



The Making of the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1947-1951

Ilan Pappe

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Arabs and Jews describe the first Arab-Israeli war of 1948 in completely different ways. Among Arabs, and especially Palestinians, the events of that year are known as the ""nakba"" - the catastrophe, the trauma, the disaster. For Jews, and in particular for Israelis, their victory in the war of 1948 is a veritable miracle in which, against tremendous odds and through heroic military effort, the Jewish community succeeded in thwarting attempts by the Arab states to destroy it.

This book integrates new archival material with the findings of recent scholarship to present the reader with a comprehensive and general history of the origins and consequences of the 1948 war. The author shows, in sharp contrast to the recollections and myths of both sides, that the military events of 1948 were not decisive. The victory of the Zionist organization and the fate of the Palestinians was determined by politicians on both sides - in the discussions and decisions of the United Nations in 1947-8 and in the Arab League - long before a shot had been fired. The author argues that Israel's failure to take advantage of the genuine opportunity for peace with the Arabs at the UN-sponsored Lausanne Conference in 1949 resulted in the prolonged and tragic conflict between Israel and the Arab states still very much alive today.



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