

Telling and Teaching Israel's Story

Where you begin shapes the history and politics
you do or do not want to convey.

What you include and what you leave out reveals your
knowledge, biases, and political intentions

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Context: When do you begin to recall the story of modern Israel; where you start determines what you intentionally omit?

- ▶ June – 1967 war
- ▶ 1948 -State Declared
- ▶ 1947-1949 UN Legitimacy – partition and admission
- ▶ 1939-1945 - Holocaust
- ▶ 1917- 1923 –League of Nations - Legitimacy Declaration
- ▶ 19th century -Failed emancipation
- ▶ Expulsions from Iberian Peninsula – 1490s
- ▶ 67-70AD -Destruction of Second Temple
- ▶ Moses at Sinai/Abraham at UR

Implications for not knowing Jewish history or Israel's story

- ▶ If you do not have a grasp for the underlying reasons/reason for a Jewish state, then explaining it is impossible-
- ▶ What do you leave out when you choose to begin Israel's Story only in 1967, in 1945, or In 1897?
- ▶ Does your choice of where to begin show your prejudice, or what you do not Know?
- ▶ If you do not know the story, where do you begin?
- ▶ Not knowing the story –the easiest way out, it is too complex, lets not learn it or teach it?
- ▶ Have Jewish educators and influencers failed to unfold Israel's story? Is that why the refuge, "it is too toxic," emerges

State Seeking, Making, and Keeping

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**Jewish
Peoplehood
Pre-Sinai to
1800s**

**Conceiving
and Planning
a State 1800s-
1940 Alkalai
to Herzl
Yishuv
leaders**

**Legitimacy
League of
Nations UN
Partition -1923,
1947 - 1949**

**Linking a
People to
the Land
Building a
State 1920s-
1949 -self
defense**

**Preserving
the State
1949-Present
13 Prime
Ministers**

**Achieving
Recognition;
Seeking
Normalization**



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- ▶ Where one starts telling Israel's story matters. If one starts with June 1967, one eliminates all Jewish and Zionist history previously; if one starts in 1945, one eliminates Jewish nation building, impoverished and dysfunctional Arab sector, and may assume wrongly that Israel came into being only because of the Shoah, and not because Jews chose Zionism
- ▶ *Lehiyot am Hofshi Beartzenu*-- to take destiny into their own hands; if one chooses to begin in 1897, then only the Zionist evolution and anti-Semitism are relevant to Jewish and Israeli history; it is more than that. If you choose Moses at Sinai, then a history of Jewish peoplehood and Jewish community evolution in the diaspora becomes part of the story. Jews as nation of laws, rules, covenants, life-cycle events; Israel is not only about what others did to Jews over the ages, Israel is about how Jewish identity evolved, and what the dynamism of Zionism has done for the Jewish people; Jews said to themselves in the early 1800s, we no longer want to be **object** in another's sentence, but the **subject** in our own sentence. Let us collectively intervene in history.

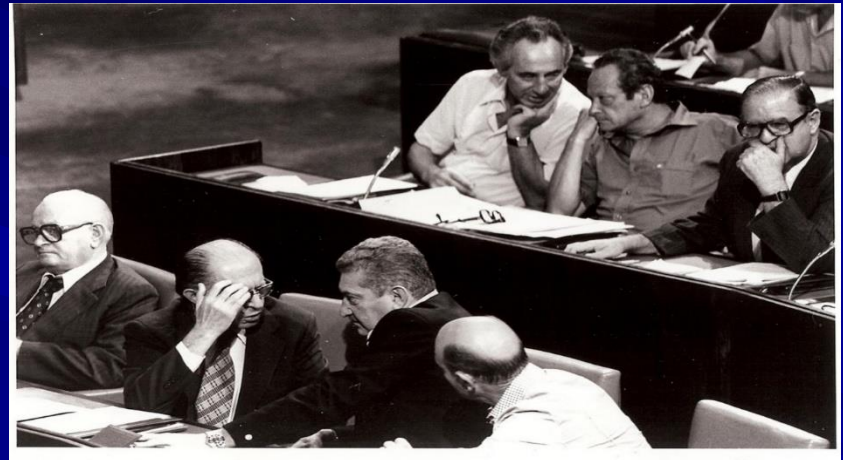
Zionism's Overarching Concept – what is that story?

להיות עם חופשי בארצנו

March 1939



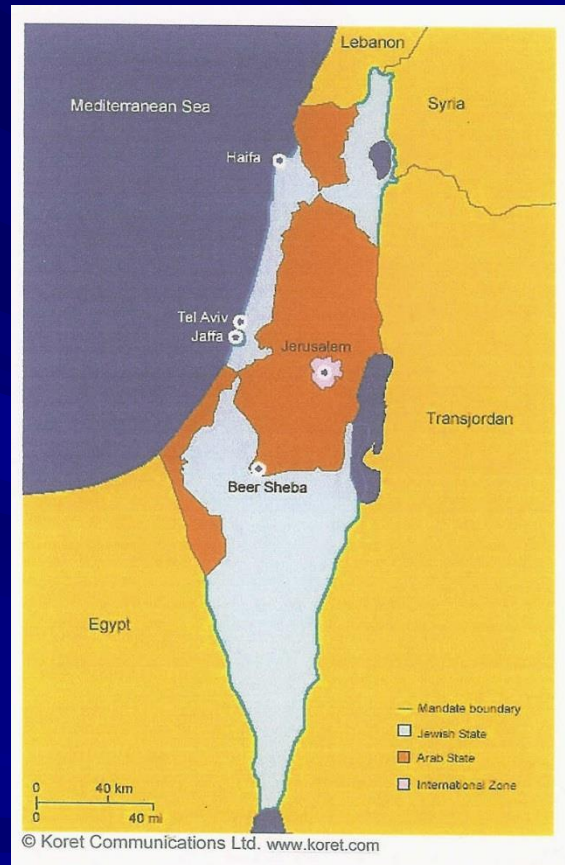
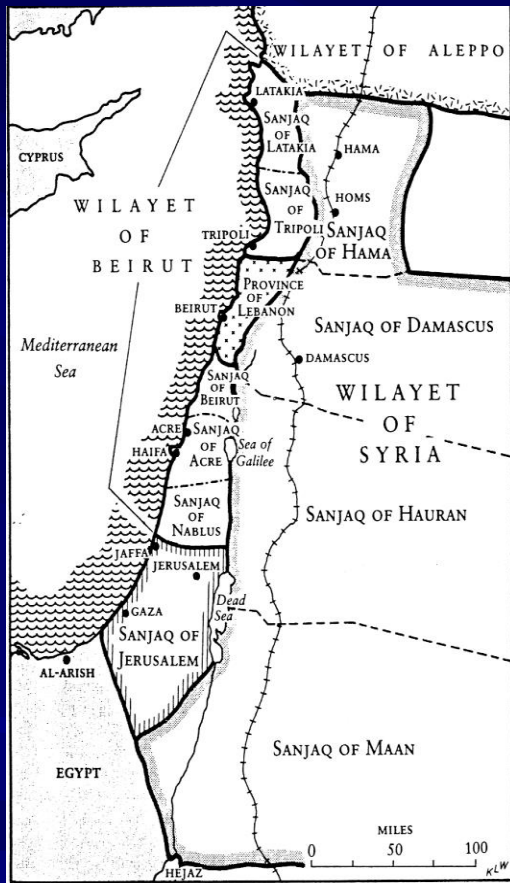
September 1978



Comparison ME in 1914 with Israel and neighbors pre-June 1967 war



Comparison of Palestine area in the 1860s, 1947 partition plan, and 1949 armistice lines



End of Israel's independence war, 1949: Decisions have Consequences

■ When Israel's independence war ended in March 1949, the area held by Israel was 20,500 sq kilometers, an **increase of 37%** of what the UN had allocated to the Jewish state in the UN's 1947 partition plan; and a **50% decrease** of what was to be the Arab state per the UN Partition plan.

■ The decision by Arab states **not** to accept partition in 1947 and to go to war resulted in land lost and Arab departure/flight from Palestine. In 1950, Jordan annexed the West Bank (6,070 sq km and Egypt controlled the Gaza Strip (390 sq km)

