**Geopolitics of Jerusalem:**

**1917 – 1947 – 1967 - 2007**

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### Eldad Brin

A Jerusalem native, Eldad Brin has been a licensed tour guide since 2006, and specializes in leading various groups, including educational groups from Israel and abroad, through diverse aspects of Jerusalem’s history, archaeology, religion, current affairs, and geopolitics. He holds two degrees in geography from The Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

1. Introductions. The holiness of Jerusalem lends it a meaning different from the other contested cities, such as Belfast, Berlin, and Sarajevo.
2. Other contested cities.
3. Hebron
4. Tiberias
5. Safed
6. Question: In Jerusalem, who gets to control the Temple Mount, or the “holy basin,” or the Old City?
7. The Balfour Declaration, 1917.
8. The British, before their take-over, favored a “national home” for Jews.
9. Quotation: England views with favor “the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people.” It’s not a promise. In 1917, Jews were a majority in Jerusalem (since the 1870s). But they were a minority in Palestine. The British Mandate lasted from 1922 until 1848.
10. “Greater Jerusalem 2015,” a map from <http://Ir-amim.org.il> .
11. Questions.
12. Is the Balfour Declaration a legally binding contract? How does one define Jerusalem?
13. The British also promised a homeland to the Arabs (recall Lawrence of Arabia).
14. Conclusion: the British were “playing both sides.” The end result is ISIS, which promises to render the borders irrelevant.
15. The Peels’ Commission Partition Plan (1937).
16. A two state solution with Jerusalem remaining in British hands (with a corridor linking Jerusalem/Bethlehem to Jaffa).
17. The Palestinians rejected this outright. The Jews accepted it with reservations regarding Jerusalem.
18. The British saw themselves as the “last Crusaders,” imposing Christian rule over the Holy Land.
19. Conclusion. In the 1920s, David Ben Gurion said “yes, but” to the partition plan. Ben Gurion insisted on keeping Mount Scopus (Hebrew University) in Jewish hands. He saw the university as the “Third Jewish Temple” and preferred that to the Temple Mount.
20. The United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (1947).
21. According to UN resolution 181, Jerusalem and Bethlehem became a UN-administered “corpus separatum,” belonging neither to Israelis nor Palestinians. Israel accepted the plan. Palestinians were encouraged to reject it.
22. David Ben Gurion said: “I would rather have an Israel without Jerusalem than insisting on Jerusalem and losing everything.”
23. Statehood (1948).
24. War between Israel and Palestine.
25. The Other Combatants: Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and Saudi Arabia. They captured the Old City. Israel captured the rest of greater Palestine.
26. The Green Line. It is an “armistice line,” not an internationally-recognized border. Jerusalem was divided.
27. West Jerusalem (newer neighborhoods, factories, commerce – all but the Jewish Quarter) remained in Jewish hands. Many Jews became refugees and went west.
28. The Palestinian refugees went east. The Jordanians took over the Old City. At the height of the Second Intifada, Eldad’s father said it paled in severity by comparison to the war of 1948.
29. There was a competition between Palestinians and Jordanians. Jordan wanted to preserve the superiority of Amman. The Americans stood by the Jordanians. Sirhan Sirhan was a Jordanian from East Jerusalem. Palestinians assassinated the Jordanian king in 1951. Amman became a great Arab capital.
    * + 1. Jerusalem became a backwater. Jewish (Western) Jerusalem became a great city with 2 million by 1967. In 1949, the State of Israel declared Jerusalem as its capital. There were embassies in Jerusalem, but they left after 1967.
        2. The Mandelbaum Gate, north of the Old City, was reserved for dignitaries, diplomats and tourists.
        3. In Jordanian Jerusalem, there were no Jews. In Israeli Jerusalem, there were few Palestinians.
        4. Aristocratic Palestinian families sold land to Israel, but complained about Zionism.
30. The Six-Day War.
31. Origin.
32. King Hussein felt obliged to join the war in solidarity with other Arab nations. Israel took over the West Bank after three days of war.
33. Yitzhak Rabin was the Chief of Staff. Moshe Dayan was the Minister of Defense. They entered the Lion’s Gate. There is the “Iwo Jima” photo at the Western Wall, three paratroopers.
34. The Fate of the West Bank. Eldad says: “Not to swallow and not to vomit.”
35. In two-three weeks, Israel voted for the annexation of the Old City (including leftist Israelis). It annexed an area of forty square miles.
36. Old Jerusalem had a population of 40,000. Now there were 70,000 people under Israeli control. They did not come to Israel – Israel came to them.
37. What was annexed? What was left out?
38. Four criteria:
39. Maximum land. The army wanted a huge buffer zone, but they had to compromise with the politicians.
40. Minimum Palestinians. Israel didn’t want more Palestinians, so they took their agricultural land and tried to avoid their villages. 28 villages and small towns became part of the New Jerusalem.
41. Commanding Ridges. Tantur was a ridge, and is now Gilo. Israel wanted to take the high points.
42. Airport of Qalandia RC was taken. Israel forced planes coming into Tel Aviv to come to the Qalandia airport in the 1960s and 1970s. It is now defunct.
43. Politicians and military made the borders. Jerusalem is 126 sq. km., larger than Paris. No country in the world recognized the legitimacy of the occupation. “Fifty UN resolutions generally speak of the ‘Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.’”
44. Israelis loved the products that they could suddenly buy in the Old City. “Shop owners in East Jerusalem made a killing.”
45. Thirteen “illegal settlements” were established: Ramot, Beit Hanina, Neve Ya’acov, Pisgat Ze’ev, Ramat Eshkol, French Hill, Ma’alot Dafna, Mount Scopus, Old City, East Talpiot, Beit Safafa, Har Homa, and Gilo.
46. Har Homa is a settlement not recognized by any of the Western nations, because it was created after 1993 (when Israel was warned against establishing new settlements). One-third of Jerusalem Jews live in settlements.
47. From the Gaza Strip, 8,000 settlers were removed at great expense. In the Jerusalem settlements, there are 200,000 Jews.
48. Most Palestinians have an “Israeli Green Card.” 40% of the population of Jerusalem is Palestinian, but they have no representation. They do not want to recognize the legitimacy of Israel rule. Arab neighborhoods of Jerusalem receive about 10% of the city budget.
49. Arabs in Israel can be citizens. 20% of Israelis are Arabs (“Israeli Arabs,” not “Palestinians”). But people in East Jerusalem are not citizens, but only residents.
50. People in Silwan live “like in a South American favela,” but they are better off than people in the West Bank. They have social benefits.
51. Some Palestinians are wealthy, but they are the exception. Palestinians have many children. Only 14% of women work. High drop out levels. Low participation in higher education.
52. The Muslim Quarter. “It is the worst slum in Israel: drug abuse, petty crime, domestic violence.” Many Palestinians don’t ask for construction permits. Silwan construction is to a low standard. Israel turns a blind eye. “Occasionally Israel destroys a badly constructed house.”
53. Demographics.
54. 20% of all Israelis are poor.
55. 35% of Jerusalemites are poor.
56. The Jewish population in Jerusalem has more than doubled since 1967, but the Palestinian population has grown five-fold or more. In 2014, roughly 40% of the city’s population is Palestinian, but they get 10% of the city budget.
57. The Intifidas.
58. Meaning: “Uprising”? Or “Dog shaking off fleas”? Shaking off the Israelis?
59. First Intifada: rock-throwing.
60. Second Intifada.
61. Ariel Sharon, the “devil incarnate in the eyes of Intifada,” triggered the Second Intifada.
62. There were suicide bombers. Eldad had a friend killed.
63. About a thousand Israelis were murdered, including 300 Jerusalemites. There was no wall or red line. It was easy to enter Jerusalem from Jericho, Ramallah, Bethlehem, Gaza, and Nablus.
64. Buses were blown up in many Palestinian locales, but when they blew up in Jerusalem, they made headlines. Jerusalem became a target for terror attacks.
65. The Separation Wall (or Apartheid Wall).
66. There were many opponents to the plan, but it was built in 2002.
67. Israel is still building the wall.
68. Terror went down drastically. Before building the wall, there was a military incursion into the West Bank (Operation Protective Wall).
69. The wall helped reduce terror.
70. Controversy about the Wall around Jerusalem. See the map, “Greater Jerusalem 2015,” produced by ir-amim.org.il.
71. “If the Palestinians suffer, who cares? They brought it on their own heads.”
72. The Green Line of 1948 is 200 miles long. The wall is 500 miles long. The red line of the wall deviates from the green line. It deprives many farmers of their land. The red line is not faithful to the blue line (or municipal boundary).
73. The Three Bubbles.
74. Enormous settlement southwest of Jerusalem: Betar Illit.
75. East of Jerusalem is Maale Adumim. The settlement of it has been upheld by the courts. Prime Minister Olmert, now convicted, has insisted on it.
76. Pisgat Ze’ev. It is the largest settlement in Jerusalem, having more than 50,000 people.
77. Was security merely an excuse? Some say the wall is a land grab. “We have no partners on the Palestinian side, so we can do what we want, and we do.”
78. We Israelis want to scrutinize people going in. “It looks bad, but it’s effective.”
79. Since the wall, there have been no major attacks in Jerusalem. No bus attacks in ten years.
80. Chairman Arafat (who died in 2004) did nothing to halt the terror attacks, and his death may have lowered the attacks.
81. Consequences of the Barrier.
82. Concerns. Kochav Yaacob and Shu’fat are outside the barrier. 100,000 Palestinians are still within “Jerusalem,” but are outside the barrier. Graffiti: Banksy, “Welcome to the Ghetto and the Wall of Tears.” “American Money, Israeli Crime.”
83. The wall costs $3 million per kilometer x 800 KM.
84. Breakdown of stable social order in East Jerusalem.
85. Discussion.
86. John Michalowski. In the past, Israelis and Arab families lived together. Not anymore.
87. Eldad: My parents would be able to ski in Lebanon, and then have dinner in Damascus. They say that the Middle East is going backward.
88. Chris Bedding: What about US involvement?
89. Eldad: Most Israelis are disappointed with Obama. He’s anti-Israeli, or not anti-Israeli enough.
90. The Areas: (a) Israelis cannot go there, for Palestinians are in charge. 20% of population. (b) When a Palestinian town is too close to Israeli settlement, Israel maintains control: 20%. Israelis can visit, but are discouraged. (c) Full Israeli military control. 60% of population, including 50,000 Palestinians.
91. 4.5 million Palestinians, plus 1.5 million in Israel proper. Jews at present have demographic parity, but will be soon a minority.
92. There’s a Jewish majority in Jerusalem, due to the ultra-Orthodox. Secular Israelis are not having children. Eldad’s cousin, ultra-Orthodox, is a grandfather.
93. Israel supplies Palestinians with electricity, but not water.