

Lesson 5: Independence

Key message: In 1948, for the first time in almost two millennia, an independent Jewish state was established in the Land of Israel. The new state was endorsed by the international community, but the ensuing war caused massive displacement and refugees.

What to Bring

- Handouts 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4a, b, c
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1. Orientation

- Takeaways from last class; questions
- Objective for this class
- Timeline (handout 5.1)

2. Partition Plan

- Distribute map (handout 5.2)
- Brainstorm and discuss the pros and cons of the plan. Make a table on the white board.
Examples:

	Jews in Palestine	Arabs in Palestine	Others
Advantages of Partition Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gain independence• State with a Jewish majority	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gain independence• State with an Arab majority	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Everyone guaranteed access to holy sites in Jerusalem• British no longer need to administer the area
Disadvantages of Partition Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Crazy borders• Don't control all of historical Land of Israel• Some Jews end up in Arab state	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Crazy borders• Don't control all of historic Palestine• Some Arabs end up in Jewish state	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Potentially unstable situation

- Overall, is this a good plan? If you were leading the Jewish *yishuv*, would you advise your people to accept it? If you were leading the Arab community, what would you advise? Discuss what actually happened.

3. The Israeli Declaration of Independence

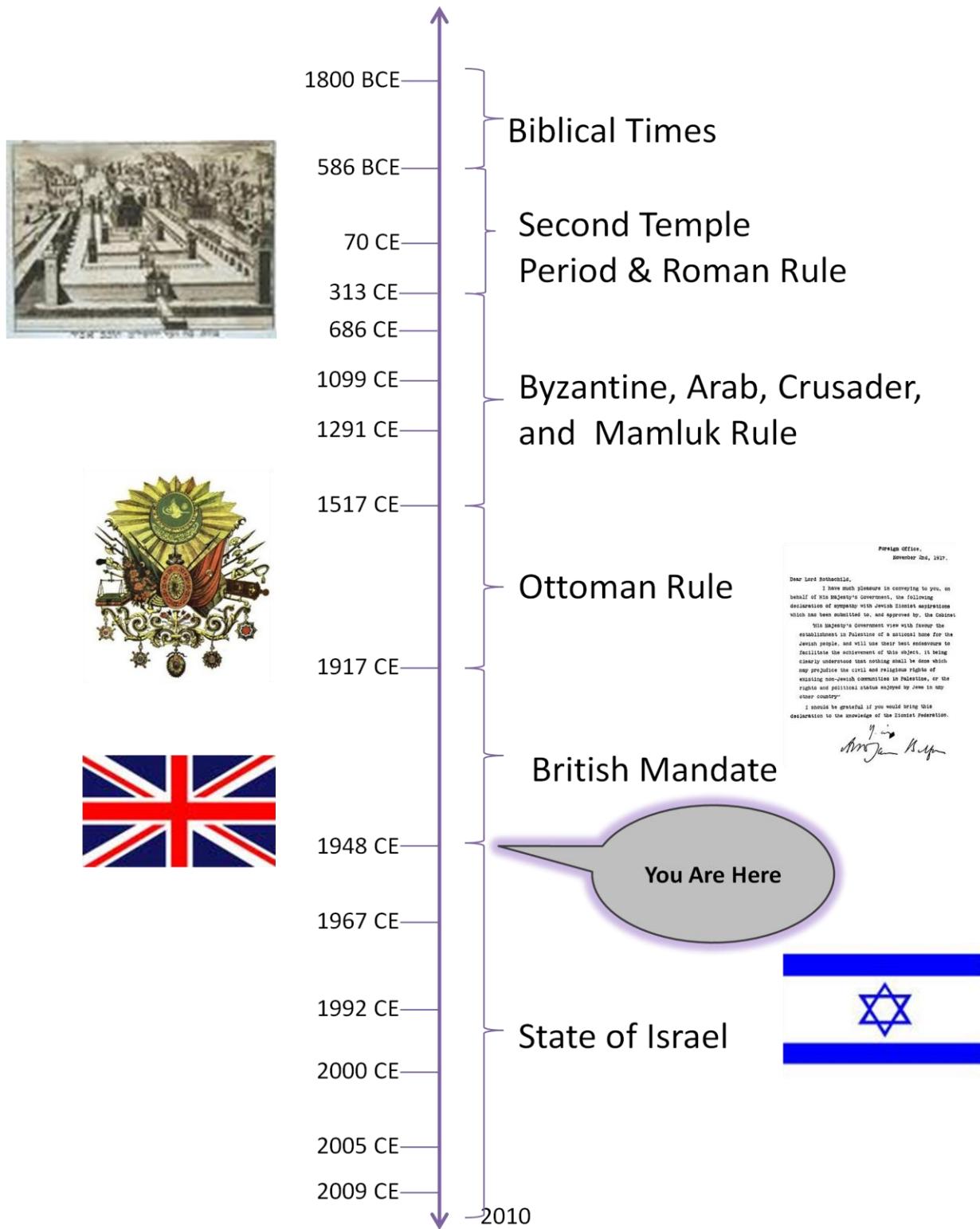
- Read the declaration (handout 5.3). What are its key points?
- According to the Declaration, what is the basis for Jewish statehood?
- What are the founding commitments of the state, as articulated in the Declaration? Are these commitments still valid today?

4. War and Displacement

- Look at the map of where the war ended (handout 5.4a). What were its outcomes?
- All wars create refugees. Why is that? (Borders move, people getting out of the way of fighting.) Some examples from 20th Century and contemporary wars*:
 - World War II (1941-1954) 16,000,000
 - India-Pakistan War (1947) 15,000,000
 - Greek-Turkish War (1919-1922) 2,000,000
 - Central & Western Africa (2000-) 7,000,000
 - Afghanistan War (2001-) 3,000,000
 - Iraq War (2003-) 2,000,000
 - Arabs from Palestine (1947-1948) 750,000
 - Jews from Arab Land (1948-1952) 700,000
- Arab refugees from Palestine (handout 5.4b).
- Jewish refugees from Arab countries (handout 5.4c)

* Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Population_exchange_between_Greece_and_Turkey; UN High Commission on Refugees, <http://www.unhcr.org/statistics/STATISTICS/4486ceb12.pdf>; <http://www.jafi.org.il/education/100/maps/ref.html>; <http://www.justiceforjews.com/>

Timeline: Lesson 5



**Partition Plan: U.N. General Assembly Resolution 181,
November 29, 1947**



Source: <http://israelinsider.com/maps>

Israel's Declaration of Independence, May 14, 1948

The Land of Israel was the birthplace of the Jewish people. Here their spiritual, religious and political identity was shaped. Here they first attained to statehood, created cultural values of national and universal significance and gave to the world the eternal Book of Books.

After being forcibly exiled from their land, the people kept faith with it throughout their Dispersion and never ceased to pray and hope for their return to it and for the restoration in it of their political freedom.

Impelled by this historic and traditional attachment, Jews strove in every successive generation to re-establish themselves in their ancient homeland. In recent decades they returned in their masses. Pioneers, immigrants and defenders, they made deserts bloom, revived the Hebrew language, built villages and towns, and created a thriving community controlling its own economy and culture, loving peace but knowing how to defend itself, bringing the blessings of progress to all the country's inhabitants, and aspiring towards independent nationhood. [...]

This right is the natural right of the Jewish people to be masters of their own fate, like all other nations, in their own sovereign State.

Accordingly we, members of the People's Council, representatives of the Jewish community of Eretz-Israel and of the Zionist movement, are here assembled on the day of the termination of the British mandate over Eretz-Israel and, by virtue of our natural and historic right and on the strength of the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly, hereby declare the establishment of a Jewish state in Eretz-Israel, to be known as the state of Israel. [...]

THE STATE OF ISRAEL will be open for Jewish immigration and for the Ingathering of the Exiles; it will foster the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants; it will be based on freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel; it will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex; it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture; it will safeguard the Holy Places of all religions; and it will be faithful to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. [...]

WE APPEAL - in the very midst of the onslaught launched against us now for months - to the Arab inhabitants of the State of Israel to preserve peace and participate in the upbuilding of the State on the basis of full and equal citizenship and due representation in all its provisional and permanent institutions.

WE EXTEND our hand to all neighbouring states and their peoples in an offer of peace and good neighbourliness, and appeal to them to establish bonds of cooperation and mutual help with the sovereign Jewish people settled in its own land. The State of Israel is prepared to do its share in a common effort for the advancement of the entire Middle East.

WE APPEAL to the Jewish people throughout the Diaspora to rally round the Jews of Eretz-Israel in the tasks of immigration and upbuilding and to stand by them in the great struggle for the realization of the age-old dream - the redemption of Israel.

Placing our trust in the "Rock of Israel," we affix our signatures to this proclamation at this session of the Provisional Council of State, on the soil of the homeland, in the city of Tel-Aviv, on this Sabbath eve, the 5th day of Iyar, 5708 (14th May, 1948).

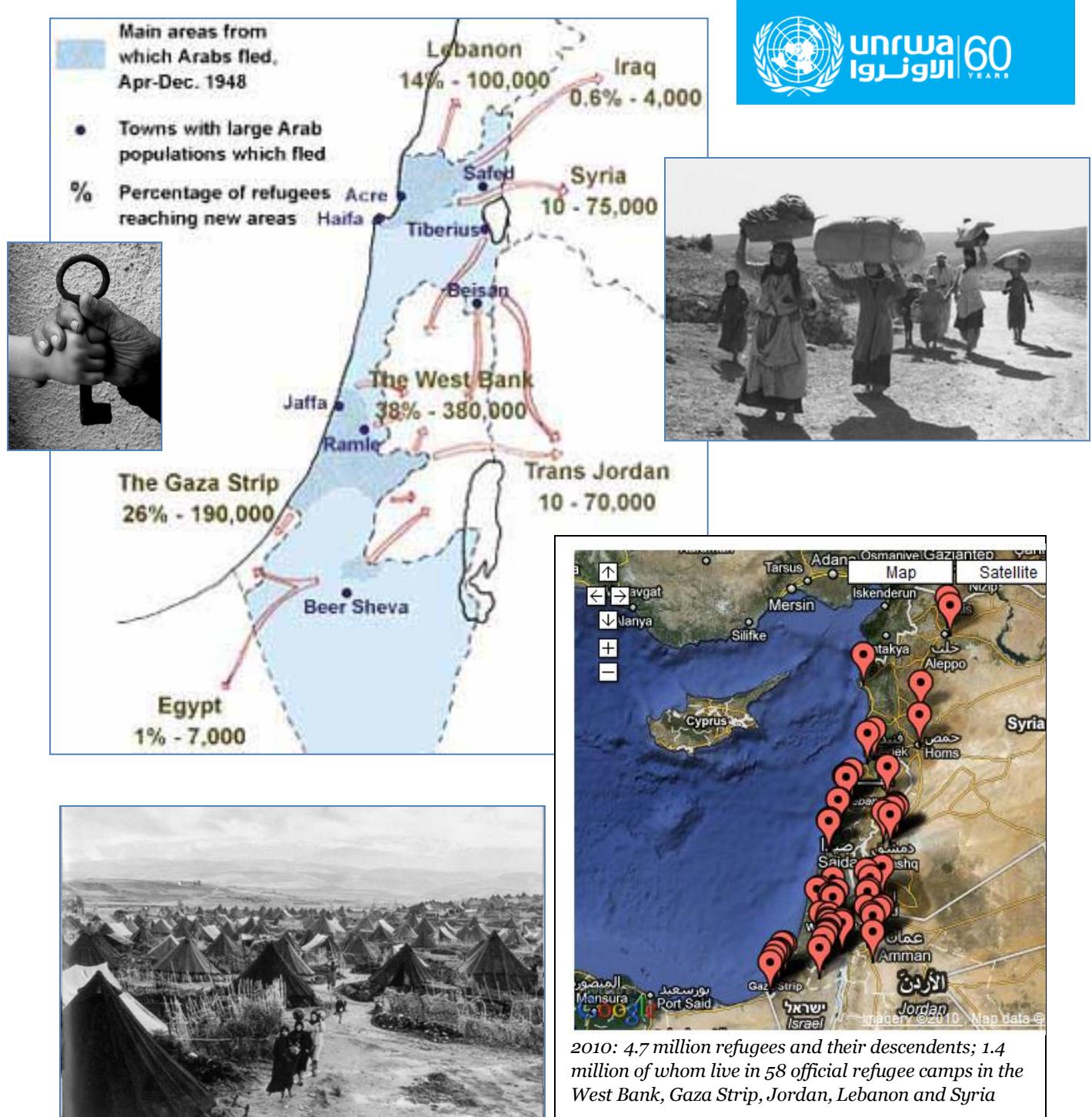
Adapted from Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, www.mfa.gov.il: Peace Process > Guide > Declaration of Establishment of State of Israel

1949 Armistice Lines



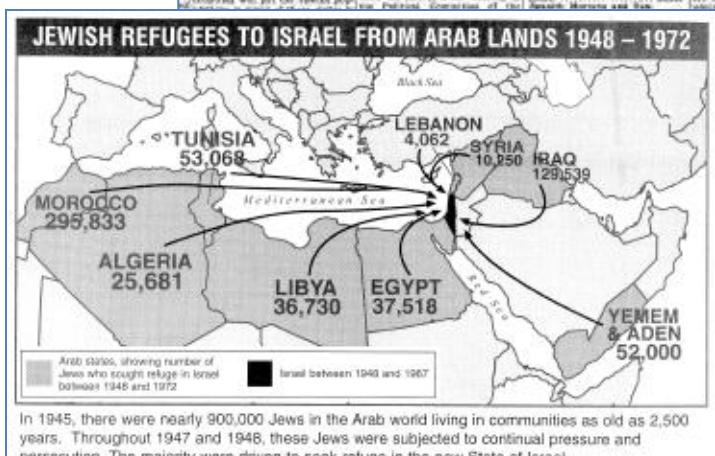
Source: <http://israelinsider.com/maps>

Arab Refugees from Palestine



Sources: Jewish Virtual Library <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/refugees.html>; UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees, <http://www.unrwa.org/etemplate.php?id=41>

Jewish Refugees from Arab Countries



	1948¹	1958²	1968³	1976⁴	2001⁵	2005⁶
Aden	8,000	800	0	0	0	0
Algeria	140,000	130,000	3,000	1,000	0	0
Egypt	75,000	40,000	2,500	400	100	100
Iraq	135,000	6,000	2,500	350	100	60 ⁷
Lebanon	5,000	6,000	3,000	400	100	~50 ⁸
Libya	38,000	3,750	500	40	0	0
Morocco	265,000	200,000	50,000	18,000	5,700	3,500
Syria	30,000	5,000	4,000	4,500	100	100
Tunisia	105,000	80,000	10,000	7,000	1,500	1,100
Yemen	55,000	3,500	500	500	200 ⁹	200
TOTAL	856,000	475,050	76,000	32,190	7,800	5,110

