

HISTORY OF ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT



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Politics and Society in the Middle East

DEVELOPMENT TO WW1

- 132-135 – Shimon Bar Kokhba's revolt defeated by Roman Empire → Jewish diaspora (only a small community of Jews remained – Old Yishuv).
- Arabs came to the territory in 6th century from Arabic peninsula.
- 19th century birth of zionismus = Jewish nationalism (Theodor Herzl – his very influential book *Der Judenstaat*).
- Since the end of 19th century Jews began to move to their biblical homeland (aliyah =



Theodor Herzl

ARABS, JEWS AND WW1

- Both Arabs and Jews supported the Triple Entente in WW1 with a hope for independence/autonomy after the failure of Ottoman Empire.
- Goals of both nations contradictory – Great Britain and France had the secret negotiations with both of them (Balfour Declaration 1917, correspondence between sir Henry McMahon and Sharif Hussein in 1915-16).
- Sykes-Picot Agreement (1916): secret treaty between Great Britain and France.

MAP OF MIDDLE EAST IN 1920s



POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN MANDATE PALESTINE

- Growing tension between Jews and Arabs in 1920s and 1930s – more and more Jews emigrated to Palestine → protests of local Arabs (Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Amin al-Husseini).
- Great Britain aimed to balance the situation and to decrease the tension – not very successful (sir Herbert Samuel).
- Terrorist attacks of radical Jewish groups on British



Amin al-Husseini

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN MANDATE PALESTINE

- 2 main groups of Zionists:
 - Left-wing ideology – varieties of socialist program, one of the very important leaders David Ben Gurion.
 - Right-wing ideology (revisionists) - Ze'ev Jabotinsky (Irgun and Lehi – Menachem Begin, Yitzak Shamir).
- Effort to unite both groups, during the time left-wing prevailed (Altalena incident 1948).
- Establishment of Hagana (militia - predecessor of Israeli army).

ANTI-SEMITISM IN EUROPE

- Since 1930 growth of anti-Semitism in Germany → Hitler's campaign against the Jews.
- Final solution of Jewish issue:
 - January 1942, designed by Adolf Eichmann.
 - Plan of the systematic genocide of all Jews in Europe → Holocaust (shoa) – more than 6 millions victims – Yad Vashem museum in Jerusalem.



HOLOCAUSTU AND FORMING OF ISRAEL

- Tragedy of Holocaust was often used as a moral argument why the independent Jewish state should be established.
- Argument of the Arabs: Why shall Arabs pay for the evil committed by Europeans?
- Ambiguous interpretations of Holocaust in Israel: Why did not the Jews fight more to defend themselves?

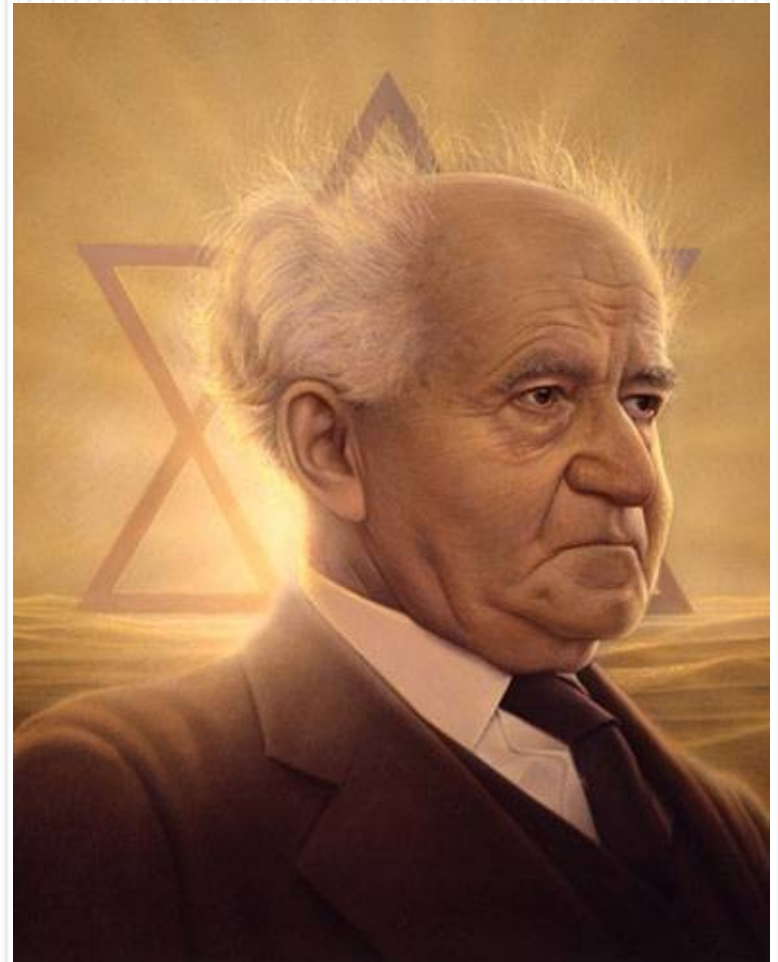


UN PARTITION PLAN (1947)



1st ARAB-ISRAELI WAR (1948)

- Independent war vs. disaster (al nakba).
- Israel vs. all surrounding states (supported by other Arab states such as Saudi Arabia, Iraq etc.) → Arab coalition was more numerous however many organizational problems + conflicts among Arab leaders.
- No external aid for Israel (exceptions: financial support from Jews living abroad, weapons from Czechoslovakia).
- The overwhelming victory of Israel.



David Ben Gurion

MAP OF MIDDLE EAST 1948

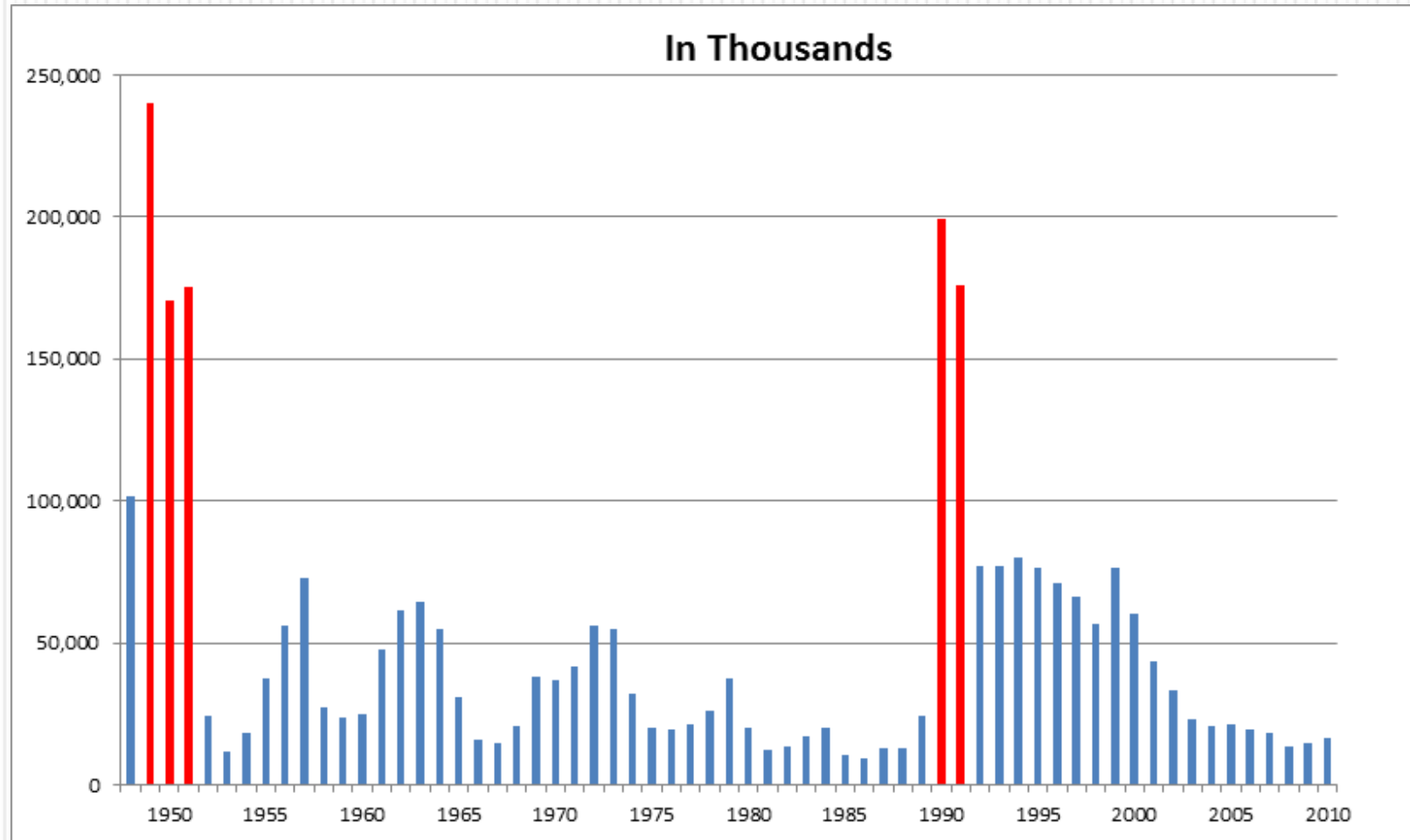
1949 Armistice Lines following
First Arab-Israeli War (1947-49)



MAKING OF ISRAELI SOCIETY

- Making of a new society (prior 1948 Hebrew culture, then Israeli culture).
- Concept of „melting pot“ (significant role of army)
- Many conflicting lines: Ashkenazi vs. Mizrakhim, secular vs. Ultra-orthodox, Jews coming from different countries of the world.
- Israeli Arabs: second class citizens.

IMMIGRATION TO ISRAEL 1948-2012



<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Immigration/imgraph.html>

SUEZ CRISIS 1956

- President of Egypt Gammal Nasser declared the nationalization of Suez Chanel.
- France, Great Britain, and Israel decided for a military action against Egypt.
- From military perspective the absolute success, from diplomatic perspective a total fiasco.
- Role of USA and USSR in the context of ongoing Cold



Gammal Nasser

BIRTH OF PLO

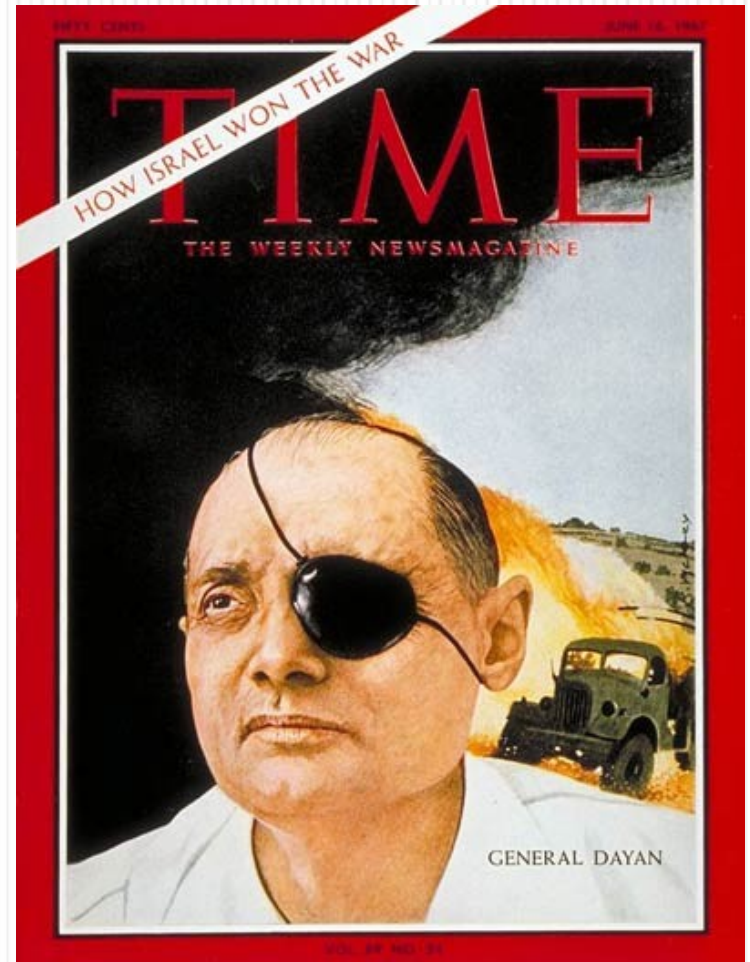
- Originally, king of Jordan recognized as the representative of Palestinians.
- 1964 Egypt initiated the establishment of Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) – since 1969 Yaser Arafat was a leader of this organization (he founded Fatah in 1965).
- PLO operated in the territory of West Bank, in early 1970s attempt to assassinate king of Jordan (Black September 1970) → departure to Lebanon (later exile in Tunisia).



Yasser Arafat

SIX DAYS WAR (1967)

- Brought significant changes to Middle Eastern geography and politics.
- Israeli secret services received some information about the presumed war against Israel initiated by a coalition of Egypt, Jordan, and Syria → preemptive strike.
- Controversial in terms of existing international law (preemptive strike itself, making of Jewish settlement in occupied territory, UN resolution 242 etc.).



Moshe Dayan

Before and after the Six Day War, 1967

Before



..... 1949 Ceasefire line



BBC

After

■ Occupied by Israel

..... 1967 Ceasefire line

Israel withdrew from Sinai in 1982 and Gaza in 2005



CONSEQUENCES OF SIX DAYS WAR

- New territories under the control of Israel (Gaza Strip, West Bank, Golan Heights, Sinai).
- Jewish settlement (pragmatic and/or religious motivation).
- Growth of radicalism and extremism in the Middle East.
- Roots of the future conflict at the Middle East (Khartoum conference 1967).

YOM KIPPUR WAR 1973

- First time when Israel did not achieve unambiguous victory.
- A surprising attack by Arab armies → big shock for the Israelis.
- The supplies of US weapons and other military equipment to Israel → oil embargo and 1st oil shock (Saudi king Faisal).
- Changes in Israeli politics – road to peace treaty with Egypt.



Moshe Dayan and Golda Meir

ARAB-ISRAELI PEACE PROCESS

- Secret peace negotiations took place since 1948.
- Separate peace vs. complex peace solution.
- Milestone: 1978 peace treaty between Israel and Egypt (Camp David summit supported by Jimmy Carter).
- 1994 peace treaty with Jordan.
- 1999 peace treaty with Mauretania, relatively good relations with Tunisia and Morocco.



Anwar Sadat, Jimmy Carter and
Menachem Begin

PEACE PROCESS WITH THE PALESTINIANS

- Crucial part of Arab-Israeli peace proces.
- Breaktrough came in 1990s (decade of hope) – in previous decades both parties refused to negotiate together)
- 1st intifada (Palestinian uprising) in 1987-1993: intensively discussed by whole international community.
- 1991 conference in Madrid – first official meeting of the delegations however without the highest political representatives.



OSLO PROCESS

- A series of peace negotiations supported by Norway and USA in 1990s.
- Key person Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin who personally promoted the peace process despite of the intense criticism – in 1995 assassinated by radical student Yigal Amir.
- Protests against the Oslo Accords on both sides (Hebron massacre, Hamas's attacks, demonstrations etc.).



Yitzhak Rabin, Bill Clinton,
Yasser Arafat

RESULTS OF THE PEACE PROCESS IN EARLY 1990s

- Palestinian autonomous territories, first democratic elections – victory of PLO and Yasser Arafat.
- Mutual recognition and the promise of future cooperation and further peace negotiations.
- The most difficult issues such as the status of Palestinian refugees, Jewish settlements, status of Jerusalem left for later round of negotiations.

OSLO PROCESS: 2nd PHASE

- After Rabin's assassination a slowdown of the peace process → early elections – new government made by Binyamin Netanyahu from Likud party.
- Netanyahu was known as a critic of peace process – reluctance to any kind of compromise (security to be the first priority).



Binyamin Netanyahu
and Yasser Arafat

CAMP DAVID SUMMIT 2000

- In 1999, another early election in Israel → Ehud Barak from Labour Party became the new prime minister.
- Barak had a very ambitious vision to solve out Arab-Israeli conflict: peace negotiations with the Palestinians, and Syria.
- Summit in Camp David has been the last big political meeting → failure of the peace process.
- Prevailing interpretation: Barak made the most generous offer in history but Arafat refused it.

BARAK'S OFFER TO ARAFAT (UNOFFICIAL)

- Israel would withdraw from 95 % of occupied territory in West Bank, and from 100 % of occupied territory in Gaza Strip.
- Israel would remove the isolated Jewish settlements and this territory shall be returned back to the Palestinians.
- The highly populated Jewish settlements shall remain under Israeli control – the Palestinians shall receive a compensation in form of other territories.
- The Palestinians shall obtain a control over East Jerusalem (Muslim and Christian parts of the Old City).
- Religious sovereignty over Temple Mount.
- Palestinians shall declare the official end of the conflict, to accept this situation as final and give up all potential future claims.

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT SINCE 2000

- After the failure of peace process, the deep disillusion in both Israel and Palestine → escalation of tension, freezing of peace process.
- Changes in international community since 9/11/2001 – shift in attitudes towards Palestinian nationalist groups.
- Changes in Israeli politics – Ehud Barak lost the elections → 2000 victory of Likud Party led by Ariel Sharon.



Ariel Sharon

2nd PALESTINIAN INTIFADA

- Characteristic with suicide attacks in public space.
- Unilateral withdrawal of Jewish settlements from Gaza in 2004.
- Security Wall built with the intention to separate Israel from Western Bank – heavily criticized (apartheid wall vs. Security guarantees).

CHECK-POINT, BETLEHEM



SECURITY WALL BETWEEN ISRAEL AND WEST BANK



YASSER ARAFAT'S TOMB, RAMALLAH



SPLIT OF THE PALESTINIANS

- After the death of Yasser Arafat significant clashes inside the Palestinians → his successor became Mahmud Abbas but he has not had a support of all fractions and groups.
- The mutual tension escalated after the elections in 2006 when Hamas got dominance in Gaza Strip while Fatah won in West Bank → in fact a civil war
- The western countries mostly support Fatah, Hamas is perceived as terrorist group.



Mahmud Abbas

MAIN ISSUES

- Restoring of the peace process.
- Status of Jerusalem and other religious sites.
- Jewish settlement in Western Bank.
- Palestinian refugees and their claims.
- Radicalism and terrorism.
- Contemporary conflicts in the Middle East.

JEWISH SETTLEMENT IN WEST BANK



CURRENT PEACE PROCESS

- Normalization of the diplomatic relations with selected Muslim countries in 2020:
 - United Arab Emirates.
 - Bahrain.
 - Sudan.
 - Morocco.



Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, US President Donald Trump, and UAE Foreign Minister Abdullah bin Zayed Al-Nahyan

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION