**Book Review**

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**To Whom Was the Promised Land Promised? Some Fundamental Truths About the Arab-Israeli Conflict**

Jerusalem: Mazo Publishers, 2020, 442 pp.

There are issues that have a dual narrative. As time goes on there is a tendency to see the narrative as another justifiable reason for the issue but here one has to be careful. Historical events are milestones and to the extent that they are backed up by official documents, certificates, protocols and signed agreements they have a significant say in determining history. However, the narrative has a life of its own and as a result it creates for itself an independent framework of existence. In his book "To Whom was The Promised Land Was Promised" Avraham Zion delves into a long-standing existential question. Facing the issue are embarrassed two peoples seeking to be "on the right side of history," that is, to be the ones whose land is. The Jews claim that this is the land that was promised to them from the days of the Bible and Abraham. And the Palestinian people who see this land as their homeland as a result of the division of the area among the local residents who have lived there for generations. Already at the beginning of reading the book and throughout its length the author excels at maintaining a high level of tension and fluent and fascinating writing. His promise in the introduction to give the clear history angle on both sides is fulfilled successfully. Throughout the book the author presents each landmark from both aspects. He gives each document the respect it deserves and each map its comprehensive interpretation. The voltage level is maintained as the reading progresses. The question of who the land was actually promised hovers on the horizon throughout and even after the reading.

It is known that historians love maps because the map has everything that the reporter can not describe. This book is replete with maps and charts and is worth over a thousand words. The book is backed by authentic and central archival documents on the subject. There is significant exposure of international rulings concerning the issue of the Promised Land. The book relies on extensive documentation of protocols from the Houses of Parliament and the State Offices of the United States and the United Kingdom. There is professional reference to UN Security Council resolutions, international legal institutions, international agreements, rulings of the courts of the United States and the United Kingdom. There is also an extensive archival documentation of press clippings.

The introduction presents the two contenders for the crown and the reasons that have accompanied them all these years. The author already promises to present the questions in an inquisitive way and not to let his prejudices on the matter of the fact that he is a Jew and an Israeli a stage. He stands his ground proudly and ensures an exciting and fascinating reading experience.

The book is divided into four parts. The first part deals with the Balfour Declaration. Here the author explains the foundations of Zionism and details the status of the Balfour Declaration as expressed in various offsets of a written document versus actual practice. Further on he deals with the interpretation of the statement of its broad aspects to all those engaged in the craft and discusses the meanings of the statement. This section is accompanied by a great deal of significant and innovative archival documentation.

The second part deals with the implementation of the statement in practice. The author concentrates on the San Remo Conference and its legal implications and discusses agreements on the way to implementing San Remo decisions. There is an extensive presentation of the agreements. This part expands greatly on the British Mandate in Palestine and describes the borders. This part of the book is steeped in maps that satisfy the eye. In his wisdom the author makes an extensive and intelligent link between the written decisions and their configuration on the surface.

Part three describes the issue of breach of trust. The author describes the founding of Trans-Jordan and the first division of Palestine and deals with the second division of Palestine. The fourth part of the book deals with the Arab position. The author details the correspondence between Hussein and McMahon and deals with additional British promises given to the Arabs on behalf of the British.

This is a unique book of its kind even though many books have been written in the field for example the book of Ari Shavit (2013), *My Promised Land: The Triumph and Tragedy of Israel*. This book presents the dilemma surrounding the establishment of the State of Israel and its implications for the two peoples. This is a fascinating and very important book in the field but the advantage of the present book is that it gives a broad view of the dilemma of the two peoples and dives far back to the point in time where a decision on the division led to an ununitable separation. The book of Ian Black (2017), *Enemies and Neighbors: Arab and Jews in Palestine and Israel* deals with the depth of the dispute but does not give deep and appropriate expression in the field of international law and the legal and civil implications of the agreements. Hence the author devoted his best years and professional experience to composing a book that is enlightening to any curious readers as they seek to know the history of the peoples of the place. The book gives extensive information in the historical as well as the legal field. There is a great deal of reference to the issues of the civic personal influence of each people and especially a direct and true statement of the writer who respects both sides equally. This is a must-read book for every Israeli, Palestinian, local, neighbor or curious reader who wants to expand the knowledge in the field and to discover another tier or two about one of the oldest places in human history, or maybe even a question.

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