

# The Absence Of Peace Between The Palestinians And Israel



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## Abstract

This case study discusses the reasons behind the absence of peace between Israel and Palestine since 1947 UN partition plan and the Arabs` rejection of it. In 2024, there seems to be no peaceful solution to bring the humanitarian crisis in Gaza to end after the Hamas attack on Israel on October 7<sup>th</sup>. This thesis aims to dissect the reasons of how a long withstanding peaceful solution to this conflict has been out of the question since the conflict`s beginning.

This article uses a set of qualitative literature by renowned scholars on this conflict to eventually evolve arguments for why a solid positive peaceful solution is out of reach. The arguments will be divided into three parts: a historical argument, an ideological argument, and an international politics one focusing on USA as key role against a peaceful settlement of this conflict.

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**Forwards**

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Lastly, this thesis was fun to write and incredibly challenging and illuminating to dig into, I hope that through this paper there will be more understanding and tolerance between all nations and people to eventually have a mutual understanding of what peace might look like for humans.

# 1. Introduction

This thesis addresses the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, one of the most enduring and complex disputes in modern history. Characterized by its deep historical, territorial, and political complexities. Originating in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, this conflict has been a primary point of international diplomacy, yet it remains unresolved despite numerous efforts like the Oslo Accords in 1991. This conflict escalated in 1948 when Israel was declared as a state in Palestine, with the support of USA and other nations. That act was perceived by the Palestinian Arab population as well as the newly established Arab states as an appropriation of the land of the indigenous population in Palestine.

Achieving peace within the complex history of human history, which is marked by various complicated and bloody wars, emerges as significantly more challenging than originally expected. The details and dynamics of a conflict like the one that this research is focused on, can prove the complexities that diplomats and politicians who despite their efforts, have faced failure in their goals. This thesis is aimed to investigate the reasons behind these failures as well as possibly find a solution to this conflict. Therefore, this paper will delve into the big three aspects of this conflict, the historical background, which include the pre 1948 era in the land of Palestine, the 1948 war, the six-day war in 1967. This paper will also explore the importance of political ideology of Zionism as well as its history and emergence, how these aspects are relevant to the peace process. Finally, the relationship between USA and Israel and its relevance to a peaceful process in that region.

## 1.1 Research Problem

The goal of this paper is to understand the failures of politicians in achieving peace in the region and learn from it to possibly find a solution with real merits in the end to resolve this conflict that has unalived hundreds of thousands innocent men, women, and children. Not to mention the incredible sensitivity of the region, which can be the start of a global conflict between the Arab world and Israel.

A solution to this conflict was always a two-state solution, called for by chief diplomats and politicians. For ever since the United Nations had the resolution in 1947 of having a Palestinian state and a Jewish state in Palestine, there was never any viable indication that a viable Palestinian state would be built in addition to a rising Israeli-state with rich resources

and modern weapons provided by the US (Mearsheimer, J. & Walter, S. 2006). However, it has never worked. This leads to the following questions; Why has the two-state solution, historically advocated by international diplomats and politicians, failed to bring peace between Israel and Palestine? What role have political ideological movements and international politics played in hindering peace efforts?

## 2. Background

Understanding and researching the history of Palestine is crucial to anyone studying the modern history of the conflict between Palestine and Israel, because this history set the stage to the British mandate in Palestine as well as the creation of the state of Israel.

### 2.1. The History of Zionism

Zionism is the idea of a national home for the Jewish population in Palestine. Zreik, R. (2023) researches and thoroughly analyses Zionism's relationship with political theology, the article analyses the complicated relationship between the political ideology of Zionism as Jews having their own state and the traditional Jewish beliefs. Zionism was a form of a reaction of the difficulties that Jews had in Europe like anti-Semitism and assimilation processes, the author addresses Zionism as a secular nationalistic ideology which puts Jews as a nation rather than a religious group. This transformed the Jewish belief of the longing and seeking of the land of Israel from a pure religious spiritual tradition into a political territorial project, noting that the traditional beliefs were that the return to the land of Israel would be in a messianic era rather than secular political efforts doing it (Zreik, R. 2023).

Halperin, L. (2015) explains in her article how Zionism emerged and grew. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Jewish population in Europe was concentrated in Russia under the Pale of Settlement with a Jewish population that kept their culture with an interest of secular sciences. A smaller influential population was living in western and central Europe. In eastern Europe there was a discourse about centralizing the power to a state and the integration of Jews into the state's collective languages and institutions. The assassination of the Tsar Alexander II while the Enlightenment introduced the citizenship rights and the individual rights in Europe, broke out pogroms and the replacement of liberalism with various forms of socialisms and nationalisms, with Zionism in the mix. Zionism is a nationalism defined with the idea that Jews are one nation that? need to be in a homeland of their own. The enlightenment in western Europe introduced the belief in citizenship and individual rights which led to a rising

ethno-nationalism which made the Jewish population's integration into European societies more challenging, which introduced the term "the Jewish problem".

These changes in the political and social landscape in Europe were driving forces towards antisemitism and Jews being unsafe in Europe because of it. This made Zionism a logical movement for many Jews but still not everybody subscribed to it like the orthodox Jews who believed that the return to the land of Israel would be in the messianic era, as well as liberal Jews who thought a full integration into European societies would be a good solution to this antisemitism. (Halperin, L. 2015). However, the Holocaust put Zionism on another course because it attracted more Jews to come to Palestine because it was one of the few places where they were accepted to come to, the Holocaust made Zionism seem to be the only logical ideology for the Jews. (Halperin, L. 2015)

## 2.2. Pre 1948

The Balfour Declaration by Arthur Balfour in 1917 was a promise to the Zionist movement that the British will help create a national home for the Jewish people, on the condition that Palestinians who inhabit that land will not be harmed. He later wrote a letter in the midst of the conflict between the Jewish immigrants that have come to the Palestinian land and the Palestinians stating: "The four great powers are committed to Zionism, and Zionism be it right, wrong, good or bad, is rooted in an age long tradition, in present needs, in future hopes, of far profounder import than the desires and prejudices of the 700 000 Arabs who now inhabit the ancient land" (Chomsky. N, 1999, P. 90). On the other hand, the people of Palestine never accepted this point of view, thereby resisting in every way possible including terrorist violence against Jews, like in August 1929 where 133 Jews were killed. (Chomsky. N, 1999). In the subsequent years after Arab revolt between 1936-1939 which was brutally squashed by the British mandate, the West's idea that Arabs had to sacrifice their land to Jews as a compensation to what had been done to them in World War 2 was not accepted among the Arabs, they were convinced that a project of a Zionist state at their land did not make sense, what made sense was making a Jewish state in Bavaria for example. (Chomsky. N, 1999).

The British mandate that was in Palestine after the first world war set the stage for the future geopolitical landscape of the region in Palestine, the British mandate allowed an influx of

Jewish immigrants to come to the region for the pursuit of a Jewish state in the region. Additionally, the mandate set up policies and regulations that favored the Zionist movement and its` aims to follow the Balfour declaration. (Raad, B.L. 2010)

### 2.3. 1948 War

The 1948 war started with the UN resolution which dictated that a Jewish state was to be created on the Palestinian land in 1947 with full rejection from all Arab states, which resulted in an inside struggle between the regular and irregular Palestinian Arab forces and the Zionist settlements in Palestine. The Arab states` rejection to the resolution justified their invasion into Israel, on May 15<sup>th</sup> after the creation of Israel the neighboring Arab countries` armies continued to invade the newly established country. The Arab states refusal and solidarity with the Palestinian Arabs was of importance because Palestine is a holy place for the Arabs as it presented the ideological symbolism for them. Not to mention the political, economic, and social unrest which also played a role in these Arab states` involvement in the conflict. (Eppel, M. 2012)

Noam Chomsky explains how the story about this war was not the whole story, he acknowledges that Arab violence was there, however, he mentions how the Kibbutz-based strike force of the Haganah (the Defense force of the Jewish settlement, now called IDF) carried out a “retaliation” operation against a Palestinian village killing 10 Arabs including one woman and 4 children. (Chomsky. N, 1999). Another example of what happened in these rural areas by the Zionist forces is what happened in the Palestinian village Tantura which was first researched by Teddy Katz for his master thesis. He concluded that there was more likely a massacre the Zionist armed forces committed, this was documented in voice recordings with the Zionist soldiers who invaded the village. (Schwartz. A, 2022)

The 1948 civil war was a bloody conflict, with entire villages being massacred and annexed from their homes, according to Pappé, I. (2006) an Israeli historian. This was an elaborate plan called “Plan Dalet” by the Zionist leadership to forcibly drive out 750000 indigenous Palestinians from their homes, furthermore, this plan included the tools of intimidation, siege, and bombardment of Palestinian villages. The goal with these tools was to create an only Jews-state in Palestine, however the war that was ongoing with the neighboring Arab states did not stop the on-going ethnic cleansing. In his article, Pappé suggests that this is a crime against humanity and the world has managed to lose it from its` collective memory. His concern with his article was to drive the consensus of what happened in the 1948 war from a

war to an ethnic cleansing. (Pappe, I, 2006). Furthermore, Morris, B. (2008) confirms also how the Zionist state used a set of tactics like intimidation, displacement, and expulsion to “transfer” the Palestinians from their villages. The Israeli army ordered also to prevent the return of those refugees, effectively stopping them from getting their homes back.

The Israeli forces were better organized which gave them the victory in this war and they found themselves having an expanded border which was assigned to the Palestinians. At the end of the war, the land that was assigned to Palestine was shared between Jordan, Israel and Egypt having half of the Gaza region (Chomsky, N. 1999). Furthermore, Morris, B. (2008) explains how Zionists got their state by being more organized and united than the Arabs, as well as garnering support by major international players like U.S and the Soviet-Union through lobbying and making moral and historical arguments to get that support.

#### 2.4. Six Day War

This war was started by Israel with a pre-emptive strike on the Egyptian Air force starting this six-day war, the escalating tensions that was happening between Syria, Jordan, Egypt and Israel was the reason why Israel started this war, Egypt’s decision to close the Straits of Tiran to Israeli ships which Israel considered as an act of war. (Naor, D., & Lewin, E. 2021). Machairas & Summers, (2017) suggests that the consequences of the six-day war in 1967 which Israel started after tensions on the border, are revolutionary. They examine the strategical and political consequences in which this war had, the war ended in Israel and USA’s victory in only 6 days against Syria, Jordan, and Egypt. Israel’s victory came also with overwhelming changes in territorial control, Israel took control of the Golan-heights from Syria, Sinai Peninsula and Gaza strip from Egypt as well as the West-Bank from Jordan. Strategically, for Israel this meant more security and U.S officials acknowledging that the new borders were vital for Israel’s security.

#### 2.5. Intifada

The Intifada is a pivotal historical moment in this conflict, it reflects how the two decades of Israeli occupation marked by systematic suppression, disenfranchisement, and humiliation of Palestinians. The Palestinians were feeling the isolation by the abandonment of the Arab world and international community who seemed to be paralyzed or indifferent when it came



to the Palestinian cause. This uprising was a spontaneous and collective response to that, it powered by a need for the Palestinian people for an assertion of their identity and rights. The intifada represented a huge shift from the traditional modes of resistance to community-based uprising. The uprising had a widespread participation across the Palestinian society, including pivotal roles played by women. Furthermore, the intifada had implications internationally; it shifted the perception of the international community, garnering a lot of sympathy and attention. This challenged the main-stream narratives and prompting discussions on Palestinians' rights and aspirations. Moreover, the Intifada led to the declaration of the Palestine National Council's declaration in Algiers which advocated for a two-state solution based on UN-resolutions. This marked a pivotal evolution in the political strategy of the Palestinian cause. (Said, E.W. 1989). Collins, J. (2004) provides a personal and sociopolitical overview over the intifada, contributing the intifada to the underlying reasons for the intifada to happen like the dispossession that happened in 1948, as well as the long history of the Israeli occupation were some of the underlying conditions that contributed to the intifada happening. The Israeli policies reacting to the intifada included mass arrests, curfews, and military responses to civilian disobedience.

## 2.6. Peace efforts.

The Oslo Accords were a pivotal moment in this conflict's history, it achieved for the first time a recognition from both parts of a Palestinian state and an Israeli state making it the most important deal sponsored by the USA. However, as we later found out it didn't achieve a long withstanding peace. A criticism to the Oslo accords I and II was presented by Finkelstein, G.N, (2003) where he presented how the PLO (Palestinian Liberation Organization) have made an occupation into a controlled area by the Israeli government, making them solely an enforcer. The "immediate needs" condition that was listed in the agreement which states that Israel is responsible to meet the immediate needs for the Palestinians in the west bank and Gaza. 80 percent of the "average annual quantities" of water was given to the Israelis and 20 percent to the Palestinians. The map which was presented in Oslo accords II clearly also includes Jerusalem as a territory in Israel, the West-bank were after the Oslo-accords a "unitary entity", and the pre 1967 war borders which were enforced by the UN have been erased. As for the sovereignty of the Palestinian State, it was next to none, the Palestinian state does not have the ability to change laws nor give military

orders, without the Israeli confirmation. A 30 percent of the land of the West bank was under jurisdiction of the Palestinian state, additionally, there was an unspecified number of redeployments were promised.

According to Roy, S. (2007) the problems with the Oslo accords are many, starting with the huge alteration in structure of the political, physical, and economic landscape of the Palestinian territories, which has supported in various ways the Palestinian oppression and dispossession. Israeli settlements increased a lot after the Oslo Accords, in both Gaza and the west-bank, this meant the Palestinian land was to be confiscated and thereby worsening the conditions for the Palestinian population (Roy, S.2007). Roy, S. (2007) mentions also how the Israeli closure policy which restricted the movement and the access of Palestinians in and out of the West-bank and Gaza, this policy resulted in a declining Palestinian economy, the Oslo treaty only supported this policy legally which only made economic and movement restrictions a characteristic of t a Palestinian's life, The separation of the West-bank into A,B and C areas further fragmented Palestinians from each other, making the creation of a sovereign Palestinian state almost impossible.

### 3. Theory

#### 3.1. Literature Review

A postcolonial theory on this conflict, was introduced by Edward Said, where he believed that the Zionist state aimed to silence and take out all Palestinian traits in the region, including their cultural and historical heritage. (Hamdi, T. 2017). He also argued that the Zionist states' policies carried out a "memoricide" which is an erasure of Palestinian heritage and culture. To create a root to the land, the Israeli state had a habit of appropriating Palestinian traditions such as dishes, clothes and the Muslims call to prayer (Hamdi, T. 2017). Another way of making Zionism a colonialist ideology is the way they have succeeded to dampen the Palestinian narrative, which is an indication of the domination and control the Zionist state had on the land. As well as calling Palestine as western rather than eastern, which in the eyes of Said is a demonstration of linguistic and geographical violence, he suggests that these actions align with colonialist practices. (Hamdi, T. 2017).

Furthermore, Said, E. W. (1979) explains the standpoint of the Palestinians when it comes to Zionism and its` consequences on them, the primary Zionist idea of creating a Jewish national home in Palestine led to the displacement and marginalization of the Palestinians. That central idea led to the neglect and rejection of the Palestinian people, viewing all Palestinians merely as obstacles to make their national home. This policy led to the creation of Israel constructed to have a Jewish majority in it and keep more Arabs out.

However, a criticism to this theory was also brought up by Shimoni, G. (2007) where he acknowledges the subjective perception that Arabs have on Zionism. Zionism do not meet the postcolonialism theory criteria due to its` nationalistic traits, Shimoni argues that Said`s definition of Zionism as a European colonialist movement is not true because it ignores the historical context of Zionism. Shimoni, G. (2007) argues that the perception of putting certain groups in categories such as victims or perpetrators based on their social class do not supply a comprehensive understandable way of explaining the conflict.

The founder of peace and conflict studies Johan Galtung, who wrote numerous articles and books on the process of peace building and conflict resolutions, proposing that to achieve the security of the Israel the first objective to be done is that mainstream Israel must embrace the idea of peace. He then proposed the idea of Two state solution with both the countries having Jerusalem as their capitals, this vision entailed the idea of the security to Israel as well as the limited right of return for the Palestinians. Galtung`s vision also entailed the idea of having a joint confederation similar to the one in Europe where Israel and its` neighbors Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria and Jordan, which in his vision can ultimately produce sustainable peace through the interdependence between these countries. He underscores that this vision that the extreme views from both sides are illegitimate, the Israeli side having the idea of “Eretz Israel” from the Euphrates to the Mediterranean Sea and the Palestinian side with the idea of the erasure of Israel. (Galtung. J, 1991)

The 1967 war is attributed to be a reason to the 1982 war in Lebanon that Israel started after years of the PLO`s (Palestinian liberation Organization) attacks after the 1967 Arab states loss. Because of the six-day war the PLO had to reside in Lebanon and Jordan. The PLO had several attacks on Israel from the borders of both Lebanon and Jordan, where they settled after the six-day war. The situation in Lebanon at that time was characterized by political weakness, the Lebanese government could not stop the attacks that were coming from their southern borders against Israel. Therefore, Israel decided to wage an invasion to have control

on the PLO that turned into a full-scale comprehensive war with the PLO and Syrian forces as well, having a siege on west-Beirut while heavily bombing it (Naor, D., & Lewin, E. 2020).

Edward Said (1985) presents an important theory where the approaches to discuss Palestinian identities as problematic entities rather than acknowledging their historical and national identities while institutionalizing this approach in the Israeli system. Which promoted the privileges of being Jewish and relegating the Palestinians to a secondary status, he argues that the Zionist ideology had a primary role in shaping this systematic discrimination against Palestinians. (Said, E.W. 1985)

The UN general assembly have made a study to decide the legality of Israel's occupation in the west bank and east Jerusalem. Based on this study, it was evident that this occupation is illegal under international law, The study references first to the pre-emptive strike that Israel did in 1967 as an act of aggression. On the other hand, the study argues that even if Israel acted in self-defense in 1967, the administration of the occupied territories has clear breaches of breaking the international humanitarian law. Which exceeds the point of an act self-defense and is an unnecessary and illegal use of force. Moreover, the study mentions the illegal establishment of settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories as a violation of the self-determination and therefore a break in international law as well (UNGA CEIRPP, 2023).

In an article describing the "special relationship" by Freilich, C.D. (2017), the US have been the best of friends to Israel in the international forum. Advocating and supporting them financially and with military aid, however this article focuses more on the diplomatic side. The US has used its' power diplomatically to vote against "anti-Israel" resolutions, they have also supported peace attempts, when they align with Israeli interests. Their Veto power has been crucial in covering the policies which Israel adopt in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. They have also helped with the improvement in diplomatic relationships with regional key players like Egypt and Jordan which ultimately made these countries recognize Israel.

On an international politics spectrum, Mearsheimer, J. (2006) explains his theory about world politics, where all states in his world are rational actors with the goal of survival in the end. To achieve that survival, they would have to get as much power as possible. He sees

international politics as an anarchy with no watchmen to eventually judge and persecute the offenders if there ever are, therefore, states must strive for power to ensure their survival.

Mearsheimer, J.J., & Walt, S.M (2006). have published an article explaining the US foreign policy concerning the unwavering support that the US gives to Israel. They explain this support mainly because of the Israeli lobby in the US political system, by exerting pressure on congress members and the executive branch to align with Israel`s interests, this lobby group have also been capable in containing the political discourse to be empty of criticism towards the state of Israel. Financial support to political action committees, letter writing campaigns and the endorsement of pro-Israel candidates to make sure that the lawmakers who support its` agenda are rewarded while those who do not are punished. This has created the situation where policy makers are hesitant to criticize the state of Israel, to avoid the possible backlash. Even though US`s support is unwavering no matter what, a lot of times this support might be against America`s interests, and sometimes even against Israel`s interests, for example if not for the diplomatic support in the UN that US has given to Israel in blocking various resolutions concerning the Palestine-Israel conflict, this conflict would have been resolved a long time ago and American-Arab relations would have been better, which is in American interests. This diplomatic support was also a reason to various terrorist threats against America and its` allies. (Mearsheimer, J., & Walt, S. 2006).

### 3.2. Theoretical framework

The existing body of research on this topic provides a comprehensive understanding of this conflict. Including various historical events contributing to the lack of a peaceful solution in the region for 75+ years. However, the recent events in Gaza spurred renewed questions of the underlying reasons behind this conflict. This research looks for utilizing the extensive scholarly discourse on the conflict as qualitative data to analyze and construct arguments for the absence of peace.

Building upon the previous scholarly work, the forthcoming chapter`s goal is to dive deeper into the core reasons underpinning the constant contention between the Palestinians and the state of Israel. Highlighting the multifaceted nature of the conflict, the analysis will be structured into three central parts, a historical argument, an interior argument, and an international politics argument. By analyzing these three aspects of the conflict, the aim of

this article is to eventually achieve a nuanced understanding of the complex dynamics causing the constant conflict, and lastly to possibly offer a potential way toward peace.

## 4. Method

This chapter outlines the methodological approach adopted to investigate the complexities of the Israel-Palestine conflict, with a focus on understanding the historical, ideological, and geopolitical dimensions that have contributed to the persistent failure to achieve peace. The research design is a qualitative study, drawing upon a diverse range of sources to construct a comprehensive narrative of the conflict and to explore potential avenues for resolution.

The study is fundamentally exploratory and interpretive, aiming to dissect the multifaceted reasons behind the intractability of the Israel-Palestine conflict. It adopts a case study approach, considering the conflict as a unique instance of prolonged geopolitical strife, characterized by deep-rooted historical grievances, ideological convictions, and international interventions.

### 4.1. Data collection

Data was collected through a review of existing literature, including scholarly articles as Said, E. (1979), books like Chomsky, N. (1999) and reports from human rights organizations, as Amnesty International. This literature study was structured around key thematic areas: the historical evolution of the conflict, the political ideological underpinnings of Zionism, the impact of geopolitical dynamics and the outcomes of past peace efforts. The process of finding relevant scholarly work on these topics was not hard due to how well known this conflict has been. Therefore, finding the most well-known scholars who have dedicated a large sum of their academic careers on this conflict like Norman Finkelstein, Noam Chomsky, Ilan Pappé, Edward Said and John Mearsheimer was the best way to insure the credibility of the thesis.

### 4.2. Narrative And Thematic Analysis

The collected literature was analyzed through thematic and narrative analysis, allowing for the identification of recurrent themes and narratives within the discourse on the Israel-Palestine conflict. This began with gathering textual data like books and articles, and using narrative analysis to note how different texts narrate the conflict, and thematic analysis to put these into the themes in which I have. Furthermore, I used narrative analysis to delve deeper into these texts' narrative and see how it fit with my thesis' themes. This involved the

dissection of the US` role in the region as well as the historical background in the region and how it influences the current situation. Finally, I synthesized the findings to present a comprehensive overview of the conflict, which included a discussion of the themes and narratives presented and their implications for understanding the root of the conflict as well as a possible solution using these texts as a informational and theoretical background of my arguments. (Franzosi, R. 1998) & (Terry, G., Hayfield, N., et.al., 2017).

The thesis also used international politics theories like structural theory by (Mearsheimer, J. 2006) to understand the geopolitics nature in the region and build on it, as well as understanding the nature of the political ideology Zionism and the importance of deferring it from the religion Judaism.

### 4.3. Ethical Considerations

The study was conducted with an awareness of the potential for bias and aimed to present a balanced perspective, acknowledging the legitimacy of both Israeli and Palestinian narratives. All sources were critically evaluated for credibility, with a preference for peer-review and academically recognized publications. Given the sensitive nature of the topic, ethical considerations were made to ensure the accuracy of the information obtained on the historical background. Using known historians like Ilan Pappé, Ben Morris and Noam Chomsky who have used trustworthy documents for presenting the history of the conflict. Furthermore, Edward Said was crucial to presenting the Palestinian view of Zionism.

### 4.4. Limitations

While this study relied on transparency and checking the legitimacy of the information provided. By using well known and respected scholars like Ilan Pappé and Noam Chomsky. The study acknowledges its limitations, particularly the reliance on secondary sources, which may reflect the biases of their authors. The complexity of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the volume of literature available means that this study cannot claim to cover every perspective or event.

## 5. Analysis

### 5.1. Historical argument

#### *British mandate effect*

Building on Chomsky, N. (1999) and Raad, B.L. (2010), the British mandate was essential to build up an artificial entity in that region and divide the groups into a Jewish nation and an

Arab one. The mandate effect can still be seen until this day, where a Jewish majority is essential to keeping the Zionist idea alive, as well as the difficulties of cohabiting with each other. The mandate effectively created divisions built upon religion or ethnicity without looking at a solution where both nations can live in one tolerant democracy. Therefore, I argue that the British mandate created the divisions that we still see until this day resulting in hostility between the two nations.

#### *The 1948 war*

The 1947-1948 civil war was a bloody conflict, with entire villages being massacred and annexed from their homes, according to Pappé, I (2006) an Israeli historian. This was an elaborate plan called “Plan Dalet” by the Zionist leadership to forcibly drive out 750000 indigenous Palestinians from their homes, furthermore, this plan included the tools of intimidation, siege, and bombardment of Palestinian villages. The goal with these tools was to create an only Jews-state in Palestine, however the war that was ongoing with the neighboring Arab states did not stop the on-going ethnic cleansing. In his article, Pappé suggests that this is a crime against humanity and the world has managed to lose it from its` collective memory.

This is mentioned here as a reason to what can be wrong with a peace process between these two nations because how bloody this war was and due to how many Palestinians were annexed from their indigenous land. Many Arabs accuse Israel of this crime and because of their subjective view on Zionism like Shimoni, G. (2007) suggests, convincing Arab Palestinians of a peace process with the people whom they may view as foreign colonialists with no right of the land of Palestine can be difficult. Additionally, the sheer violence and annexation that the Zionist army perpetrated in the war and before still is viewed by the Palestinians as a “Nakba” which translated to catastrophe in English, this suggests that the history of this conflict resonated with some of the Palestinians and drove some to acts of violence towards innocent Jews as well in Israel. This makes this conflict even more complicated to solve in a peaceful manner.





*Palestinian territory highlighted in green and jewish territory highlighted in blue starting from 1917 to the Oslo Accords (Source: Haddad, M., & Chughtai, A., 2023).*

### *1967 WAR*

Machairas & Summers, (2017) suggests that the consequences of the six-day war in 1967 which Israel started after tensions on the border, are revolutionary. They examine the strategical and political consequences in which this war had, the war ended in Israel and USA's victory in only 6 days against Syria, Jordan, and Egypt. Israel's victory came also with overwhelming changes in territorial control, Israel took control of the Golan-heights from Syria, Sinai Peninsula and Gaza strip as well as the West-Bank. Strategically, for Israel this meant more security and U.S officials acknowledging that the new borders were vital for Israel's security. However, this meant that the Palestinian Arabs in the west bank and Gaza strip were under occupation by Israel. Israel's opinion was mainly that safe borders are more important than internationally recognized ones. Moreover, the new borders came with the Jewish expansion that the Zionist movement previously did to create the Israeli state, only this time they did it in an occupied land and not in a land the UN has promised nor recognized them with, which resulted in a major second annexation of the Palestinian people from their homes after the 1948 one.

Moreover,

The Settlements and the expansion that Israel performed in this war has had longstanding consequences on the peace process until this day, the settlements that have since only gotten

bigger in area and in number driving a huge sum of Palestinians out of their properties. These settlements are often the biggest talking points when it comes to a two-state solution. Many human-rights organizations and states have condemned the creation of these settlements as well the expansion that happened in 1967 calling it illegal settlements which breaks international-law; however, Israel have never agreed on leaving or minimizing the Zionist expansion in the west bank for “security reasons”. This meant that any meaningful, logical, or fair talks on a peaceful two-state resolution were always blocked by this point.

## 5.2. Interior argument

### *Zionism's problem in Palestine.*

Some of the European Jews Pre-World War II were in favor of establishing a Jewish state in Palestine while others were convinced of possible integration in European societies, however after the terrible holocaust the persecution of the Jewish population in Europe. The Jewish population found a refuge in Palestine after the atrocities done in World War II. However, taking Shimoni, G. (2009) 's article into account about Zionism, I can argue that the political Zionism which he calls as a nationalism movement have done atrocities towards the indigenous people in 1948, which were documented by top historians like Pappé, I. (2006). Those were allowed by the world because of what had been done to them by the Nazis in Europe. As mentioned above, the Zionist army's plan Dalet entailed the annexation and killing of Palestinians from their villages to prepare it for Jewish settlements, Tantura was an example of that (Schwartz, A. 2020). Moreover, jumping to the 1967 war and its consequences, we can see the expansionist ideology of Zionism where everything can be reasoned with security, however security is fearing something might happen while Israel as a democratic state was breaking the international law by driving more Palestinians out of their land which was dictated to them by the UN resolution 181 in 1947. As stated in various human rights organizations like Amnesty International, (2017).

Moreover, the policies on the treatment of the Palestinians in these occupied territories have been “ruthless” as Amnesty International stated. Examples on these policies are; confiscation of Palestinian` land and giving it exclusively to Jewish settlers, restrictions on their movement and water. Building on what Said, E, W. (1979) explained in his article as well as the facts presented by Amnesty international, (2017), there is an argument to be made that Zionism as an ideology is; exclusively giving Jewish people more confiscated Palestinian land, resources, and weapons as well as protection in order to drive out more Palestinians and thereby having a bigger Israel. These policies have continued since 1967, and therefore one

must ask if Zionism as a political ideology a fair ideology for everyone involved, and not just Jews.

Furthermore, Said, E. W. (1979)'s article dissects the view in which Zionism views the Palestinians through what was done by the movement and what has been said by them, this leads me to make the argument of the view in which Zionists view Palestinians as a view which will never able the Palestinians to have their own state or be equal in one state, moreover one of the reasons of why peace never worked in that region. "Zionism was one of the most successful national liberation movements of the twentieth century. It set out to build an independent Jewish state in Palestine and this goal was achieved with the establishment of Israel in 1948. Arab resistance was the most serious obstacle that the Zionist movement encountered on the road to statehood. Consequently, from an early stage, Zionist leaders became preoccupied with what they euphemistically referred to as "the Arab question"" (Shlaim, A. 2012 pp.1). This citation underscores how the Zionist movement, with the core ideas of Jewish independence, has put the Palestinians who were not particularly historically implicated in the European anti-semitic sentiment into an existential quandary. While the Zionist movement has fulfilled its` goals in Jewish independence, there was a price to be paid by the Palestinian population to lose their self-determination and land and have now become a "question" as well.

Additionally, Zreik, R. (2023) `s contribution to the understanding of the political ideology of Zionism as a nationalistic movement and its` difference from the Jewish religion is of great importance. This importance can be contributed to the colonialist and nationalistic traits that Zionism has. The article highlights the uniqueness of Zionism as a political theology involving religious, nationalistic, and colonialist elements. The practical implementation of Zionism entailed various violent conflicts with the Palestinian people, occupying and implementing policies directed to favor Jewish settlers over Palestinians are one of the continuous practices of this ideology. Therefore, a peaceful solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is dependent on the political understanding of Zionism, which necessitates the stripping of the traits which hurt the indigenous people of Palestine and gives them the rights they deserve as human beings.

Furthermore, building on the structural theory, it is easy to acknowledge that Israel was possibly trying to ensure its` survival in 1948, and even in 1967, however by invading the West-bank and Gaza in 1967 and still in 2024 having various policies that ensure the

discrimination against a whole nation cannot be in just in favor of your own survival as a state. This anarchy of a world we have, also have institutions which represent global consensus like United Nations and International Law who both have condemned those policies. Surely, this cannot be good for the survival of a democratic state with western values in the Middle East (Mearsheimer, J. 2006)

To conclude this argument, history has documented the actions of the State of Israel since 1967, through those actions and policies as well as the situation in which Palestinians are living in the Occupied territories. We can conclude that the Zionist movement is and has been an expansionist, discriminatory and occupying the west bank since 1967. There seems to be no signs for them to stop taking over more land or giving the Palestinians their rights under international law. The idea of Zionism was noble in a sense of the liberation of a people who have been discriminated against through history in Europe, however their liberation meant them being the discriminatory force they once tried to fight in Europe. The idea of a Jewish state is not complicated, but the idea of a Jewish state in a land like Palestine who already had 750000 people living there is very complicated, to achieve that, Zionists have done what can only be described as immoral. Therefore, Zionism cannot work to be existent in that region because most of a majority Jewish state in that region would mean the annexation of the Palestinian people again, and as previous wars have shown, that will not work.

### *Arabs*

There is an argument to be made on the lack of unity that the Arabs have concluded when it came to the Palestinian cause, and that can be applied throughout history until the present day. Since the Balfour declaration in 1917 and the emerge of Arab nationalism in the Arab states and Palestine although weaker than Zionism. Palestinians were in unity of the idea that there should not be a Jewish state in their land because of them being the indigenous people. However, Arab leaders disagreed over the future of Palestine, for example king Abdullah in Jordan sought to make a greater Syria under his rule while the Syrian republic wanted a greater Syria that would have been run from Damascus. These political disagreements only furthered and hurt the Palestinian cause. Had these states been on a united front diplomatically before the military option, a strong Palestinian state might have been born, just like the one Israel is (Morris, B. 2008). Moreover, in the present day the Arab states like Egypt and Saudi Arabia being in a “Normalization” process diplomatically with Israel made

the Palestinians who lives in Gaza and the occupied territories in the west bank feel like they are being left alone which can only drive for further conflicts. The atrocity done on October 7<sup>th</sup> 2023, by Hamas was an example of that.

### 5.3. International Relations` Argument

#### *USA`s support to Israel*

The U.S have given Israel diplomatic, financial, and military support since 1967. With the U.S having veto power in the U.N and with it using its power to crash every possible peaceful solution for this conflict. These solutions are often comprised with international law, meaning that the Jewish settlements must move to the 1947 Israeli borders. Moreover, the U.S is arguably the superpower of the world and with its` values as a liberal democracy that protect rights like the right to vote, live freely and own property. Mearsheimer, J. & Walt, S. (2006) argue for how the support that America gives Israel unequivocally may not be in America`s interest all the time. For example, the way the Arab and Muslim world look at the U.S would be vastly different if it were not for the support that Israel gets from U.S. (Mearsheimer, J. & Walt, S. 2006). Acknowledging that the U.S is a central power in the world with a veto power in the U.N and having the most powerful and technologically advanced military in the world, their support to Israel have been an obstacle to a genuine and fair peaceful solution in the region.

Furthermore, building on the structural theory, it is easy to acknowledge that Israel was possibly trying to ensure its` survival in 1948, and even in 1967, however by invading the West-bank and Gaza in 1967 and still in 2024 having various policies that ensure the discrimination against a whole nation cannot be in just in favor of your own survival as a state. This anarchy of a world we have, also have institutions which represent global consensus like United Nations and International Law who both have condemned those policies. Surely, this cannot be good for the survival of a democratic state with western values in the Middle East (Mearsheimer, J. 2006). As well as the various times of the Palestinians resisting both peacefully like in the first intifada and using force, like the PLO using force pre 1982 war and Hamas calling 7<sup>th</sup> of October as a form of resisting. Looking back at the history of this conflict, the Palestinian nation will never give up their rights, that means resisting, thereby furthering the conflict, making Israel`s diplomatic situation in the world weaker even with the U.S by its` side.

Concluding this argument, the unequivocal US support to Israel diplomatically continuously have decreased the chances of real positive peace between the two nations. Their official support to peaceful resolutions has not been in the interest of everyone involved but if it is only acceptable to the Israeli side. This support have now been proved as not in the favor of the Israeli nation`s security now, as the unfair treatment of the west-bank and Gaza Palestinians only furthers conflict with the Palestinians and Arabs unfortunately viewing not only Israel as an enemy but also America. (Freilich, C.D. 2017) & (Mearsheimer, J. & Walt, S. 2006).

### *Power dynamics*

Israel has already exerted a huge demonstration of power on the Palestinians whether on the west -bank or in Gaza. Whether in 1948, 1967, 1982, 2004-2006 or in 2024. How would Israel go into a negotiation talks with the Palestinians when they are strong enough to annex them again and again until no Palestinian is living in the land from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan river. Israel tries to keep on the charade of being “the only democracy of in the middle east” which is why they can`t go as far as they did back in 1947 and 1967. The power dynamics in that region is completely unrealistic to call for a long-lasting peace between the two nations, because the possibility of creating a strong Palestinian state with its` own strong military is almost impossible with the current power dynamics in that region.

The explanation that Finkelstein, N. (2003) and Roy, S. (2006) provided on the Oslo accords are examples on how the power dynamics in the region can force Palestinians into an unfair and non-sustainable peace.

## 6. Conclusion

This thesis critically examines the long ongoing challenges in achieving peace between Israel and Palestinians through the lens of a two-state solution advocated for by diplomats and politicians. The analysis took on the legacy of key events such as plan-Dalet and the displacement of the 750000 indigenous Palestinians in 1948, which has deeply put grievances that complicated any attempts of peace after. The aftermath of the six-day war which created the settlements and with it the apartheid regime we see today in the occupied territories, have further complicated the conflict making it harder to achieve peace under the circumstances. (Pappe, I. 2006), (Amnesty international, 2017) & (B`tselem, 2022).

Significantly, the thesis underscores the importance of the US`s role as the most powerful state in the world and its` support to Israel as pivotal for the absence of peace in the region.

Their support (influenced by the Israeli lobby) plays a huge role in shaping the power dynamics of the region which makes it even harder for achieving a fair settlement giving the Palestinians their full humanitarian and land rights. This geopolitical dynamic renders a two-state solution increasingly implausible under the current conditions. Galtung, J. (1996) `s advocacy for two state solution necessities for a moderation in leadership to transcend radical positions on both sides.

In conclusion, the failure of a peaceful solution to deliver peace stems not only from historical injustices and ongoing geopolitical biases but also from a critical lack of wise political decisions on both sides, especially the one with more power, Israel. This study advocates for a reevaluation of ambitions, suggesting that peace might not necessarily hinge on the form of the solution—be it two-state or one-state—but rather on the establishment of a truly democratic, and inclusive society where all groups are fairly represented and can coexist with equal rights and security, further research on this topic should be concerned with the current political environment in both nations, to further understand how these environments can be receptive to mediation and peace. Lastly, further investigation on the US-Israel relations is eminent to understand and set light on how effective USA has been during this conflict.

## 7. Literature

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