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Book Review: A provocative, evocative look at Israel's history

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Homeland

The Illustrated History of the State of Israel Marv Wolfman, Mario Ruiz and William J. Rubin

(Nachshon Press, 128 pages, \$19.95)

Hold the Middle Eastern world in your hand with this provocative, evocative book. Every page is a feast of full-color photos and painted art illustrations, with trenchant bits of explanatory text superimposed, a graphic nonfiction work bringing 3,500 years to eye-popping life.

The book opens with a clever conceit: Teenage and adult readers are in a classroom with a professor who cautions that there are many ways in which any one story may be told.

Although it's "written from the Israeli point of view," this book "also acknowledges that there are other narratives of the region's history," according to its trio of creators. One of them, Mr. Wolfman, has written graphic novels, including *Blade* and *Superman Returns*.

Beginning – where else? – "In the beginning," with Old Testament Israelites, the region's tale unfolds as though through a telescopic lens, the levelheaded professor navigating her students' minefield of questions until finally reaching those as-yet- unanswered ones of today.

On the cover: an imagined Abraham. Among those with him: astronaut Ilan Ramon, who died in the 2003 Columbia shuttle disaster.

Harriet P. Gross