostages at Entebbe in 1976.

30. Ezer Weizman. Ezer Weizman is first mentioned in the description of the peace process. There is no mention of his decisive contribution to the establishment of Israel's Air Force, which he headed during its formative period.

31. Moshe Dayan. There is a short sentence alluding to Moshe Dayan as IDF chief of staff during the 1950s (World, p. 178). Other than that, there is no mention of his thirty-year career as one of the most renowned soldiers and officers in the world. Dayan is not mentioned at all in connection to the Six Day War, during which he served as defense minister.

32. PLO Terrorism. The book does not explicitly mention a single terror attack perpetrated during the 1970s or 1980s by the PLO. The terrorist attacks at Munich, Ma'alot, Misgav Am, and the Coastal Road are not mentioned. Instead, a single banal sentence appears:

“The PLO struggled to achieve its goal both by political means and by violent means, in the form of terror acts against Israelis, in Israel and in various countries around the world.” (World, p. 261)

33. The Entebbe Raid. The daring July 1976 raid by IDF commandos on the Entebbe airport in Uganda is not mentioned at all. Nor are any of Israel's other operations against terror in Israel and around the world, such as the commando operation to take control of a hijacked Sabena airplane in Tel-Aviv in 1972.

34. Ethiopian Jewry. There is no mention of Operation Solomon, or of any other efforts to bring Ethiopian Jewry to Israel.