

# Shared Paths, Divergent Courses: Zionism and Palestinian Nationalism

Hussein Ibish

David N. Myers



# Goals of the Day:

## Understanding Three Key Moments

- 1) Origins of Zionism and Palestinian Nationalism
- 2) 1917
- 3) 1948

# Timeline

- “ 1882: First Aliyah
- “ 1897: First Zionist Congress
- “ 1917: Balfour Declaration
- “ 1922: British Mandate
- “ 1929: Western Wall Episode
- “ 1936: Arab General Strike/Revolt
- “ 1947: UN Resolution on Partition
- “ 1948: Independence/Nakba

# Push from the Heartland



- “ Czar Alexander II assassinated in 1881
- “ Hastened flow of emigration from EEJ, largest pop. of world Jewry (5 out of 8 million)
- “ Major streams
  - “ US and Americas
  - “ Russian cities
  - “ Land of Israel/Palestine

# First Waves of Zionist Immigration (Aliyah)



- “ First immigrants leave EE in 1882
  - “ Return to Zion
- “ Ethos of “Autoemancipation”
- “ 25,000 *Olim*
- “ Prior to formal Zionist movement

# Ahad Ha-am (1856-1927)



- “ Visits Palestine and writes “Truth from Erets Yisrael” (1891)
- “ We are accustomed to believing that the Arabs are all desert savages, like donkeys...But this is a big mistake. The Arab, like all children of Shem, has a sharp intellect and is very cunning...The Arabs, and especially those in the cities, understand our deeds and our desires in EY, but they keep quiet and pretend not to understand...Yet they mock us in their hearts.

# Zionism is “Born”



Theodor Herzl (1860-1904)

- “ Assimilated CE Jew
- “ Epiphany about need to solve “Jewish Question”
  - “ Dreyfus Affair: 1894
- “ “State of the Jews”: 1896
- “ Founds first Zionist Congress in Basel: 1897
- “ Subsequent waves of aliyot

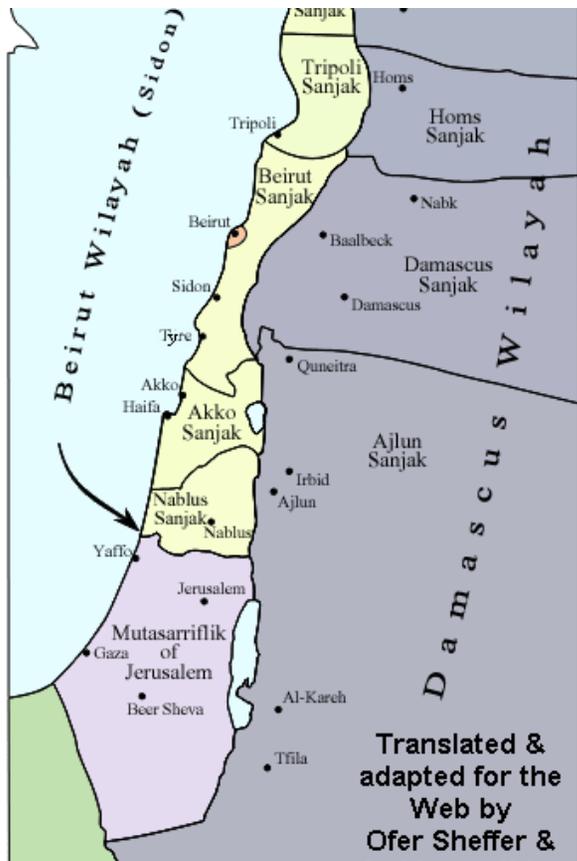
# Land Settlement in Palestine in the Early Twentieth Century



Arthur Ruppin (1876-1943)

- “ Designated to lead Zionist land settlement in 1907
- “ Buys land for Ahuzat Bayit (1909)
- “ Oversees land purchase, often from absentee landlords (*effendi*)
- “ Introduces tension with *fellahin* (rural dwellers)

# The Ottoman Setting



- “ Founded 1299
- “ conquers Constant. in 1453
- “ Palestine in 1516 from Mamluks
- “ Wide imperial web: ME, NA, and Europe
- “ Administrative units and *millet*s (divided by religion)



Yusuf Khalidi

# Herzl to Khalidi

WIEN-WÄHRING  
CARL LUDWIGSTRASSE 50.

19 Mars 1899

Excellent,

je dois à la bienveillance de Mes jadis Kohn  
le plaisir d'avoir lu la lettre que vous lui avez  
adressée. Laissez moi vous dire tout d'abord  
que les sentiments d'amitié que vous rap-  
portez pour le peuple juif m'inspirent la  
plus vive reconnaissance. Les juifs étaient,  
sont et sont les meilleurs amis de la Turquie  
depuis le jour où le Sultan Sélim a ouvert  
son Empire aux juifs persécutés de l'Europe.

Et cette amitié ne consiste pas seulement  
en paroles, elle est toute prête à se  
transformer en actes et à venir au aide  
aux musulmans.

L'idée sionniste, dont je vois l'humble res-  
susciter, n'a aucune tendance hostile au gou-  
vernement ottoman, mais bien au contraire il  
s'agit dans ce mouvement d'ouvrir de nouvelles  
ressources à l'Empire ottoman. En faisant  
immigrer une quantité de juifs apportant leur  
intelligence, leur esprit financiers et leurs  
moyens d'entreprise au pays, il ne peut faire

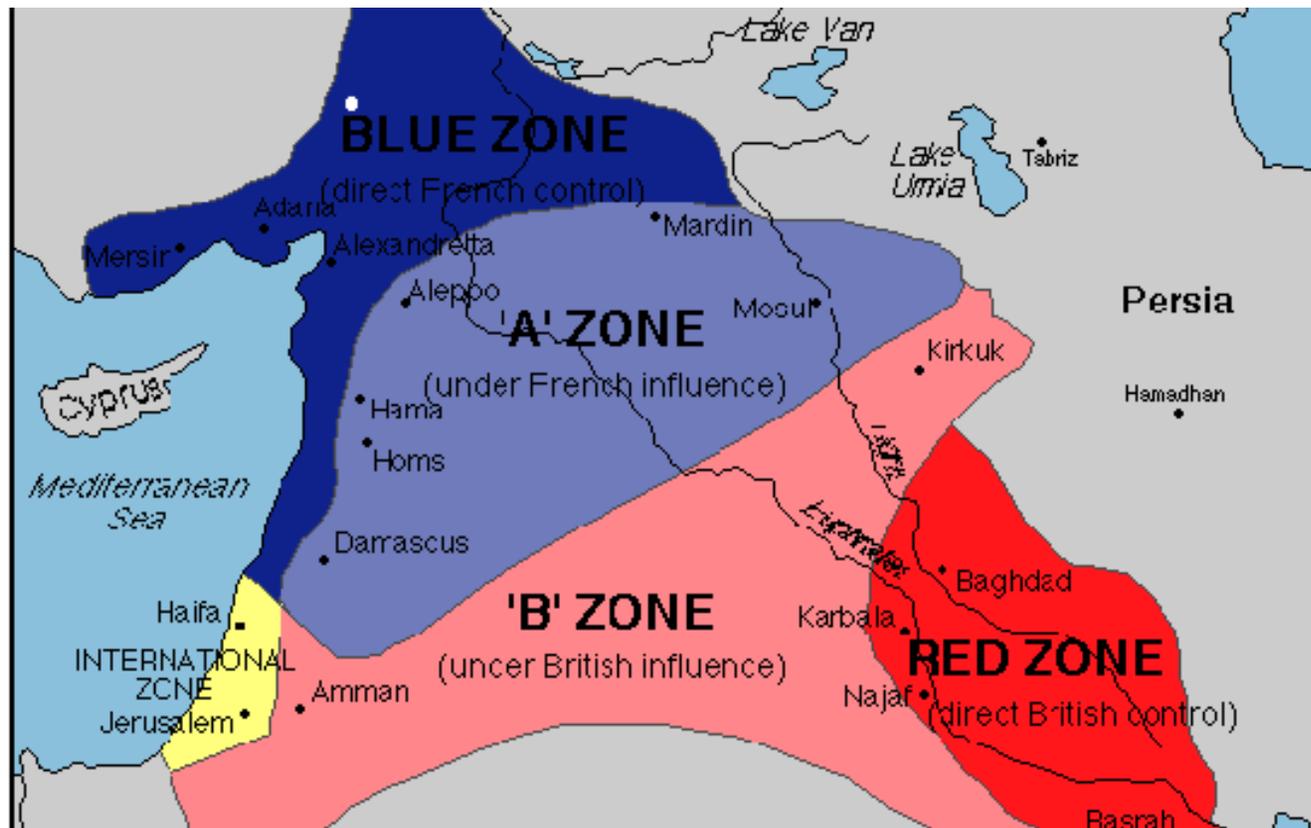
# From Ottoman to British Rule

Gen. Allenby: Dec. 1917



- “ WWI: summer 1914
- “ Ottoman vs. British
- “ Battle over Jerusalem (November-Dec. 1917)
- “ Allenby takes Jerusalem on 9 December 1917

# British Colonial Plans: Sykes-Picot (1916)

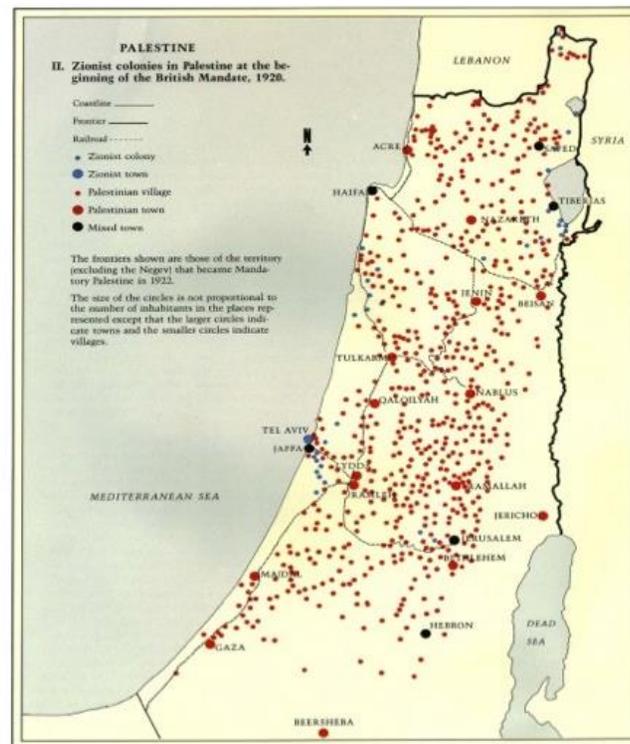


# Balfour Declaration:

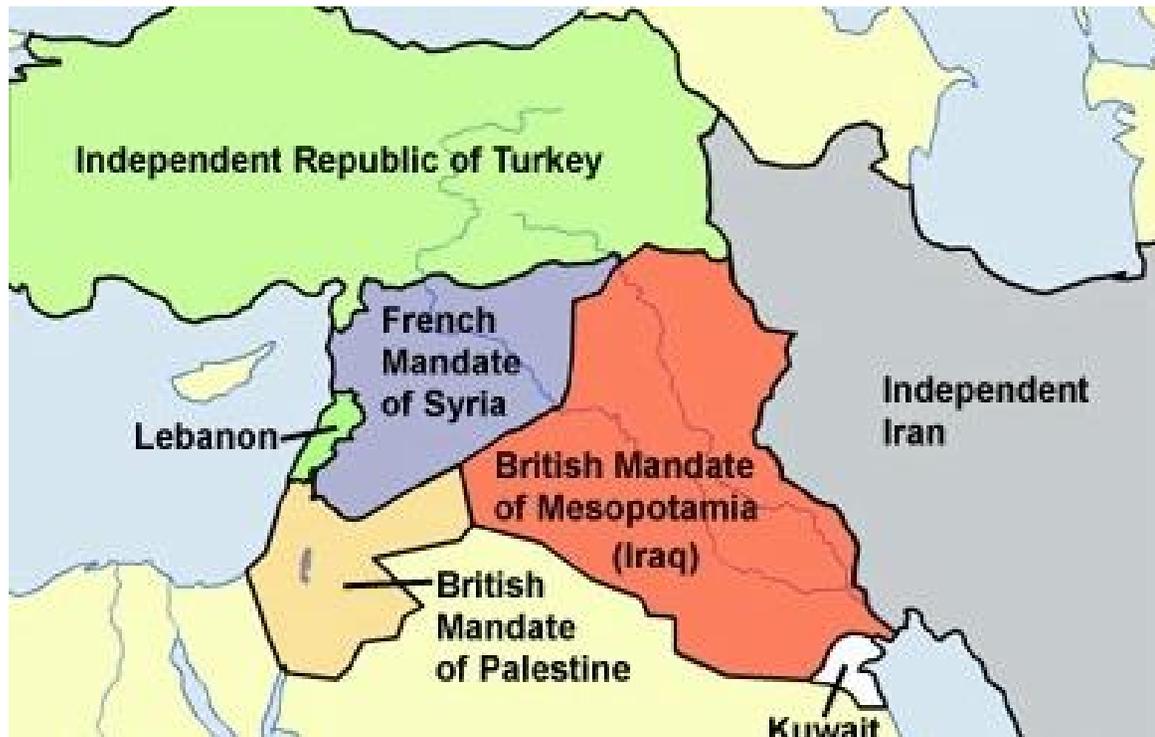
## 2 November 1917

“His Majesty's government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.”

# Zionist Colonies, 1920



# The New Order in the Middle East: The League of Nations (1920) and Mandates



# British Mandate over Palestine (1922)

“Whereas the Principal Allied Powers have also agreed that the Mandatory should be responsible for putting into effect the declaration originally made on November 2, 1917, by the Government of His Britannic Majesty, and adopted by the said Powers, in favour of the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, it being clearly understood that nothing should be done which might prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.”

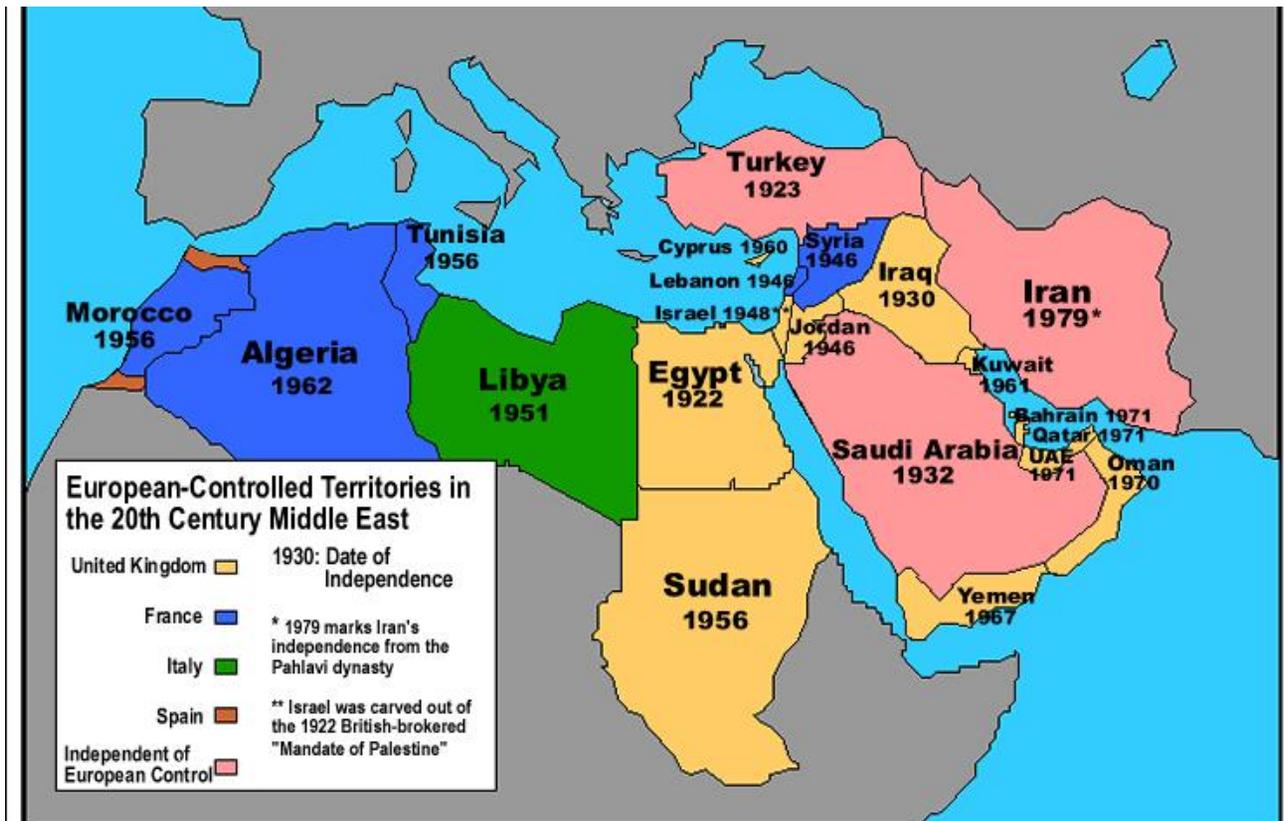
# Triangulated Relationship in Palestine: A Prism of Misunderstanding

- “ British see new opportunity to expand empire and assert interests in ME
- “ Palestinian Arabs see colonial usurpation of their land with Jews as vanguard
- “ Zionists see affirmation of legal grounding for their cause in international law

# Population of Palestine

Year	Non-Jewish Population <sup>a</sup>	Jewish Population	Percentage of Palestinian Arab to Jewish Palestinian	Total	Post WW I Cumulative Jewish immigration
1851	327,000	13,000			N/A
1861	356,000	13,000	96/4	369 000	N/A
1881	442,000	25,000	95/5	467 000	N/A
1895	522,000	47,000	92/8	569 000	N/A
1914	675,000	85,000	87/13	760 000	N/A
1916		57,000	-	-	N/A
1918		57,000	-	-	N/A
<b>1919</b>	<b>500,000</b>	<b>65,000</b>	<b>87/13</b>	<b>565 000</b>	N/A
<b>1920</b>					5,514
1922	723,000	93,000	89/11	816 000	22,507
1924	765,000	113,000	87/13	878 000 <sup>b</sup>	42,784
1931	881,000	175,000	83/17	1 056 000	108,825
1936	1,003,000	370,000	73/27	1 373 000	282,555
1940	1,113,000	467,000	70/30	1 580 000	326,911
1945	1,295,000	564,000	70/30	1 859 000	367,755
<b>1948</b>	<b>1,319,000</b>	<b>650,000</b>	<b>67/33</b>	<b>1 969 000</b>	482,755

# The Rise of Nation-States



# Key Zionist Players in the 1920s

## B-G, Jabotinsky, and Magnes



# Rising Tensions up to the Western Wall Episode (1929)

- “ Violence flares in riots of 1920-21 over Balfour
- “ Continues through 20s
- “ Tension over holy sites then and now (Haram al-sharif and Western Wall)
- “ Rising tensions via Mufti and J. nationalists
- “ Arab riot on 8/23/29; violence spreads to Jerusalem, Safed, and Hebron
- “ 133 Jews killed; 110 Arabs



# A Tipping Point

## “ Brits

- “ Shaw commission: cause is Arab fear
- “ 1930 Passfield WP: calls for restricted settlement

## “ Jews

- “ Outrage that victim and perpetrators are confused
- “ Claim British withdraw from Balfour
- “ Goals: majority and state

## “ Arabs

- “ Outrage at rising Zionist tide
- “ Growing organization: AHC
- “ Mix of strategies leading to Revolt/General Strike (1936)

## “ Joint Efforts: Some J-A talks (Alami, B-G, Magnes)

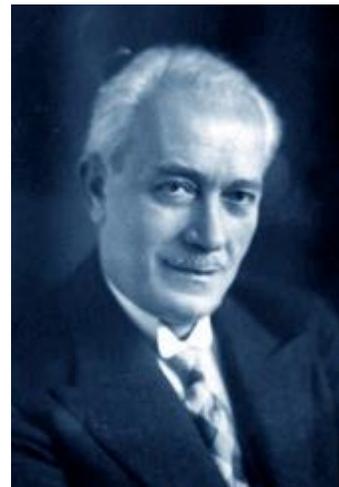
## Key Palestinian players in the 20s and 30s



Haj Amin  
al-Husseini



Musa Alami



Raghib  
al-Nashashibi



Izz ad-Din  
al-Qassam

# Abd al-Qadir al-Husseini



## Mass arrest, 1938



# Impact of the Arab “General Strike” or Palestinian “Great Uprising”

- “ 5,000 Palestinians killed, 10,000 wounded, 6,000 detained
- “ Hundreds of homes blown up
- “ Most of the leadership killed, imprisoned or exiled to the Seychelles
- “ Arab fighting strength crushed while Jewish capabilities greatly enhanced by cooperation with the British (Haganah vs. Irgun/IZL)
- “ Peel Commission (1937): Mandate failing; partition

# The British Response: MacDonald White Paper (1939)

- “ Independent, unitary Palestine established within 10 years, governed jointly by Arabs and Jews
  - “not... policy that Palestine should become a Jewish state”
- “ Limits Jewish immigration
  - “After...five years, no further Jewish immigration will be permitted unless the Arabs...acquiesce in it”
- “ Restricts land transfers from Arabs to Jews
  - “transfers of land must be restricted if Arab cultivators are to maintain their existing standard of life”

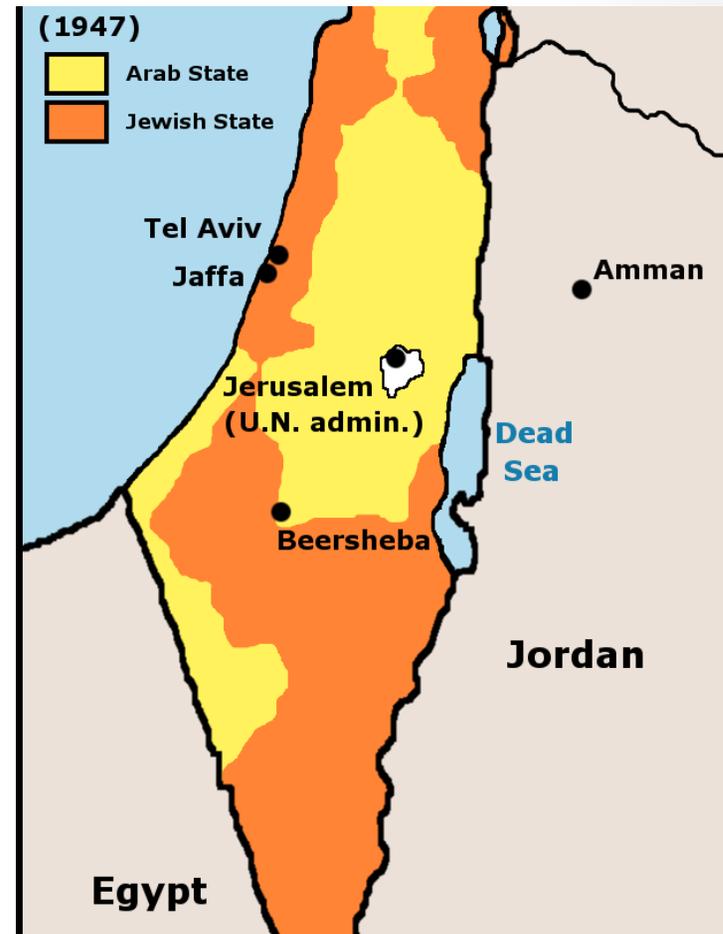
# Internecine Jewish Struggle

- “ Specter of Nazism hovers
- “ Haganah cooperates with British
- “ IZL announces revolt against British
- “ Stern Gang surfaces (1940): Moyne (1944)
- “ “The Season” (1944)
- “ IZL blows up British HQ at King David (July 1946)



# Mandate Ends

- “ British decide to surrender mandate (1947): Irgun action?
- “ UNSCOP created (5/47)
- “ UN General Assembly Res. 181
- “ Vote on 29 November 1947: 33-13-10



# Reactions to Res. 181

## Jewish and Arab

### Jewish

- “Joy and trepidation (B-G felt fear) in Yishuv
- “Diaspora Jewry galvanized
- “Prepare for military and political battles
- “B-G: “These are not riots; They are a real war.”
- “Post-Shoah motivation

### Arab

- “ Shock and outrage
- “ Lack of effective organization
- “ Riots in Jerusalem
- “ Arab Higher Committee calls for 3 day protest on Dec. 2, 1947
- “ Violence commences thereafter

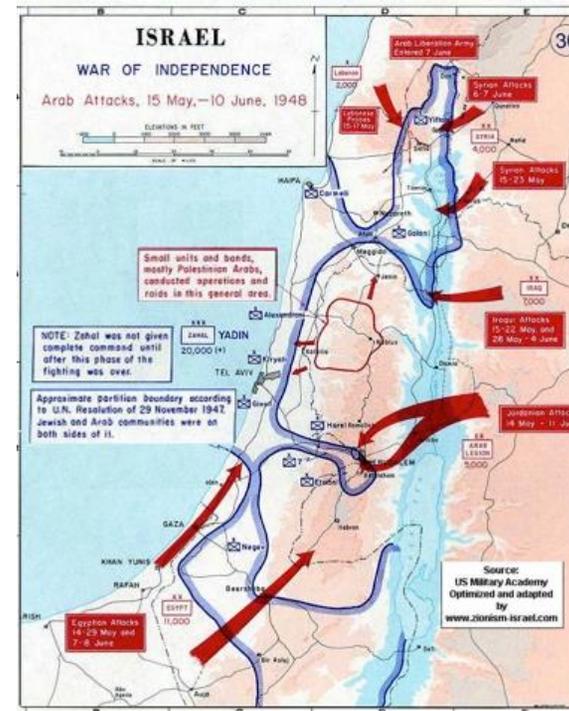
# 1948: Independence vs. Nakba

- “ Pitched battle in first months, especially over Jerusalem
- “ Arab elites take flight
- “ Deir Yassin: 9 April 1948
- “ Attack of Hadassah convoy: 13 April 1948
- “ 14 May 1948: State of Israel declared
- “ 15 May 1948: Attack by Arab armies
- “ Competing Narratives: Homeland/Exile



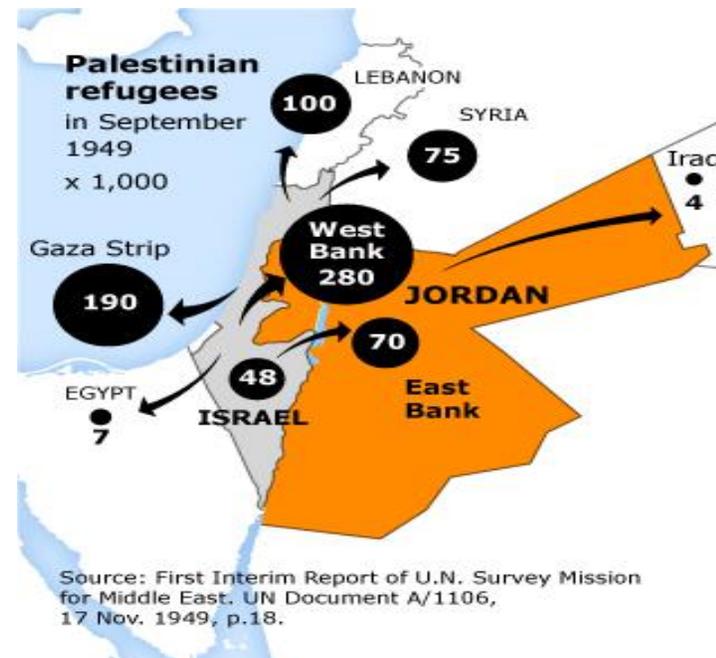
# The Lived Experience of 1948: A Jewish Perspective

- “ Fight for survival amidst sea of hostile forces
- “ Calls for jihad, as well as pro-Nazi agitation (Mufti)
- “ Massive population disadvantage (Egypt-20 million, Iraq-5 million)
- “ Vast shadow of the Holocaust
- “ Sense of extreme peril
- “ Very high motivation in fighting
- “ Joy at turn of events



# The Lived Experience of 1948: A Palestinian Perspective

- “ Appearance of European Jewish settlers
- “ Perceived British support for them
- “ Growing strength of Zionist movement
- “ Growing hostilities  
→ major conflict (1948)
- “ Dispossession
- “ Incredulity at turn of events



# Divergent Perspectives: Who is David and Who is Goliath?

- “ Jews believe themselves to be a beleaguered minority who had int’l validation, legally purchased land, built up a nation in advance of statehood, and suffered a genocide.
- “ If not they, who?

- “ Palestinians believe themselves to be a beleaguered group who suffered from European colonialism, Orientalist discrimination, and dispossession.
- “ Multiple narratives, multiple rights, multiple truths
- “ How to get beyond?