



Report of meeting held at School of Economic Science, 11 Mandeville Place, London [W1U 3AJ](#)
See: Notes of Open Research Group meeting on 14th June 2017: [OpenResearchGroup-170614](#)
Present: Janos, Paul, Ellena, Mary (notes).

We were talking about the middle east, and the fact that there are two sides to the story. Paul had attended a talk the previous evening, given by an Oxford Don who had researched the Palestine situation, but he had not looked earlier than the Balfour declaration - in Paul's view, there are so many long-term processes, that you need to look earlier. He was part of the strand of free-thinking Jewish liberalism that doesn't look at long-term processes doesn't understand that the Arabs have a different mentality, because they act in a tribal emotional way, not a rational way. A lot of his premises were wrong.

Paul has read around the subject, and discovered that the Jewish decision to migrate back to Israel, the movement to repossess Palestine for the Jewish people, been building up, since 1895. Weizmann presented the theory of Zionism at a conference, Jewish people responded, but the response of some Arabs was also to migrate back to Palestine. Mohammed had said that land should be left for the Jews. Census documents in mid 1800s show that the land was very sparsely populated, mainly by Arab-Christians, and only a few Jews. When reports started circulating about the idea of re-patriation, the Arabs started migrating from the neighbouring countries from Syria, Jordan and Egypt. This was in the early 1900s, at a similar time to Jews travelling to Palestine, there was also a draw for Arabs to get work doing building for the Jews arriving with money and little building skills - it was the beginnings of national migration.

But there was an intention to block the Jewish migration, they had been a minority among a muslim majority region, they were a demo-status, they were not citizens. There is now a backlash with the Jewish state attacking people in the Gaza strip. The Israelis conquered the Gaza strip in 1967, then they withdrew the army and the settlers, and allowed them to stay. Arafat was their leader, in 1948 the Arab armies decided against the Jews and told the Arabs to get out of the way of the army whilst we destroy them but the attack failed - Nakba, was an attempt at Genocide. Annihilation was the intention, but the Arabs took their revenge by driving Jews out from the wider middle east, a land which was five times the size of Palestine. Hamas were firing rockets in order to get the Jews to hit back and maximise civilian casualties.

References: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zionism> • <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nakba> Day
<http://www.balfourproject.org/balfour-weizmann-and-the-creation-of-israel-by-charles-glass/>
<http://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/benny-morris-on-why-he-s-written-his-last-word-on-the-israel-arab-conflict-1.465869>

Similarly, in Northern Ireland, Cromwell killed a third of the population, gave the soldiers land, and encouraged people from Scotland to emigrate, which set up an ongoing conflict.
