



Palestine: **From a Marxist** **Perspective**



Roadmap

1. History

- Early History/Roman Era
- Arab Conquest and Islam
- 800 AD to the Rise of the Ottomans
- Ottoman Empire

2. Origins of Zionism

- The Arab Revolt/Myth of Arab Betrayal
- Balfour, Sykes-Picot, Mandate

3. Formation of the Entity

- Nakba
- Establishment of the Entity

4. Post-Formation

- Six Day War and October War
- Formation of Resistance
- Lebanese Civil War
- Intifada
- Oslo
- Invasion of Lebanon
- Hamas Elected
- Al-Aqsa Flood
- Escalation of Genocide
- Where We Are Now



Early History + Roman Era

- Earliest trace of human settlement in Palestine goes back 12,000 years ago in Jericho
- Various different Semitic-speaking tribes inhabited the region starting around 5,000 years ago
- The land that is now Palestine was ruled over by various empires including the Akkadians, Babylonians, Assyrians, and finally the Romans in 63 BC
- The Romans referred to the Levant as the province of Syria-Palestina
- The inhabitants of Palestine were a mix of Arhamains, Arabs, Greeks, Romans, etc

Map of Roman Palestine





Arab Conquest + Islam

- Arab traders would frequently spend summers in the Levant and build cross-cultural contact since the Roman Era
- In 638 BC Umar Ibn Khattab conquered the Levant, which was a predominantly Arahmain-speaking Christian society at the time
- Umar brought the religion of Islam and the Arabic language to the region, which over the course of the next 600 years became the dominant culture
- After the fall of the early caliphates, Palestine traded hands between various different Islamic dynasties

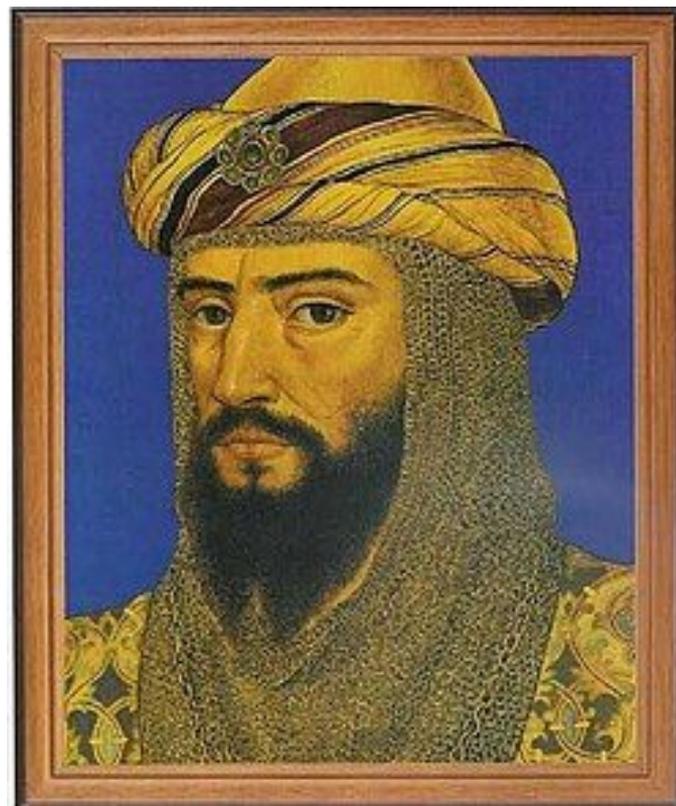


800 AD to the Rise of the Ottomans

- By the 11th century, the Muslim population was starting to overtake the Christian population. Regional Christian powers such as the Byzantines, with the help of the European kingdoms via the pope, conquer the Levant and set up a series of integrated Kingdoms.
- Mamluks under Salah-ad-din eventually oust some of the crusader kingdoms, establish the Ayyubid dynasty.
- Seljuk Turks migrate from Central Asia into Anatolia, set up an empire, and overthrow the Mamluks, capturing Palestine.
- Seljuks, a culturally Persianate empire, ruled by foreigners in the eyes of the Arabs, gradually falls apart.
- Various local kingdoms and beyliks emerge in the former Seljuk empire.
- One of these Beyliks comes under the control of Osman I, who founds the Ottoman Empire.



Saladin





Ottoman Empire

- Hereditary Turkic monarchy, claimed Caliphal authority
- Ruled over a large ethnically, religiously, and linguistically diverse empire
- Frequent massacres of minority populations
- Governed via the Millet system, a caste based society
- Established the Tanzimat system in 1839, aimed at assimilating all people in the empire into Turkishness
- Emerged weakly at the turn of the century after losing various wars and territories to neighboring states
- Entered WWI in 1914 on the side of the Central powers



Origins of Zionism

- Theodor Herzl proposed a Jewish homeland as a solution to Antisemitism in Europe
- Initially proposed various territories including Argentina, Uganda, Mesopotamia, Madagascar and Cyprus
- Chose Palestine to appeal to fringe religious fanatics
- Was wildly unpopular at the time, criticized by European Christians and Jews for unnecessary and unrealistic irredentism
- Starting gaining support at the turn of the century (World Zionist Congress 1897)



Theodor Herzl





The Arab Revolt and the Myth of "Arab Betrayal"

- In 1916, frustrated with constant famines, forced Turkishization, and poor economic conditions, the Arabs of the Ottoman empire revolted against the Ottoman authority, establishing a new Pan-Arabist state in the Levant, supported by the Allied powers
- In 1918, when the war ended, the Allied powers betrayed the Arabs and divided up the land between themselves
- Ottomanists and Islamists incorrectly blame the Arab Revolt for Zionism in order to further reactionary political ideas



Sharifian Army





Balfour, Sykes-Picot, Mandate

- With the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in WWI, the allied powers abandoned the Arabs as well as the other peoples of West Asia and partitioned the region between themselves
- France got Syria, and Lebanon, while the United Kingdom got Palestine, Jordan, Iraq, Kuwait
- Additionally the British signed the Balfour Declaration establishing the Mandate for Palestine as a Jewish homeland in West Asia
- During this time, European Jewish migration to Palestine exploded and the earliest Zionist paramilitaries began to form (ex: Lehi, Hagana)
- Increased surveillance of Palestinians in order to prepare for ethnic cleansing



Mandate





Nakba

- In May of 1948, Zionist paramilitaries began full scale massacres against Palestinians of all faiths (Christians, Muslims, and Jews)
- They scouted and burned villages, raided homes, and killed and displaced approx. 2 million people
- This process began on a smaller scale in 1946 and is still ongoing, but peaked in violence from 1948-1952
- Eventually led to the consolidation of the IOF, and the establishment of the Zionist entity as the so-called “State of Israel”.



Nakba



Establishment of The Entity





'67 War and '73

- Various Arab-majority states attempted to overthrow the occupation in the Six Day War of 1967, where the Entity annexed Sinai and the Golan Heights from what was then the United Arab Republic, a Ba'athist union between Egypt and Syria.
- In 1973, Egypt and Syria attempted to regain their occupied territories in what would be known as the October war, with Egypt eventually abandoning Syria and the greater movement, in exchange for the return of the Sinai, while Syrian troops did most of the fighting in the occupied Jolan, ultimately resulting in a Syrian defeat, and Egyptian normalization with Israel.

October War of '73





Formation of Resistance

- In response to Zionist violence, various political and military organizations formed within Occupied Palestine
- These included the PFLP (George Habash), PLO, and Fatah (Yasser Arafat)
- The PFLP was communist, while the PLO and Fatah were secular anti-imperialists
- Resistance transcended sectarian lines with all religions and ethnicities of Palestine participating in the struggle



PFLP



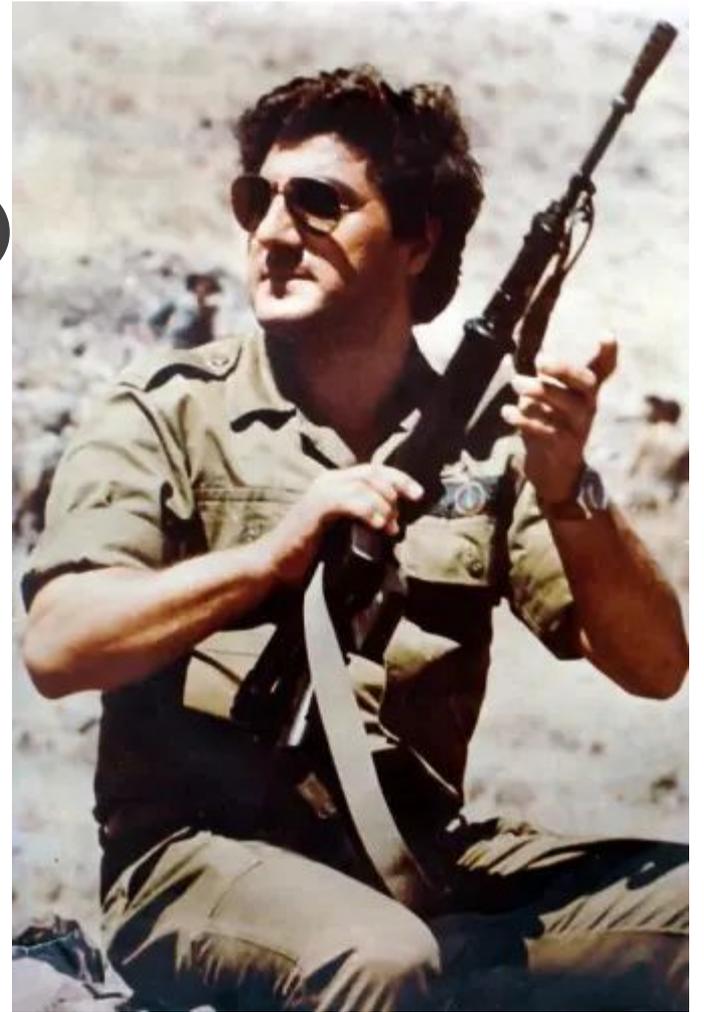
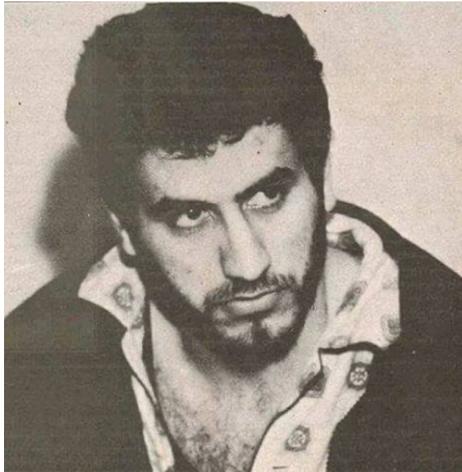
Lebanese Civil War, 1975-1991



- Lebanon's history is quite complex, and has always been extremely religiously diverse, leading to both national unity and sectarianism. This led to its first constitution being heavily confessionalist, and at the time, with Christian being the majority, having a 55-45 split between "Christian-affiliated" and "Muslim-affiliated" seats (with Druze being in the Muslim block, despite historically having ties to the Maronites, effectively making it 60-40).
- PLO headquarters was in Lebanon, and many Palestinian refugees settled in Lebanon.
- The reactionary predominantly maronite right-wing Kataeb party, and its military wing the Lebanese Forces (Phalange) viewed the Palestinian influx as a threat to their political domination of Lebanon.
- Various political interests of Lebanese religious groups erupted into a sectarian civil war in 1975. In 1978, Israel formally invaded Lebanon, and Syrian troops entered the country as well to repel them. Syrian troops remained in Lebanon until 2006.
- The LF committed numerous massacres, predominantly targeting the Lebanese Shias, as well as the Palestinian refugees. These events led to formation of Hezbollah in Lebanon to protect the Shia, as well as various other self production militias like the ASALA.



Bachir Gemayel (right)
Habib Shartouni (bottom)





First Intifada, 1987

- Started in Jabalia refugee camp when four Palestinians were killed as what is speculated to be an Israeli response to the killing of an Israeli in Gaza a few days earlier
- During the first Intifada, the Islamic Resistance in Palestine (Hamas) initially a wing of the Muslim Brotherhood began forming
- Hamas led demonstrations, mutual aid, and led acts of resistance against the Entity, primarily in the West Bank
- Ended with the Oslo Accords

1st Intifada





Sabra + Shatila Massacre, 1982

- In 1982, the Lebanese forces carried out the deadliest massacre of the civil war, targeting the Sabra and Shatila neighborhoods, predominantly Shia and Palestinian. An estimated 4000 people died in this sectarian massacre.
- The massacre led to an increased Shia resistance in Lebanon, as well as many maronite defectors forming non-LF affiliated militias, such as the Free Tigers.
- The motivation for the escalated violence was the assassination of prominent Kataeb leader Bachir Gemayel, by the Maronite SSNP soldier Habib Shartouni.

Sabra + Shatila Massacre





Oslo, 1993

- Peace treaty between the PLO, Fatah, and the Zionist Entity
- Signed under the administration of Bill Clinton between Yasser Arafat (Fatah) and Ariel Sharon (Entity)
- Established the Palestinian Authority to rule over Gaza and the West Bank
- The PA effectively functions as a liberal wing of the Zionist Entity, policing and arresting Palestinians and promoting the apartheid state within Occupied Palestine
- Widely unpopular, esp in Gaza



Oslo





Second Intifada, 2000

- Began in occupied Jerusalem as a civilian uprising after Ariel Sharon made a provocative visit to Temple Mount/Al-Aqsa
- Regional instability, Syrian troops deployed to Lebanon to assist with Israel's 2nd invasion of Lebanon.
- This created tensions within Lebanon, with some opposing Syrian intervention and viewing it as a threat to Lebanese sovereignty.
- The second intifada, and the resistance it created, ultimately ended when the traitor Mahmoud Abbas signed another "peace" deal with Ariel Sharon.



2nd Intifada





Hamas Elected + Blockade

- 2005, Hamas was elected to replace the PA in Gaza by an overwhelming democratic majority
- The PA was widely unpopular due to liberal Zionists and the PFLP candidate was imprisoned
- The Entity immediately insisted on Hamas disarming and abandoning its anti-entity rhetoric; Hamas refused
- In 2007 the Entity began construction of the Gaza border walls, effectively blockading Gaza for 18 years
- This drastically reduced supply of food, water, and medicine into Gaza



Blockade



Great March of Return 2018-2019





Road to Al-Aqsa Flood

- Various Escalations from 2005-2021, including a prominent one in 2014 and The Great March of Return in 2018/2019
- In 2021, constant bombardment of Gaza and poor living conditions ran rampant, cities like Khan Younis, Rafah, and Gaza City under constant threat
- One of the deadliest years of occupation in Gaza
- Lead Hamas to foment a plan to break out of the apartheid blockade and secure transport lines to the West Bank



Operation Al-Aqsa Flood

- On October 7th, 2023 Hamas and its military wing (The Al-Qassam Izz Adin Martyr's Brigades) launched a military occupation, temporarily breaking out of the apartheid wall and advancing into Occupied territories from 1948
- Hamas fought against the IOF and gradually retreated back into Gaza where the blockade was reinstated
- What followed was an ongoing multi-year siege including bombings, drone strikes, targeted assassinations, famine, medical scarcity and mass destruction/displacement inflicted by the IOF against the people of Gaza

Operation Al-Aqsa Flood





Escalation of Genocide

- An estimated 600,000 people have been killed within Gaza alone (not including casualties in Lebanon or Syria) since the start of the escalation of the genocide
- Northern Gaza has been flattened, cities throughout South and Central Gaza lies in ruins
- Food and water are extremely scarce
- Thousands of children are orphans and amputees
- Electricity and internet are rare and temporary
- Disease is extremely prevalent and medical facilities are near non-existent
- There is a constant fear of re-escalation resulting in even more casualties
- The responsibility of this genocide is entirely in the hands of the IOF, its suppliers, and its foreign state supporters (Amerikkka, Saudi, Qatar, UAE, Turkey, Azerbaijan, etc.)



Invasion of Lebanon 2.0

- Shortly after Al-Aqsa Flood, Hezbollah joined in support of Hamas, sending rockets into Occupied Palestine and the Golan Heights
- Entity invaded Southern Lebanon in October 2024
- Resulted in a large number of displacements on both sides of the border
- Entity conducted major attacks on Lebanon incl. bombings, pager attack, and assassination of Nasrallah
- Ceasefire signed in November 2024, though some attacks from the Entity still continue, Entity still has not completely withdrawn from the region

Invasion of Lebanon 2.0





Decapitation of Axis of Resistance

- Assassination of major leaders such as Ismail Haniyeh (former head of Hamas), Sayyed Hasan Nasrallah (former Head of Hezbollah), and Yahya Sinwar (former head of Hamas)
- These assassinations mirror previous ones carried out by the Entity such as the assassination of Qasem Solemani
- This campaign was deliberately carried out to fragment resistance groups and isolate Hamas from its state allies of Assadist Syria and Iran
- In December of 2024, Israeli and Turkish backed mercenaries overthrew the government of Syria and established a right wing Takfiri (muslim fascist) government, cutting off Hamas' main supply of weapons

Decapitation of Axis of Resistance





Fall of Syria

- In December of 2024 Turkish, Israeli, US, and Qatar backed terrorists (HTS) staged a coup against the Assad Government
- Their leader, Al Jolani, is a former Al Qaeda member who massacred religious minorities in 2013-2014. As soon as he assumed power, Alawites, Christian's, Shias, and Druze have all been persecuted, massacred, and disappeared by the HTS
- Jolani has had relations with Netanyahu who worked to get the US to drop sanctions on Syria assuming they normalize relations with the Zionist entity/the west
- David's corridor
- Disastrous impact on resistance in the levant

Jolani



Abu Mohammad al-Jolani (He/Him)

HTS LEADER

CNN



Iranian Involvement

- In response to the Entity carrying out assassinations via drone within Iranian airspace, as well as Iran's continued support of resistance, Iran fired a salvo of rockets against the Entity in 2024.
- This was then met with the Entity firing back a large salvo against Iran
- Later, in 2025, the Entity launched a series of unprovoked strikes against Iran, targeting its nuclear facilities, residential housing, as well as its scientists and military leaders
- This led to another Iranian response, and a multi-week chain of exchanges between Iran and the Entity, until a ceasefire was reached
- Iran is now the sole state power in the Levant that supports resistance and opposes the Entity
- As a result, it is highly sanctioned and isolated by Amerikka and its allies



Khamenei





"Ceasefire"

- Numerous ceasefires have been offered by Hamas since January 2024, but have been rejected by the Entity
- A series of Entity proposed "ceasefires" have been implemented and subsequently been broken by the Entity
- Despite the "ceasefires", the blockade and its accompanying famines and death continue
- More recent ceasefires include a forced disarmament of Hamas and Hezbollah, a demand that seeks to permanently cripple resistance to the Entity

"Ceasefire"





The "Movement" in the West

- Encampments
- Increased repression, criminalization of resistance
 - Samidoun, Palestine Action
- Reactionary trends: Arab nationalism/Islamism
- Abandonment of political prisoners



Additional Reading

- Various Writings - Basel Al-Araj
- My People Shall Live - Leila Khaled
- Strategy for the Liberation of Palestine - PFLP
- Perfect Victims - Mohammed El Kurd
- The 1936-1939 Revolt in Palestine - Ghassan Kanafani
- On Zionist Literature - Ghassan Kanafani
- Palestine: A Four Thousand Year History - Nur Masalha
- The National Question - Ibrahim Kaypakayya



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