

The Palestinian conflict

29.10.2009

Elena Vezzadini

elenavezz@gmail.com

Palestine in the Middle East



Theodore Herzl, 1860-1904



Palestine is “A land without a people
for a people without a land.”

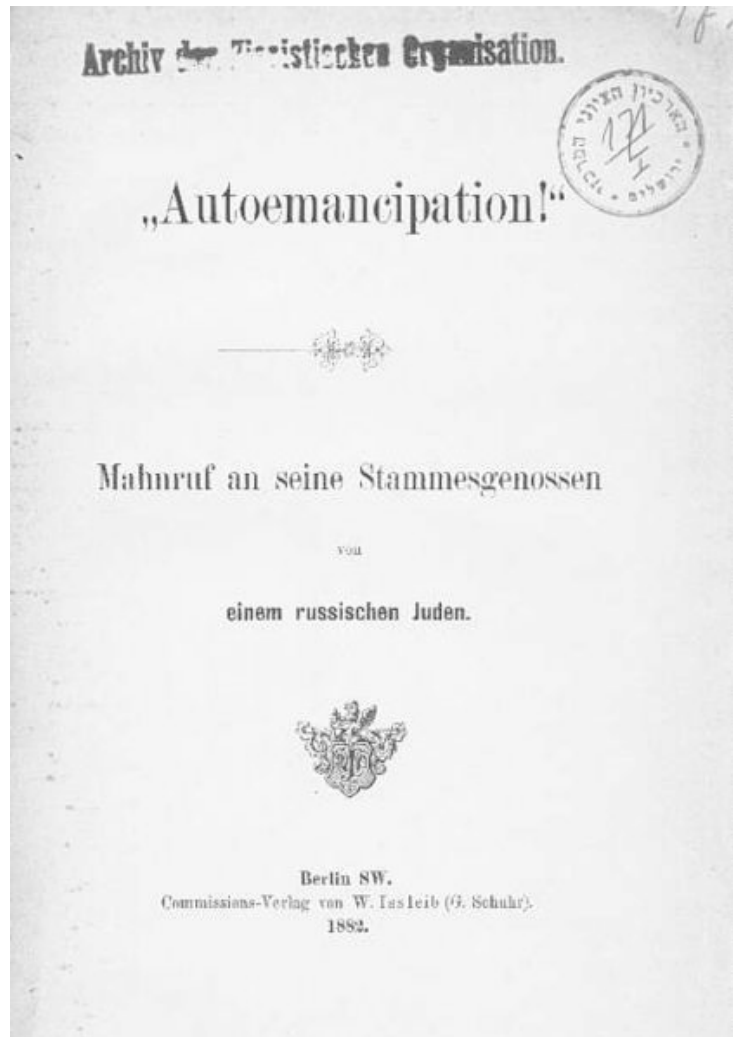
1884: foundation of the Lovers of
Zion, ‘Hovevei Zion,’ in Kattowitz,
Germany

1897: first Zionist congress in Basel,
Switzerland

=> The Basel Program

- To secure a legally recognized
home in Palestine for Jewish people
through diplomatic pressures

Leo Pinsker (1821-1891)



“to the living the Jew is a corpse,
to the native a foreigner, to the
homesteader
a vagrant, to the proprietary a beggar,
to the poor an exploiter and a millionaire,
to the patriot a man without a country,
for all a hated rival.”

Autoemancipation

<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Zionism/pinsker.html>



“AUTOEMANCIPATION !”

- With the loss of their country, the Jewish people lost their independence, and fell into a decay which is not compatible with existence as a whole vital organism... But after the Jewish people had ceased to exist as an actual state, as a political entity, they could nevertheless not submit to total annihilation -- they lived on spiritually as a nation. The world saw in this people the uncanny form of one of the dead walking among the living. The Ghostlike apparition of a living corpse, of a people without unity or organization, without land or other bonds of unity, no longer alive, and yet walking among the living -- this spectral form without precedence in history... could but strangely affect the imagination of the nations.
- And if the fear of ghosts is something inborn, and has a certain justification in the psychic life of mankind, why be surprised at the effect produced by this dead but still living nation

=>

- JEWS ARE A NATION WITHOUT A LAND = A GHOST
- NATION AS AN VITAL ORGANISM – BUT LACKING THE BODY WHERE IT CAN ‘COME TO LIFE’
- THE NATION IS A SPIRIT



TS Eliot, one of the greatest poets of English literature, in the poem **Gerontion**, writes:

*My house is a decayed house,
And the jew squats on the window sill, the owner,
Spawned in some estaminet of Antwerp,
Blistered in Brussels, patched and peeled in London*

La mia casa é una casa in rovina
E l'ebreo si rannicchia nel davanzale, il padrone,
Generato in qualche taverna d'Anversa
A Bruxelles pieno di vesciche, a Londra cencioso e
spiantato

First Israeli settlements in Palestine



Zionism after 1917 and the Balfour Declaration

- Jewish waves of immigrations starts before the Balfour and continues well into the 1960s; they are called aliyot (sing. Aliya)
 - First aliyah 1882-1903
 - Second aliyah 1904-14 and third aliyah 1918-23: 60.000 Jews migrate to Palestine
 - Fifth aliyah, 1929-39, 200,000- 250,000 immigrants, plus 100.000 during the WW2

Jewish community under the Mandate: leadership and institutions

- 1921, Palestine Zionist executive => 1929 Jewish agency
- The Histadrut: the Federation of Jewish Labour
- Kibbutz (pl. Kibbutzim), collective agricultural settlements

=> ideals of the Jewish Nation

- Image of the strong, physically fit Jews
- The Haganah, the Jewish Defense Force
 - In 1936: 10 000 men and 40 000 reservists
 - The Irgun, the terrorist wing



A manifest for the
Histadrut

Ben Gurion



A glorifying image of Ben Gurion
(1886-1973)

Founder of the MAPAI party in 1930

Chairman of the Jewish agency from 1935

The first Israeli Prime Minister

Palestinian leadership and institutions

- 1919, the Palestinian Arab congress, lead by Musa Kazimal-Husayini
- Rivalry between the Husayin and the Nashashibi
- Hajj Amin al-Husayin becomes Grand Mufti in 1922 and lead the Supreme Muslim Council



British commissions to explore the Palestinian problem...

- Series of disturbances and riots in 1928-29
- 1929 -> Shaw commission
- 1930 -> Hope Simpson commission
 - 1930 Passfield White Papers
- 1931: the 'Black Letter' of Ramsay MacDonald, read to the House of Commons

The MacDonald Letter, 13 February 1931

- Dear Dr. Weizmann: In order to remove certain misconceptions and misunderstandings which have arisen as to the policy of his Majesty's Government with regard to Palestine, as set forth in the White Paper of October, 1930, and which were the subject of a debate in the House of Commons on Nov. 17, and also to meet certain criticisms put forward by the Jewish Agency, I have pleasure in forwarding you the following statement of our position, which will fall to be read as the authoritative interpretation of the White Paper on the matters with which this letter deals.
- But the intention of his Majesty's Government appears to have been represented as being that "no further immigration of Jews is to be permitted as long as it might prevent any Arab from obtaining employment." His Majesty's Government never proposed to pursue such a policy. They were concerned to state that, in the regulation of Jewish immigration, the following principles should apply: viz., that "it is essential to insure that the immigrants should not be burden on the people of Palestine as a whole, and that they should not deprive any section of the present population of their employment." (*White Paper 1922.*)
- <http://www.mideastweb.org/macdonald1930.htm>

The Great Revolt of 1936

- Causes:
 - Great Depression accelerates the eviction of Arab peasants: 20 000 only in 1931
 - Aliyah: 400 000 Jews in Palestine in 1935
- Rebellion of Shaykh al-Din al-Qassam in 1935 – General Strike – Guerrilla in the rural areas: in 1937, still 10.000 rebels roamed in the countryside
- An Arab Higher Committee is formed, but is ineffective to guide the revolt
- => 1937 Peel Commission, suggesting partition
- => the 1939 White Paper: limitation of Jewish immigration, restriction to land sale, independence in 10 years

The Israeli independence war, or the Naqba, the Calamity, 1948

- 1948: Uk refers the matter to the United Nations
- 1948: The UN proposes a Partition Plan
- => Civil war broke out
- Fierce Palestinian resistance, but Israeli military superiority
- Involvement of Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Saudi Arabia, but inefficient

Consequences:

- => 50% more of the partition plan is annexed by Israel
- => demographic transformation of Israel:
 - 720 000 Arabs leave Israel, only 150 000 stay (and get the citizenship)
 - 600 000 Jews migrate from different countries of the Middle East into Israel
- => the refugee problem: in 1950, 960 000 Palestinians are registered for relief, and in 1967 they are 1.3 million
- => No two state solution: the Arab Palestine is annexed by Jordan, who had concluded a secret treaty with Israel
- => Change of regime in most of the Middle East countries: Egypt, Iraq, Syria, plus assassination of King Abdallah of Jordan





Israël de 1947 à 1949



LE PLAN DE L'O.N.U.



APRES LA GUERRE DE 1948-1949

Palestine
britannique

	Etat arabe (palestinien)
	Etat juif
	zone internationale

annexions
israéliennes

Immigration of Middle Eastern Jews into Israel



The 6 days war, 1967



The 6 days war

- Important territorial losses of Jordan, Syria and Egypt
- New refugee problem, with 300 000 new refugees
- Tarnished the reputation of the military regimes -> Nasser starts the War of Attrition
- => Yom Kippur War or October war, 1973

October 1973 (Yom Kippur) war



Militarily not a great success, but
-it guaranteed at least a place in the negotiating table with Israel
- it was an important psychological victory

=> Opened the way to the Camp David negotiation, 1978-79, and the Treaty between Egypt and Israel => Restitution of the Sinai peninsula

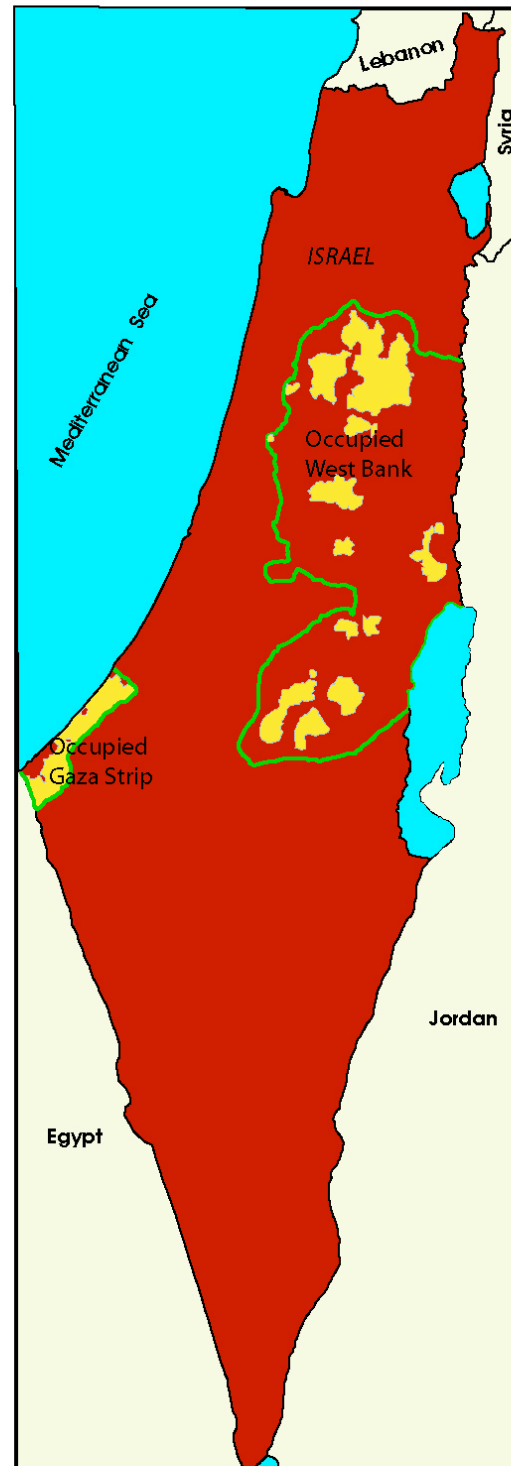
The Sinai peninsula goes back to Egypt



Palestinians in Cis-Jordania and in the Gaza Strip

- 1967-77 : indecision
- 1977: coming to power of Menachen Begin of the Likud party
 - Vertical growth of Jewish settlements
 - Requisition of land
 - Taxation policy to favour economic dependence of the Occupied territories
 - => radicalization of the Palestinians in Israel/ opening to the PLO

ISRAELI AND PALESTINIAN SECURITY-CONTROLLED AREAS



- Area "A" - Under full Palestinian security control pursuant to 1994 Oslo Accords*
- Israeli Security-Controlled Area
- Green Line (1967 Pre-Occupation Border)

FACTS ON PALESTINIAN SECURITY-CONTROLLED AREAS (AREA "A")

- Palestinian Authority controls only 17.2% of the Occupied West Bank divided into 13 non-contiguous reservations
- Palestinian Authority controls only 80% of the Occupied Gaza Strip
- Palestinian Authority controls only 21.7% of the Occupied Palestinian Territories
- Palestinian Authority controls only 5% of Historical Palestine

** Since 2000, Israel has invaded and otherwise violated the territorial integrity of Area "A". For all practical purposes, Area "A" does not exist.*