

# The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, 1947-1949

(Cambridge Middle East Library)

Benny Morris (1987)

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'Mr Morris ... is a rare combination of journalist and painstaking research historian, whose thorough use of Israeli, British and American archives - many of the materials unavailable until now has enabled him to present a definitive history of his subject.'

*The New York Times Book Review*

'.. The most comprehensive and detailed study yet published on the Palestinian refugees.' *The Economist*

'.. a book of extraordinary power and integrity . . . Benny Morris takes that great tale of flight and conquest and tells it as it has never been told before: with precision and moral economy, with awesome detail and honesty, drawing from recently declassified archival and private papers.' Fouad Ajami in *The Washington Post*

'In page after page crammed with hard data and play-by-play descriptions of what was going on in each period - December 1947 to March 1948, April to June 1948- . . . Morris details the bloody conflict between Arabs and Jews and what was going on behind the lines. He takes us back, into offices of the Arab League and the Haganah, into the councils of the National Committees set up in Arab towns, into meetings of the Jewish Agency and, later, the fledgling Israeli government.' *The Christian Science Monitor*

'This latest addition to the Cambridge Middle East Library is a book of exceptional importance It will be required reading for anyone who professes a serious interest in the Arab-Israeli Conflict over Palestine. Its conclusions, which invalidate many of the assumptions commonly made about the origins of the conflict, need to be taken into account in any attempt to devise a solution to it. *Arab Affairs*

'This excellent myth-debunking book... deserves a wide readership among those who want to understand what has happened in Israel over the last 40 years rather than repeat discredited propaganda which serves only to prolong the war.' *The Spectator*

The first full-length study of the birth of the Palestinian refugee problem. Based on recently declassified Israeli, British and American state and party political papers and on hitherto untapped private papers, this book traces the stages of the 1947-9 exodus against the backdrop of the first Arab-Israeli war and analyses the varied causes of the flight. The Jewish and Arab decision-making involved, on national and local levels, military and political, is described and explained, as is the crystallization of Israel's decision to bar refugee repatriation. The subsequent fate of the abandoned Palestinian refugees leaving the Galilee in October-November 1948. Clickable map of the depopulated locations - i.e. the source of the refugees. The 1948 Palestinian exodus, also known as the Nakba (Arabic: *انكبة*, al-Nakbah, literally "disaster", "catastrophe", or "cataclysm"),[1] occurred when more than 700,000 Palestinian Arabs - about half of prewar Palestine's Arab population - fled or were expelled from their homes, during the 1948 Palestine war.[2] Between 400 and 600 Palestinian villages were sacked during the war, while urban. The history of the Palestinian exodus is closely tied to the events of the war in Palestine, which lasted from 1947 to 1949, and to the political events preceding it. Gelber, Yoav Palestine 1948, War Escape, and the Emergence of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, Brighton, Sussex Academic Press, 2001. Gelber, Yoav (Heb.) Independence and Nakba (forthcoming) (Chapter 15). Lorch, Netanel, The Edge of the Sword, Israel's War of Independence, 1947-1949, revised ed., Jerusalem, Masada Press, 1968. Masalha, Nur, Expulsion of the Palestinians, The Concept of "Transfer" in Zionist Political Thought, 1882-1948, Washington DC, Institute for Palestine Studies, 1992. Masalha, Nur - A Critique of Benny Morris, Journal of Palestine Studies 81, Vol. X, 1, Autumn 1991. Masalha, Nur - The Historical Roots of the Palestinian Refugee Question, in Naseer Aruri, ed., Palestinian Refugees, the Right of Return, London, Pluto Press, 2001.