

The Fall of Jerusalem in the Memoirs of Anwar Nusseibeh

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Abstract

The memoirs of Palestinian political figure Anwar Nusseibeh (1913–1986) provide a unique and intimate account of the fall of Jerusalem and the Palestinian catastrophe of 1948. Written shortly after the events, Nusseibeh's unpublished manuscript, "Pattern of Disaster: Personal Notes on the Fall of Palestine," offers a critical perspective on the failures of Palestinian and Arab leadership during this pivotal period with a focus on the fall of Jerusalem, detailing the battles, the collapse of Arab defenses, and the subsequent ethnic cleansing of Palestinian communities. The memoirs serve as a crucial historical document, shedding light on the personal and political dimensions of the Nakba, and offering a sobering critique of the Arab and Palestinian response to the Zionist challenge.

Keywords:

Anwar Nusseibeh; 1948 Jerusalem; Nakba; Palestinian leadership; Arab failure; Zionism; Haj Amin al-Husayni; Plan Dalet; Arab Salvation Army.

The writing of memoirs is a relatively new historical practice. Although travelogues often represent a type of memoir blended with diaries, they are not as focused on personal reflections as modern memoirs. Memoir writing in Europe spread following the production of paper, initially for commercial and administrative uses. The beginnings of memoir writing perhaps originated in monasteries, where monks wrote diaries for self-review linked to the Catholic confession ritual. In earlier

periods, a type of autobiographical writing in the Arabic language was referred to as “interpretations of the self” (*tarjamat al-nafs*), which differ from contemporary autobiographies. As Dwight Reynolds describes, this writing genre originates from the Qur’an, urging humans to speak of God’s blessings bestowed upon them, based on the verse: “And as for the bounty of your Lord, speak!” (*Surah al-Duha* 93:11).¹ Rather than being intimate personal writing, it was more of a literary form intended for others.

In the modern era, memoirs are more intimate and/or seek to document life. Typically, memoirs are documents written personally and contemporaneously with the events they recount. They may also be retrospective accounts based on notes made at the time of the events, forming part of a continuous, daily or frequent, chronological record on specific topics. These notes, when taken as a whole, constitute a coherent record. Memoirs are not necessarily written for an audience other than their author. As Rak points out, “They are not literary texts, even though they might be written in a literary style with aesthetic dimensions.”² One could argue that memoirs are ongoing narratives of life that do not yet have an ending. Although they are unable to narrate or even predict the future, they represent an exercise in storytelling and an attempt to understand life. Since unpublished memoirs, like diaries, are private writings, reading them may seem intrusive or voyeuristic, an invasion of the author’s privacy.³

There are different types of memoirs. Some are documentary, lacking in intimacy and personal or emotional responses to the recorded events, resembling logs kept by ships or courts. Others are more autobiographical and personal and include emotional and subjective reactions to the events recorded and to the people mentioned in the notes, similar to some diaries that “include not only a record of activities and/or events but also personal commentary reflecting roles, activities, relationships, and even the exploration of personal feelings.”⁴ For historians, autobiographical memoirs are a vital textual source – provided they have not been altered or modified over time. Since they are first person accounts and written during the author’s lifetime, they differ from biographies written by others. Memoirs may sometimes aim to glorify the author’s role, placing themselves at the center of events they document as a key participant, potentially exaggerating their importance or avoiding a full account. Readers and researchers should approach such narratives with a critical eye.

The unpublished memoirs of the Palestinian political figure Anwar Nusseibeh (1913–1986), “Pattern of Disaster: Personal Notes on the Fall of Palestine,” which we have before us, is a unique document in subject matter, style, and timing. Nusseibeh’s “notes” were written relatively close to the events described, giving them greater credibility since they do not rely on distant memory. Although the use of memoirs has been a controversial topic among historians, raising questions about their historical reliability and the proximity of the author to events mentioned, Nusseibeh’s “Pattern of Disaster” is distinguished by the fact of the author’s active participation in the events and his eye-witness documentation of what occurred in Palestine – specifically Jerusalem – before and during the occupation of its western part by Zionist militias in 1948. Thus they are an invaluable source of information regarding that time period, despite their retrospective nature and lack of daily entries.

Nusseibeh's memoirs are also unusual in serving as an account of the significant failures that contributed to the loss of Palestine. Written soon after the Nakba, while the author was recovering from a wound sustained during battles on the outskirts of Jerusalem, they seem to represent an attempt to hold the participants accountable for this loss, even if partially.⁵ They also highlight the role of individuals on the ground whose actions facilitated the erasure of Palestine from the political map, the displacement of its people, and the fragmentation of their unity.

At the same time, Anwar Nusseibeh, the author of the memoirs, cannot reasonably be considered as someone attempting to exaggerate his role. He was indeed an active participant and a prominent political activist in Jerusalem during the year of Palestine's loss. He served as the secretary-general of the National Committee in Jerusalem and later as the secretary-general of the All-Palestine Government, declared in Gaza in 1949. After Jordan's formal annexation of eastern Palestine, he held positions in both the Senate and House of Representatives at various times, served as a minister and ambassador, and eventually became the governor of Jerusalem in 1963. He remained in his home city of Jerusalem after the Israeli occupation of its eastern part in 1967, and until his death.

Nusseibeh focuses his memoirs specifically on the period of Jerusalem's fall, a critical phase that he studied extensively from various perspectives. There is no doubt that his memoirs add details regarding the Arab failure during the decisive battles for Jerusalem. At that time, following Britain's decision to end its Mandate, the Palestinian issue was referred to the newly established United Nations, which adopted a resolution on 29 November 1947 to partition Palestine into two states – Arab and Jewish. The partition plan recommended that the expanded Jerusalem area remain under international supervision and be open to both states.

This decision resulted from a report prepared by the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP), which the General Assembly had formed earlier that year and sent to Palestine to study the facts (Resolution 106 of 1947). The committee included representatives from Australia, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Guatemala, India, Iran, the Netherlands, Sweden, Uruguay, and Yugoslavia, but neither Arab countries nor the five major powers were represented, on the claim that this would ensure its impartiality. While in Palestine, the committee met with representatives of the Zionists, the British, and the Arabs. However, the Arab Higher Committee, formed in 1946 and led by Haj Amin al-Husayni, refused to engage with the committee, accusing it of bias toward Zionism. Nevertheless, the committee met with Husayn Fakhri al-Khalidi, a former mayor of Jerusalem (1934–37) and a member of the Arab Higher Committee. The committee also visited neighboring Arab countries, received letters from Jordan and Lebanon, and visited camps of Holocaust survivors in Europe, where its members expressed dismay at what they witnessed. While in Haifa, the committee members witnessed the arrival of a ship carrying over four thousand illegal Jewish immigrants, which the British authorities refused and sent back to Europe.⁶ Upon returning to New York, the committee submitted its report to the General Assembly, which subsequently adopted the resolution to partition Palestine into two states (33 to

13 with 10 abstentions), based on the committee's findings.

Anwar Nusseibeh's memoirs begin the day after the partition resolution, opening with the statement:

My story begins on the 29th of November, 1947, or, rather, on the 30th, when the news reached us in Palestine that the United Nations General Assembly had voted in favor of the Partition plan for Palestine. It was a Sunday. The Jews spent the day in jubilation, as well they might. For one thing, two rival great powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, who had so far managed to disagree on almost everything else, were somehow persuaded to see an identity of interest over Palestine and to support a common policy towards it. This in itself was a phenomenal success for the Jews.⁷

Nusseibeh titled his memoirs "Pattern of Disaster: Personal Note on the Fall of Palestine," a fitting title for what he wrote. It reflects not only his dissatisfaction with the international role but also his criticism of Palestinian positions and actions at the time, which significantly contributed to the loss of Palestine. The Palestinian stance on the partition resolution was not as clear-cut or decisive as it might seem. While most Palestinian forces opposed it, some supported it, and certain Arab states accepted it, even if not officially. Meanwhile, the Zionist leadership in Palestine welcomed the resolution, despite opposition from the Lehi and Irgun organizations, which argued that the Jewish state should encompass all of Palestine and Transjordan.

Nusseibeh notes that the initial reaction of the Palestinian leadership at the time, represented by the Arab Higher Committee (AHC), was merely to announce a three-day strike. He reminds his readers of the Zionist claim about the AHC, that it is not an elected body, and therefore lacks legitimacy. Nusseibeh pointedly uses the term "committee" and describes this claim as one of the reasons for the overall failure of the committee, despite later explaining the obstacles that prevented its election. Supporting this belief, a few pages later he points out the lack of organization among Palestinians, describing a protest he personally witnessed on the southern side of St. Paul Street in Jerusalem as "disappointing" and disorganized. He characterized it as spontaneous and fervent, noting that the Arab Higher Committee had ensured that "the Arab Higher Executive disclaimed any responsibility for it and no other organization or body was either interested or even capable of producing even so uninspiring a protest as this." He added that the demonstration turned into acts of looting and destruction, with the protesters being "undoubtedly driven by their dazzling actions." He commented that the demonstrators attacked both Arabs and Jews indiscriminately and "without distinction."

Such acerbic and bitter criticism appears repeatedly throughout the memoirs. Nusseibeh mentions several events related to Arab failures in Palestine. For example, in the fourth chapter, he writes about the Arab Revolt of 1936–39, describing it (rightly so, in my opinion) as having "contributed to shattering Arab unity within Palestine and beyond more than any other event in modern history." Throughout the memoirs,

there is harsh criticism of Palestinian leadership, particularly Haj Amin al-Husayni, although this criticism is often veiled.

As is well-known, following the United Nations resolution to partition Palestine, the situation on the ground deteriorated quickly. Zionist organizations began putting together the declaration to declare the independence of the Jewish state, aiming for a minimum number of non-Jewish residents. Arabs prepared to thwart the partition plan and to protect Palestinians from being expelled from their land. Meanwhile, British forces were preparing to withdraw from Palestine, largely neglecting the developments on the ground, which were rapidly escalating into an open war between Arabs and Jews in the country.

Zionist forces enjoyed superior training and had large numbers of fighters. Many of them had trained and fought during World War II on the European front, while others belonged to various paramilitary groups, such as the Haganah – the largest and most organized Zionist group. Additionally, there were the Palmach forces (“strike” companies of the Haganah, considered the military elite of the Jewish Agency), as well as Zionist terror forces like Lehi (Fighters for the Freedom of Israel), also known as the Stern Gang after its founder Abraham Stern, later led by Yitzhak Shamir. Another terror group was the Irgun (National Military Organization in Israel), led by Menachem Begin, the successor of Ze’ev Jabotinsky, the leader of Revisionist Zionism.

In contrast, Palestinian Arab forces were weak in terms of training and organization, scattered across several paramilitary organizations formed at the time. Their members carried individual weapons purchased at their own expense, and each organization bore the name of its leader. However, there were formations with formal names, such as the *Jaysh al-Jihad al-Muqadas* (Holy War Army), led by ‘Abd al-Qadir al-Husayni, the cousin of the mufti and one of the heroes of the 1936 Palestinian revolt. Other examples include al-Najjada organization in Jaffa, led by Muhammad Nimr al-Hawari,⁸ and the Futuwwa organization, led by Kamil Arikat, founded by the Palestinian Arab Party.⁹ Additionally, Arab volunteers arrived in Palestine as part of the *Jaysh al-Inqath al-‘Arabi* (Arab Salvation Army), led by Fawzi al-Qawuqji, a Lebanese fighter who had also volunteered during the 1936 revolt in Palestine.

In addition to the Zionist paramilitary organizations surpassing the Arab formations in numbers, training, and equipment, they benefited from having a strategic political leadership that coordinated their activities, unlike the Palestinian and Arab organizations. Fawzi al-Qawuqji himself confirms this in his memoirs, noting the disparity between Arab and Jewish forces. He writes:

It became evident from the first battles between Palestinian Arabs and Jews that the Arabs had no organized military preparedness of any kind, nor any trace of training. The resistance they exhibited, though genuinely courageous, was merely personal and narrowly localized defense, typical of a sudden and ordinary attack. It was carried out with simple weapons, usually owned by villagers who had bought them with their own money, without any connection to a specific system or adherence to a coordinated plan.¹⁰

In his memoirs, Anwar Nusseibeh mentions several issues that plagued the Arabs in their preparations to confront the Zionist aggression. Among them was how “petty disputes arose over who would be responsible for directing operations, between the Mufti on one side and most Arab politicians on the other.”

The leaders of Arab states, who met on 7 October 1947, in Aley, Lebanon, under the Arab League, decided to form a Higher Military Committee to funnel money and weapons to Palestinians to prevent the establishment of the Jewish state. However, they rejected Mufti Haj Amin al-Husayni’s request to appoint Palestinian guerrilla commander ‘Abd al-Qadir al-Husayni as the committee’s head. Instead, they appointed Arab military officials to the committee, with Iraqi Isma’il Safwat as head. The committee divided Palestine militarily into four combat zones with different military commanders. The Holy War Army, led by ‘Abd al-Qadir al-Husayni, was put in charge of the Jerusalem region, including areas such as Ramallah, Jericho, Bethlehem, and Hebron.

The Battle of Jerusalem, which reached its peak between March and April 1948, occurred in the area under the Holy War Army’s influence – the only region defended primarily by Palestinians. The guerrilla units consisted of Palestinian peasant volunteers, numbering no more than a thousand at best, and were poorly trained and equipped. These fighters were distributed across different areas of Jerusalem, including Qatamun in the city’s west, where 125 fighters were placed under Ibrahim Abu Dayya’s leadership, and in the Old City and its northern sections. In the western neighborhoods outside Jerusalem’s walls, in addition to Abu Dayya’s forces, fifty fighters were stationed in the Arab neighborhood of Baq‘a, adjacent to Qatamun.

Some reports indicate a kind of social dissonance between the middle class residents of these areas, and the poor peasant volunteers from various regions, including the hills of Hebron. Locals reportedly treated the fighters with condescension. Nusseibeh highlights another element of disconnection between the appointed leadership and on-the-ground realities. The Arab leaders appointed Fawzi al-Qawuqji as the field commander of the Arab Salvation Army and selected General Isma’il Safwat as chief of staff and General Taha al-Hashimi as inspector general. Nusseibeh comments that the latter two, both Iraqis, had never set foot in Palestine.

While ‘Abd al-Qadir al-Husayni took the initiative to recruit Palestinians, Nusseibeh writes, “he did not receive the promised support from the Arab League or other Arab states.” Nusseibeh also notes that General Safwat mockingly told a Palestinian delegation not to worry about the fall of Jaffa, adding, “Let Haifa fall, let Acre, Safed, Jerusalem, and Nazareth fall. These cities have no strategic importance whatsoever, and we can reclaim them anytime.” This reflects Safwat’s inability to provide assistance, according to Nusseibeh, due to the Arab League Secretary-General ‘Abd al-Rahman ‘Azzam Pasha’s stinginess and the ban on arms sales.”

It was clear that the Zionists had several plans for expelling Arabs from the areas they intended to become part of the Jewish state. The most famous of these was Plan Dalet, approved by the Zionist leadership in March 1948, to expel the Palestinian population from areas occupied by Jewish forces.¹¹ Although Jerusalem was supposed

to become an internationally administered zone as per the partition plan, both sides were fully aware of its strategic and symbolic importance. This led the Zionists to strive to control it, while Palestinians were determined to maintain their presence in the city and to reclaim any part that fell out of their hands.

Until 1948, Zionist operations had not focused on Jerusalem, perhaps because the Zionists had accepted the partition plan, including the city as an international zone. According to Danny Rubinstein, the prevailing sentiment among the Zionists in the winter of 1948 was that “the Arabs had the upper hand,” and added that Arabs were confident about their defenses in Jerusalem.¹² ‘Abd al-Qadir al-Husayni stated, “My soldiers are at the peak of their triumph.”

The defenses of neighborhoods outside Jerusalem’s walls were weak, as the majority of the Arab forces were concentrated in the Old City. The defense of the city relied primarily on the Holy War Army, which included approximately 380 armed fighters stationed in the city. In addition, there was a fighting force from the Arab Salvation Army, numbering between 100 and 150 fighters, led by Fawzi al-Qawuqji. Generally, Palestinian fighters lacked proper weapons. Nathan Krystal describes this situation, noting that ‘Abdallah al-Badiri searched for weapons even in herbalist shops. He reportedly found “a weapon on sale dating back to the 19th century, bearing the mark of the East India Company.” Another anecdote mentions a villager from Bayt Safafa who received a rifle from ‘Abd al-Qadir al-Husayni that “required pulling the trigger 100 times before a single bullet could be fired.”¹³

The early months of 1948 were marked by escalating violence that foreshadowed the coming war. In January, Zionist forces bombed the Semiramis Hotel in Jerusalem’s al-Qatamon neighborhood, killing twenty members of the Abu Suwan family and wounding twenty others. In retaliation, Palestinian militants in February bombed a building on Ben Yehuda Street, leaving nearly fifty dead. The cycle of violence intensified in March when Anton Jamil Daoud, a Palestinian driver for the U.S. consulate in Jerusalem, carried out a daring attack on the Jewish Agency headquarters. Daoud’s operation was meticulously planned. After receiving instructions from Qassim al-Rimawi, secretary-general of the Holy War Army at their Birzeit headquarters, he drove an explosive-laden vehicle through heavily guarded government and Jewish areas. As described in Nusseibeh’s memoirs:

It was a textbook operation – the volunteer parked his vehicle directly in front of the Agency building, then escaped on foot through hostile territory. What set this apart wasn’t the penetration of Jewish areas – others had done that before – but the cold nerve required to walk out alone through potential checkpoints. This display of calm bravery was extraordinary.

The atmosphere grew increasingly desperate. Jewish sources referred to that time as the “Terrible March.”¹⁴ As journalist Danny Rubinstein recorded, Palestinian leader Abd al-Qadir al-Husayni framed the conflict in existential terms:

Palestine cannot belong to both Arabs and Zionists – it's either us or them [...] It is a war of life or death; either we emerge victorious, or we all perish.¹⁵

The Zionist forces launched a major military operation on 5 April 1948, aimed at breaking the Arab siege on Jerusalem and opening the road between it and Tel Aviv. The operation, known as Operation Nachshon, marked the beginning of the implementation of Plan Dalet, which officially aimed to establish Jewish control over all areas granted to the Jewish state by the partition plan.¹⁶ However, in reality, it sought to expand the state's borders beyond those delineated by the plan. The operation resulted in widespread ethnic cleansing across Palestine, including in parts of Jerusalem. The battle of al-Qastal and the subsequent Zionist control of the area were central to the operation, as was the attempt to seize Arab neighborhoods in western Jerusalem near several Jewish settlements. Al-Qastal remained under the control of 'Abd al-Qadir al-Husayni's forces until his death. According to Jordanian commander 'Abd al-Tal, the fighters' departure to participate in al-Husayni's funeral caused the Palestinians to lose this strategic position.¹⁷

After their victory, the Zionist forces focused on encircling and occupying Arab neighborhoods, particularly those near settlements such as Talpiot, Rehavia, and Mekor Hayim. The battle of Qatamun was decisive in this regard, as Qatamun's strategic location allowed control over other nearby Arab neighborhoods and villages.

Although the Arab defenses, particularly at al-Qastal, initially halted the Zionist advance, the death of 'Abd al-Qadir al-Husayni on 8 April and the subsequent fall of al-Qastal changed the course of the battles. Zionist fighter Uri Avnery described what he saw after the battle on his way to Jerusalem:

On the road to Jerusalem, the area was filled with destruction and devastation. The surrounding Arab villages had been looted and burned, and their inhabitants forced to flee. I saw destroyed houses and uprooted trees. The smell of death lingered everywhere, and the atmosphere was charged with tension and fear. The effects of the battle were visible on the ground, and its deep impact on the population could not be ignored.¹⁸

Later, Avnery recounted his feelings after Zionist forces secured the area:

Someone points to a steep mountain to the right of us, with a flag waving. I take the field glasses. It is a blue-white flag. That is the famous Castel. We are a bit annoyed about this Castel. It became famous and overshadowed our victories although we saw them as the peak of military success. The people from Castel have climbed down to us on the road. Someone raises a tin of sardines in our honor: the symbol of the army at the front. Together we have fought to clear this road. They have suffered the same as us, made the same sacrifices, fought like us with grenade launchers, rifles, against fleas and sardines. A silent friendship unites us. We don't need many words. A rough curse and a smile are enough.¹⁹

The day after the killing of 'Abd al-Qadir al-Husayni, while the fighters were attending his funeral at al-Aqsa Mosque, Zionist forces carried out the Dayr Yasin massacre, in a village located west of Jerusalem on the road to Tel Aviv. Over one hundred people were brutally killed, most of them the elderly, children, and women. Forces from the Irgun and Lehi (also known as the Stern Gang) participated in this massacre, with approximately 120 Zionist fighters involved. It was carried out with the approval of the Haganah, although they did not participate directly, through David Shaltiel, the commander of the Jerusalem area. This occurred even though the village had signed a peace and non-aggression agreement with the neighboring settlement of Givat Shaul in January 1948.

Nusseibeh reminds us that the relationship between Givat Shaul and Dayr Yasin had been good, with no indication of the possibility of a massacre. He adds:

Deir Yassin is a small Arab village, which lies roughly between Ein Karem and Jerusalem. It is surrounded by Jewish areas and its villagers had served in Jewish households and provided the Jews with cheap but good dairy products. When the troubles broke out, therefore, they did not feel impelled to take the same precautions against their trusted neighbors as other villages had done. They continued to live in amity with them.

By launching their savage attack against the weak, defenseless, and trusting villagers of Dayr Yasin, the Jews employed tactics the fierceness of which, in addition to the atrocities that were perpetrated, were largely instrumental in demoralizing other villages and starting the large-scale exodus of the Arabs from their homes.

It seems reasonable to claim that the fall of Jerusalem affected all Palestinians, weakening their morale and marking the beginning of Palestine's fall to the Zionist movement. According to Rubinstein, "The collapse began to snowball," starting with the death of 'Abd al-Qadir al-Husayni in the battle of al-Qastal, the failure of the Arab Salvation Army in the ten-day battle of Mishmar HaEmek (a kibbutz west of Marj Ibn 'Amr in northern Palestine), and the Dayr Yasin massacre, which some Zionists considered the most significant factor in their victory. For instance, a statement attributed to Herut Party representative Yaakov Meridor in the Knesset declared in response to Communist Party member Tawfiq Toubi, "Thanks to Deir Yassin, we won." He added, "In mid-April, the Arab city of Tiberias fell to the Jews, followed by the collapse of Haifa – one of the largest Arab urban centers – two weeks later."²⁰

In conclusion, Nusseibeh's memoirs are rich with details about the various Arab failures in Palestine, along with extensive discussion on the roles of the British and Zionists in the events. He recounts significant historical events, tragic for Palestinians and Arabs, shedding light on the fall of Jerusalem and other Palestinian cities and the geographic transformations caused by Zionist occupation.

However, the central theme of the memoirs remains the inability of Arab and Palestinian forces to confront Zionist challenges effectively and achieve their goals.

This underscores the catastrophic failure, both Arab and Palestinian, in planning and confronting the Zionist threat. It also reveals the lack of seriousness among Arab forces in defending Palestine at that time.

These memoirs are an essential document for anyone interested in the history of the Palestinian Nakba. While titled “Pattern of Disaster,” they are, in fact, a narrative of plunging into its depths. As Musa al-Budeiri commented two decades ago in his article on the memoirs, Palestinian leader Haj Amin al-Husayni bears significant responsibility for this descent. Al-Budeiri reiterates Nusseibeh’s sentiment:

The Mufti, who gave Arabs a symbol of resistance, failed them as a leader in my opinion. His failure may have been inevitable given the circumstances at the time.²¹

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An Arabic version of this essay will appear in the Arabic translation of Anwar Nusseibeh’s memoirs to be published by the Arab Centre for Research and Policy Studies.

Endnotes

- 1 Dwight F. Reynolds, ed., *Interpreting the Self: Autobiography in the Arabic Literary Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 1.
- 2 Julie Rak, “Dialogue with The Future: Philippe Lejeune’s Method and Theory of Diary,” in Philippe Lejeune, *On Diary*, ed. Jeremy D. Popkin and Julie Rak (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2009), 19–20.
- 3 Andy Alaszewski, *Using Diaries for Social Research* (London: Sage Publications, 2006), 2.
- 4 Alaszewski, *Using Diaries*, 2.
- 5 Musa Budeiri, “A Chronicle of a Defeat Foretold: The Battle for Jerusalem in the Memoirs of Anwar Nusseibeh,” *Jerusalem Quarterly* 11/12 (Winter 2001): 40.
- 6 Ilan Pappé, *A History of Modern Palestine*, 2nd edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 124.
- 7 Anwar Nusseibeh, “Pattern of Disaster: Personal Notes on the Fall of Palestine,” unpublished manuscript, n.d., 1. All quotations

attributed to Nusseibeh are from this unpublished manuscript, which was originally written in English and without page numbers.

- 8 For more information on al-Najjada, see Muhammad Nimer al-Hawari, *Sir al-Nakba* [The secret of the Nakba] (Nazareth: Al-Hakeem Press, 1955).
- 9 In 1948, the Palestinian Arab Party established the Futuwwa Organization to serve as its official wing. The party’s president was the supreme leader of the organization, and its overall commander was Kamil Arikat. The Futuwwa included a large number of young people as an extension of the Arab Party, and it was divided into twenty-four sections, each covering a district (qada). A Supreme Council was elected to represent these regions, and the organization’s office was composed of five members chosen by the Supreme Council. For further information, see Bayan Nuwayhed al-Hout, *al-Qiyadat wa al-mu’assasat al-siyasiyya fi Filastin 1917–1948* [Leadership and political institutions in

- Palestine, 1917–1948] (Beirut: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1981), 508.
- 10 Khairiya Qasimia, ed., *Muthakarat Fawzi al-Qawaqji* [Memoirs of Fawzi al-Qawaqji] (Beirut: Palestine Liberation Organization-Research Centre, 1975), 134.
 - 11 For information on Plan Dalet, see Walid Khalidi, “Plan Dalet: Master Plan for the Conquest of Palestine,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* 18, no. 1 (Autumn 1988): 4–33.
 - 12 Danny Rubinstein, *Ima Nahnu wa ima Hum: Ma’rakat al-Qastal: al-Sa’at al-Arba’a wa al’shrin al-hassima* [Either us or them: The battle of al-Qastal: The crucial twenty-four hours], trans. Salim Salameh (Ramallah: MADAR – The Palestinian Centre for Israeli Studies, 2020), 29.
 - 13 Nathan Krystal, “The Fall of the New City” in Salim Tamari, ed., *Jerusalem 1948: The Arab Neighborhoods and their Fate in the War* (Jerusalem and Bethlehem: Institute of Jerusalem Studies and Badil Resource Centre, 2002), 89.
 - 14 Rubinstein, *Ima Nahnu*, 223.
 - 15 Rubinstein, *Ima Nahnu*, 7.
 - 16 For more information, see Operation Nachson at the interactive Encyclopedia of the Palestine Question, online at (palquest.org) bit.ly/3S61Ks9 (accessed 24 February 2025).
 - 17 ‘Abdullah al-Tal, *Karithat Filastin* [The Palestine disaster] (Cairo: Dar al-Qalam, 1959), 15.
 - 18 Uri Avnery, *1948: A Soldier’s Tale – The Bloody Road to Jerusalem* (Oxford: One World, 2008), 43.
 - 19 Avnery, *1948: A Soldier’s Tale*, 43.
 - 20 Tom Segev, *1949: The First Israelis*, ed. and trans. Arlen Neil Weinstein (New York: The Free Press, 1985), 89.
 - 21 Budeiri, “Chronicle of a Defeat Foretold,” 51.