

# Zionism and the Creation of Modern Israel

## 1870's – 1880's

- *Hovevei Zion (lovers of Zion) societies in Russia and Romania begin to promote agricultural settlements in Palestine, which was then ruled by the Ottoman Empire. Dreams of returning to Jerusalem begin in earnest.*
- *Mikve Israel, an agricultural school, is established north of Jaffa (now Tel Aviv).*
- *1885 – Nathan Birnbaum coins the term “Zionism” in a periodical promulgating the ideas of the Hovevei Zion movement. This term holds that “Jews are entitled to a homeland promised by God.” The term is both political and religious.*
- *1890 – “The Hebrew Language Committee” is founded by Elizer Ben Yehuda, who is referred to as the “father of the Hebrew language.”*
- *1896 – Theodor Herzl, best known figure of political Zionism, writes The Jewish State, in which he asserts that the problem of anti-Semitism can only be resolved by the creation of a “Jewish state.”*
- *1897 – The “First Zionist Congress” convenes on Aug. 29 calling for establishment of a national homeland for the Jews in the Land of Israel. More than 30 Zionist congresses have met since.*
- *“The Zionist Organization” is founded; Theodor Herzl is elected president.*

## 1882 – 1903

- *The “First Aliya,” or “going forward” occurs, as a large-scale immigration of Jews (mainly from Russia) to Palestine takes place. (Jews from Eastern Europe are referred to as “Ashkenazi” and make up close to 80% of Jews worldwide.)*

## 1900 – 1909

- *1901 - The “Jewish National Fund” is established by “The Zionist Organization” for the purpose of purchasing land in the “Land of Israel” (then Palestine) to be “the eternal possession of the Jewish people.”*
- *1902 – The Sha'are Tzedek Clinic (today a modern hospital) opens in Jerusalem.*
- *1903 – The Anglo-Palestinian Bank (now Bank Leumi) is established. Also, the Hebrew Teachers Association is founded.*

- 1904 – Theodor Herzl dies.
- 1906 – The Bazalel Academy of the Arts is opened in Jerusalem.
- 1908 – The first Hebrew Daily newspaper is published ... in Hebrew.

### **1904 – 1914**

- The “Second Aliya” (also Ashkenazi) occurs, with immigrants mostly from Russia and Poland.

### **1914 – 1917**

- World War I takes place, ending a six-hundred year rule by the Ottoman Turks. Palestine is given to Britain to govern as a “British mandate.”
- 1917 – The “Belfour Declaration” is issued pledging British support for the establishment of “a Jewish national homeland” in Palestine. This declaration receives wide Western support and commitment.

### **1920 – 1923**

- The “Third Aliya” (also Ashkenazi) occurs and is made up mostly of young Russians with strong Zionist and socialist convictions.
- 1921 – Anti-Jewish riots break out in several key cities in Palestine, as (mostly) Muslim and Christian groups object to the large influx of new populations.
- 1922 – The Western “League of Nations” confirms the British Mandate, which includes agreement with the “Belfour Declaration” of 1917.

### **1924 – 1932**

- The “Fourth Aliya” (also Ashkenazi) occurs made up mostly with middle class Jews from Poland.
- 1925 – The Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the Jewish National and University Library open in Jerusalem.

### **1933 – 1939**

- The “Fifth Aliya” occurs with immigrants mainly from Germany, including many academic scholars and professionals, accompanied by large influxes of capital.

- *1933 – Adolph Hitler comes to power in Germany. Jews are targeted for imprisonment and death for the next twelve years. Many German and other Jews immigrate to Palestine during this time.*
- *1936 - Some fifty new settlements are established in outlying areas of Palestine, all set up in one day and ready to defend by night time. They become known as “stockade and watchtower” settlements.*

*A three-year period of disorder and violence, known as the “Arab Revolt,” takes place in Palestine, during which hundreds of Jews are killed.*

- *1937 – In attempts to resolve this crisis, the “Peel Commission” recommends partitioning Palestine into two states, one Jewish and one Arab.*
- *1938 – “Illegal immigration” of Jews from Europe begins with almost 100,000 arriving by 1948.*
- *1939 – The “White Paper” is published, restricting immigration and the sale of land to Jews.*

*Also, World War II breaks out in September with a master plan by the Nazi Regime to extinguish the Jewish community in Europe.*

### **1940-1948**

- *1944 - The “Jewish Brigade,” composed of Jews from Palestine, is incorporated into the British Army to fight against Adolph Hitler’s forces.*
- *1945 – World War II ends. Hundreds of thousands of Jews have been killed; thousands more held in concentration camps. Few countries around the world, including the United States, have offered sanctuary for the Jews.*
- *1946 – Palestinian communities have been overwhelmed by the large influxes of Jewish populations, and the “Arab League” imposes an economic boycott against Jewish communities in Palestine.*
- *1947 – The Israeli National Opera Company opens.*
- *1948 - The “State of Israel” is proclaimed by David Ben-Gurion on May 14, just hours before the “Belfour Declaration” is set to expire on 15 May. The First Census Report claims a population of 872,700 in Israel: 716,700 Jews and 156,000 non-Jews.*

*Taken from internet sources: Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs – State of Israel*