

The War of 1948: Disputed Perspectives and Outcomes _____

The Birth of Israel: Myths and Realities, by Simha Flapan. New York: Pantheon Books, 1987. x + 244 pages. Notes to p. 264. Index to p. 277. \$18.95 cloth.

The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, 1947–1949, by Benny Morris. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988. xx + 296 pages. Appendices to p. 302. Notes to p. 364. Bibl. to p. 370. Index to p. 380. \$39.50 cloth.

Palestine 1948: L'expulsion, by Elias Sanbar. Paris: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1984. 234 pages. 79 F.F. paper.

Reviewed by **Ibrahim Abu-Lughod***

There has always been an admittedly slow yet determined effort on the part of a handful of scholars—Palestinian and others sympathetic to their perspective—to challenge the more widespread and occasionally more “credible” Israeli interpretation of what happened in 1948. That effort is now benefiting from serious and solid contributions that are being put forth principally, but not exclusively, by Israeli scholars. The revisionism has coincided with the fortieth anniversary of the establishment of Israel; it is also the fortieth anniversary of the exodus of the Palestinians and the dismemberment of Palestine. It is of considerable value to look back on those traumatic events from the standpoint

of the apparent victor as well as from the standpoint of those who were then perceived to be the vanquished.

Yet nothing can be clearer today than that the events of 1948 are both “historical” and very contemporary indeed; the events are very much alive in the minds of both protagonists; both are actively engaged, not only in discussing what actually happened then, but in a serious attempt to “resolve” the dispute—whether that regarding interpretation or regarding the issue which brought about the dispute in interpretation in the first instance. It is not certain that an authoritative interpretation of those events can in fact emerge; even with the best of intentions, control of the data, and skilled analysis it is doubtful that Palestinian and Israeli scholars—as well as “third” party scholars—can arrive at a consensus either on the facts or on their interpretation. The difficulties are not only those of national identity and perspective; nor are they of language and skills, or access. They are much more complex and relate simultaneously to values, beliefs, attitudes as well as the national and historical experiences of both people. It may be possible for an Israeli or a Palestinian scholar to make an authoritative contribution on one or more aspects of the Palestinian/Zionist/Israeli national experiences; but none has been able to do so thus far.

The late Simha Flapan, a lifelong Zionist/socialist Mapam scholar and activist, is clear on this issue. In his introduction to *The Birth of Israel* Flapan indicates that his principal purpose is to “debunk a number of Israeli myths, not as an academic exer-

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cise but as a contribution to a better understanding of the Palestinian problem." He then goes on to add:

I am restricting myself to an analysis of Israeli policies and propaganda structures. I choose to do it this way not because I attribute to Israel sole responsibility for the failure to find a solution . . . the Palestinians, too, were active players in the drama that brought upon them the calamity of defeat and the loss of their homeland. But review of the contributing Arab myths, conceptions, . . . must be done by an Arab. . . . Certainly the ideal way to fulfill this undertaking would have been a joint project by an Israeli-Palestinian Historical Society. I hope this is not wishful thinking, and that someday such a common effort will produce a study free of the deficiencies and limitations of this one.

Flapan is absolutely right; what Israel's revisionists have accomplished is in fact considerable but clearly cannot be—and perhaps is not intended to be—the final word. The revisionists such as Tom Segev,* Flapan, and Morris give us a wealth of detail based on primary Zionist/Israeli sources (sometimes supplemented by British material and an occasional Arabic work). Moreover, through cogent analysis they have reexamined specific or more general events in the Palestinian-Israeli encounter and thus provided fresh reinterpretation and analysis.

Palestinian scholars and those sympathetic to their perspective initially started with different assumptions and values; some of them have undergone existential experiences *in situ* that enabled them early on to apprehend a Palestinian/Israeli reality that conflicted and contrasted very sharply with that exposed by Israel's con-

ventional apologists. It is evident to all students of the Palestinian/Arab-Israeli conflict that there are at least two contrasting traditions in understanding Palestinian history in the crucial decades of the Mandate. These two traditions have virtually nothing in common. One is much more abundant in Western languages and is received more hospitably in the West, but has little credibility in the third world, while the other informs a much more restricted constituency but has greater credibility in the third world. Even the definition of Palestine itself is in dispute. Demographic figures are disputed; land ownership figures are disputed; processes of land alienation are disputed; policies of the British, the operations of the Mandate, the role of the League of Nations, as well as social development, culture, and education are all subject to serious controversy. Even Palestinian existence itself is disputed by the extreme exponents of the Zionist tradition. So it should not come as a surprise that the interpretation of any particular event must be different for adherents of these two traditions. Perhaps the most serious dispute relates to the establishment of Israel, the simultaneous uprooting of the Palestinians, and the thwarting of their right to self-determination.

II

Let us face squarely one crucial issue (in Flapan's terminology "myth"), namely, that of the creation of the "refugees," which is the subject of Morris' exceedingly meticulous study. Two facts about the "refugees" are not in dispute: one is that they exist and the second is that their existence is a critical issue that underlies the Palestinian/Arab-Israeli conflicts. Everything else about the refugee question is debated by the protagonists and their apologists. How many refugees were there; who is responsible for their situation; were they

*Tom Segev, 1949: *The First Israelis* (New York: Free Press, 1986.)

deliberately expelled by the Zionists; were they told by their various "leaders" to depart; should they be allowed to return; should they be compensated; should they be settled and integrated; and why they have not been—all are questions that are answered differently by the proponents of the two traditions. In answering these and similar questions it would likely appear to a reader uninvolved in the mysteries of the question of Palestine that we are dealing not with one refugee question but with at least two which seem to have very little to do with each other.

In one way or another all three studies deal either exclusively or in part with that issue. All three understand and try to relate the issue to the broader political context which is relevant to the establishment of Israel. Sanbar attaches much more significance to the overall context of the struggle between Palestinians and the Yishuv and thus links the specific issues with the much broader ideological bases of the conflict. In a sense, like other Palestinians, Sanbar perceives the eventual eviction of the Palestinians in 1948 as a logical consequence of the triumph of Zionism in Palestine. Although a major event in Palestinian history, it is certainly not unique. For, if Zionism was to succeed in translating its premises into reality in Palestine it would have had to take Palestinian land without the Palestinian people. Thus Sanbar analyses the processes of eviction before 1948 to demonstrate that the Zionists were trying to fulfill Israel Zangwill's premise of "a land without a people for a people without a land." The historical record is clear: Zionism did not intend to exterminate the Palestinians; but it did seek to dismantle their socio-cultural system in preparation for seizing their land and denying them their right to independence. Zionism could not accomplish its goal of "emptying" the land of the indigenous people peacefully; Palestinians re-

sisted the process all along. The events of 1936-39 and of the 1940s constituted major acts of resistance, but Palestinians mounted resistance before that; throughout the period, the Palestinians differentially overcame enormous odds, mobilized and waged militant resistance not only to Zionism but against the British as well. That they were defeated is more of a commentary on the superior forces arrayed against them than on their acquiescence in the projected schemes of the Zionist movement. What is crucial for Sanbar in his narration and analysis is that the expulsion of 1948, although a major event, cannot be understood in an historical or political vacuum. To be understood it must be linked to the premises of the Zionist movement, to its practices in Palestine, and to the idea of the kind of state it wished to establish. While willing to debate issues of detail, Sanbar's concern, unlike that of Morris, is not to look for a "smoking gun" to ascertain whether an actual "order" can be identified and produced that would conclusively "prove" that David Ben-Gurion issued the order to expel or that some Arab leader issued a call to the Palestinians to leave. If such materials could be found they would certainly add to the picture; but no satisfactory answer can be given outside the historical context.

III

The work of the revisionist scholars, Palestinian or Israeli, will not inhibit the outpouring of received "wisdom" on the origin of the refugee question. *The New York Times*, among others, publishes letters periodically from irate Zionists regurgitating the story of the alleged 1948 orders from Arab leaders to Palestinians to abandon their lands and homes to clear the way for the coming offensive by the Arab armies; the letters intend to reinforce Arab and Palestinian culpability for the "refugee" question and, correspondingly, Is-

rael's innocence. In a distorted adherence to an even-handed approach *The New York Times* published a lone response to a couple of Zionist letters from a retired Palestinian international civil servant who gave a first hand account of his and his brother's "departure" from Jaffa and Haifa in April of 1948. He emphasized, regardless of rights or obligations, the horrors and ravages of war as a principal cause of the civilian population's search for "safe" areas. Shukri Salameh's letter to *The Times* (22 September 1988) could be duplicated by thousands; for such people, the question of whether the Zionists *intended* to evict them from the land or not is really a moot issue. Introducing Erskin Childers' brilliant essay entitled "From Citizens to Refugees," which appeared in *The Transformation of Palestine*, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1971), I stated:

. . . no writing on the Arab-Israeli conflict has been free of an attempt to settle an obvious question: How did these Palestinians become "refugees"? That bicomunal wars inevitably produce victims is obvious; various pressures . . . have historically combined to produce human dislocations, the victims of which are categorized and subsumed under the term "refugees". . . . In the case of Palestine, had the world not been confronted with a familiar yet bizarre interpretation—that which attempts to demonstrate the culpability of Arab leadership in the removal of the Palestinians . . . as well as the individual responsibility of the Palestinians for being refugees—it would be sufficient to call the attention . . . to the fact that a bicomunal war occurred and that, as in all such wars, some people were dislocated as a result.

Childers demonstrated beyond a shadow of a doubt that no Arab orders could be found anywhere that would sustain the Zionist allegation. Palestinian scholars, aware of what went on in Palestine, di-

rectly contested that Zionist allegation. More recently an American scholar, Michael Palumbo, in *The Palestine Catastrophe* (London: Faber and Faber, 1987) took on the Israeli allegation once more and demonstrated its absurdity.

Now it is Israelis who are subjecting that allegation to detailed study. Their finding is complex yet conclusive. For Flapan, it is clearly a myth, number three in his enumeration of Israel's seven myths. Flapan synthesizes a great deal of material, reexamines documentary evidence and statements, and subjects the military behavior of the Israeli army to close scrutiny. He concludes that Israel's statement about Arab and Palestinian culpability for the refugees is simply a myth. Like most myths it is very useful politically.

However, Morris' account is by far the most detailed, comprehensive, and meticulous of all accounts published thus far. Although it is not pleasant to read, it reminds a Palestinian, who knew the land intimately, where all the cities, towns, and villages were. Those that have been forgotten come back to life and one is able to revive the past and remember the conditions of the exodus. Those of us who experienced the exodus directly can test the documentary evidence cited by Morris against our own experience. We are also in a position to test the reality he apprehended from his source material against our "reality." Despite the ravages of memory we are able to identify that which is authentic as against the perceived.

Morris is explicit in his orientation; he relies principally upon the Zionist/Israeli archives; these are supplemented by British and American archival material. Very self-consciously Morris decided to avoid personal interviews with any of the players (he states, but does not defend, his decision); he cites some Arabic sources but states that he did not have access to Palestinian or Arab archival sources. De-

spite these self- or externally imposed constraints Morris' work is indeed a major contribution to our knowledge, as close to an authoritative history of the exodus as we are likely to get. It is comprehensive; it deals with the events systematically beginning in November 1947 and through 1949. It notes the major acts of expulsion as well as the complex policies pursued by various commanders either inspired or ordered by the political leaders. It treats the "discriminatory" policies of expulsion and retention pursued toward the Christian and Druze communities, particularly in the Galilee. In short, it confirms much of what we, Palestinians, knew in general but could not document. Not only is Morris able to cite evidence; equally significant, he demonstrates, sometimes vividly, that while the exodus was "national" in scope, each region experienced it in a different way and at a different time. Thus the "personal" narratives of Salameh [mentioned above], Busailah, Nazzal, and Shoufani* can now be placed alongside the "documentary" narrative of Morris in order to assess each experience in terms of its special circumstances. Morris provides ample documentation and analysis from the perspective of the victor.

On the basis of material provided by Morris, the historic Palestinian contention that there was a Zionist/Israeli consensus irrespective of party affiliation on the issues of expulsion and the possible return of the Palestinians to their homes is substantiated. Zionists of all political stripes, including Mapam—the occasional squeak-

ishness of a member notwithstanding—were in essential agreement on the need for and the desirability of a Jewish state as clear as possible of Arab inhabitants. Palestinians are fully justified in pointing to their chief historic antagonists—David Ben-Gurion, Moshe Sharret (who now seems to enjoy an undeserved "dovish" reputation), Joseph Weitz (succeeded by his son in wishing for a "transfer" of the Palestinians), Yigal Ailon, Yitzhaq Rabin, Menahem Begin, and others—as the architects and implementors of the policy of evicting the Palestinians in 1948–49 and perpetuating their "refugee" status.

The contention of the Palestinians and their supporters is and has always been that they were expelled. Rarely does Morris find an actual "order" to expel; more frequently it is hinted at, or approved de facto, but Morris is unable to find an explicit, overarching order promulgated by an authoritative Zionist body that called for expulsion.

If at the start of the war the Yishuv had been reluctantly willing to countenance a Jewish State with a large, peaceful Arab minority, by April the military commanders' thinking had radically changed: the toll on Jewish life and security in the battle of the roads and the dire prospect of the invasion of Palestine by Arab armies had left the Haganah with very narrow margins of safety. The Yishuv could not leave pockets of actively or potentially hostile Arabs or ready-made bases for them behind its geographically unnatural front lines. (p. 113)

It may also be helpful to reproduce some of Morris' statements on particular events to indicate his way of assessing the "clearing" of Palestine of its Arab population.

The inhabitants of Arab Caesarea . . . began to evacuate out of fear on 12 January [1948], and others followed on 9 February. On 15 February the village was

*Rega-e Busailah, "The Fall of Lydda, 1948: Impressions and Reminiscences." *Arab Studies Quarterly* 3, no. 2 (Spring 1981): 123–51; Nafez Nazzal, *The Palestinian Exodus from Galilee, 1948* (Beirut: Institute for Palestinian Studies, 1978); Elias Shoufani, "The Fall of a Village." *Journal of Palestine Studies* 1, no. 4 (Summer 1972): 108–21.

captured and most of its inhabitants fled or were ordered to leave. Caesarea was the first preplanned, organized expulsion of an Arab community by the Haganah in 1948. (p. 54)

Elsewhere he notes a general "tendency" of villagers to abandon their villages on the basis of "general fear."

This "tendency" was being promoted by and expanded in part by Weitz himself. . . . Soon after the start of hostilities, Weitz realized that the circumstances were ripe for the Judaization of tracts of land bought and owned by Jewish institutions . . . On 20 February Weitz noted that "beduins" in the largely Jewish-owned Beisan Valley, were beginning to cross over to the Transjordan. "It is possible that now is the time to implement our original plan: To transfer them there." (p. 55)

Morris also notes:

Plan D[ale]t* was not a political blueprint for the expulsion of Palestine's Arabs: it was governed by military considerations and was geared to achieving military ends. But given the nature of the war and the admixture of the two populations, securing the interior of the Jewish State . . . in practice meant the depopulation and destruction of villages that hosted hostile local militia and irregular forces. . . . The Arab townspeople and villagers usually fled from their homes before or during battle: the Haganah commanders had rarely to decide about, or issue, expulsion orders (though they usually prevented inhabitants who had initially fled from returning home after the dust of battle had settled). (p. 71)

The depopulation of the cities and towns in which the British occupation forces, then preparing to withdraw from Palestine,

played important roles, also needs to be carefully examined. Let us take Tiberias as an illustration. Morris writes:

The Haganah decided to pacify Arab Tiberias . . . units of the Golani Brigade and the Palmah's 3rd Battalion attacked the Old City using mortars and dynamite . . . caused great panic. Arab notables apparently sued for truce but the Haganah commanders refused to negotiate; they wanted a surrender. The Arabs then appealed to the British to lift the Haganah siege and to extend their protection to the Arab areas. . . . The British could offer no protection to the Arabs beyond 22 April. . . . The British governor subsequently called in the Jewish representatives and informed them that "in order to assure the Arabs' safety, it had been decided to evacuate the Arabs from the town." . . . The British then brought up buses and trucks, the Arabs got on and the buses, under British escort, took them to Nazareth and Transjordan. (p. 71)

Subsequent attacks on Safad and its surrounding villages brought about the collapse of the fictitious resistance and, as Morris notes:

That day [2 May] Haganah radio announced, somewhat prematurely, that "Safad is being evacuated by its Arab population." The Palmah informed the Haganah General Staff on 3 May that, following a brief Davidka shelling of Arab Safad on 2 May, "Many Arabs were seen making their way from Safad down the path . . . in the direction of the Jordan [River]." (pp. 102-103)

The actual attack on Safad took place on 6 May, and on 11 May the Palmah troops:

moved into and secured the empty Arab quarters of Safad. . . . The Palmah troops scouring the abandoned Arab quarters found in the houses about 100 Muslims, "with an average age of 80" according to Safad's military governor, Avraham Hanuki. . . . These inhabit-

*For a full discussion of Plan Dalet see "Plan Dalet Revisited," *JPS* #69 (Fall 1988): 3-70—Ed.

ants were rounded up and expelled to Lebanon apparently in late May or early June. (p. 104-105)

Thus Safad became a completely Jewish city.

The stories of the depopulation of other cities such as Haifa, Jaffa, Acre, and others are recapitulated, sometimes with additional details and appropriately noting linkages between events. For example, Morris notes the overall impact of the Dayr Yasin massacre on the behavior of people in Haifa and Jaffa. However, he does not give sufficient weight to the devastating impact that the martyrdom of 'Abd al-Qadir al-Husayni had on the Palestinian resistance, although Morris does note the strategic importance of al-Qastal.

Morris' portrayal and analysis, as stated earlier, is premised on a mastery of Zionist/Israeli source material and supplemented by other secondary sources where feasible. Much of the Palestinian territory apportioned by UN Resolution 181 of 1947 to the Jewish State was in fact wrested from the Palestinians before 15 May. The "military" confrontation pitted a largely disarmed, pitifully led, and tightly controlled Palestinian community against a much enlarged, modern, tightly organized, brilliantly led, and internationally anchored and connected Palestinian Jewish community that was determined to fulfill its goal of establishing a Jewish state. It did so on 14 May 1948. Israeli commentaries on the crucial five months of struggle between the two communities that preceded the declaration of the state vary in quality, credibility, and authenticity. Irrespective of quality, Palestinian commentaries are quite limited and thus far do not provide an adequate alternative portrayal or analysis of the encounter. I can point to important weaknesses in Morris' narration of the fall of Jaffa, but my narration would be based entirely on my perception from the other

side; someone else could point to a different explanation for the fall of Haifa, and so forth. Thus, what is clearly needed is a Palestinian analysis of the same events. When that is done, perhaps Flapan's suggestion of a joint Israeli Arab historical society's endeavor can be translated to reality and produce a truly authoritative account of the period.

The same of course applies to the post-May period. The long-awaited Arab states' "invasion" of Palestine began on 15 May; the "invasion" backfired with further disastrous territorial losses. A good part of the territory designated by UN Resolution 181 for the Arab state was wrested from the Jordanian Arab Legion, and the Egyptian and Syrian armies. Morris gives detailed accounts of the various battles and truces. In this phase of the encounter, Jordan, Iraq, Syria, and minimally Lebanon could be in a position to provide an alternative interpretation of what happened; for the most part they have not done so.

Yet we have some accounts from the Palestinian victims of the Arab-Israeli confrontation. Let us take Lydda/Ramleh as an example of the post-15 May period. The Israeli army subdued these two towns with a combined population of 50,000-70,000 (including "refugees" from previously occupied areas) in a major battle between 8 and 13 July 1948. The two towns had some Palestinian irregulars but their "defense" was presumably to be the responsibility of the Arab Legion. All accounts of the encounter are clear about one issue: the Arab Legion withdrew without much of a fight. By mid-July the two towns had been "emptied" of their population. Busailah's moving account of his exodus along with the people of Lydda leaves no doubt that Israel's soldiers not only engaged in looting (confirmed by Morris) but in deliberate violent acts (including a massacre) intended to precipitate flight after the population resisted expulsion. Morris sifted

through the Israeli evidence and his conclusion differs only in emphasis and detail. In Morris' words:

Operation Dani was the linchpin of the "Ten Days" offensive. . . . Before the First Truce the IDF General Staff and Ben-Gurion had already begun to think offensively about Ramle and Lydda. . . . Allon was appointed OC Operation Dani only on 7 July, some 48 hours before battle was joined. Neither his operational orders nor [others] . . . dealt with the prospective fate of the civilian population of the two towns and the surrounding villages . . . Ben-Gurion spent the early afternoon of 12 July at Yazur [a captured Arab village that served as military headquarters for Operation Dani]. According to the best account of the meeting, at which Generals Yadin, Ayalon and Allon, Israel Galilee and Lt. Colonel Yitzhak Rabin (Chief of Operations Operation Dani) were present, someone, possibly Allon, . . . proposed expelling the inhabitants of the two towns. Ben-Gurion said nothing, and no decision was taken. Then Ben-Gurion, Allon and Rabin left the room. Allon asked: "what shall we do with the Arabs?" Ben-Gurion made a dismissive, energetic gesture with his hand and said: "Expel them [*garesh otam*]." (pp. 203-207).

And so they were expelled. The Arab towns of Lydda and Ramleh, clearly earmarked for the projected Arab state, became Jewish cities and part of the Jewish state.

IV

The refugee question, important as it may be, is only one aspect of the historic conflict between Israelis and Palestinians. The question of Palestine itself and the derivative Arab-Israeli conflict have revolved around other equally important issues: territorial, demographic, political, and the like. Flapan's interest goes beyond

the refugees (with which he does concern himself) and the "myths" that he wished to deal with revolve around Israel's basic commitments to peace with the Palestinians and other Arabs, its attitude toward itself as a Jewish state, and its assessment of its power relative to its adversaries. His study of this range of issues demonstrates that Israel's actual behavior has conflicted sharply with the image it has projected to its own people and to the world at large. These "myths" have been carefully developed and nourished for obviously political purposes. Students of the Arab-Israeli conflict will readily recognize the myths: Israel's desperate search for peace with the Palestinians and the Arabs; how it was outnumbered and how it "defended" itself against a more numerous and better equipped fanatical adversary (the entire Arab world) that wanted to annihilate the small and democratic Jewish state, and so on. Flapan takes each of these seven myths separately and concludes—at least to his own satisfaction if not to Israel's—that Israel made no serious effort to deal with "moderate" Palestinians who did not wish to fight the Jewish state. Instead it bypassed all Palestinians and opted to deal with King 'Abdallah in order to destroy the potential Palestinian state and then proceeded to intimidate King 'Abdallah and compromise him. Flapan points out the "peace" overtures made by some Arab states—Syria under Husni al-Za'im, Egypt, and others—but which Israel ignored or rejected outright. Flapan points out that Palestinians made serious efforts at the refugee conference held at Lausanne under the auspices of the Palestine Conciliation Commission to reach an agreement with Israel that would have made it possible for Palestinians to return, even gradually, and would have entailed accommodation with Israel.

Flapan's is an important contribution to the process of revealing the dimensions of

Israel's character as a state more concerned with territory, with its definition of itself as a Jewish state, with its superiority over its neighbors and with its intent to suppress any aspect of Palestinian nationalism. Thus far these dimensions have been successfully disguised by the "myths" Israel developed.

V

Our understanding of the Palestinian-Zionist and Arab-Israeli conflicts has been both improved considerably and perhaps even jolted by the findings of these three, differentially seminal, works. Without in any way detracting from their value, it is obviously necessary to suggest how they can be improved upon (by scholars on both sides of the divide). The first and perhaps the most critical is a careful sifting through of what is available in Arabic. Neither the Palestinian leadership (or organizations) nor the Arab states have made state papers available to scholars—Arab or foreign. It is impossible to gauge how much material is available in the ministries of defense, foreign affairs, police, the interior, and so on. But it is clear that the availability and accessibility of Israel's archives, and British and American papers has meant that the perspectives of Israel, its friends, and supporters will be more prevalent. It is late, but hopefully not too late, for Palestinian research institutions to launch major research projects of an "oral history" variety to record the experience of Palestinians during the exodus. This oral narration could then be set against the documentaries of Morris.

The archives of other states, though peripherally involved in the question of Palestine, could be quite helpful, especially those that were antagonistic to Britain. While Flapan has important points to make about Israel's policies, an examination of either Palestinian or Arab archival material—besides Jordan—may in fact in-

dicade that both parties are equally guilty in wanting conflict in 1948 (for obviously different reasons). Flapan, for example, may not have sensed the Palestinian contempt for Muhammad Nimr Hawari, who negotiated at Lausanne. Cursory interviews with Palestinians who knew Hawari in Jaffa in 1947–48 would have revealed to Flapan that people at that time thought that Hawari was an Israeli plant. In fact, he was eventually "permitted" to settle in Nazareth, where Israel appointed him judge, thereby confirming what people had been saying about him. Flapan, in his critique of Israel, pinned hopes on such "interlocutors." Syria's state papers may also reveal that Husni al-Za'im was neither serious in his effort to reach a peace settlement with Israel nor in his proposal to settle the Palestinian refugees in northern Syria.

These issues are clearly important and should be dealt with on the basis of all available material. But the successful analysis and portrayal of the dynamic encounter between Palestinian Arab and Israeli Jew across time will suffer seriously if it is not premised on some theory, some ideological or intellectual premise. Sanbar does that; Morris is more pragmatic in approach; while Flapan, aware of the importance of theory, is, nevertheless, unable to "evaluate" Israel's policies in terms of their intrinsic connection with Zionism. It may not be out of place to suggest that the mufti and Ben-Gurion "understood" each other well. Judah Magnes understood the Palestinian fear of Zionism; had Flapan lived longer he might have come closer to Magnes' view of the encounter, but would have then been even more marginal to Israel's political system.

American Public Opinion _____

The Arabs in the Mind of America, by Michael W. Suleiman. Brattleboro, VT.: