



Cursed Victory: A History of Israel and the Occupied Territories, 1967 to the Present

Ahron Bregman

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An authoritative and impassioned history of the aftermath of the Six Day War—by a former Israeli soldier—and a cogent argument for an end to the occupation.

In a move that would forever alter the map of the Middle East, Israel captured the West Bank, Golan Heights, Gaza Strip and Sinai Peninsula in 1967's brief but pivotal Six Day War. *Cursed Victory* is the first complete history of the war's troubled aftermath—a military occupation of the Palestinian territories that is now well into its fifth decade. Drawing on unprecedented access to high-level sources, top-secret memos and never-before-published letters, the book provides a gripping and unvarnished chronicle of how what Israel promised would be an 'enlightened occupation' quickly turned sour, and the anguished diplomatic attempts to bring it to an end. Bregman sheds fresh light on critical moments in the peace process, taking us behind the scenes as decisions about the fate of the territories were made, and more often, as crucial opportunities to resolve the conflict were missed.

As the narrative moves from Jerusalem to New York, Oslo to Beirut, and from the late 1960s to the present day, *Cursed Victory* provides vivid portraits of the key players in this unfolding drama, including Moshe Dayan, King Hussein of Jordan, Bill Clinton, and Yasser Arafat. Yet Bregman always reminds us how diplomatic and back-room negotiations affected the daily lives of millions of Arabs, and how the Palestinian resistance, especially during the first and second intifadas, and now in recent tragic developments, have shaped the political arena.

As Bregman concludes, the occupation has become a dark stain on Israel's history. *Cursed Victory* is essential reading for anyone who wants to understand the origins of the ongoing conflict in the region.

Cursed Victory: A History of Israel and the Occupied Territories, 1967 to the Present Details

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Author : Ahron Bregman

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1967 to the Present Ahron Bregman

From Reader Review Cursed Victory: A History of Israel and the Occupied Territories, 1967 to the Present for online ebook

Barry Sierer says

Bregman's book presents a detailed look into the history of Israel's occupation of the West Bank, Gaza Strip, the Sinai Peninsula, and the Golan Heights. He explains the various policies and adjustments that were made in these areas as a result of, and during, the occupations. He also delves into the rather insidious motives behind many of Israel's policies, including those that appear to be benevolent on the surface.

This is a biased account, when I say "biased", I means it's biased towards the people who actually live in the occupied territories, mainly the Palestinians. Bregman is fairly unsparing towards the Israelis but also seems unimpressed by the decisions of the Palestinian leadership.

While groups like Hamas or the PLO are not directly criticized, it is clear that many decisions by Palestinian leadership were poorly calculated and not beneficial to their people. In one incident, during a Clinton-brokered meeting between Ehud Barak, and Yasser Arafat at the start of the Al Aqsa Intifadah, both parties agree to the wording of a cease-fire, then Arafat slips out of the room so he doesn't have to actually sign it.

Despite, the slant, it's still well informed and worth the read.

Lois says

Very interesting read about the Israeli Palestinian conflict written by an Israeli with a more understanding view from the Palestinian point of view.

Roxanne says

This is a good book talking about in 1967 when the Israel went into other countries and took thier land from them. When poeple try to do that to them they get mad. It is no wonder this conflict cannot be solved. Give back the territory they stole and let their be two states. What is the problem?

Ray says

I don't think I can improve on the description shown on the Book Jacket, and with apologies, I simply repeat it here:

An authoritative and impassioned history of the aftermath of the Six Day War—by a former Israeli soldier—and a cogent argument for an end to the occupation.

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As the narrative moves from Jerusalem to New York, Oslo to Beirut, and from the late 1960s to the present day, Cursed Victory provides vivid portraits of the key players in this unfolding drama, including Moshe Dayan, King Hussein of Jordan, Bill Clinton, and Yasser Arafat. Yet Bregman always reminds us how diplomatic and back-room negotiations affected the daily lives of millions of Arabs, and how the Palestinian resistance, especially during the first and second intifadas, and now in recent tragic developments, have shaped the political arena.

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Sandra says

El relato empieza en 1967, justo al inicio de la ocupación después de la Guerra de los Seis Días, así que carece de todo contexto y análisis histórico antes de esa fecha. Aunque a mí esos aspectos me parecen fundamentales para entender todo el conflicto, entre otras cosas porque si no parece que Israel nació de la tierra como una seta y empezó a expandirse, el libro es excepcional. Ordenado por fechas y por territorios ocupados. Con acceso a conversaciones secretas y privadas. Quizá es un poco propalestino, pero creo que la verdad también lo es... Es difícil justificar este tipo de ocupación y también lo es cualquier solución.

Stephen Goldenberg says

If you are interested in the Israel-Palestine conflict then this is one of the best books to give you an insight into all of its machinations. The author is now an academic but grew up in Israel, served in the army there and had access to most of the key people and key documents associated with the issues surrounding the occupied territories. Astonishingly, this includes tapes made in secret by the Israeli security services of conversations between various US presidents and their advisors during the negotiations with Israeli and Palestinian leaders.

The title 'Cursed Victory' sums up the book's conclusions - that Israel should never have hung on to the territory it occupied during the 1967 war but should have negotiated a return immediately afterwards. The various negotiations over the years are related in exhaustive detail, which can get tedious, but is often fascinating, if also depressing. Even more depressing are the accounts of the brutality and inhuman treatment of the Palestinians in the occupied territories by the Israeli defence forces. Again the title says it all - showing how reviled Israel has become for its outrageous actions (and the book only goes up to 2007 so it doesn't include the most recent wars in Gaza).

Tragically, we seem further away than ever to a solution to this problem due to the extreme attitudes of the leaders on both side of the conflict who, for their own political purposes, prefer aggression and war to any serious attempt to make the compromises that would allow for a negotiated settlement.

Patrick says

When we read about the Arab-Israeli conflict like so much else in life, the story is far too complex and fraught with truths, half-truths and some outright lies to gain a real understanding of the reality!

This book by an Israeli political scientist and author is a specialist on the Arab-Israeli conflict and this book covers the long history of the Occupied Territories since the Six Day War. It debunks an awful lot of myths and is an honest forthright account of affairs between Israel and its neighbors. It is full of very factual and until recently secret information that tends to lay the blame for much of the violence of the past 50 years squarely at the feet of both Israel and the Palestinians instead of trying to push it all off on the Palestinians.

Israel from the very end of the war has been a major player in the fomenting of violence in their attitudes and use of power during their occupation. They ignored all standards of international law and basically did as they chose. The leadership from the very beginning played the duplicity card constantly saying they would do one thing then reneging on the promises or making such vague promises that they could easily disregard them.

Much of the violence was actually instigated by Israeli actions against the Palestinians and like any lopsided power arrangement asymmetrical warfare (terrorist tactics, suicide bombings etc.) was about the only recourse. Yes Arafat was a very thorny issue and his long recalcitrance was part of the problem but so was the inability to actually negotiate by the Israeli leadership. The book also points out that the longer the occupation lasted without any hope the more radicalized the Palestinians became eventually turning to the Islamic fundamentalism that is so prevalent today! As the book pointed out the only way to get Israel to even think of compromise was to apply an inordinate amount of pressure on them! The other point in at the end of the book is that Israel's behavior often mirrored the same behavior of so many of the Jew's antagonists over the centuries! It's unfortunate because it basically shows power tends to distort the views of the powerful!

If you really would like to have a deeper understanding of the conflict and the specific issues at play I highly recommend this book. It will change your perspective and like all conflicts show that there are actually two sides with neither being absolutely right or wrong; innocent or guilty!

David says

An interesting history of Israel's occupation of Palestine. I was especially interested in the information about how settlements began after 1967. I don't completely agree with the author's characterization of some of the leaders—too charitable to Arafat and assuming bad faith from Rabin and Barak—but history was interesting overall.

Mark Hanson says

Always good to try and see both sides to the story. This one is from the eyes of the Palestinian perspective and reveals the fact that wrong has been done by both sides. Just reinforces the fact that no one will come out the victor, so the book is aptly titled.

