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## Do the Jews Have the Right to a State in the Holy Land?

**The question is not whether the Palestinians are an “invented people,” but rather why Arabs deny Jewish history and Jewish rights to a state in Israel.**

The recent brouhaha about whether the Palestinians are an “invented people” misses the point. The real question we should ask is, “Why do Palestinian Arabs repudiate 3,000 years of Jewish history in Palestine and the rights of Jews to a state in their ancestral homeland?” Can peace really be achieved if the Palestinians teach their people the lie that Jews are newcomers and Palestinians were the original inhabitants of the Holy Land?

### What are the facts?

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas stood before the United Nations General Assembly in September, 2011 and said, “I come before you from the Holy Land, the land of Palestine, the land of divine messages, ascension of the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) and the birthplace of Jesus Christ (peace be upon him).” What’s missing in Abbas’s description of the Holy Land is any mention of its Biblical founders, the Jewish people, or the fact that Jesus was a Jew. So brazen is the Palestinian effort to turn history on its head that Abbas’s predecessor, Yassir Arafat, often claimed that “Jesus was the first Palestinian martyr.”

Indeed, rewriting the history of the land of Israel in order to deny Israel’s right to exist is central to the Palestinian Authority’s PR strategy. This rewriting has two dimensions: First to erase the 3,000-year history of the Jewish nation in the Holy Land; and second to invent ancient Palestinian, Muslim and Arab histories in the region.

**The Palestinians deny virtually every fact of Jewish life in Palestine before and after Biblical times.** Dr. Jamal Amar, a lecturer at Bir-Zeit University states that in the Holy Land after “60 years of digging . . . they’ve found nothing at all, not a water jug, not a coin, not an earthen vessel . . . absolutely nothing of this [Jewish] myth, because it is a myth and a lie”—this despite the discovery of tens of thousands of Hebrew coins, texts, pots, buildings and seals carrying Biblical references. Likewise, despite definitive archeological findings from the Temple Mount in Jerusalem and exhaustive scholarly confirmation of two Jewish Temples, the Palestinian Authority (P.A.) categorically denies the existence of any Temple.

What’s more, the P.A. claims that since the Jews had no history in the Land of Israel, Zionism was a colonialist movement fabricated by Europeans to get rid of Jews. Another professor at Bir Zeit University, Samih Hamouda, asserts that President Abbas’s student research proves “the Zionist movement is not Jewish . . . Rather it is an imperialist colonialist movement which sought to use the Jews . . . to further western colonialist plans.”

Israel has long accepted the idea of two states for two peoples—the Palestinians and the Jews. But the Palestinian Authority refuses to embrace this solution. As Mahmoud Abbas lashed out just a few months ago, “Don’t order us to recognize a Jewish state. We won’t accept it.” Clearly, until this fundamental issue is resolved, the Palestinians will not achieve their goal of statehood. The fact that this outcome is based on falsehoods makes it a shame and a tragedy.

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To prop up claims that only Arabs have valid rights to the Holy Land, the P.A. and its academics have fabricated histories of Palestinians, Arabs and Muslims before Biblical times. Of course this is impossible, since the term Palestine was coined by Rome in 136 C.E.—after the time of Jesus. Islam was established much later in 610 C.E., and Arabs first arrived in Israel with the Muslim invasion of 637 C.E.

We witness more such distortions and outright lies in a 2005 Palestinian Authority video documentary that claims the ancient, vanished Canaanites were Arab, as were the Biblical Hebrews, and that the religion preached by Moses was Islam.

**In the face of these fabrications, it’s fair to ask: Are the Palestinians an invented people?** The Associated Press headline responding to the question announced, “Palestinians ‘invented people’ is truth.” But this is nothing new. The fact that the Palestinians are a made-up people has been established by all manner of historical research and acclamation, even by Arabs themselves.

We know that never in history was there a Palestinian state. We also know that nearly all the cities in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza have Hebrew names—like Bethlehem, Nazareth and Hebron—and their current Arabic names are translations of these names.

More importantly, back in 1937, the Arab leader Auni Bey Abdul-Hadi proclaimed to the Peel Commission, “There is no such country [as Palestine]. Palestine is a term the Zionists invented.” Then in 1977, Zahir Muhsein, a member of the PLO Executive Committee said in an interview that “The Palestinian people does not exist. The creation of a Palestinian state is only a means for continuing our struggle against the state of Israel . . . Only for political and tactical reasons do we speak about the existence of the Palestinian people.”

**To say that the Palestinians are a fabricated people, however, is *not* to say that they don’t deserve their own state.** Rather, the problem arises when the P.A. invents *not only* their peoplehood but *also* a false history that justifies permanent jihad against the Jewish people and denies their rights to self-determination and a Jewish state in their homeland.

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