



Mukaddime

Britain's Palestine Policy and the Institutionalization of Jewish Immigration to Palestine (1917-1925)

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Abstract

This article analyzes the conditions under which Jews migrated to Palestine and how Britain handled Jewish immigration. With the occupation of Palestine by Britain in 1917, a period marked by conflict and turmoil began in the region. In the early years of the occupation, how Britain would establish an administration in Palestine was a matter of great curiosity. However, the Balfour Declaration, which was announced just before the occupation, was a significant document in terms of revealing what the inhabitants of Palestine would face. The Balfour Declaration, published as a result of intensive negotiations between the British and the Jews, declared that Britain would support the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine. At this point, in order to increase the number of Jews -who were fewer in number compared to the Arabs in the region- Zionists encouraged Jewish migration from Europe to Palestine. The Zionists promoted Jewish immigration by disregarding the Arabs. The policy of displacing Arabs from their lands and settling Jews in their place was implemented intensively from the early years of the occupation of Palestine. During this period, the Arabs submitted petitions to the League of Nations in an effort to mobilize the international community against the injustices they faced. This process has been attempted to be revealed through the petitions and reports reflected in some League of Nations and British archival documents. This study also examines the measures taken by the Ottoman State to prevent Jewish immigration, based on Ottoman archival documents.

Keywords: Palestine, Britain, Jewish Immigration, Arabs, League of Nations.

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İngiltere'nin Filistin Politikası ve Filistin'e Yahudi Göçünün Kurumsallaşması (1917-1925)

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Öz

Bu makale, Yahudilerin Filistin'e hangi şartlar altında göç ettiklerini ve İngiltere'nin Yahudi göçünü nasıl ele aldığını analiz etmektedir. Filistin'in 1917'de İngiltere tarafından işgal edilmesiyle beraber, bölgede çatışmaların ve kargaşanın eksik olmadığı bir dönem başlamıştır. İngiltere'nin Filistin'de nasıl bir yönetim oluşturacağı, işgalin ilk yıllarında büyük bir merak konusuydu. Ancak işgalin hemen öncesinde ilan edilen Balfour Deklarasyonu, Filistin'de yaşayanların neler ile karşılaşacaklarını göstermesi açısından önemli bir vesikaydı. İngilizler ile Yahudiler arasındaki yoğun görüşmelerin bir sonucu olarak yayımlanan Balfour Deklarasyonu, İngiltere'nin Filistin'de bir Yahudi yurdu kurulmasına destek vereceğini ilan etmiştir. Bu noktada, bölgede Araplara oranla sayıları az olan Yahudilerin sayılarının artırılması için Avrupa'dan Filistin'e göç etmeleri, Siyonistler tarafından teşvik edilmiştir. Siyonistler, Arapları yok saymak suretiyle Yahudi göçünü teşvik etmişlerdir. Arapların topraklarından uzaklaştırılarak, Yahudilerin yerleştirilmesi politikası, Filistin'in işgalinin ilk yıllarından itibaren yoğunlukla uygulanmaktaydı. Bu dönemde Araplar, yaşadıkları haksızlıklar karşısında uluslararası toplumu harekete geçirebilmek için Milletler Cemiyeti'ne dilekçeler göndermişlerdir. Yaşanan bu süreç, bazı Milletler Cemiyeti ve İngiliz arşiv belgelerine yansıyan dilekçeler ve raporlar aracılığıyla ortaya konmaya çalışılmıştır. Bu çalışmada ayrıca, Osmanlı Devleti'nin Yahudi göçünü önlemeye yönelik tedbirleri Osmanlı arşiv belgeleri ışığında ele alınmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Filistin, İngiltere, Yahudi Göçü, Araplar, Milletler Cemiyeti.

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Introduction

The political aspiration to make Palestine a homeland for Jews was a matter that emerged before World War I. Jews engaged in various political activities under the banner of Zionism, carefully pursued diplomatic efforts to gain the support of the international community. Through Zionist congresses, they intensively interacted with British statesmen, asserting the necessity of making Palestine a Jewish homeland even before the war. After Britain occupied Palestine in 1917 and the Ottoman State withdrew from the region, Palestine went through extremely difficult times. Before World War I, the Ottoman State was aware of Jewish interest in Palestine and did not desire Jewish migration to the region. The Ottoman State foresaw that intensive Jewish migration to Palestine would lead to challenges in the region. Nonetheless, Jews consistently expressed their interest in Palestine to both the Ottoman and Western governments. Long before World War I, Jews organized various meetings, agreeing on the necessity of finding a homeland for Jews. Gathered around this idea, they began to act in line with Zionism. Over time, Zionists started to make their presence known through both the press and diplomatic channels. At this point, the primary goal of the Zionists became the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. The state that contributed most to this Zionist goal was Britain. After Britain's occupation of Palestine in 1917, Jewish migration to Palestine increased. Britain adopted a determined stance in facilitating Jewish migration and provided every kind of support to the Jews (Hacohen, 2001, p. 207). Although the Jewish population in Palestine was smaller compared to the Arabs, Zionists made significant efforts to increase the Jewish population. In response to these developments, Arabs in Palestine, regardless of their Christian or Muslim identities, united to protest Zionist policies in the region and sent numerous petitions to the League of Nations and Western states. Additionally, as a reaction to the Zionists' efforts to establish Palestine as a Jewish homeland, conflicts began to emerge between Arabs and Jews.

In this study, it has been attempted to reveal how Jewish immigration took place in the region after the British occupation of Palestine through the use of some critically important League of Nations and British archival documents and secondary sources. With Britain's occupation of Palestine in 1917, Zionist aspirations to achieve their goals in the region became much more feasible.

Over the years, the number of Jews migrating to Palestine increased. One of the major objectives the Zionists set for themselves in Palestine was to increase employment opportunities, thereby transforming Palestine into a destination for Jewish migration from Europe. To realize their plans in Palestine, Zionists not only engaged in armed conflicts with Arabs in the region but also ensured diplomatic support from Western states. This study primarily focuses on Jewish immigration to Palestine. It reveals how the migration of Jews to the Palestinian territories under Ottoman rule was prevented through Ottoman archive documents. It also examines historical developments in Palestine and presents the details of Britain's approval of a Jewish State in Palestine, known in public discourse as the Balfour Declaration. Then, the conflicts between Arabs and Jews following the start of Jewish immigration to Palestine are discussed.

This study employs a qualitative historical analysis method that integrates primary archival documents with relevant secondary sources. The research investigates British diplomatic strategies, Zionist political maneuvers, and Arab responses during the early years of British rule in Palestine. Besides, this study addresses the following questions: How did British policies directly influence Jewish immigration to Palestine?

What were the economic, political, and social factors that facilitated British support for Zionist activities? The hypothesis guiding this research is that British involvement was driven by strategic imperial interests, aligning closely with Zionist objectives.

1. Britain, Zionism, and the Fall of Ottoman Rule in Palestine

Zionism refers to the ideology that seeks to gather all Jews living outside Palestine into the region and to rebuild the Temple of Solomon on Mount Zion (Kutluay, 2019, p. 15). The term *Zionism* was first used in its modern sense by Nathan Birnbaum in 1890 (Prior, 1999, p. 2). Throughout history, the concept of Zionism has not been approached in a universally agreed-upon or unified manner. Rather, it has been interpreted through various political, cultural, social, and religious lenses (Ben-Israel, 2003, p. 91). Moreover, Zionists argue that Jews should settle in what they consider the Holy Land - Palestine- and establish political and cultural influence there, attaining a degree of self-governance. There has been considerable debate over whether Jews should seek political sovereignty or merely cultural autonomy in Palestine. Moreover, the Jewish socialist party Bund, which operated in Lithuania, Poland, and Russia, along with the Russian Jewish historian Simon Dubnow, advocated for the cultural autonomy of Jews within the countries in which they resided. A more pressing issue raised by Zionism has been the persistent question of how the national boundaries of the Jewish people should be defined. In the 1880s, Zionism primarily aimed at reviving cultural, linguistic, and national identity. However, in the course of history, it has become evident that the political ambitions of Zionism have increasingly taken precedence (Perez, 2023, pp. 1-2; Gans, 2008, p. 3). In conclusion, contemporary Judaism has been deeply influenced by Zionist thought. The plan to establish a Jewish state in Palestine has had a substantial impact on Jewish identity and communities (Taylor, 1972, p. 35). Zionism led to the establishment of a Jewish state in the Middle East as part of a broader political Project (Rosenbaum, 2019, p. 125).

Zionism originated as a Western ideology and has consistently sought to legitimize itself by appealing to international public opinion. At its core, the actions undertaken -and still pursued- by Zionists in Palestine can be interpreted through a colonial lens. Nevertheless, Zionist discourse has strategically aimed to obscure these actions within the frameworks accepted by the international system. In this context, Zionism has depicted its activities in Palestine as a civilizing mission directed toward an “empty land,” drawing parallels with the colonial enterprises of Western powers in Africa (Said, 1979, p. 12). Although nationalist ideas were predominant in the early emergence of Zionism, it was also approached within a socialist framework. For example, Baer Borochoy and A. D. Gordon interpreted Zionism from a socialist perspective. According to them, Zionism constituted a significant revolutionary political movement within the context of global class struggle. Despite collaborating with both Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Moses Hess supported the idea of a Jewish nation-state in the Holy Land (Selwyn and Selwyn, 1993, p. 29). The Enlightenment movements that took place in 18th century Europe initially influenced Jews in Western Europe and, by the late 19th century, began to affect Jewish communities in Eastern Europe as well. As a result of this process, a period of Jewish Enlightenment known as *Haskalah* emerged within Jewish society (Friesel, 2024, p. 383).

In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, Britain was interested in significant settlements in the Near East, including Egypt, Syria, and Palestine. Following Napoleon's Egyptian and Palestinian campaigns in 1799, Britain became increasingly concerned with the region due to its rivalry with France. Ten years after the Governor of Egypt, Kavalalı Mehmet Ali Pasha, took control of the Syrian and Palestinian territories in 1830, these areas were returned to Ottoman control through the operations of British and French forces. During this period, Britain sought to pursue a more active foreign policy in the Palestinian region. In 1838, Britain established a consulate in Jerusalem. Furthermore, with the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, Palestine began to gain strategic importance for Britain (Şener, 2024, pp. 190-191). Throughout the 19th century, the British also engaged in mapping the land surrounding Jerusalem and its environs (Gavish, 2005, p. 4). Britain undertook every necessary measure to enhance its influence in this region. Thus, the Palestinian region, and consequently the Mediterranean corridor, became prominent in British foreign policy, with ensuring the security of colonial routes to India emerging as a priority.

Before World War I, the Ottoman State made every effort to prevent Jewish migration policies to Palestine. For example, in a petition sent by the Ottoman government to the British consulate in 1884, it was stated that, despite the prohibition imposed by the Ottoman State, Jews from various parts of the world were attempting to migrate to Palestine, causing unrest in the region. The petition emphasized that some Jewish migrants were arriving and settling in Palestine under the pretext of pilgrimage and trade (BOA, HR. SFR. (03), 299/100). When Sultan Abdulhamid II refused to allow Jews to reside in Palestine, the British, German, French, Russian, and American consuls objected to this decision and exerted pressure on the Ottoman State (BOA, DH.MKT., 1505/53). In addition to blocking Jewish immigration to Palestine, Sultan Abdulhamid II also prohibited Jews from acquiring property in the region (BOA, HR.ID., 836/30). These documents show that the Ottoman State adopted strict immigration and property policies in order to maintain demographic and political stability in Palestine. However, pressure on the Ottoman State from external actors, primarily Western powers, created significant obstacles to the implementation of these policies. Sultan Abdulhamid II's decisions to ban immigration and property acquisition are understood as a systematic effort to control the growth of the Jewish population in the region.

Jews systematically organized Zionist congresses to facilitate mass migration to Palestine. At the first Zionist Congress in 1897, held in Basel, Switzerland, Zionist Jews stressed the importance of establishing a homeland (Tür, 2007, pp. 226-227). Additionally, in his opening speech at the Basel Congress, Theodor Herzl emphasized to the participants that, with few exceptions, the condition of Jews around the world was dire; had that not been the case, they would not have gathered there. Herzl stated that the congress held great significance for the Jewish people and that, in order to establish a Jewish homeland, personal ambitions must be set aside in favor of dedication to the Zionist cause. He also stressed that European nations and governments were closely monitoring every step taken, and that it was of utmost importance for decisions to be adopted unanimously. Moreover, Herzl acknowledged that the plan to establish a Jewish state could not be negotiated with the Turks and that the Ottoman Sultan would not give the Jews even an inch of land (Vital, 1995, pp. 361-366). Following the conclusion of the Zionist Congress, Herzl wrote in his diary the statement: "At Basel, I founded the Jewish State." (Avineri, 1998, p. 3).

Through his 1896 book *The Jewish State*, Theodor Herzl, a key architect of Zionist ideology, sought to unite the Jewish community around Zionist ideas. (Abdurahmanlı, 2022, pp. 1782-1784). In this book, Theodor Herzl does not consider the establishment of a Jewish state to be impossible. He stated that the effective use of diplomacy was a prerequisite for the creation of such a state. Herzl also claimed that the population of the future Jewish state would be modern and technologically Europeanized. He emphasized that Jews would not be able to leave the countries they lived in all at once, and that this migration would have to occur gradually. While the fertile and sparsely populated lands of Argentina seemed advantageous for resettlement, the idea of Jews settling in Argentina was not welcomed by the Argentine government. Herzl described Palestine as the historic homeland of the Jews and noted that if Jews were to migrate there, it would strongly appeal to them (Herzl, 1989, pp. 2-13). In 1899, the Ottoman administration, in an effort to prevent Jewish migration to Palestine, required that the passports of Jews arriving in the region include a statement indicating that they had come for pilgrimage or trade purposes. Furthermore, new regulations mandated that travel documents be stamped and that Jews not remain in Palestine for more than one month (BOA, HR. SFR. (03), 480/109). The Ottoman State faced significant difficulties in preventing Jewish immigration. As noted above, Western powers exerted considerable pressure on the Ottoman State. Despite these pressures, the Ottoman government continued to issue decisions aimed at stopping Jewish migration to Palestine. In this context, the Ottoman administration announced in 1908 that visas would not be issued to Jews due to the prohibition on their immigration to Palestine (BOA, HR. SFR. (03), 588/101). However, all these measures proved insufficient, and with Zionist organization and support, Jewish migration to Palestine continued. In fact, the Jews went so far as to establish an independent court in Jaffa in 1912. At that point, the Ottoman government prohibited even Jews who were Ottoman citizens from migrating to Palestine (BOA, DH. ŞFR., 465/19). These developments show that the Ottoman administration's efforts to control the demographic and political structure in Palestine were largely unsuccessful. The pressure exerted by Western states on the Ottoman State limited the implementation of policies to prevent emigration, while the Zionist movement's local support mechanisms ensured that emigration continued. Furthermore, the establishment of an independent court by Jews in Jaffa indicates that they had begun to create an autonomous structure in the legal and social spheres in Palestine.

The concept of Zionism was centered on shaping the future of the Jewish people. Edward Said described Zionism as “a discriminatory, exclusionary, and colonial practice.” (Sirhan, 2021, p. 20). According to Theodor Herzl, Zionism was a system with political objectives rather than a religious character (Perry, 2003, p. 186). At the first Zionist Congress, Jews designated Palestine as their homeland. However, after this decision, Muslims and Christians opposed the move. In this context, the Papacy declared that it would never consent to such a *fait accompli* in the Middle East and emphasized the protection of the rights of Christians in the region. In response, Theodor Herzl wrote a letter to the cardinals in an attempt to appease them (Göze, 1995, p. 157). During this period, Jews living within the borders of the Ottoman State enjoyed trade, social, and religious freedoms. Sultan Abdulhamid II ensured that Jews, like other non-Muslim groups, could continue their lives freely within the Ottoman realm. However, especially after the Zionist Congress in Basel, Sultan Abdulhamid II imposed stricter laws and decrees than the aforementioned measures to prevent Jewish settlement in Palestine (Gökmen, 2023, pp. 34-38). In this context, the Ottoman administration sent instructions

to its consuls to exercise caution when issuing visas to Jews wishing to travel to Palestine, thereby introducing strict regulations to prevent their entry into the region (BOA, HR. SFR. (03), 480/27). Despite these measures, Jews attempted to migrate to Palestine illegally. Among the states that provided the most significant support for Jewish aspirations to migrate to Palestine was Britain.

During World War I, Britain sought to gain the support of both Jews and Arabs by conducting its activities in the region covertly. On the one hand, promises of an independent Arab state were made through correspondence between McMahon and Sharif Hussein. On the other hand, Jewish support was sought in exchange for the establishment of a Jewish state in the region. The British Jewish journalist Lucien Wolf conveyed the demands of Jews regarding Palestine to British Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey on 12 March 1916. Wolf stated that if Britain and France were to occupy the Palestinian region at the end of the war, they should consider the historical interests of the Jews living there. Municipal privileges should be granted to Jews in the areas where they resided, and Jewish migration to Palestine should be facilitated. Sir Edward Grey expressed his willingness to consider these requests and emphasized the need to discuss them with Allied states (UK The National Archives, FO: 800/176, No. 1-2, E. Grey-L. Wolf, 12 March 1916). In response to Sir Edward Grey's letter on the Jewish demands, the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in a telegram dated 13 March 1916, expressed concerns that granting such privileges to Jews could be discovered by the Arabs, potentially leading to adverse consequences for the Allied Powers. Furthermore, it was warned that, unlike the Arabs, Jews did not possess martial qualities and, without the support of Britain and France, they would likely be defeated in any conflict with the Arabs (FO: 800/176, No. 3, E. Grey-B., 13 March 1916). These documents show that Britain and France were forced to pursue inconsistent policies among both Arab and Jewish communities in order to maintain their interests in Palestine. The Allies made strategic calculations to manage tensions between different ethnic and political groups in the region, believing that granting privileges to Jews would increase Arab resistance. However, it is clear that they did not completely disregard the Jewish community. Furthermore, the perception of Jews as militarily weak, coupled with the Allies' emphasis on the need to maintain military balance in the region, indicates that they adopted a cautious approach to preventing regional conflicts during this process.

With the signing of the secret Sykes-Picot Agreement between Britain and France in October 1916, it became evident that Britain intended to act actively in the region after the war (Ari, 2012, p. 69). The Sykes-Picot Agreement demonstrated that Britain's control would be limited to the oil-rich Mesopotamia and the Haifa region (Fraser et al., 2011, p. 84). In Palestine, however, it was decided to establish an international administration (Ari, 2012, p. 80). During this period of significant developments, proponents of Zionist ideology continued their political manoeuvres to achieve their goal of establishing a homeland in Palestine.

As seen above, the World Zionist Organization recognized that it was impossible to achieve political goals without international support. Chaim Weizmann, the organization's president, spent two years trying to convince British Prime Minister David Lloyd George and Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour to support Zionism. As a result of these efforts, A. Balfour sent a letter to Lord Rothschild on 2 November 1917, stating that the British government supported the idea of establishing a national home for Jews in Palestine. Thus, the Jews secured British support. Following the declaration of the Balfour Declaration, Zionists began advocating for Palestine to be placed under British

mandate (Rogan, 2017, pp. 184-185). British diplomat Sir Charles Webster described the Balfour Declaration as the most significant diplomatic move of World War I. Although the Jews were a minority in Palestine, they were trying to establish a state (Friedman, 1973, p. 282).

The Jewish desire to establish a state necessitated the development of more intensive diplomatic relations at the international level. In this regard, not only Theodor Herzl but also the aforementioned Weizmann sought to exert influence on international public opinion. During this period, Weizmann had become quite wealthy through his commercial ventures. Beyond financial power, his consistent focus on the Jewish question earned him fame. Consequently, he gained the opportunity to attend elite gatherings in Britain and began building personal diplomatic channels in London. In this context, Weizmann played a significant role in securing British acceptance of the Balfour Declaration (Cohen, 2020, p. 15). Moreover, Zionists worldwide were focused on the idea of establishing a Jewish homeland in Palestine (McTague, 1978, p. 55). As dialogue between the British and Jews intensified, Weizmann began to argue that Zionist interests aligned most closely with those of the British government (Murphy, 2011, p. 330). Britain was aware of the intelligence capabilities of the Jews and sought to exploit them in the Palestinian region. During this period, Zionists were highly engaged with developments in Palestine, making significant efforts to acquire early information about regional events (Sheffy, 2013, p. 164).

In addition to political developments, military events were also unfolding in the region. In June 1917, British Prime Minister Lloyd George met with British commander Allenby and expressed the War Cabinet's expectation to capture Jerusalem before Christmas. From the beginning of the war, Lloyd George foresaw that conflict in the Middle East would work to Britain's advantage and supported activities in this regard. Furthermore, he instructed John Buchan, responsible for propaganda, to launch a campaign under the slogan "The Turk must go." The future of the Ottoman State had been a longstanding topic of debate in Britain. For the British War Cabinet, the possibility of Muslims uniting to wage war against Britain or the outbreak of a Muslim uprising in India was deeply concerning (Bar-Yosef, 2001, pp. 90-91). In a letter dated 16 April 1917, Ronald Graham, serving in the British Air Force, informed Britain's Ambassador to France, Bertie Thame, that the British government was determined to support Zionism and that all Zionist hopes were tied to the establishment of a British or American Palestine (FO: 800/176, No. 7, B. Thame-R. Graham, 16 April 1917). This correspondence reveals that British support for Zionism was not merely rhetorical, but part of high-level strategic planning. British officials, who envisaged Palestine as being under British or American protection, placed Zionism within the broader framework of British-American geopolitical influence in the Middle East.

On 11 December 1917, British Expeditionary Force Commander General Allenby invaded Jerusalem, arriving from Egypt (Pappe, 2007, p. 91). Consequently, Britain established a provisional administration in Palestine. Allenby entered the holy city of Jerusalem on foot (Bar-Yosef, 2001, p. 87). With the withdrawal of Ottoman military forces from the region, the military administration established by Britain had gained control over Palestine. However, one of the most critical challenges facing the British military administration was the demographic imbalance. According to 1917 population data, 90% of Palestine's population consisted of Muslim and Christian Arabs, while Jews made up only 10%. Under such a population composition, attempts to establish a homeland for Jews without Arab consent were seen as highly problematic for Britain.

Nonetheless, Britain granted concessions to Jews regarding Palestine despite strong objections from Arabs, a situation that persisted throughout Britain's presence in the region (McTague, 1978, p. 56). General Allenby gained control over southern Palestine by January 23, 1917. The Fourth Army of the Ottoman State was defeated after nine months of struggle, forcing its withdrawal from Syria and Lebanon. Finally, on 30 October 1918, the Allied Powers signed the Armistice of Mudros with the Ottoman State, marking the end of Ottoman influence in the Middle East (Deveci, 2018, p. 38).

2. Efforts to Create a Jewish Homeland in Palestine and Initial Reactions

Following the British occupation, unrest arose between Arabs and Jews due to the Zionists' aim of establishing a Jewish homeland in Palestine. In November 1918, a year after the Balfour Declaration was announced, violent clashes erupted between Jews and Muslims in Jerusalem. Britain was unable to find a solution to the increasing tensions in Palestine (Köse, 2018, p. 743). After World War I, approximately 40 Palestinian Arab political clubs were established under the leadership of prominent Arabs. Among these, the Muslim-Christian Association stood out the most. The proliferation of political organizations among Palestinian Arabs reflects growing concern about the long-term effects of Zionist expansion, particularly under British protection. These movements can be interpreted as a response to broader fears of political marginalization rather than as individual reactions. During this period, a meeting took place between Weizmann and King Faisal. When Palestinians questioned Faisal about this meeting, he expressed that he had categorically rejected Jewish immigration to Palestine. Weizmann's first meeting with the Arabs occurred in 1918. In subsequent discussions, Weizmann assured that the Zionists did not seek to establish a Jewish state in Palestine and would not expel Arabs from their land (Cohen, 2020, pp. 16-17). However, these statements can be seen as part of the Zionist leaders' strategic diplomatic efforts to secure political support from important regional actors while minimising the influence of Arab opposition. The differences between public statements and actual policy objectives reveal the pragmatism behind early Zionist diplomacy.

In a letter to his wife dated 17 July 1918, which referenced his meeting with Faisal, Weizmann noted that King Faisal was not interested in Palestine but desired full control over Damascus and northern Syria (Kamel, 2015, p. 126). In reality, King Faisal supported Weizmann's policy of Jewish immigration to Palestine. Faisal also promised that Jews would be settled in areas where they could make effective use of the land and that all necessary steps would be taken. According to Faisal, Jewish immigration to Palestine would lead to the economic development of the region (Nir, 2021, pp. 21-22). Faisal's stance reveals how Zionist goals were constructed within the framework of economic development rhetoric in order to gain legitimacy. However, this economic rationale, which temporarily brought together Zionist and Hashemite interests, did not receive widespread support among the Arab people. This disconnect between high-level agreements and grassroots Arab sentiment has subsequently increased political tensions. As a result of the negotiations, an agreement was signed between Weizmann and King Faisal on 3 January 1919. In this agreement, Faisal declared that the necessary measures would be taken to implement the Balfour Declaration in Palestine (Morris, 2001, p. 80). This agreement made a temporary Hashemite-Zionist alliance possible through British mediation. However, the fact that the agreement was not accepted by the wider Arab community reveals the inadequacy of Zionist diplomacy. King Faisal's hasty support for establishing a state for Jews in Palestine alarmed the British. Faisal's collaboration with Zionists in exchange for financial incentives also disturbed Britain (Ediz, 2016, p. 164).

The economic dimension of the Faysal-Weizmann understanding reveals how financial incentives can be effectively used to establish short-term political alliances. However, the British hesitation regarding this arrangement shows that even imperial actors were concerned about the long-term consequences of supporting the establishment of a Zionist state without a stable Arab consensus.

The future of the former Ottoman territories in the Middle East was discussed at the San Remo Conference in 1920. It was decided that these territories would be administered under mandates by the League of Nations until the states in the region could achieve self-sufficiency. In this context, it was determined on 15 April 1920, that Britain would be the mandatory power for Palestine and Iraq, while France would oversee Syria. Under the Balfour Declaration, Britain aimed to establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine. According to a population census conducted by the British Mandate Government in Palestine in 1922, the total population was 757.182 of which 83.794 (only 11%) were Jews. This data demonstrates that Jews were a minority within Palestine's demographic structure. By encouraging Jewish immigration to Palestine, Britain facilitated land ownership for Jews. The Jews, seizing upon these opportunities, employed various means to dispossess Arabs of their lands (Sinanoglou, 2019, pp. 3-6). This situation indicates that land acquisition, often carried out under legal or administrative pretexts, is central to the settler-colonialist ideology that underpins the Zionist demographic and political transformation strategy.

These developments provoked significant Arab opposition. In November 1921, the Palestinian Arab Delegation published a booklet titled "The Holy Land: The Moslem-Christian Case against Zionist Aggression". This document was not only a protest against British favouritism towards the Zionists, but also an early expression of Palestinian national identity based on both Muslim and Christian solidarity. The booklet stated that during World War I, Britain had made various promises but deeply disappointed the Palestinian Arabs with the Balfour Declaration of 2 November 1917, betraying their trust. Following the declaration, Arab protests were not only directed at British officials but also targeted the Allied Powers, the Pope, the United States, and eventually the League of Nations. The Arabs lost all confidence in the British after the arrival of Sir Herbert Samuel, a Jew, as High Commissioner in Palestine. The appointment of a Zionist-leaning Jew to an important administrative position reinforced the Arabs' perception that the authority was fundamentally biased. This weakened the British administration's so-called neutrality and further strengthened Arab political mobilization. The booklet also summarized Weizmann's vision for establishing a Jewish state in Palestine. According to Weizmann, between 50.000 and 60.000 Jews should be settled annually in Palestine, and suitable conditions should be established for them to live there. Furthermore, the development of the Hebrew language in schools was emphasized. Ultimately, Weizmann advocated creating all necessary conditions to make Palestine a homeland for the Jews, just as the United States was for Americans and Britain was for the British. Officials from the Palestinian Arab Delegation expressed that during the Ottoman period, Jewish immigration to Palestine had been prohibited. They also reported that Jews had established 46 settlements under British mandate. During Turkish rule, Arabs in Palestine had the ability to manage local issues independently and could send representatives to the parliament in İstanbul. Most governors, judges, and officials in Palestine were of Arab origin. Thus, it was highlighted that the region was more peaceful under Ottoman rule. Under British mandate, Arabs were prohibited from using firearms, while Jews were known to have been armed (The League of Nations Archive (LoN), S300-1-91-10, November 1921). This discriminatory disarmament

policy demonstrated how the mandate system was based on injustice. It left the Arabs defenceless while allowing Zionist groups to become effectively militarized; this policy would have long-term consequences.

One of Sir Herbert Samuel's first acts was to establish the Palestine Immigration Unit on 26 August 1920. The department began its work in September 1920. Its aim was to create a legal framework for Jewish immigration to Palestine (Deveci, 2017, p. 5). As can be seen, rather than being an impartial regulatory body, this institution has served as a tool for implementing the goals of Zionist expansion. Thus, under the guise of administrative regulation, settler migration has been institutionalized.

Following the initial waves of Jewish migration under British rule, Arabs and Jews frequently clashed. One notable event occurred on 4 April 1920, during the Nabi Musa celebrations, which erupted into violent confrontations between Jews and Arabs. The transformation of a religious festival into a conflict foreshadowed more significant clashes in the future (Shepherd, 1999, pp. 41-42). This incident should not be viewed as an isolated religious conflict, but rather as an early manifestation of deep political tensions stemming from British support for Zionist goals. The transformation of a traditional religious holiday into a nationalist uprising demonstrates how the public sphere has become an arena for identity and sovereignty struggles.

On 18 December 1920, the Third Palestinian Arab Congress convened in Haifa under the presidency of Kazim al-Hussein. This Congress, representing both Muslim and Christian communities, reiterated opposition to the Balfour Declaration. The declaration issued afterward stated that the attempt by Jews to expel Arabs from their ancestral lands, which had been won with their ancestors' blood, constituted a violation of Arab rights. It also opposed Bolshevik-inspired practices by Jews in Palestine and emphasized the region has limited size and inadequate resources to sustain foreign immigration (LoN, 1/10136/2413, 18 December 1920). The Arabs sought to prevent Jewish immigration on both practical and ideological grounds, citing financial constraints and ideological threats. Their petitions were not merely diplomatic appeals, but also warnings about possible instability in the region. Moreover, while the future status of Palestine had not been determined, the current British administration in Palestine created and enforced laws on issues such as personal freedoms and land ownership (Quigley, 2024, p. 39). In a letter dated 27 October 1921, the Palestine Committee informed the General Secretariat of the League of Nations that Jews could never govern Palestine and would instead become a source of hatred. The letter also pointed out that Jewish presence in Palestine imposed an economic burden on Britain (LoN, 1/16862/2413, 27 October 1921).

On 20 June 1921, the Fourth Palestinian Arab Congress convened in Jerusalem under Secretary Jamal Husseini. The final statement from this Congress alleged that Zionist leaders sought not merely to establish a Jewish homeland but to construct a religious-political Jewish state. It further criticized the British administration for being influenced by Zionist interests and prioritizing Zionist goals over the principles outlined by the League of Nations. It was stated that the purpose of the British mandate in Palestine was to hand over the region to a foreign race rather than to defend the rights of the Palestinian people (LoN, 1/15385/2413, 20 June 1922). This rhetoric reflects a shift from reactive protest to ideological conflict. The Arab Congress not only opposed Zionism, but also interpreted British actions as a betrayal of international norms, particularly the League of Nations' principle of self-determination. Besides, Arabs have characterized Zionism as an ethno-nationalist foreign imposition. The use of the term

‘foreign race’ also reflects the ethno-political polarisation that has emerged in Palestinian discourse.

In 1922, the Muslim-Christian Committee in Haifa sent a letter to the League of Nations, stating that Jews were involved in arms smuggling within Palestine, and that more than 25.000 Jews, most of whom were from Poland, Russia, and Central Europe, had immigrated to Palestine impoverished and embracing Bolshevik ideas (LoN, 1/15385/2413). The reference to Bolshevism here shows that Arab actors viewed Jewish immigration not only as a demographic issue but also in the context of the global ideological threats of the time. By emphasizing the socio-economic profiles and political leanings of the immigrants, Arab leaders demonstrated their efforts to protect the security and stability of their own societies. In a petition sent to the League of Nations on 4 July 1922, by the scholars of Jerusalem, it was stressed that the Balfour Declaration had caused significant injustices in Palestine and had ended the peace in the region. Furthermore, it was stated that the sacred sites would be tainted with the blood of innocent people (LoN, 1/15385/2413, 4 July 1922). This appeal emphasizes religious symbols and moral responsibility in order to mobilize the international community. The reference in the petition to the protection of holy sites reveals that Arabs view the Zionist project not only as a political threat, but also as an initiative that damages religious values and is contrary to social conscience.

As Jewish immigration to Palestine continued at full speed, Arabs continued to write petitions to the League of Nations in an attempt to mobilize international support. The Syrian-Palestinian Congress Delegation, headed by Michel Lotfallah, along with signatories such as former Syrian Parliament member Emir Shakib Arslan, former mayor of Aleppo Ihsan al-Jabri, and former member of the Lebanese Administrative Council Soliman Kanaan, submitted a report to the League of Nations on 5 September 1922. This report indicated that the Jewish migration to Palestine was equivalent to planting the seeds of bloodshed in the region. This metaphorical perspective of “seeds of bloodshed” clearly reflects that Zionist immigration is not only demographic, but also inherently violent and destabilising. By positioning Zionism as a long-term threat to regional peace, the report challenges the British portrayal of Jewish immigration as a peaceful development. It also pointed out that the Balfour Declaration, issued by the British Government on 2 November 1917, granted foreign Jews the right to settle in Palestine, thus challenging Arab sovereignty in the region. The report further called for the immediate withdrawal of foreign military forces from Palestine, Syria, and Lebanon, and demanded the recognition of the independence and sovereignty of these countries (LoN, S300-1-91-10/ M 4, 5 September 1922). This document is important in that it links the Palestinian issue to broader anti-colonial movements in the Arab world. It argues that the mandate system effectively eliminated the political influence of the indigenous Arab population by granting privileges to Jewish settlers. Political leaders in the Arab world, particularly in Palestine, had made efforts to mobilize the international community regarding the situation. After the Balfour Declaration, the Arabs saw the process as being detrimental to their interests and began taking preventive measures.

The Arabs were observing the gradual efforts by Britain to establish a Jewish state in Palestine and were trying to mobilize the international community to put pressure on Britain. They strongly opposed the recognition of a Zionist administration in Palestine and the establishment of Hebrew as an official language. The language policy here symbolizes deeper concerns about the destruction of cultural values and the imposition of a settler identity. Despite the widespread use of Arabic in the region, the elevation of

Hebrew is understood as an attempt to institutionally eliminate the Arab presence in Palestine. To maintain the Zionist administration in Palestine, which was burdened with a debt of £1.400.000, Britain imposed heavy taxes on the Arabs. Besides, Arab workers were dismissed from their jobs and replaced by Jews. Britain had also pledged to provide £1.500.000 in economic aid to the Zionists. These economic practices not only reveal structural discrimination, but also expose the close material ties between British imperial power and Zionist institutions. Here, the Arab population was economically punished in order to finance a colonial settlement project. One of the main policies adopted by the Zionist administration was to allocate Arab lands to Jewish immigrants from Europe. On 11 October 1923, the British High Commissioner of Palestine, Sir Herbert Samuel, called a meeting with about 30 Arab leaders representing all segments of the Arab population in Palestine to inform them about the future administration of Palestine. In this context, it was planned to establish an Arab Agency, in addition to the Jewish Agency, which was recognized by the League of Nations and represented the Zionist Executive Council. However, the Arab side rejected this proposal, claiming that since 93% of Palestine was made up of Arabs, an Arab Agency established for consultation purposes would leave the Arabs without any real influence on decisions. They also argued that accepting the Arab Agency would be equivalent to recognizing the Jews (LoN, 1/15385/2413, July 1923). This rejection was a protest against the political manipulation of institutional structures in order to normalize minority rule. The Arabs recognized this asymmetry and chose to adopt a policy accordingly. Britain showed every effort to ensure that the Zionist administration adopted an effective governance model in Palestine. The British supported the Zionists financially, as this would encourage Jewish immigration. To get the Arabs to accept the Zionist administration, Britain pursued a *fait accompli* policy in Palestine.

3. Jewish Immigration to Palestine under the British Mandate

Britain consistently supported the immigration of Jews to Palestine at every opportunity. In December 1922, Chaim Weizmann visited Palestine and prepared a "secret" report on the region. At the request of the Zionist administration in Palestine, Weizmann first visited Egypt on 20 November 1922, and after spending ten days there, he toured various cities in Palestine for five weeks, compiling his observations into a report. According to the report, some Arab leaders were in London, while others had visited Ankara. An Arab delegation that visited the Ankara government left disappointed. The Arab delegation was surprised by the switch from Arabic to Turkish in both schools and mosques. Nevertheless, the Arabs were still waiting for the results of the Lausanne Conference. The Arabs also had high hopes that the new Italian government would meet their demands. For the Arabs, the belief in a shift in British policy in Palestine was steadily diminishing. Because of this, Palestinians were left with two options: either they would come to terms with the Jews or they would mobilize the Arabs in Jordan to force a change in the Zionist policies in Palestine. Due to the Zionist administration's import-dependent economic system, the Arabs in Palestine were unable to sell their products. Economic hardship was causing unrest in rural areas. According to Weizmann, Christian Arabs were reluctant to cooperate with Muslims but avoided developing relationships with Jews. However, some Christian Arab leaders sought agreements with the Jews. More importantly, a nationalist movement emerged in Palestine that adopted anti-Jewish, anti-Western, Islamist or Bolshevik ideologies. This nationalist movement was a force to be reckoned with and should not be underestimated. Besides, Jews coming from Europe were trying to learn Arabic. The Zionist administration and other Jewish organizations were making intense efforts to support the needs of Jewish immigrants to

Palestine. Jewish immigrants were hastening the construction of homes in Jaffa, although the pace was slower in Haifa and Jerusalem. The report indicated that the needs of the Jewish immigrants could not be met by the £800.000 allocated by the Zionist administration or the Jewish Colonization Association, and that at least £1.500.000 would be required. Weizmann emphasized that, in order to create a Jewish homeland in Palestine, issues related to immigration and land had to be resolved first. He also pointed out that if Jewish immigration were allowed for another three years, some rural areas would be exclusively populated by Jewish immigrants. Mr. Norman Bentwich and Sir Wyndham Henry Deedes, appointed by Britain to oversee Palestine, were criticized by Jews for not supporting Zionism sufficiently (LoN, 1/43897/2413, December 1922). This report clearly shows how the Jews, with British backing, were trying to establish a governance model in Palestine. Weizmann stressed that the Jews in Palestine, especially, needed more financial support from Britain. However, his comments on the political situation in Palestine were manipulative. He attempted to create the impression that Muslim or Christian Arabs, were not fighting against the Jews. However, as shown in previous petitions sent by the Arabs to the League of Nations, Arabs had been resisting Jewish immigration both militarily and diplomatically.

The Zionist administration under the British mandate wanted to establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine by usurping the rights of Palestinian Arabs. Britain officially declared the establishment of a mandate state in Palestine in 1922. However, the developments show that Britain supported the establishment of a Zionist administration in Palestine long before this date. Britain now officially approved the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine and stated that the rights of non-Jewish communities would be protected (Iriqat, 2024, p. 113). As can be seen, Britain did not defend the rights of non-Jewish communities in Palestine. It engaged in activities that would serve the mission of the “Jewish State” set forth by the Balfour Declaration.

In the first half of the 1920s, the Zionists actively encouraged Jewish immigration to Palestine to make sure that the Jewish population became the majority. They pursued this strategy as part of their efforts to establish a Jewish state. Additionally, one of the most important goals of Zionist policy during this period was to build good relations with the mandatory power, Britain. Since the Balfour Declaration, the Zionists had understood that Britain was a protective ally for the Jews (Halamish, 2020, pp. 172-173). In October 1924, the Zionist Organization sent a memorandum to the League of Nations. According to this memorandum, the Jewish Agency would collaborate and provide advisory services on economic and social matters affecting the Jewish population in Palestine. It would function as a subsidiary body under the oversight of the Zionist administration, supporting the development of the Jewish homeland. For a long time, the Zionist Organization had instilled the idea of a “homeland” in the minds of Jews. During World War I, which broke out in 1914, the Zionists tried every means to encourage Jewish immigration to Palestine. It would be a mistaken assessment to regard the efforts to build a national homeland for the Jews in Palestine as an artificial attempt. For two thousand years, Palestine had been the guiding light of Jewish idealism. Before the war ended, many young Jews in Eastern Europe were ready to emigrate to Palestine following the announcement of the Balfour Declaration. From what can be determined, approximately 38.000 Jews immigrated to Palestine between the British occupation and 1924. The main migration centers included Warsaw, Kovno, Riga, Lemberg, and Bucharest. A lot of Jewish immigrants also passed through İstanbul, Vienna, Berlin, and Czernowitz on their way to Palestine. Jewish immigrants boarded ships from Trieste and Galatz, through the Keren Hayesod company, to reach Palestine. To ensure the safe passage of Jewish

immigrants to Palestine, the Zionist Organization established Palestine Offices. These offices had various tasks, including registering incoming immigrants, providing general information, and assisting with the necessary bureaucratic procedures. They were also responsible for placing suitable immigrants in available jobs in the local labor market. Upon arrival in Palestine, Jewish immigrants were directed to immigration offices in Jaffa, Haifa, and Jerusalem. These offices assisted with customs and sanitation procedures. Immigrants were then sent to camps or boarding houses, where their needs for housing, clothing, food, and medical care were met until they found employment. If necessary, immigrants were provided with equipment to develop agricultural activities. The most important task of the Jewish Agency at this point was to employ immigrants so that they could contribute economically to Palestine. Moreover, most Jewish schools in Palestine were under the control of the Zionist Organization through Va'ad Ha-Chinuch. Hebrew was the language of instruction in all Jewish schools (LoN, 1/43897/2413, October 1924). Archival documents reveal that tensions between the Jewish Agency's leadership and grassroots Zionist movements influenced Britain's strategies for managing migration.

Through this memorandum, it is clear how the Zionist Organization organized Jewish immigration to Palestine. Every effort was made to facilitate the immigration of Jews from Europe to Palestinian territories. The Zionist Organization aimed to make Palestine economically attractive to Jews in order to create a Jewish homeland. A notable point in the memorandum is that the Zionists make no mention of the Arabs living in the region. In the minds of Zionist leaders, the Arabs of Palestine were nonexistent. The Zionist administration envisioned the settlement of Jews in Palestine and regarded the land as empty (Abed-Rabbo, 2024, p. 40).

The year 1925 witnessed a significant increase in Jewish immigration to Palestine. In this context, the Zionist administration intensified its diplomatic efforts with the League of Nations to establish a Jewish state in Palestine while disregarding the rights of the Palestinian Arabs. Another memorandum sent to the League of Nations in October 1925 outlines efforts to alter the demographic structure of Palestine. According to this memorandum, by 31 May 1925, approximately 55,000 Jews had immigrated to Palestine. Additionally, by April 1925, the total Jewish population was reported to be 108,000. Immigrants were provided agricultural and industrial training through the Hehalutz organization, which had branches in various parts of Europe. About 10,000 of its members had settled in Palestine. Small artisans with moderate capital, directly under the supervision of the Zionist Organization, also immigrated to Palestine (LoN, 1/43897/2413, October 1925). To increase the Jewish population, the Zionist administration accelerated immigration through civil society movements that appeared as organizations across Europe.

Conclusion

The immigration of Jews to Palestine was the result of a long-term project. Before World War I, the Ottoman State had blocked Jewish immigration, but after the war, with the loss of Ottoman control over Palestine, efforts were made to change the region's demographic structure in favor of the Jews. With the Balfour Declaration in 1917, a Jewish state began to take shape under British protection in Palestine. The British focused on Palestine in order to gain political and military influence in the Middle East. At this point, it became evident that the goals of the British and the Zionists were aligned. Jews viewed their immigration to Palestine as part of the Zionist ideology and strived to

establish a Jewish state. Upon examining Jewish immigration from various European countries to Palestine, it becomes apparent that the Zionists completely disregarded the Arabs living in Palestine. The forcible expulsion of Arabs from their lands and the settlement of Jewish immigrants in their place was one of the most well-known policies of the British-protected Zionists in Palestine. Furthermore, archival documents reveal that the British mandate in Palestine was actually influenced by the Zionists. One of the strongest pieces of evidence for this is the appointment of a Jewish-origin High Commissioner to Palestine. The petitions submitted by the Arabs to the League of Nations highlighted the injustices they were facing and called for a prompt solution to these issues. It is clear that the Jews never entertained the idea of living alongside the Arabs. Despite the fact that leading Zionist figures expressed in the early contacts with the British that the rights of non-Jewish groups would be protected in Palestine, they ultimately accepted that only the Jews would exist in Palestine. In this context, Jewish immigration from Europe to Palestine was meticulously organized by the Zionists. However, the Zionists required substantial financial resources to carry out all these activities, and British archives clearly show that the Britain were quite generous in their support of the Jews. This study contributes to the field by illustrating how British imperial motives, coupled with internal Zionist political dynamics, shaped the patterns of Jewish migration to Palestine. The research also emphasizes the overlooked role of British financial support in sustaining Zionist activities.

In the initial years following the British occupation of Palestine, policies were implemented to strengthen the Jewish presence in the region. Although Zionist reports largely ignored the Arab population, they anticipated that continued Jewish immigration would lead to increased armed resistance from the Arabs. This makes it clear that Jewish immigration to Palestine was, in effect, a form of occupation. The Zionists believed that with each passing year, the influx of Jewish immigrants would transform Palestine into a Jewish homeland. Furthermore, this process had gained acceptance within the international community.

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Extended Abstract

This study explores the political, demographic, and diplomatic processes that shaped Jewish immigration to Palestine between 1917 and 1925 under British rule. Using British, Ottoman, and League of Nations archival materials, the research reveals how imperial ambitions and Zionist strategies intertwined to transform the region's social and political landscape. The article argues that Britain's Palestine policy was not a neutral mandate administration but rather a calculated imperial design that institutionalized Zionist objectives while marginalizing the Arab population. Following the British occupation of Palestine in 1917, the Balfour Declaration became the cornerstone of British policy, affirming support for a "national home for the Jewish people." This declaration, conceived through intense negotiations between British officials and Zionist leaders, laid the groundwork for demographic transformation in Palestine. Britain's endorsement of Jewish settlement aligned with its geopolitical interests in the Middle East, particularly in maintaining strategic control over routes to India and countering French influence. At the same time, Zionist organizations capitalized on this imperial partnership to advance their vision of a Jewish state.

The research traces the earlier Ottoman resistance to Jewish migration, which had sought to preserve demographic balance and regional stability. Sultan Abdulhamid II implemented strict measures to prevent the acquisition of land by Jews and to limit their stay in Palestine to religious pilgrimage. However, the weakening of Ottoman authority during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries opened space for Zionist mobilization. Through congresses, diplomacy, and financial networks, Zionist actors laid the foundations for a migration infrastructure that would later flourish under British protection. The article details how British authorities facilitated the institutionalization of immigration after the war. High Commissioner Sir Herbert Samuel, a known supporter of Zionism, established administrative bodies such as the Palestine Immigration Unit to regulate and legalize Jewish migration. Under his supervision, mechanisms were developed to settle European Jews, often through land purchases that displaced Arab peasants. Meanwhile, Arab petitions to the League of Nations reflected growing discontent with these demographic and economic shifts. These documents, analyzed in the study, show how Arab leaders framed their opposition in terms of both national sovereignty and social justice, emphasizing that British favoritism toward Zionists violated the principles of the mandate system.

During the early 1920s, several Arab congresses convened to protest British and Zionist activities, warning of political instability and loss of native land. Despite these appeals, Britain continued to endorse Zionist projects, often under the guise of legal and administrative modernization. Economic inequality deepened as Jewish settlers received tax privileges, employment opportunities, and foreign financial support, while Arabs faced dispossession and economic marginalization. The resulting tension culminated in repeated outbreaks of violence, such as the Nabi Musa riots of 1920, which underscored the collision between imperial, nationalist, and settler-colonial agendas. Archival evidence further shows that Zionist institutions, particularly the Jewish Agency and the Jewish Colonization Association, played a pivotal role in coordinating migration, employment, and settlement. Through networks in Europe, they facilitated the arrival of thousands of immigrants, offering housing, education, and agricultural training upon arrival. The use of Hebrew in all Jewish schools under Zionist administration symbolized the emerging cultural hegemony that paralleled the physical colonization of the land.

The mandate system served as a colonial mechanism that legitimized Zionist expansion while suppressing Arab self-determination. Britain's dual strategy -promising national independence to Arabs while simultaneously endorsing Zionist state-building- exposed the contradictions of its imperial diplomacy. In effect, British Palestine policy institutionalized inequality and laid the structural foundations of a protracted conflict that would endure throughout the twentieth century. Methodologically, this research employs a qualitative historical approach, combining archival analysis with secondary sources to reconstruct the interplay between British administrative practices, Zionist political lobbying, and Arab resistance. The findings highlight the importance of understanding the British-Zionist alliance not only as a product of postwar diplomacy but also as an example of early twentieth-century settler colonialism facilitated by empire. This dynamic reveals how the demographic transformation of Palestine was both a consequence of British geopolitical strategy and an expression of Zionist ideological ambition. Ultimately, the study provides an

interpretation of Jewish immigration to Palestine as a multi-layered process driven by imperial power, nationalist ideology, and the politics of international legitimacy. By exposing the bureaucratic and diplomatic dimensions of this transformation, the article contributes to broader debates on colonial governance, displacement, and the making of modern Middle Eastern geopolitics.