

The Occupation of Palestine

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By looking at this wonderful (but meaningless) parade by President Abbas at the UN, it is time to publish my argument I have been using for several years. The immediate cause that "broke the camel's back" was a piece in the Financial Times on September 22nd, written by David Gardner titled "Palestinians' Fight For UN Recognition Exposes Hollow US Role".

Let me provide a (free of charge) crash course to millions of uninformed people such as Mr. Gardner. I have been listening to this pipedream, called the "Israeli occupied territories" along with the theory with regards to those dirty Israelis having the chutzpa to be there. Let me start from my conclusion; stay with me, it will be factual and interesting.

I will be willing to call the Jordan River's West Bank and East Jerusalem an "occupied territory" after a few things already happened. First, Hungary again included the former Yugoslavia, Transylvania, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Southern part of Poland, Eastern part of Austria (Burgenland) and Western part of Ukraine. Because all these used to call "Hungary".

---But they lost it! Really?...and how? Well, throughout history Hungary has had an extreme ability to always join the wrong crowd, be in the losing camp, so the winning sides took it. Hm. That's sounds logical!

Back to the Israeli "Occupied Territories":

It looks like there are a lot of people out there who must be educated (thank God, few of them have the chance to publish lunatic theories in reputable media outlets). So let's do a quick trip in history shall we? Review this time-line with me.

- The Dome of the Rock and the Al Aqsa Mosque, were constructed on the site of the Second Jewish Temple. The Al Aqsa Mosque, the third most significant Muslim religious site after Mecca and Medina to where Muhammad (570-632) went from Mecca during the Night Journey. The exact time when the Mosque was built is unknown and it is still debated. The Dome of the Rock (from which -according to Islamic tradition- Muhammad ascended to Heaven accompanied by Gabriel) was initially completed in 691 AD, at the order of Umaayyad Caliph Abd al-Malik.
- The Second Jewish Temple was constructed in 516 BC and was destroyed in 70 AD in the first Jewish-Roman War. The Roman army was led by Titus, the future Emperor. The army besieged and conquered Jerusalem.
- The First Jewish Temple was constructed in the 10th Century BC under King Solomon, King of the Israelites and was destroyed 586 BC, when the Jews were exiled to Babylon.

The Muslim "Noble Sanctuary" WEB Site (Noble Sanctuary: as the Muslims call the Temple Mountain where the Al Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock are situated) gives the following account: *"...In the ninth year of the Prophet's mission, about 620 AD, Muhammad rose in the middle of the night to visit the Sacred Mosque in Makkah. After a time of worship he fell asleep near the Ka'aba. The angel Gabriel came to him and woke him from his slumber. He led the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, to the edge of the sacred Makkan mosque. Awaiting them was al-Buraq, a white winged beast "whose each stride stretched as far as the eye could see." Muhammad mounted al-Buraq and sped northwards with Gabriel to Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, the Furthest Mosque....". **This event happened close to 1,100 years after the Second Jewish Temple was built.***

This timeline well supports a simple visual image. Being an engineer, I have always been floored by the lunacy of the very discussion with regards to "who does the land belong to" on the West side of the Jordan River. Because if one just looks at the Temple Mountain, the Dome of the Rock and the Al Aqsa Mosque are on **top** of the Jewish Temple, which -based upon my meager architectural knowledge- proves that both the First and the Second Jewish Temples were there first, making the "when was exactly the Al Aqsa Mosque built?" question academic at best. That should settle the "who owns the land" issue right there. Not to mention the historical timeline showing that the Jews have almost eleven hundred year "leg" on the Muslims as far as "who was there first". The Jews already lost their Second Temple before the Dome of the Rock was built. What

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cannot be debated is the fact that the Jewish Temple today is buried **under** the Al Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock. This should be enough for anyone who wants to keep the conversation going without being excluded from it for not knowing what he/she is talking about.

But there is more

It is imperative to see that one must separate the terminology of "Palestine" as a geographical area from "Palestinian people" as a group of specific national identity. In short, there was a Palestine (as a land) populated by Jews; on the other hand "Palestinian people" as a common national identity have never existed. But let us see how that happened.

The Palestinian land's origins go back to the Philistine confederacy that contained five cities (the Pentapolis): Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Gath, and Ekron, bordered by the Yarkon River in the north, and was known as Philistia, or the Land of the Philistines. This area is in the approximate location where Gaza is today (Pentapolis extended more to the south).

The Philistines were ancient people, descended from Noah's son Ham after the time of the flood (Genesis 10:14). They were part of the population called "Sea Peoples". Researchers have still not completely agreed as to where the Sea People came from; the west, (Italy, Sicily, and Sardinia), and traveled east, or they were from the Eastern Mediterranean and had fled west. Most scholars argue that the Sea Peoples began their migration from the Western Mediterranean, and that there is a linguistic link between the Shardana and Sardinia as well as the Shekelesh and Sicily.

In about 1175 BC, Egypt was threatened with a massive land and sea invasion by the "Sea Peoples" (incl. Philistines). Ramesses III defeated them and settled their captives in fortresses in southern Canaan (Canaan expanded from today's Lebanon through south of Gaza and east to the Jordan valley); another related theory suggests that Philistines invaded and settled the coastal plain for themselves. Abraham and Isaac interacted with the Philistines in Canaan (Genesis 21:33-34). But it was during the time of the Exodus that the Lord promised that the land of Israel would include the territory of the Philistines (Exodus 23:31); this promise meant that an eventual conflict will take place for Israel to displace the Philistines.

There are various theories (among others: Petrie, Yadin, Bright, and Alt) how the Israelites occupied Canaan, but the date of "between 1350 BC and 1200 BC" is agreed. The United Kingdom of Israel was established in 1020 BC and split within a century to form the northern Kingdom of Israel, and the southern Kingdom of Judah. During Solomon's reign in Israel, the Philistines were subdued, yet the later prophets note that the Philistines continued the war against Israel. The Philistines were devastated by the same Assyrian Kingdom that overtook Israel (722 BC). Philistia was not completely destroyed until about 600 BC, at which point Nebuchadnezzar destroyed both the Philistines and Israelites through extensive campaigns. The majority of the Philistines were either killed or deported back to Babylon. The remainder of them were absorbed into the Phoenician settlements that succeeded them in the 6th and 5th centuries BC.

In the 2nd century CE, the last attempt of the Jews to achieve independence from the Roman Empire ended with the well-known event of Masada that is historically documented and universally recognized as the fact that determined the Jewish Diaspora in a definitive way. The land where this happened was -until then- the province known as Judea, and there is no mention of any place called "Palestine" before that time. The Roman Emperor Hadrian (117-138) was utterly upset with the Jewish Nation and wanted to erase the name of Israel and Judah from the face of the Earth, so there would be no memory of the country that belonged to that rebel people. (*"They lay crafty plans against Your People... they say: 'come, let us wipe them out as a nation; let the name of*

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Israel be remembered no more'." - Tehilim 83:3-4 (Psalm 83:3-4).

He decided to replace the denomination of that Roman province and resorted to ancient history in order to find a name that might appear appropriate, and found that an extinct group of people unknown in Roman times, called "Philistines" was once dwelling in that area and were enemies of the Israelites. Therefore, according to Latin spelling, he invented the new name: "Palaestina", a name that would be also hateful for the Jews as it reminded them of their old foes. He did so with the explicit purpose of effacing any trace of Jewish history. In 132 CE, Hadrian joined the province of Judaea with Galilee to form a new province, renamed it **Syria Palaestina** and Jerusalem was renamed Aelia Capitolina. Some researches argue that Hadrian chose the name because the Hebrew spelling of "Philistine" and "Palestinian" is almost identical (below)

Philistine	פְּלִשְׁתִּי
Palestinian	פְּלִשְׁתִּינָאִי

The difference is marked in yellow; it is the "ian" part of "Palestinian". The word "Philistinian" doesn't exist. There is no mention of the name *Palestina* in history, before the Romans renamed the province of Judea. Such name does not occur in any ancient document, is not written in the Bible, neither in the Hebrew Scriptures nor in the Christian Testament, not even in Assyrian, Persian, Macedonian, Ptolemaic, Seleucian or other Greek sources, not even by the Romans that invented the term.

"Palestinian People"

In order to examine the origins of "The Palestinian people" there are a few questions should be asked:

- If "Palestinians" allegedly are the historic inhabitants of the Holy Land, why did they not fight for independence from Roman occupation as Jews did?
- How is it possible that not a single Palestinian leader heading a revolt against the Roman invaders is mentioned in any historic record?
- Why there is not any Palestinian rebel group mentioned, as for example the Jewish Zealots?
- Why every historic document mentions the Jews as the native inhabitants, and the Greeks, Romans and others as foreigners dwelling in Judea, but not any Palestinian people, neither as native nor as foreigner?
- Why there is no reference to any Palestinian people in the Quran, although Muslims claim that their prophet was once in Jerusalem (an event that is not mentioned in the Quran either)?
- Since we now know how the name "Palestinian" was invented, it is interesting to ask: how can the Arab people have a western name instead of one in their own language?

When Caliph Salahuddin al-Ayyub (1137-1193) brought the Jews to settle in Jerusalem, he recognized it as their Homeland. At the same time he neither knew, nor invite any Palestinian. To claim that Palestinians are the original people of Eretz Yisrael is not only against secular history but against Islamic history as well.

The chairman of the Syrian Delegation at the Paris Peace Conference in February 1919 stated: *"The only Arab domination since the Conquest in 635 c.e. hardly lasted, as such, 22 years"*.

The preceding declarations by Arab politicians have been done before 1967, as they had not the slightest knowledge of the existence of any Palestinian people. How and when did they change their mind and decided that such people existed? When the State of Israel was reborn in 1948 CE, the "Palestinians" did not exist yet, the Arabs had still not discovered that "ancient" people. They were too busy with the purpose of annihilating the

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new Sovereign State and did not intend to create any Palestinian entity, but only to distribute the land among the already existing Arab states. They were defeated. They attempted again to destroy Israel in 1967, and were humiliated in only six days, in which they lost the lands that they had usurped in 1948. In those 19 years of Arab occupation of Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip, neither Jordan nor Egypt suggested to create a "Palestinian" state, since the still non-existing Palestinians would have never claimed their alleged right to have their own state... Paradoxically, during the British Mandate, it was not any Arab group but the Jews that were known as "Palestinians"!

Auni Bey Abdul-Hadi, Syrian Arab leader to British Peel Commission said in 1937:

"There is no such country as Palestine. 'Palestine' is a term the Zionists invented. There is no Palestine in the Bible. Our country was for centuries part of Syria. 'Palestine' is alien to us. It is the Zionists who introduced it".

Professor Philip Hitti, Arab historian said 1946:

"There is no such thing as Palestine in history, absolutely not".

A representative of Saudi Arabia at the United Nations stated in 1956:

"It is common knowledge that Palestine is nothing but Southern Syria".

Syrian president, Hafez Assad told to the PLO leader Yassir Arafat:

"You do not represent Palestine as much as we do. Never forget this one point: There is no such thing as a Palestinian people, there is no Palestinian entity, there is only Syria. You are an integral part of the Syrian people, Palestine is an integral part of Syria. Therefore it is we, the Syrian authorities, who are the true representatives of the Palestinian people".

(Sources: <http://www.imninalu.net/myths-pals.htm>; Theories of the Israelite Occupation of the Land of Canaan, David Hargus, 2000)

The one and only "vital looking" reference I found was an argument with regards to "when Moses lead the Jews out of Egypt, they occupied the Palestinian people's land; therefore the Palestinian people have a legit claim." It is historically false for many reasons:

- Between 2300B.C.-3300B.C. people of large diversity lived in the area now called Syria and the area today called "Palestine."
- The invaders' number and diversity were also significant. These populations were the ancestors of Canaanites.
- Between 2300 B.C. - 1900 B.C. all buildings and structures were destroyed by the invading forces, mostly pastoral tribes.
- Between 1900 B.C. - 1550 B.C. the non-Semitic Indo-Aryan people (called Horites) migrated into Palestine and introduced a new and powerful tool the horse-drawn chariot.

But there is more

To keep a rational sequence here let us see real facts (replacing popular fictions) in a timely manner. One of the most hands-on evidences could be found in the book, written by Hadriani Relandi (1676-1718), titled *Palaestina, Ex Monumentis Veteribus Illustrata* published by Trajecti Batavorum: Ex Libraria G. Brodelet, 1714. The author Relandi, a real scholar, geographer, cartographer and well known philologist, professor of physics and metaphysics at the University of Harderwijk (today: Netherlands), completely fluent in Hebrew, Arabic, ancient Greek, as well as the European languages at age 25 (in 1701). He was appointed professor of Oriental languages at the University of Utrecht. In 1713, he also taught Hebrew antiquities. This was extended with a Chair in Jewish antiquity. The book was written in Latin. In 1695 he was sent on a sightseeing tour to Israel, at

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that time known as *Palestina*. In his travels he surveyed approximately 2,500 places where people lived that were mentioned in the bible or Mishnah. As his research method, he first mapped the Land of Israel. He also identified each of the places mentioned in the Mishnah or Talmud along with their original source. If the source was Jewish, he listed it together with the appropriate sentence in the Holy Scriptures. If the source was Roman or Greek he presented the connection in Greek or Latin. He also arranged a population survey and census of each community.

His most prominent conclusions:

- ***Not one settlement in the Land of Israel has a name that is of Arabic origin.*** Most of the settlement names originate in the Hebrew, Greek, Latin or Roman languages. In fact, till today, except to Ramlah, not one Arabic settlement has an original Arabic name. Till today, most of the settlements names are of Hebrew or Greek origin, the names distorted to senseless Arabic names. There is no meaning in Arabic to names such as Acco (Acre), Haifa, Jaffa, Nablus, Gaza, or Jenin and towns named Ramallah, El Halil and El-Kuds (Jerusalem) lack historical roots or Arabic philology. In 1696, the year Relandi toured the land, Ramallah, for instance, was called Bet'allah (From the Hebrew name Beit El) and Hebron was called Hebron (Hevron) and the Arabs called Mearat HaMachpelah El Chalil, their name for the Forefather Abraham.
- Most of the land was empty, desolate, and the inhabitants few in number and mostly concentrate in the towns Jerusalem, Acco, Tzfat, Jaffa, Tiberius and Gaza. Most of the inhabitants were Jews and the rest Christians. There were few Muslims, mostly nomad Bedouins. Nablus, known as Shchem, was exceptional, where approximately 120 people, members of the Muslim Natsha family and approximately 70 Shomronites lived. In the Galilee capital, Nazareth, lived approximately 700 Christians and in Jerusalem approximately 5000 people, mostly Jews and some Christians. Relandi describes Muslims as nomad Bedouins who arrived in the area as construction and agriculture labor reinforcement, seasonal workers. In Gaza for example, lived approximately 550 people, fifty percent Jews and the rest mostly Christians. The Jews grew and worked in their flourishing vineyards, olive tree orchards and wheat fields and the Christians worked in commerce and transportation of produce and goods. Tiberius and Tzfat were mostly Jewish and except of mentioning fishermen fishing in Lake Kinneret -- the Lake of Galilee -- a traditional Tiberius occupation, there is no mention of their occupations. A town like Um el-Phahem was a village where ten families, approximately fifty people in total, all Christian, lived and there was also a small Maronite church in the village.
- The book totally contradicts any post-modern theory claiming a "Palestinian heritage," or Palestinian nation. The book strengthens the connection, relevance, pertinence, kinship of the Land of Israel to the Jews and the absolute lack of belonging to the Arabs, who robbed the ***Latin name*** Palestina and took it as their own. In Granada, Spain, for example has Arabic heritage and architecture. In large cities such as Granada and the land of Andaluc  a, mountains and rivers like Guadalajara, one can see genuine Arabic cultural heritage: literature, monumental creations, engineering, medicine, etc. Seven hundred years of Arabic reign left in Spain an Arabic heritage that one cannot ignore, hide or camouflage. But in Israel, there is nothing like that. No names of towns, no culture, no art, no history, and no evidence of Arabic rule; only huge robbery, pillaging and looting; stealing the Jews' holiest place, robbing the Jews of their Promised Land.

(Source <http://www.think-israel.org/goldreich.palestina.html>)

But there is more

Researching the history of Jewish and Arab people and their relationship throughout history, and my own experience there, helped me formulate this solid view: the overwhelming percent of Jewish and Arab people have zero problem with one another. I know this is hard to stomach, but it is just a fact. If you talk with them,

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both sides will say, the “people” would have no problem, the politicians are the source of the mess, supported by a small percent of the people who listen to them. And even more surprising, “street Arabs” put 80% of the blame on Arab leaders. As one of my Palestinian friends told me: “If you think you hated Arafat, you are wrong. We hated him even more. He was a terrorist and a thief.

I gradually came to the conclusion that there had to be a turning point between 1880 and 1920; something must have happened, and someone must have “helped” destroying the relationship between the Arabs and the Jews. Because until about 1900, Jews and Christians enjoyed autonomy in religious affairs and areas such as education. In this sense, Jews and Christians enjoyed certain privileges under Ottoman Rule that was not granted to minorities in Europe, where Jews and Muslims were often persecuted or held back due to religious prejudice. This is not to say, however, that Jews and Christians enjoyed complete freedom under Islamic rule. They were seen as inferior by both the government and by many people. Put in simplistic terms, the superiority complex held by Muslims in the Ottoman Empire could likely be attributed to their acceptance of the Prophet Muhammad as the final prophet, a belief that Christians and Jews did not aspire to.

I found the culprit, and it –as usually the case– was the British Empire. So this segment will be a bit longer, but read it carefully; this is where everything we have today was cemented. In simple terms, there were the monetary (land ownership, etc.) and the political sides as contributing factors.

Monetary Side:

The Talmud (governing Jewish life) specifically states “settling in the Land of Israel” as a religious duty. It is so significant in Judaism that the Talmud allows the lifting of certain religious restrictions of Sabbath observance to further land acquisition and settlement.

Before 1858, land in the Ottoman Empire was owned by peasants who lived on it. Also, many times the land was owned by the community. The Ottoman Land Code of 1858, required to register the land for two reasons: tax them and better control them. Peasants did not want to register, because “registration” also meant mandatory military service. Peasants did not realize the magnitude of the issue (by not registering, they lose ownership). As a result, most land was registered under one person’s name, many times a person who did not live there. At this point, the Talmud’s relevant directions for the Jews, and the Arabs’ greed intersected; Jewish buyers gained an opportunity to purchase large tracts of land from the wealthy Arab owners. Although throughout the second half of the 19th century the Ottoman Empire tried to prevent Jewish land purchase (opposing the idea of Jewish self-rule in Palestine), the Jews had gradually increased their footprint. ***It is very important to understand that “the” only means Jews got the land back (which was theirs throughout history) was through purchasing it (as oppose to: “occupy” it).***

Political Side:

The Sinai and Palestine Campaign of the Middle Eastern theatre during World War I. between the British Empire and the Germans-supported Ottoman Empire started with the Ottoman Empire raiding the Suez Canal in 1915, and ended in 1918, by the Ottoman Empire losing Syria, Palestine, a large tract of the Arabian Peninsula. In short, the Brits desperately needed the Arabs to rise up against the Turks, to split the Ottomans’ military power.

To understand the magnitude of the British Empire’s historical responsibility (which has had effect to this date) for double-crossing the Arabs, a short review of history is warranted.

- The area we know as Saudi Arabia today was controlled by two opposing families; Shareef Husain ibn Ali, a Hashimite, whose family-tree justifiably claimed to be the direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad (the Hashimite clan’s name was derived from the Prophet’s full name of Muhammad ibn Abdullah ibn Abdul Muttalib ibn Hashim). By being a “Shareef” (a descendant) the Hashimites ruled the

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Hijaz as Emir of Mecca since 1073. The controlled areas included Mecca, Medina and the entire Red Sea coast of the Hijaz. "Hijaz" means "the Barrier"; the name reflects on the fact that the Hijaz covers the entire west coast of the Arab peninsula, all the way down to the current area of Yemen. Hussein ibn Ali was the Grand Shareef of Mecca; the position, awarded by the Ottoman sultan-caliph since the Ottoman Empire integrated the Hijaz under its rule in 1840. Husain ibn Ali was appointed to be the Grand Shareef of Mecca in November 1908.

- The ever growing territory of the Nejd (areas around Riyadh) was controlled by the House of Sa'ud, led by Abdul Aziz ibn Sa'ud, who captured Riyadh back from the Rasheeds in 1902, and is the founding father of modern Saudi Arabia.
- Abdul Aziz and his forces suffered a devastating blow in a battle against the Rasheeds in the town of Jarrab in January, 1915, causing the power of the House of Sa'uds in the peninsula fall to its low point, even in doubt that the regime can survive. The Brits therefore didn't regard Abdul Aziz's involvement against the Turks as a significant one. They had to look elsewhere.
- Sir Henry McMahon, British High Commissioner in Egypt later explained: *"...At that moment a large portion of the Turkish force at Gallipoli and nearly the whole of the force in Mesopotamia were Arabs....Could we give them some guarantee of assistance in the future to justify their splitting with the Turks?"* The Arabs wanted independence in the areas of Sinai, Syria, Iraq, and Palestine; with the Germans on the Ottoman side, the British needed the Arabs. Between July of 1915 and January of 1916, Husain ibn Ali and Sir Henry McMahon exchanged a series of letters (*The McMahon-Husain Correspondence*). The letters declared that if Arabs revolted in alliance with the United Kingdom, the UK would recognize Arab independence. Shareef Husain ibn Ali had proclaimed the Arab Revolt against the Turks in June, 1916.
- However, Husain ibn Ali's Arab revolt (although the revolt first surprised the Turks) was foundering. The Turks used the Damascus-Medina railway to reinforce their army. The Brits were considering a full scale British Expeditionary Force to save the Hijaz. Enters Captain T.E. Lawrence ("Lawrence of Arabia"); Captain Lawrence convinced the British government to provide gold, guns and other supplies; he also actively helped the Bedouin with military advice (including blowing up the Damascus-Medina railway).

As it turned out, the Brits wanted to double-cross the Arabs from day one. As usual, something happened no one saw coming; the Russian Bolshevik revolution in November, 1917. The Bolsheviks found the document of the great powers' plan to cut up the Middle East after the war. Britain, France, Italy and the Tsarist Russia agreed to four-way carve-up of the Ottoman Empire. It gave northern Turkey to Russia (that wanted a seaport in Constantinople), southern Turkey and the Dodecanese Islands to Italy, greater Syria (now: Syria and Lebanon) to France, and everything else excluding Arabia's Southern region to Britain. The Brit/French portion of the agreement was worked out by Sir Mark Sykes and Georges Picot resulting in the secret *"Sykes/Picot Agreement"*. There was no mentioning of any promise the Brits made to the Arabs. The Bolsheviks published both the great powers' plan and the Sykes/Picot deal.

"Nothing to do with me" said Sir Henry McMahon when confronted with the mess after the war; *"...purely military business.."* T.E. Lawrence wrote: *"I risked a fraud on my conviction that the Arab help was necessary to our cheap and speedy victory in the East, and that better we win and break our word than lose."* Captain Lawrence knew from the beginning that the Brit government won't deliver on the promises to the Arabs; *"Had I been honourable adviser I would have sent my men home, and not let them risk their lives for such stuff. Yet the Arab inspiration was our main tool to win the Eastern war. So I assured them that England kept her word in letter and spirit. In this comfort they performed their fine things: but of course, instead of being proud of what we did together, I was continually and bitterly ashamed."*

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The Arabs took it as an act of betrayal.

The British, seeking legitimacy to their continued control, issued the *Balfour Declaration*. On November 2nd, 1917, Arthur James Balfour, the British Foreign Secretary wrote a letter to Lord Rothschild, President of the British Zionist Federation. In part it reads: "His Majesty's Government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object..."

Balfour wanted to enlist Jewish support in Britain and America; he also wanted pro-British Jewish presence in Palestine because of the potential Suez conflict. Two years later he put it even more clearly: *"In Palestine, we do not propose even to go through the form of consulting the wishes of the present inhabitants of the country...The Four Great Powers are committed to Zionism. And Zionism, be it right or wrong, good or bad, is rooted in age-long tradition, in present needs, in future hopes, of far profounder import than the prejudices of the 700,000 Arabs who now inhabit that ancient land."*

They used the Balfour Declaration to receive consent for British Mandate from the League of Nations' (representing the Principal Allied Powers). They received it, on July 24th 1922 in London. In part it reads:

- "...in favor of the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people,...",
- "...Whereas recognition has thereby been given to the historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine and to the grounds for reconstituting their national home in that country;..."

The document uses the "national home for Jewish people" and "Jewish national home" phrases four times in its text.

They needed the legitimacy, because after the war ended, a military administration, named "Occupied Enemy Territory Administration", was established in the captured territory of Syria. The Balfour Declaration (promising support for a Jewish "national home" in Palestine) and the League of Nations' decision (authorizing British Mandate) further enraged the Arabs. Shareef Husain ibn Ali didn't have much to show for his help he gave to the British; the fact that the Brits gave Transjordan and Iraq to his sons was not a compensation. He refused to sign the Hijaz-British friendship treaty Lawrence himself presented to him, because it required the acceptance of the British mandate over Palestine and the creation of the Jewish homeland. *"Palestine does not want you"* Lawrence told him; *"This does not effect us"* replied Husain; *"...all we are asking is that Britain to keep her plighted word to the Arabs."*

In short, the British Empire promised the same land (Palestine) to three different entities in three different agreements:

- ***The McMahon–Husain Correspondence promised Palestine to an Arab state***
- ***The Sykes/Picot Agreement declared Palestine as an "international territory", meaning: it will be split between France and UK. France wanted Syria and Lebanon, the UK wanted a train track from Haifa to India to protect the Indian territory.***
- ***As per the Balfour Declaration, Palestine will belong to the Jews***

The British succeeded to create a perfect storm; the competing national interests of the Arab and Jewish populations of Palestine against each other, the Balfour Declaration, and the governing British authorities, resulted in Muslim-Christian Associations (they held the first "Palestine Arab Congress in 1919), on the one side, and the Zionist Commission (formed in 1918) on the other. They first promised independence to the Arabs, then double-crossed them, because they wanted to enlist Jewish support; they practically fixed the blame on the Jews for their shenanigans.

It did not help that the first British High Commissioner (Herbert Samuel) appointed a violently anti Zionist Grand Mufti to govern Jerusalem. This Grand Mufti, Mohammed Amin al-Husseini served in the Ottoman Army during WWI., was actively opposing Zionism, was implicated in the Nabi Musa riots and was sentenced to ten years' jail but the British pardoned him in 1920. In 1921, they installed him as the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem. He was considered an important ally to the Brits between 1921-36, when he changed sides during the Arab Revolt in Palestine between 1936-39. During WWII., he helped the Nazis recruit Bosnian Muslims for the Waffen-SS. He met with Hitler, and was lobbying him against the Jewish homeland in Palestine. The Mufti told the British that he planned for the Jews of Palestine the same solution as had been adopted for the Jews of Europe: extermination. At the end of WWII., he was declared a Nazi war criminal, sought French protection, and was living in Cairo as a refuge to avoid prosecution.

The next twenty years (until the early 1940s) could be characterized as Arabs almost continuously attacking Jewish (mainly agricultural) settlements. By 1936, the mess was clear even for the British Government. As a result, they formed the "Peel Commission" (headed by Lord Peel) to investigate the matter. On July 7, 1937, the commission published a report that, for the first time, stated that the Mandate had become unworkable and recommended partition. British cabinet endorsed the Partition plan in principle but requested more information.

But there is more

After years of negotiation, and right after the Ottoman Empire lost Palestine, the so called "Faisal-Weizmann Agreement" was signed on January 3, 1919. Emir Faisal was the son of the King of Hejaz while Chaim Weizmann was the leader of the World Zionist Organization (later he became the President of it). The Agreement's preamble reads: "His Royal Highness the Emir Feisal, representing and acting on behalf of the Arab Kingdom of Hedjaz, and Dr. Chaim Weizmann, representing and acting on behalf of the Zionist Organization, mindful of the racial kinship and ancient bonds existing between the Arabs and the Jewish people, and realizing that the surest means of working out the consummation of their national aspirations is through the closest possible collaboration in the development of the Arab State and Palestine, and being desirous further of confirming the good understanding which exists between them, have agreed upon the following Articles:..."

Article IV of the Agreement states: *"....All necessary measures shall be taken to encourage stimulate immigration of Jews into Palestine on a large scale, and as quickly as possible to settle Jewish immigrants upon the land through closer settlement and intensive cultivation of the soil. In taking such measures the Arab peasant and tenant farmers shall be protected in their rights, and shall be assisted in forwarding their economic development...."*

But there is more

While "more information" was collected (by 1939), the Brits abandoned the "partition" idea too; watching the continuous Arab opposition, not knowing what to do, but not wanting to admit it (which –throughout the 20th century- was the British Government's usual response to any mess they created) they issued a White Paper (1939) which severely restricted Jewish land purchase and immigration. Which created even more storm. It is important to understand, that neither the British Government nor the League of Nations, have ever questioned the Jews rights to live in Palestine. Most rules and laws in Palestine were created by either serving the interest of the British Empire, or by the Brits -not understanding the situation and knowing what to do- were creating laws "as they were going".

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In February 1939 the British Government, under Neville Chamberlain, called the London Conference to negotiate an agreement between Arabs and Jews in Palestine. In the wake of World War II, the British believed that Jewish support was guaranteed or unimportant. However they feared that the Arab world might turn against them. Egypt, Iraq and Saudi Arabia were independent and allied with the British. The Arab delegates attended on the condition that they would not meet directly with the Jewish representatives, which would constitute recognition of Jewish claims over Palestine. So the British government held separate meetings with the two sides. The conference ended in failure on March 17th, upon which the British Government produced the so called **White Paper**. It was approved by the House of Common on May 23, 1939. The paper called for the establishment of a Jewish national home in an independent Palestinian state within 10 years, by rejecting both the ideas of the creation of a Jewish state and partitioning Palestine. It also limited Jewish immigration to 75,000 for 5 years, and ruled that further immigration was to be determined by the Arab majority. Restrictions were put on the rights of Jews to buy land from Arabs. Further, it promised that only with Palestinian support would Britain allow a Jewish state. This was nothing less than criminal activity on the Brits' part, considering the fast growing Nazi movement across Europe; Kristallnacht –where 267 synagogues were destroyed, 7,000 Jewish businesses were destroyed or damaged, and 30,000 Jewish men were arrested, incarcerated and sent to concentration camps- happened on November 9-10, 1938 rendering all British “we didn’t know it” excuse a lie (Times of London wrote on November 11, 1938: *"No foreign propagandist bent upon blackening Germany before the world could outdo the tale of burnings and beatings, of blackguardly assaults on defenseless and innocent people, which disgraced that country yesterday"*).

The policy was accepted by the Grand Mufti Amin al-Husseini as leader of the Arab High Committee. Zionist groups in Palestine immediately rejected the White Paper. There was a campaign of attacks on government property and Arab civilians, which lasted for several months. On 18 May a Jewish general strike was called. Although it acted as the de facto policy of the government until 1945, its key provisions were ultimately never to be implemented, initially because of Churchill's opposition following the change in government, and later because of preoccupation with World War II.

But there is more

The United Nations Resolution 181 (II) established the right for independent Jewish and Arab States on November 29, 1947. It called for a withdrawal of British forces, termination of the Mandate and establishment of the new states by October 1, 1948.

It is important to know and understand ***because today Mr. Abbas is asking the same UN's help today, that established Israel's state rights six decades ago. The state rights that Mr. Abbas has not gotten around to recognize to this date. It looks like, all UN resolutions are observed by Mr. Abbas and his "Palestinian people" ---I mean "all" that fits their agenda.***

But there is more

In accordance with the UN Resolution, and on the day when the British announced to end the Mandate (May 14, 1948), Israel declared its Statehood. The next day (May 15, 1948) the armies of five Arab countries crossed the borders, starting the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. The war ended in 1949, when Israel signed separate agreements with Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria. In this agreement, the Gaza Strip was occupied by Egypt and the West Bank by Jordan. The territory Israel controlled under this agreement was approximately one third larger than the UN partition proposal. But let us all remember: the Arabs attacked Israel, so the territory Israel took could be considered "occupied", as much as Transylvania is "occupied" after Hungary teamed up with

Hitler. (just like Hungary) the Arab countries lost the war. One does not need to be a brain surgeon to comprehend this.

But there is more

At war end, a separate General Armistice Agreement (GAA) was signed between Israel and Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria. It happened throughout the first half of 1949. The GAA (planned to be a cornerstone "for a permanent peace in Palestine") was mediated by the UN's Ralph Bunche, who received Nobel Peace Price for it. Although the GAA tried its best to settle issues, it had become a relatively worthless document. Beside it gave a detailed declaration of troop withdrawals and tried to encourage the parties to cease hostility (which is a far cry from "peace"), it (as no UN document has ever had until and since) didn't have a force for execution on the one hand, and gave a lot of latitude to the parties how to interpret the document on the other. As an example, at Arab insistence the GAA's Article V. Section 2 (in the agreement with Egypt). declared: *"The Armistice Demarcation Line is not to be construed in any sense as a political or territorial boundary, and is delineated without prejudice to rights, claims and positions of either Party to the Armistice as regards ultimate settlement of the Palestine question."* The very same text could be found in all other GAAs except the Israel/Lebanon GAA; an international border is established there. It could be easily and forcefully argued, that the 1949 GAAs were the root of the 1967 Six Day War.

But there is more

There is a wide range of "opinions and rumors" how the "Palestinian refugees" myth was born. The true version starts with the Palestinian Arabs were not responsible "in some bizarre way" for what befell on them in 1948. Their responsibility was very direct and simple. In defiance of the UN Resolution, they launched hostilities against Israel, and they lost; the displacement of 700,000 of them did not happen because they lost and it was not initiated by the Jewish State.

Contrary to popular opinion, there were no Arab radio broadcasts urging the Arabs to flee en masse; to the contrary, there were broadcasts by several Arab radio stations urging them to stay put. But, on the local level, in dozens of localities around Palestine, Arab leaders advised or ordered the evacuation of women and children or whole communities, as occurred in Haifa in late April, 1948; Haifa's Jewish mayor, Shabtai Levy (on April 22nd), plead with them to stay, to no avail. ***Most of Palestine's 700,000 "refugees" fled their homes because of the uncertainty of war*** (and in the expectation that they would shortly return to their homes on the backs of victorious Arab invaders).

The displacement of the 700,000 Arabs who became "refugees" was not a "racist crime", but the result of a national conflict and a war, launched by the Arabs themselves. There was no "Zionist Plan" or blanket policy of evicting the Arab population, or of "ethnic cleansing". Plan Dalet (Plan D), of March 10th, 1948 was the master plan of the Haganah to counter the expected pan-Arab assault on the emerging Jewish state. And the invasion of the armies of Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Iraq duly occurred, on May 15th. It is true that Plan D gave the regional commanders carte blanche to occupy and garrison or expel, and destroy the Arab villages along and behind the front lines and the anticipated Arab armies' invasion routes. And it is also true that mid-way in the 1948 war the Israeli leaders decided to bar the return of the "refugees" (those "refugees" who had just assaulted the Jewish community) viewing them as a potential fifth column and threat to the Jewish state's existence. Given Israel's situation, their fear was more than well founded.

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There were two irrefutable, uncontested and unchallenged instances of ethnic cleansing; the first occurred when the Arab Legion, under British officers, conquered Gush Etzion. Following a massacre of defenders, the remaining inhabitants were expelled and ethnically cleansed the four kibbutzim were looted and destroyed. The looting started before the fighting had finished. The second instance of ethnic cleansing occurred in the old city of Jerusalem, at the end of May in 1948. Again the culprit was the British officered Legion, by now called the "Jordan Legion" to free the British from any association with its war crimes. The British officers were now officially "volunteers." Under the watchful eyes of the soldiers of the Legion, the entire remnant of the Jewish population of the old city of Jerusalem, about 1,700 people who had remained there despite repeated pogroms, were ethnically cleansed.

In this, the expulsion of the Jews was part of the Arab plan for ethnic cleansing of Jerusalem and Palestine in 1948. This was announced by the Arab league, but it was instigated and planned in part by the Grand Mufti Hajj Amin Al Hussein and his able relative, Abdel Khader Al-Husseini. The strategy included ambushes, constant shelling and sniper fire, by armies of the Arab states, attacks on the Jewish quarter by the Jordan legion and a blockade of the Jerusalem road that resulted in near starvation. Over a thousand Jewish civilians were killed during this campaign. There were also a number of intentional massacres in Palestine that can be proven. Most of them were committed by Arabs. The most infamous massacre however, occurred with the willing assent of the British. This war crime was the planned targeting of a convoy of medical personnel and patients bound for Hadassah hospital in Jerusalem. About 80 persons, doctors and nurses and patients, including the director of the hospital, were murdered in cold blood on April 13, 1948. The Jews had every reason to fear that the Arabs would massacre them en masse, since that is what Arab leaders promised.

The Arabs of Palestine, instigated by the Mufti, had a history of pogroms against the Jewish communities in 1920, 1921, 1929 and in the so called Arab Uprising (1936-1939). ***On the eve of the war, Palestinian and other Arab leaders had issued calls to murder the Jews, and apparently had called on the Arabs of the Palestine mandate to leave their homes and allow Arab armies to finish the work of conquering the land.***

But there is more

The "peace time" did not last long. Beginning 1952, Egypt (violating the agreement signed only three years earlier) started to block Israeli ships in the Suez Canal and blocked the Straits of Tiran, the only Israeli access from Eilat to the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. At the same time, Palestinian Arab Fedayeen attacked Israeli civilian areas from Egypt, Jordan and Syria. They killed 260 Israeli citizens in 1955 alone. On October 29, 1956 Israel began its assault, and by November 5th they took the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula. Although - ***again-*** Israel was attacked by the Fedayeen from three different sides while Egypt was blocking all possible waterways, Israel (under US pressure) withdrew its forces from the Sinai Peninsula (as opposed to the result at the end of the Second World War, where Hungary did not receive Transylvania back).

But there is more

Came 1967, and Egypt's President Nasser (receiving the Sinai Peninsula -for no good reason- back after his previous aggression only ten years earlier) was still under the delusion that he can do just about anything. In May, 1967 he ordered the UN Peacekeeping Troops out and blockaded all shipments to and from Israel through the Straits of Tiran. At the same time, Syria mobilized its troops along the Golan Heights. On May 26th, US President Johnson declared the Gulf of Aqaba an "international waterway" saying, the Egyptian blockade was illegal. Egypt did not respond to it. Four days later (on May 30th) Egypt and Jordan, eight days later (on June 4th) Cairo and Baghdad signed a defense pact. At the same time, Arab states began to mobilize

their troops and Nasser called for a war and the total destruction of Israel. Based upon the totality of the rapidly developing situation Israel launched a preemptive strike on June 5th, 1967. It was unavoidable. At that time the Egyptian Air Force had 420 Russian MIG-21 combat aircrafts. Syria (upon a false information received from Egypt) started to run air raids on, and shell Northern Israel. Although Israel repeatedly asked Jordan to stay out, Jordan also attacked Israel. Jordan entered into the war with 53,000 troops and 270 tanks. By June 10th, the war was over, by Israel seizing the Gaza Strip, the Sinai Peninsula, the West Bank and the Golan Heights. Israel's territory has grown by the factor of three.

But there is more

On the day of Yom Kippur, (October 6, 1973) Egypt (through the Suez Canal) and Syria crossed the ceasefire lines into Sinai Peninsula and Golan Heights respectively. The Israelis first were greatly outnumbered but they recovered within a week. By October 24th, they encircled Egypt's Third Army. The Israeli forces were 25 Miles from Damascus and 63 Miles from Cairo. On October 25th, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 340, calling for a ceasefire between the parties. Following Egyptian President Anwar El Sadat's visit to Israel, the Camp David Accords in 1978, and based upon the agreement signed on March 26, 1979, the Sinai Peninsula was returned (again) to Egypt in 1979.

This is in the nutshell. Let me draw some conclusions which probably are still not clear for people such as President Mahmoud Abbas and David Gardner:

- Jews owned the West side of the Jordan River eleven hundred years earlier than the Arabs;
- The State Rights to Israel was given by the world's governing body (the quality of the job what the UN has been doing is a topic of another writing);
- Most Arab countries around Israel attacked Israel in 1948 and 1973;
- Beginning 1952, Egypt violated the agreement signed in 1948 blocked all waterways to and from Israel, and the Palestinian Arab Fedayeen attacked Israeli civilian areas from Egypt, Jordan and Syria;
- In 1967, the Arab countries amassed huge forces around Israel and the Egyptian president called for a war and the total destruction of Israel. This was the only time when Israel preemptively attacked.
- After taking the Sinai Peninsula twice, they gave it back twice. I am having hard time to find a parallel historical evidence by a winning country doing this.

Does this read like the Arab countries around Israel have continuously been on the wrong side of history? I argued with several scholars with regards to one point. Based upon strict technical terms of military engagement, the "1967 preemptive strike" was an offensive move by the Israeli government lead by David Ben Gurion. But it was reasonable, necessary and rooted in President Nasser's statements and actions. The right of Israel to preemptively attack Egypt could not possibly be better demonstrated than the Yom Kippur War that proved what happens when Israel does not attack preemptively. Yet, based upon strict military terms (and this is really only a technical terminology) "Israel attacked" its poor neighbors (happens to be the same poor neighbors who were busy amassing close to 700 combat aircrafts, a thousand tanks and 150,000 troops on its borders). I have been arguing that David Ben Gurion and Golda Meir (whom I rank with Winston Churchill as "one of the five largest format political geniuses in the 20th Century") made one mistake each. If David Ben Gurion waited until the first Egyptian MIG-21 crossed Israel's borders then took care of Egypt, there would not be space even for a strict technical argument. And I think Golda should have not signed any peace agreement in 1973 (after the Yom Kippur War) until all Arab countries signed Israel's rights to exist within its borders defined by the 1973 status. It is documented how much pressure Golda was under from the US government to pull back, but -as a result of that- in my humble opinion the 1967 war was lost in 1973. But at least -if Golda forced the Arab world to recognize Israel- the "House of Lies" (the United Nations), mental retards such as the

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gang currently running Iran, Palestinian "leaders" (if you want to call them that), and last but not least, lunatic opinion writers in reputable publications would shut up, and we all could have some peace. That would be an improvement.

What do the "Palestinians" say?

In an interview with the Dutch newspaper Trouw, Zahir Muhsein (3/31/1977), the PLO Executive Committee member made the following statement:

"The Palestinian people does not exist. The creation of a Palestinian state is only a means for continuing our struggle against the state of Israel for our Arab unity. In reality today there is no difference between Jordanians, Palestinians, Syrians and Lebanese. Only for political and tactical reasons do we speak today about the existence of a Palestinian people, since Arab national interests demand that we posit the existence of a distinct "Palestinian people" to oppose Zionism. For tactical reasons, Jordan, which is a sovereign state with defined borders, cannot raise claims to Haifa and Jaffa, while as a Palestinian, I can undoubtedly demand Haifa, Jaffa, Beer-Sheva and Jerusalem. However, the moment we reclaim our right to all of Palestine, we will not wait even a minute to unite Palestine and Jordan."

In 1993, on the day PLO Leader Arafat signed the Bill Clinton managed Declaration of Principles in the White House, he gave this interview to a Jordan-based TV station.

"Since we cannot defeat Israel in war, we do this in stages. We take any and every territory that we can of Palestine, and establish a sovereignty there, and we use it as a springboard to take more. When the time comes, we can get the Arab nations to join us for the final blow against Israel."

Closing

Based upon the long list of historical evidences, for Mahmoud Abbas to call Israel or any (I mean: **any**) territory West side of the Jordan River an "occupied Palestinian land" is between arrogant and blatant disregard of history and sheer lunacy. And it will stay in that definition bracket until President Abbas (along with all the lunatics in the UN General Assembly Hall who gave a standing ovation when Abbas declared it) will come up with a plausible explanation as to why Jerusalem is not Jewish land when the "Second" (not the "First", that was a really long time ago; the "Second") Temple is **under** the Muslim Mosque. To me (and practically anyone who has a bit of gray tissue left working) with all do respect to Mahmoud Abbas and the Palestinian people, if someone's land is occupied in Jerusalem and anywhere on the West side of the Jordan River is the Jews' land.

Again, one does not need to be a rocket scientist to figure this out. One can freely enter into Al Aqsa Mosque; it is proudly standing on the top of Temple Mountain. But there is no way to enter the "Holy of Holies": the Jewish Temple. ***It is because the Jewish Temple is buried, under the Al Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock on the Temple Mountain.*** Probably this is why a group of lunatics in the "House of Lies" giving a standing ovation to Mahmoud Abbas.

PS: I'm Catholic.
