CHAPTER 19

THE PRIME SHARED HISTORY PROJECT

## Peace-Building Project Under Fire[1]

Dan Bar-On
Sami Adwan

Peace building is a planned activity, based on bottom-up processes, while peacemaking is a political agreement based on top-down processes. We usually believe that a peace process can become sustainable only when the two are synchronized. For example, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in South Africa was a political agreement, compromising the interests of both sides, which took into account also the bottom-up needs of acknowledgment of past atrocities and taking personal responsibility for them, letting 22,000 victims of the Apartheid give testimonies. Along this analysis, the Oslo Accord gave a political opportunity (and hope) to synchronize the top-down and bottom-up processes in the Israeli and Palestinian conflict. Many bottom-up projects were initiated as a result of such a hope, alas these hopes were shattered by the outbreak of the bloody conflict in October 2000, after the failure of the Camp David talks.
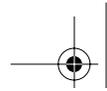
It is quite clear, that when there is no ongoing, top-down peacemaking initiative, the peace-building activities cannot bring about peace all by themselves (Maoz, 2000a). Therefore, they should become more modest in their goals: They have to focus on maintaining the ability of mutual positive interactions of the peace builders (the idea of "islands of sanity") and/or prepare the ground by initiating small projects that could become widespread once a future synchronization with top-down initiatives takes place. Again, to take the example of South Africa, the agreement of the TRC in the 1990s did not take place in a vacuum. Black and white cadres were prepared for more than 30 years, in isolated, mostly Christian refuges, which served as such "islands of sanity" under the most severe external conditions.

This perspective is based on a more mature conclusion that peace processes of intractable conflicts are not linear, have ups and downs, and need a long-term commitment of the peace builders rather than momentary, conjectural optimism or opportunism. We present here a project of a joint school textbook that we developed with Palestinian and Israeli teachers at PRIME during one of the most violent periods of the conflict in 2001, and that helped us maintain our "island of sanity" while developing a project that could become widespread in times of future peace agreements. At the present stage we did not try to advertise it or bring it to the attention of the ministries of education, because the public and the ministries were paralyzed and haunted by the conflict, not the peace process, and we estimated that such attempts would hamper the possibility of future dissemination, rather than accommodate them. Our project was based on a more realistic approach, that at the present stage of hostility and violence, the Israeli Jews and the Palestinians are not able to develop a joint narrative of their history (and we do not expect them to do so under the current conditions). Nevertheless, in the meantime they could learn to acknowledge and live with the fact that there are at least two competing narratives to account for their past, present, and future. We assumed that this is an essential intermediate phase, in the process of learning about the other, legitimizing the other's valid reasoning.

In periods of war and conflict, societies and nations tend to develop their own narratives, which from their perspective become the only true and morally superior narrative. These narratives devaluate and even dehumanize their enemy's right for a narrative. If the enemy's narrative is described at all, it is presented as being morally inferior and the enemy is depicted as a faceless immoral with irrational or manipulative views. These narratives become embedded into everyday culture, into the national and religious festivals, into the media and into children's school textbooks. Textbooks are the formal representations of the society's ideology and its ethos. They impart the values, goals, and myths that the society wants to instill into the new generation (Apple, 1979; Bourdieu, 1973; Luke, 1988).
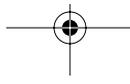
Children growing up during times of war and conflict know only the narrative of their people. This narrative is supposed to convince them, overtly and covertly, of the need to dehumanize the enemy. It usually indoctrinates children to a rationale that justifies the use of power to subjugate the enemy. This not only causes the development of narrow and biased understandings among children, but also leads to the development of negative attitudes and values toward the other (Levinas, 1990).

This state of affairs is true also for the Palestinian/Israeli situation. First of all some facts: Since the early 1950s, Palestinians have been using Jordanian and Egyptian schoolbooks in their schools in West Bank and Gaza Strip, respectively. The use of these schoolbooks continued after Israel occupied the West Bank and Gaza Strip in the 1967 war but they went through censorship. Palestinians have started preparing their own schoolbooks right after the establishment of the PNA in 1994. In the 2000–01 school year, the first Palestinian-produced textbooks were introduced for grades 1 and 6. Each year the Palestinian curriculum, centered under the supervision of the Palestinian Ministry of , produced textbooks for two grades only. They gradually substituted the Jordanian and Egyptian ones. The Palestinian education system is described as a centralized one. This means the Ministry of Education is the sole producer of the school textbooks and all schools use the same textbooks. Israelis have a longer history of producing their textbooks. It goes back to before the State of Israel was established. The Israeli system of education is described to be a more decentralized system. This means that schools and teachers have some freedom to choose the textbooks they want to use from a list of textbooks that the Ministry of Education has approved. To a limited extent, teachers also may choose the text they want to use from the open market.

Research on textbooks shows how each side, Palestinian as well as Israeli, presents its own narratives. In an analysis of 1948 Palestinian refugees' problem (Adwan & Firer, 1997, 1999) in Palestinian and Israeli textbooks since 1995, both sides failed to talk about the complexity of the refugees' problems. The Israeli texts put most of the blame on the Palestinians and the Arabs for the refugees' plight, while the Palestinian texts mainly blamed the Israelis and the British. The texts even fail to agree on the facts (e.g., the numbers of 1948 Palestinian refugees). Israelis write that there were between 600–700,000 Palestinians who became refugees as a result of the 1948 war, while Palestinians wrote that there were more than 1 million Palestinians who became refugees as a result of the 1948 fighting.

Another comprehensive analysis of narratives of the conflict/relation in Palestinian and Israeli history and civic education (Firer & Adwan, 1999; Maoz, 2000a, 2000b) shows that the texts reflect a culture of enmity. The terminology used in the texts had different meanings. What was positive on one side was negative on the other side. For example, the 1948 War in the

Israeli texts is called the "War of Independence," while in the Palestinian text it is called "Al-Naqbah (the Catastrophe)." While Israeli texts refer to the first Jewish immigrants to Palestine as "the pioneers," the Palestinian texts refer to them as "gangs" and "terrorists." The heroes of one side are the monsters of the other. Also, most of the maps in the texts eliminate the cities and towns of the other side. The texts show the delegitimization of each other's rights, history, and culture. There is also no recognition of each other's sufferings. The Holocaust is barely mentioned in Palestinian texts,[2] and likewise the trauma of Palestinians is ignored in the Israeli texts. The findings show also that both sides' textbooks fail to include the peaceful periods of coexistence between Jews and Palestinians.

Daniel Bar-Tal (1995) analyzed the content of 124 Israeli schoolbooks from 1975–1995. According to Bar-Tal, in times of intractable conflict each side develops beliefs about the justness of its own goals, beliefs about security, beliefs about delegitimizing the opponents, beliefs of positive self-image, beliefs about patriotism, beliefs about unity, and beliefs about peace. These beliefs constitute a kind of ethos that supports the continuation of the conflict. The study showed that beliefs about security were emphasized in the Israeli textbooks. There was rarely delegitimization of Arabs but most of the text stereotype Arabs negatively.

Based on these studies, we concluded that the Israeli–Palestinian conflict is not yet ready, perhaps will never be ready, for one joint narrative; neither are we ready to erase all expressions of hostility toward each other in our textbooks at the current stage of the conflict. We therefore decided to develop an innovative school booklet that contains two narratives, the Israeli narrative and the Palestinian narrative, around certain dates or milestones in the history of the conflict. This would mean that each student will learn also the narrative of the other, in addition to the familiar own narrative, as a first step toward acknowledging and respecting the other. We assumed that a joint narrative would emerge only after the clear change from war culture to peace culture took place. This requires time and the ability to mourn and work through the painful results of the past. We could not expect this to take place while the conflict was still going on. In addition, we had to consider the roles of teachers. Studies have shown that teachers have more power than the mere written texts in forming children's understandings and value systems (Angvik & von Borries, 1997; Nave & Yogev, 2002). As a result, this project focuses on the central role of the teachers in the process of using shared history texts in the classroom. The teachers should therefore develop these narratives and try them out with their 9th- and 10th-grade classrooms, after the booklet has been translated into Arabic and Hebrew. There will be an empty space between the narratives for the pupils and teachers to add their own responses.
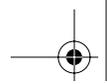
THE PARTICIPANTS

The co-founders of Peace Research in the Middle East (PRIME), Sami Adwan and Dan Bar-On, and two history professors, Adnan Massallam (Bethlehem University) and Eyal Nave (Tel Aviv University and the Kibbutzim Teachers Seminar in Tel Aviv), chose the team to work on this project. The team includes six Palestinian history and geography teachers, six Jewish-Israeli history teachers, and six international delegates, as well as one Jewish-Israeli observer. The Palestinian teachers, who are from Hebron, Bethlehem, and East Jerusalem, had never before participated in dialogue encounters with Israelis. Several of the Israeli teachers, who teach in high schools in the center and north of Israel, had participated in previous encounters with Palestinians.

THE PROCESS

All the participants convened four times for three days of workshops at the New Imperial Hotel in the Old City (Eastern, Palestinian part) of Jerusalem in March, June, and August 2002 and in January 2003. As the political and the military situations were very fragile, it was unclear until the last minute whether the Palestinian teachers would get permits to enter Jerusalem, or if they would be able to reach the places where the permits were issued. The workshops were called off several times, but each time we found ways and the energy to call them on again and finally we succeeded to make them happen, mostly with full participation.

   As the project operated within the reality of the conflict, it is critical to note the contexts from which the participants came. First, while the situation on both sides was bleak, difference and asymmetry existed with respect to the intensity of the general realities on the ground. For Palestinians, the reality has an unrelenting effect on day-to-day life with experiences of occupation and living under the thumb of the Israeli army (Maoz, 2000a). This translates into restricted freedom of movement, curfews, border checkpoints, and a lot of fear of shootings, killings, and house demolitions. Most have suffered serious losses and have had their own homes or those of relatives damaged. Meanwhile, for Israelis, because of Palestinian suicide attacks, the everyday reality reflects itself mostly in fear. This involves fear of riding buses and of going downtown or anywhere with crowds. Many on both sides even fear sending their kids to school. Rather unsurprisingly, given the situation, faith and hope are commodities that have been difficult for both sides to hold on to—hence our sheer amazement at the fact that the seminars had such high participation and commitment. One of the Israeli teachers mentioned during the
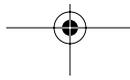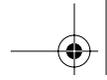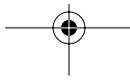
fourth seminar: "This work over the last year was my only source of hope in the current desperate situation." A Palestinian teacher commented, "We should look into other ways of resolving our conflict and this project is an example for such a way."
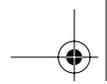
In the first (March 2002) workshop, teachers got acquainted with each other by sharing personal details ("the story behind my name") as well as other biographical stories. That was not an easy process to listen to stories that contained painful moments, which were related to the other's violence or oppression. But it was an important process because it enabled the teachers later to work together on their joint tasks more openly.

During this first workshop we formed three mixed task groups. Each task group created a list of all the events that were relevant to the Palestinian–Israeli conflict and chose one event they would like to work on. In the plenary we followed this process and agreed on the three events: one group worked on the Balfour Declaration of 1917, another on the 1948 war, and the third on the First Palestinian Intifada of 1987. A program was set up for how the groups could communicate and develop their relevant narratives to be reviewed at the second workshop. Professors Naveh and Mussalam provided their professional view of how such narratives should be developed and what should they be composed of. It was the role of the international participants to do some of the translations, when necessary, to summarize the task groups' work and to write an evaluation at the end of each seminar. An additional flavor to our seminars were our evening strolls in the Old City of Jerusalem, which members of both groups did not do lately because of the severe security conditions. In a way we felt like we were in a self-created bubble, disconnected from the hostile surroundings in which we usually lived.

In the second (June 2002) workshop, teachers actually developed their narratives, partially by working in the original task groups and partially by working in uninational groups. We also devoted time to continue our personal acquaintance and joint walks as this became an important ingredient of this kind of work, especially in the current hostile atmosphere outside the group. Between the second and the third workshops the respective narratives were translated into Hebrew and Arabic, as the workshop's language was English.

During the third (August 2002) seminar the teachers had their first opportunity to read both narratives in their own native language, the way they will have to present these narratives to their pupils in the following year. This time, most of the work was done in the plenary and it was interesting to follow jointly how the teachers accepted these narratives. Most of the questions posed during these sessions were informative. Was the translation precise? Who was the person you mentioned in 1908? Why did you try to describe this event so briefly, while the others are described at length? Inter-

estingly, there were almost no attempts of delegitimization of the other's narrative. According to our interpretation, the fact that each side could feel safe with their own narrative made it easier to accept the other's narrative, being so different from one's own. At this workshop we learned about the sudden death of one of Palestinian teacher from Hebron of cancer, while we were convening. There was some deliberation if we should stop the workshop, but the Palestinian teachers felt that he would have liked them to continue and they decided to stay and continue our work. The whole group later decided that his picture and a dedication would be in the opening page of the forthcoming joint booklet. The groups departed with the task to introduce corrections in their narratives as a result of the discussion and to develop a glossary for the teachers and the pupils, concerning definitions that the other side may not be familiar with.

In November 2002 the booklet was to come out in Hebrew, Arabic, and English. The teachers were then supposed to try it out in their classrooms, which meant that in this experimental phase already hundreds of Israeli and Palestinian pupils would be exposed to this new booklet (see a sample in Appendix A). The following teachers' workshops would then be dedicated to get the pupils' responses, make corrections, support the teachers in their work, and develop more such narratives around additional dates. However, the continued and renewed curfews of the Palestinian towns and the additional necessary proofreadings did not enable us to follow this timetable. Therefore, when we convened for our fourth workshop in January 2003, the booklet was not yet ready, but the texts were on paper and most of the teachers have at least tried them out in one classroom. We devoted the first day to listen to their evaluations of the initial testing and then devoted the second day to decide about three additional dates around which more narratives will be developed.

The teachers' reports of their classrooms were very interesting and diverse. For example, one Israeli teacher taught these texts in a classroom comprised predominantly by children of foreign workers, children of new immigrants (partially not Jewish), and Arab children. She had first to make them acquainted with the Israeli narratives (that many of them never learned about before) and only then introduce the Palestinian narrative. She was very creative in visualizing for her pupils what these texts actually represented. Her students could quite easily accept the two narratives as legitimate as they lacked the emotional involvement and identification with "their" narrative. Another Israeli teacher reported that his students were suspicious ("Are these texts really translated into Arabic and taught there?"). Some students showed great interest and asked to take them home to study them further.

One of the Palestinian teachers had to ask the permission of his principal (who actually came to our workshop and showed great interest in our
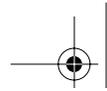
work). He gave his students the texts and invited them to his house to discuss them (as the school was closed because of the curfew). Another Palestinian teacher brought written reactions of her pupils. Some of them expressed an interest to meet Israeli pupils to discuss these texts together. Others wanted to know more about this date or that person, mentioned briefly in the texts. There were reports of students who right away started to deconstruct the other's narrative. In general there was a surprise effect by presenting the two narratives, a surprise that created interest and curiosity. We could feel a general feeling of ownership and accomplishment of the teachers from both sides, in spite of the deteriorating external situation. They felt that they are creating something new for the future, which no one tried to do before.

During the second day the plenary discussed the general concept of the final book. Will we continue to focus on the historical aspects, or will we turn now to specific topics (like women, religions), or even to our contemporary situation? The plenary decided in favor of the historical continuity of the book and chose three additional dates: the 1920s, 1936–1948, and the Six Days 1967 war. These additional dates will fill in the gaps among the initial dates (1917; 1948, the first Palestinian Intifada) and create a continuity of dates. The teachers divided the dates between them and committed themselves to prepare a draft for the following workshop. We decided to convene again in March 2003 to review these new narratives, in addition to further explore the testing of the initial narratives in more classrooms.

In the third year we plan to run a formal evaluation by comparing the binarrative classes with single narrative classes. In June 2004 we would like to have a conference at PRIME, where we will summarize the first experimental phase. We hope by then to have a more positive political climate into which this work will fit in better. In the second phase we will recruit more teachers and use the first group of teachers as assistants to accommodate the new ones.

SUMMARY

The violence that took place around us often also affected our interactions. Yet we continued to do the work, and we were rewarded with glimmers of hope and enthusiasm about the implementation of this project in the schools. We assume that the success of this project (in comparison to earlier projects with Israeli and Palestinian teachers, which were less successful) was related to three important aspects:
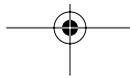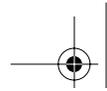
1. The timing of the project introduced as an aspect of urgency to create a positive counterweight to the violence we experienced outside our workshops.
2. Our leadership was a role model for the possibility of a serious performance of academic, professional, financial, and managerial symmetry, which we have never experienced before in similar projects.
3. The creation of real texts, as something concrete that can be given to students and can be related to in both contexts, was very important for teachers who have difficulty with abstract forms of discussions and evaluations.

We acknowledged to each other that peace could only be a result of both sides winning; a "peace" in which only one side wins has no value. Sami said: "The disarmament of history can happen only after the disarmament of weapons. But one can prepare it now." Events of the last months have highlighted the fact that we are not yet getting close to a formal peace agreement. Still, even if that will be achieved in the future, without a bottom-up, peace-building process involving face-to-face encounters between Jewish-Israeli and Palestinian peoples, a sustainable peace will not be achieved. Furthermore, the booklet these teachers are creating and their implementation of it will provide a concrete way to spread the effects outward of this face-to-face encounter between a small group of teachers. As Margaret Mead once said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world." In this case, "Never doubt that a small group of committed teachers—Palestinian and Israeli—can change the world, or at least one part of it, when the time will be ripe."

NOTES

1. We are thankful to Dr. Dieter Hartmann and the Wye River People-to-People Exchange Program of the U.S. State Department for their 3-year grants and to the Ford Foundation for their 2-year grant that helped us implement this research project. We also wish to thank Dr. Shoshana Steinberg for her help in developing an earlier report and to Linda Livni and Bob Loeb for their administrative help.
2. While this chapter was being written, a group of Israeli Palestinians, headed by Emil Shufani, a Greek Orthodox priest from Nazareth, decided for the first time to travel to Poland and visit Auschwitz as part of their need to learn about Jewish suffering there and its impact on contemporary Jewish-Israeli society.
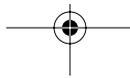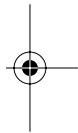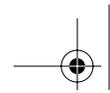
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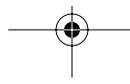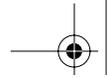
APPENDIX A: A SAMPLE OF THE TWO NARRATIVES
OF THE BALFOUR DECLARATION

(In the original there are empty lines between the two narratives
for the students to write in their own reactions.)

THE ISRAELI NARRATIVE

## From the Balfour Declaration to the first White Paper

Introduction

The birth of the Zionist movement.   Zionism, the Jewish national movement, was born in the 19th century when the ideology embodied in the Enlightenment was disseminated in the European Jewish community. These new ideas planted the first seeds of Jewish nationalism; the subsequent birth of Zionism was the result of several factors:

1. The rise of modern anti-Semitism—a deeply-rooted and complicated mixture of traditional religious hatred augmented by "scientific" racism, which categorized Jews as a depraved and pernicious race.

2. The disappointment of western European Jews with the emancipation, which pledged that the position of Jews in society would equal that of the Christians. The Jews were discouraged when it became clear that in many instances there was equality in name only. Discrimination continued.

3. New European nationalist movements such as those appearing in Italy and Germany inspired similar aspirations among the Jews.

4. An important element was the longing for Zion, an integral aspect of Jewish religious and national identity throughout history. This longing stemmed from the biblical promise that the Land of Israel was given to the people of Israel by the God of Israel, and on memories of those historical eras when the people of Israel lived independently in their land. This concept inspired the national anthem, written at that time:

   Hatikvah: The Hope

   As long as in our heart of hearts
   the Jewish spirit remains strong,
   And we faithfully look toward the east,
   Our eyes will turn to Zion.
   We have not yet lost our hope,
   The hope of two thousand years,
   To be a free people in our land—
   The land of Zion and Jerusalem.
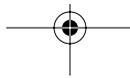
The Zionist movement was born in the major centers of Jewish popula-
tion in Europe, and its purpose was to return the Jewish people to its land
and put an end to its abnormal situation among the nations of the world.
At first there was a spontaneous emergence of local associations ("Lovers
of Zion") out of which an organized political movement was established,
thanks to the activities of "The Father of Zionism," Theodore Herzl [whose
Hebrew name is Benjamin Ze'ev Herzl].

In 1882 there was a small wave of immigration [aliya/Aliyot] to "the
land" [i.e., the Land of Israel], the first of several. The purpose of these
aliyot was not just to fulfill the religious obligations connected to the land,
as had been the case in the past, but rather to create a "new" kind of Jew, a
productive laborer who Zionism is to create a refuge for the Jewish people
in the land of Israel, guaranteed by an open and official legal arrangement.

There were two basic approaches to Zionism:

1. Practical Zionism focused on increasing immigration, purchasing
   land, and settling Jews on the land. By 1914, in the first two waves of
   immigration, nearly 100,000 people immigrated (although most of
   them later left the country). Dozens of agricultural settlements were
   established and there was a significant increase in the urban Jewish
   population.
2. Political Zionism focused on diplomatic efforts to get support for
   Zionism from the great empires in order to obtain a legal and offi-
   cial charter for widescale settlement in the land.

Chaim Weizmann, who became Zionism's leader after Herzl's death,
integrated both aspects of the movement.

In the original there is a picture of The moshav Nahalal, a semi-cooper-
ative agricultural settlement, established in 1921 in the Jezreel Valley.

The Balfour Declaration

The first time any country expressed support for Zionism was in a letter
sent by Lord Balfour, they would work on his own land and help establish a
Jewish political entity in the Land of Israel.

Minister of Foreign Affairs, to Lord Rothschild, a leader of the Jewish
community in Great Britain. It came to be known as the Balfour Declara-
tion. The letter was dated November 2, 1917, shortly before the end of
World War I. It expressed the support of the British Government for estab-
lishing a national home for the Jewish people in the land of Israel:
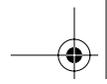
Foreign Office

November 2nd, 1917

Dear Lord Rothschild,

I have much pleasure in conveying to you, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations which has been submitted to, and approved by, the Cabinet.

"His Majesty's Government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country."

I should be grateful if you would bring this declaration to the knowledge of the Zionist Federation.

Yours sincerely,

Arthur James Balfour

THE PALESTINIAN NARRATIVE

The Balfour Declaration

Historical Background

In April 1799 Napoleon Bonaparte put forth a plan for a Jewish state in Palestine. During the siege of Acre, he sought to enlist Jewish support in return for which he promised to build the Temple. The project failed after the defeat of Napoleon in the battles of Acre and Abu-Qir. It represents the first post-Renaissance expression of cooperation between a colonialist power and the Jewish people.

However, it was the events of 1831–40 that paved the way for the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. Lord Palmerston, the British Foreign Secretary in 1840-41, proposed establishing a British protectorate in the Ottoman Empire to be settled by as a buffer area—an obstacle to Mohammed Ali of Egypt and to political unity in the Arab regions.

Britain launched a new policy supporting Jewish settlement in Palestine after Eastern European Jews, particularly those in Czarist Russia, whose living conditions were poor in any case, suffered cruel persecution. Consequently, with the rise of nationalism, Zionism appeared as a drastic international solution to the Jewish problem, transforming the Jewish religion into a nationalist attachment to a special Jewish homeland and a special Jewish state. Other factors influencing the birth and development of
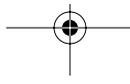
the Zionist movement were the increasingly competitive interests shared by European colonialists in Africa and Asia, and the Zionist colonialist movement for control of Palestine.

British imperialism found in Zionism a perfect tool for attaining its own interests in the Arab East, which was strategically and economically important for the Empire. Likewise, Zionism used British colonialist aspirations to gain international backing and economic resources for its project of establishing a Jewish national home in Palestine.

This alliance of British imperialism and Zionism resulted in the birth of what is known in history books as the Balfour Declaration (November 2, 1917). It is a conspicuous example of the British policy of seizing another nation's land and resources and effacing its identity. It is a policy based on aggression, expansion and repression of a native people's aspirations for national liberation.

For the Palestinians, the year 1917 was the first of many—1920, 1921, 1929, 1936, 1948, 1967, 1987, 2002—marked by tragedy, war, disaster, killing, destruction, homelessness, and catastrophe.

Dividing the Arab East

Imperialist Britain called for forming a higher committee of seven European countries. The report submitted in 1907 to British Prime Minister Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman emphasized that the Arab countries and the Muslim-Arab people living in the Ottoman Empire presented a very real threat to European countries, and it recommended the following actions:

1. To promote disintegration, division, and separation in the region.
2. To establish artificial political entities that would be under the authority of the imperialist countries.
3. To fight any kind of unity—whether intellectual, religious or historical—and taking practical measures to divide the region's inhabitants.
4. To achieve this, it was proposed that a "buffer state" be established in Palestine, populated by a strong, foreign presence that would be hostile to its neighbors and friendly to European countries and their interests.

Doubtless the recommendations of Campbell-Bannerman's higher committee paved the way for the Jews to Palestine. It gave British approval to the Zionist movement's policy of separating Palestine from the Arab lands in order to establish an imperialist core that would ensure foreign influence in the region.

Jewish imperialist projects in Palestine followed in quick succession. World War I, 1914–1918, was a critically important period for Zionist and British imperialist policies for Palestine. Included in an exchange of letters
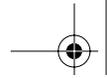
between Sharif Hussein of Mecca and Sir Henry McMahon was the Damascus Protocol (July 14, 1915). Sharif Hussein indicated to McMahon the boundaries of the Arab countries in Asia to which Britain would grant independence—the Arabian Peninsula, Iraq/Mesopotamia, Syria and southern parts of present-day Turkey. He excluded Aden because it was a British military base. McMahon's response in a Hussein–McMahon Agreement.

In May 1916 Britain and France signed a secret document—the Sykes–Picot Agreement—to divide the Arab East at a time when Britain was exchanging letters with Sharif Hussein about recognizing the independence of the region. In the agreement Britain and France pledged to divide the Ottoman Empire as follows:

(A map in the original)

1. The Lebanese and Syrian coasts were given to France.
2. South and middle Iraq were given to Britain.
3. An international administration in Palestine excluding the two ports of Haifa and Acre.
4. A French zone of influence, including eastern Syria and the Mosul province.
5. Transjordan and the northern part of Baghdad province.
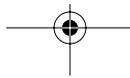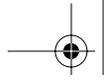
This prime was even luckier for Patrick Laroche, striking pay dirt on just his fourth try. For years, Patrick had used GIMPS software as a free "stress test" for his computer builds. Credit for this prime goes not only to Patrick Laroche for running the Prime95 software, Woltman for writing the software, Blosser for keeping the Primenet server running smoothly, and the thousands of GIMPS volunteers that sifted through millions of non-prime candidates. Due to the distributed nature of the project as a whole, numbers are not always tested in order and a smaller Mersenne prime may yet be found. For that reason, thanks to all the GIMPS members that contributed their resources towards achieving this milestone. Share All sharing options for: The making of Amazon Prime, the internet's most successful and devastating membership program. Twitter. But the idea came with huge risks, and it spurred real tension inside Amazon. Some managers resented that their projects appeared to be deprioritized for a secret program they knew little about. Others feared that Amazon's top customers were going to abuse the program and ultimately bankrupt the company with soaring shipping costs. And if it succeeded, Amazon Prime was going to mean big, uncomfortable changes on everything from how managers were evaluated by superiors to how the company fulfilled orders and moved goods from point A to point B. Bezos's instinct, however, proved to be very right Crash Course Big History takes a look at Humans, one of the weirdest examples of change in the Universe. Around for only 250,000 years, we are truly one of the most complex things in the cosmos. We didn't descend from chimps or bonobos â€" they're just our cousins. We all descended from a common shrew-like ancestor. After a slow 7 million years of evolving, developing bipedalism, collectively learning, and tinkering with primitive tools, a powerful new species ruled the Earth. Using Tools, Shelter, and Fire. © Carolina Biological/Visuals Unlimited/CORBIS.