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"The Impossible Peace - 70 Years after The World War 2 in the Middle East"(20)

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Chapter 2 Global wave – The end of colonial era and the emerging two super powers

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Egypt gained a political victory by the Suez War in 1956 letting the international community recognize the nationalization of the Suez Canal. But in the military sense, the war itself was definitely a defeat. As a result, Egyptian President Nasser was honored as an Arab hero, but the people called "Palestinians" fell into the whirlpool of history. They continued to live in Palestine or emigrated to neighboring countries like Jordan.



Palestine is the geophysical name of the east coast of southern Syria. There lived an ethnic group of Semuroids from ancient times, but the oldest tribe to appear in history was the Jewish people speaking Hebrew. They called Palestine the land where Israel promised to them. Israel is another name of Jacob, grandson of Abraham, who was the ancestor of Judea.

But, of course, Jews was not only one tribe who lived there. Majority of the inhabitants were Arabs. In AD century, Palestine was dominated by the Roman Empire. Palestine had been ruled under the Christianity. And when Islam appeared in the 7th century, Palestine became the Arab Muslim world, and thereafter a peaceful period had been continued dominating by Islam for 1300 years. Of course, there were many small conflicts from time to time in the region. And It could not be denied that there was a harsh pressure by Islamic dynasties such as the Ottoman Empire. It was similar in Europe and Asia. But

there was no doubt that Palestine was a very peaceful region compared to Europe and other Asian regions. Palestinian people have enjoyed peaceful lives.

It was the European Jews who had broken that peace by means of the homeland construction movement at the beginning of the 20th century. Lord Rothschild and other rich Jews supported the poor brothers who fled into Palestine. They oppressed the indigenous Arab-Muslims. The Jews justified the Palestinian settlements with a political slogan saying "Landless people to people defunct land". But it was clear to everyone that Palestine was not the people defunct land.

Ultimately many Arabs in Palestine left their homeland and moved to neighboring Arab countries as refugees. The first Middle East war, so-called Israel Independence War, accelerated the movement. About 700,000 Arabic Palestinians were kicked out of their homeland. Both Arabs who remained in Palestine or left their homeland were called "Palestinian people" since then. There was no consciousness to themselves as "Palestinians". They had to think themselves as Arabs in Palestine because they had been living in Palestine over several generations. After World War II, the nation state became common and people were categorized where they lived. The Arabs who had been living in Palestine were defined as Palestinians.

The Palestinians believe that their Arab fellows would regain their homeland someday. They endured under the Israel Independence War in 1948 and the Suez war in 1956. However, they were betrayed by the politicians of the Arab countries who boasted to crush Israel in the Israel Independence War. And in the Suez War, Palestinians fully realized the difference of armament between the Egyptian army and the Israeli army in addition to their fighting ability. After all, in the Israeli Independence War, the Arab Allied Forces were only the incapable crowd, and in the Suez War, only Nasser who won the nationalization of the Suez Canal became a hero. In the hearts of the Palestinians there was only a helpless feeling that even if the Arab allies were into one bundle, Arabs could not defeat Israel. It was exactly "Thousands must die to make one hero". The Palestinian people were disappointed in their Arab fellows.

The only way left to the Palestinians was to stand up on their own. In 1964 they formed the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) aimed at self-determination of the people of the Palestinians and the return of the discrete Palestinians.

(To be continued ----)