

Chapter Two: The Jews

A. The Jews in History

Grade 11

Unlike former books, which hardly refer to ancient Jewish history in Palestine and in at least one case obliterate it altogether and leave an unexplained gap between the years 1200-586 BCE⁴, the history book for grade 11, part 1, features a radical change, as it talks in some detail of Jewish presence and history there in ancient times. It begins with Patriarch Abraham whom is not identified as forefather of the Jews. But later episodes of Jewish history are presented as such, this time without the usual claim that the Canaanites, who preceded the Jews in the land, were of Arab origin, as done in former PA textbooks in order to create an Arab continued presence in the country since antiquity and depict the Jews as foreign invaders already then.

Our Lord Abraham's Entrance to Palestine

Our lord Abraham reached the land of Canaan arriving from the city of Ur in southern Iraq through Harran in Syria at the end of the nineteenth century BCE (1805 BCE) and first settled down in Shechem (Tall Balata in Nablus). He later moved to Hebron and met during his journey with Malkizedek ("king of righteousness and justice") the Canaanite ruler of Jerusalem. Abraham was accompanied in his journey by his nephew Lot who settled in Jericho. Our lord Abraham, his wife Sarah and their son Isaac died in Hebron. During that period the Philistines settled in the land of Canaan, in part of the coastal valley between Jaffa and Gaza.



Palestine during the reign of Prophet David

Modern and Contemporary History of Palestine, Grade 11, Part 1 (2005) p. 9

⁴ Reading and Texts, Grade 9, Part 2 (2004) p. 36 (see in CMIP report "Jews, Israel and Peace in the Palestinian Authority Textbooks – The New Textbooks for Grades 4 and 9", May 2004, p. 10 and footnote number 2 there).

Palestine during the Reign of Prophet David⁵

The ancient history of Palestine witnessed the entrance of the Children of Israel under the leadership of Joshua the son of Nun in the 12th century BCE. They fought the Canaanites and the Philistines. In the latter third of the 11th century BCE Saul the son of Kish (Talut [in Islamic tradition]) assumed the leadership of the Children of Israel and fought the Philistines under the leadership of Goliath who managed to kill him and his sons at the end of the 11th century BCE. After his death Prophet David the son of Jesse assumed the leadership of the Children of Israel and continued fighting the Philistines and the Canaanites and established a kingdom on part of the Palestinian lands under his command. Prophet Solomon came after him and ruled from 963 until 923 BCE and in his reign the Jewish state reached its widest scope. After his death his state was divided into two parts: the Kingdom of Israel in the north (Samaria) and the Kingdom of Judea in the south (Jerusalem).

The Kingdom of Judea faced an attack by Shoshenq, an Egyptian pharaoh of Libyan origin, who besieged Jerusalem (Al-Quds)⁶ and took possession of many treasures and golden plates. Palestine was subjected to Assyrian attack in 722 BCE under the command of Sargon II who imposed his rule over the northern kingdom (Samaria), took most of the Jews who inhabited the northern [part of the] country captive and laid siege to Jerusalem but did not enter it. After a short while, Palestine faced another Assyrian attack by King Sanherib, who took control of Jaffa in 709 BCE.

Palestine experienced in 586 BCE a ruinous attack by the Chaldean Babylonian commander Nebuchadnezzar who destroyed Jerusalem and took the Jews captive to Iraq. It did not take long before this region submitted to Persian rule in 538 BCE and the Persian ruler Cyrus permitted whoever so wished from among the Jews to return to Palestine.

The Return of the Jews by Cyrus: Cyrus believed that the Jews' presence in Palestine would create a balance vis-à-vis part of the population who were supporting the pharaohs of Egypt. In addition, the Jews had helped him against the Babylonians. It is [also] said that his wife was Jewish and influenced him to bring the Jews back to Palestine...

Modern and Contemporary History of Palestine, Grade 11, Part 1 (2005) p. 9

...During Greek rule the southern and eastern parts of Palestine submitted to the rule of the Nabateans who made an alliance with the Jews against the Seleucids. But soon their relations with the Jews worsened and a battle took place between them on the shores of Lake Tiberias, which the Nabateans won, and another battle near Lydda, which the Nabateans won again and imposed peace on the Jews.

Palestine under Roman Rule

The Romans took control of Palestine in 63 BCE under the leadership of Pompeius and divided it and the neighboring areas into four administrative districts⁷:

1. First Palestine [Palaestina Prima], which included Nablus, Jerusalem, Hebron and the coastal plain until Rafah, of which the capital was Caesarea.

⁵ The Biblical Kings David and Solomon are considered prophets in Islam.

⁶ The Arabic version "Urushalim" is given here and followed by another Arabic name of the city, Al-Quds, which is more familiar, as an explanation to the student. In most other cases the name "Al-Quds" is used exclusively.

⁷ This division is a relatively late one. The country was first governed as a vassal kingdom, or kingdoms, ruled by kings of the Herodian dynasty and later as a province named "Judea". This name was replaced by "Palestine" in 138 CE following the suppression of the last great revolt by the Jews (132-135 CE). The partition of Palestine into several units as mentioned here belongs to later periods and mostly existed under the Byzantines.

2. Second Palestine [Palaestina Secunda], which included Galilee, Um Qays in [present-day] Jordan and Tiberias, of which the capital was Beisan [Beit Shean, Scythopolis].
3. Third Palestine [Palaestina Tertia], which included southern Syria, of which the capital was at times Petra and at other times Bustra.
4. Fourth Palestine, which included Haifa, Acre, Tyre, Sidon and Beirut and of which the capital was Tyre.⁸

The Romans appointed Herodes the Edomite as ruler over Palestine in 37 BCE. During his reign Lord Christ was born...

During the Roman period the Canaanite city of Shechem was destroyed and the Romans established in its stead the city of Nablus [Flavia Neapolis]. The Jews in Jerusalem staged several revolts, which were met by force on the Romans' part. In 70 CE the Roman commander Titus attacked them and imposed his rule over Jerusalem by force...

In 132 the Jews rebelled again under the leadership of Bar Kokhba in the reign of the Roman emperor Aelius Hadrian who put an end to the revolt, destroyed Urushalim (al-Quds), established in its place the city of Aelia Caputina [sic and should be Capitoline] and forbade the Jews to reside in it.

...During Byzantine rule over Palestine the Samaritans, who were part of the population [there], rebelled. The Byzantine emperor sent against them the Ghassanid [Arab vassal] king al-Hareth bin Jabalah who managed to suppress the revolt in 529 CE...

The Byzantine-Persian Struggle over Palestine

Palestine submitted to Persian rule in 614 CE when King Khosrow II sent his famous commander Shahrbaraz to Palestine. His forces managed to take control of Jerusalem with the Jews' help.

Modern and Contemporary History of Palestine, Grade 11, Part 1 (2005) pp. 10-11

But the former narrative, which Arabizes the ancient Canaanites and presents them as the sole legitimate inhabitants of the country, and thus directly connects them to the Arab Palestinians of today and implicitly makes the Jewish presence in Palestine in antiquity illegitimate, is not gone.

Palestine is considered to have great natural importance by virtue of its geographical position, as it is the crossroads and the center of the continents, and the passageway connecting the continents of Africa and Asia. Due to its distinguished position, invaders from all directions successively attacked it, but they were defeated and left it one by one and could not change its Arab and Muslim identity. Its first Arab-Canaanite civilization, and its Muslim civilization that subsequently merged with it, have remained as a living testimony to its Arab-Muslim roots... The Arab Canaanites, who were the first ones to settle in Palestine and populate it, were known of their achievements in the agricultural field...

Arabic Language – Reading, Literature and Critique, Grade 11, Part 2 (2006) p. 12

According to Muslim sources quoted in a history textbook, one of the provisions of the surrender pact of Christian Jerusalem to the Muslim Arab conquerors in 638 CE was the following:

...And no one from among the Jews will dwell [in the city] with them...

Modern and Contemporary History of Palestine, Grade 11, Part 1 (2005) p. 14

⁸ There was no "Fourth Palestine". The areas mentioned here under this name constituted the province of Syria, otherwise named Phoenicia.

The following is a traditional Islamic perception of ancient Jewish history based on the Qur'anic narrative. Although the general attitude is traditionally negative, there are two points deserving attention since they reflect a somewhat milder approach compared to former expressions in this context: One, there is a clear indication to the Jews' historical connection to Jerusalem. Two, there is an optimistic notion regarding the Jews' possible return to God's favor under certain conditions (they are both underlined for the reader's convenience).

Moses' Mission to the Children of Israel

[A Qur'anic verse]

God revealed the Torah to Moses in order to guide the Children of Israel and take them out of the darkness of ignorance and unbelief into the light of knowledge and belief. God ordered the Children of Israel not to take for themselves a god on whom they would rely and to whom they would entrust their affairs except Almighty God who had created them and bestowed His favor upon them...

The Children of Israel's Mischief on Earth

[A Qur'anic verse]

God had revealed that the Children of Israel would make mischief on earth twice and that that mischief would not be their determined fate but would rather emerge from their own deeds... God reveals to the Children of Israel that they will make mischief on earth twice through [the commitment of] murder, oppression, repression and sacrilege and that they will rise high and be dominant so that power and strength will be theirs. The more powerful they become the more corrupt and mischievous they will be. Any time they make mischief God will set some of His servants as rulers upon them who will subjugate them and ruin them.

The First Mischief

[A Qur'anic verse]

...The Children of Israel would rise high in the land and would have power and authority. Then they would make mischief there and God would send upon them His servants who have much courage and who would take possession of their country, move around it as they please and trample underfoot anything and anyone there with no fear. The [Qur'anic] verses indicate that the Children of Israel would again have victory, would have more property and more offspring and would reclaim their power and dominance. The verse addresses the Children of Israel [saying] that if they do right, then their right will turn for their own benefit and if they do wrong, then they will encounter the outcome of their evil deeds.

The Second Mischief

[A Qur'anic verse]

Since the Children of Israel did not stick to God's order to do right and thank [Him] for His favors [bestowed] upon them, and [since] their mischief continued in murder, violation of God's prohibitions and [in their] disobedience of Him, God sent upon them for the second time **someone who entered upon them in Jerusalem**, humiliated them, made the impact of misfortune, distress and humiliation apparent on their faces and destroyed what the Children of Israel had made themselves high with. God says addressing the Children of Israel in spite of their mischief: **God may have compassion for you and forgive you if you repent and return to God and to His obedience**. The verse confirms an eternal social norm, namely, whenever the Children of Israel return to making mischief on earth God punishes them by giving power over them to someone who will cause them painful suffering in punishment for their mischief...

[Questions:]

- How should I perceive the future of our land Palestine in the light of my study of the preceding [Qur'anic] verses?

Islamic Education, Grade 11, Part 1 (2005) pp. 14-16

A reference to the Jews in antiquity appears in a Christian Education textbook.

The people of the Old Testament is an image of God's new people, namely, the Church...

Towards the New Testament: God chose the Hebrew people to be a tool for this testament. But the prophets announce a new testament between God and mankind, ...which is the testament that God has established with humanity through Christ.

God's new people: From this New Testament emerged God's new people, namely, the Church.
Christian Education, Grade 11 (2005) pp. 55-56

Though the relations between Prophet Muhammad and the Jews of Arabia were never amicable and ended up in wars, expulsion, slaughter and subjugation of various Jewish tribes, the PA books of grade eleven do not feature much condemnation of the Jews as is sometimes seen in books published earlier, except for few cases.

The Prophet confirmed [the principle of] concluding treaties and concluded a number of them with the Jews of Medina...

Islamic Education, Grade 11, Part 1 (2005) p. 120

One of the Hypocrites [a group of outwardly Muslims in Medina who still opposed Muhammad]... quarreled with a Jew over a [tract of] land and the Jew summoned him to God's Messenger so that he would pass a judgment [in the case] between them... He [Muhammad] issued a sentence in the Jew's favor for he was the rightful one...

Islamic Education, Grade 11, Part 2 (2006) p. 22

Following are two quotations presenting negatively Jewish individuals in early Islam. The first one is a Jewish woman who was taken captive by Muhammad after her relatives had been slaughtered by the Muslims in Khaybar and who wanted to avenge their death. The second figure is of a Jew who converted to Islam and later participated in the political conspiracy against Caliph Uthman.

He [Muhammad] also pardoned... the Jewish woman who had inserted poison in the lamb [she had prepared] for him and did not take revenge on her.

Islamic Education, Grade 11, Part 1 (2005) p. 68

But they [the conspirators against Caliph Uthman] held a grudge [against him] and set a date for them to appear again in Medina in order to carry out their conspiracy, which was presented to them in a favorable light by Abdullah bin Saba, a Jew in origin who presented himself outwardly as a Muslim.

Islamic Education, Grade 11, Part 1 (2005) p. 74

A vaguely phrased reference to the Jewish suffering under the Nazis with the mentioning of the term "anti-Semitism" appears in one of the books. Apart from this reference nothing is said in the PA schoolbooks about the Holocaust, even in a history book covering in detail the Second World War. But the mere mentioning of Jewish suffering under the Nazis is in itself an innovation.

"The Jewish Question" is a European problem first and foremost. What befell the Jews at the hands of Nazism made "Anti-Semitism" a moral and political burden on the European Union...

Contemporary Issues, Grade 11, Part 1 (2005) p. 41

Grade 12

The books for grade 12, which were prepared and published under the Hamas government, do not contain any reference to ancient Jewish history in Palestine, and, in fact, any other material about the Jews in history, except for the following piece, which present a Jewish individual in early Islam as a quarrel-monger.

The Jew Shas, son of Qays, [once] passed by a group of Ansar⁹ of the [formerly rival] tribes of Al-Aws and Al-Khazraj. It was unbearable for him to see the friendship and love after the hostility and wars, which had prevailed between them before Islam. So he started reminding them of their past and stirring the old enmity feelings, until they called to one another to take up arms and fight. God's Messenger heard of it and he took steps to prevent that... Their souls calmed down and they repented of what they had done.

Islamic Education, Grade 12 (2006) p. 12

B. The Jews in the Context of the Conflict

Grade 11

The first manifestation of the Jews' claim to Palestine in modern times, according to the books, is Napoleon's call upon them to help him in his efforts to gain control over the Levant.

...Napoleon issued an appeal to the Jews of Asia and Africa in which he urged them to rally around his flag in order to bring them back to Jerusalem and build their temple anew in return for helping him to take control of the Levant [Bilad al-Sham]. His aims by that were:

1. Wishing to attract the Jewish communities in the East so that they would be his assistants in supporting his influence and stabilizing his rule [there].
2. Acquiring the trust of the Jews in France and their financial support in order to obtain loans to meet the deficit in the French treasury.
3. Encouraging the Jews to settle in Palestine in order to facilitate the French occupation and support it as a threat to British interests and transportation [routes] to India.

As it is made clear from the following text:

On April 4 Napoleon directed his famous call to the Jews, which said:

“It was Divine Providence, which has sent me here at the head of this army... which has made Jerusalem my general headquarters... I do not only demand the lawful heirs of Palestine to occupy their homeland... Rather, I demand that they assure and back this nation [France] so that you will guard it [your homeland] from all those who have greedy ambitions against you, so that you become your country's true masters.”

[Questions:]

- Napoleon issued an appeal to the Jews to come back to Jerusalem:
 1. What was Napoleon's motive in directing this appeal [to the Jews]?
 2. Was Napoleon serious in his appeal? Why?

Modern and Contemporary History of Palestine, Grade 11, Part 1 (2005) pp. 49, 51

Following are poetical references to the Jews in the context of the conflict in Mandatory times.

[The Palestinian poet] Ibrahim Tuqan said [in the 1930s]:

We have two adversaries:

⁹ Muslims of Medina, as opposed to Muhajirun – Muslims of a Meccan origin who immigrated to Medina at the time of the Prophet

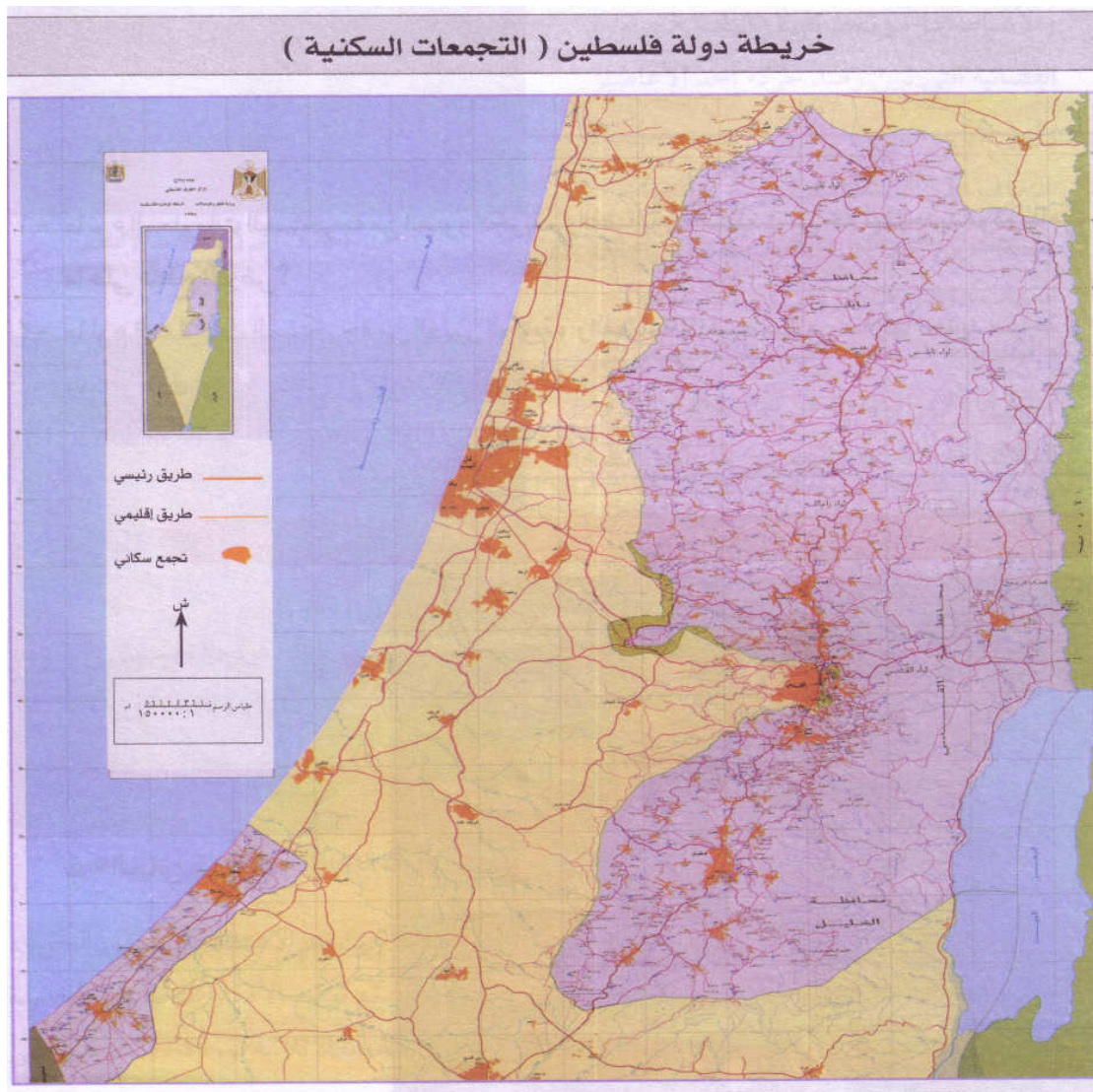
[One] has power and might [i.e., Britain]
And another deceives and takes advantage [i.e., the Jews]
Arabic Language – Linguistic Sciences, Grade 11, Part 1 (2005) p. 61

Protect my homeland from the time's misfortunes
For the little bird [i.e., the Jewish people] came to think that it was an eagle
Arabic Language – Linguistic Sciences, Grade 11, Part 2 (2006) p. 66

A textbook of Christian Education recognizes the existence of more than one people in the country, but it does not elaborate regarding their respective identities.

...Our land and its peoples.
Christian Education, Grade 11 (2005) p. 81

Contrary to former usage, according to which modern Jewish settlements – including Tel Aviv – are never shown on any map of the country appearing in the textbooks, a map in a geography textbook for grade eleven shows for the first time Jewish cities and provides their names, although one needs a magnifying glass to be able to read them.



Map of the State of Palestine (Settlements)
Physical and Human Geography, Grade 11, Part 2 (2006) p. 20

Grade 12

A demonizing description of the Jews in the context of the conflict appears in a language textbook for grade 12.

...The Catastrophe [*Nakbah*], which took place in 1948, as the Jews occupied Palestine and established their state on its soil, and expelled the Palestinian people to exile and the neighboring states after having tortured it, massacred it and robbed its land, homes and holy places...

Arabic Language – Reading, Literature and Critique, Grade 12 (2006) p. 109

A story by the Palestinian writer Samira Azzam tells of a love between a fighter in Acre in 1948 and a nurse who is killed while trying to bring him and his comrades a loaf of bread. The Jews are mentioned in the story several times as enemies, but with no explicit hateful expressions. The text of the schoolbook editor following the story is far more hostile:

The story is based on a narrator who tells the events of the Palestine Catastrophe of 1948 and the bloody battles related to it between the Palestinian resistance and the Zionist gangs and the latter's desire to expel the Palestinians from their villages, cities and land by use of means of repression, torture and murder in order to empty the country of its inhabitants...

A bond of pure love emerges between them [i.e., the heroes of the story], which the Zionist occupation of Palestine prevents from being crowned by marriage, as it ends Suad's life with bullets that settle in her heart... The story's characters have a patriotic sentiment and defend their land against the uprooting attempts by the Zionist gangs...

The Palestinian's defense of his land and his resistance to occupation... is represented by the [Palestinian] soldiers' defense of their city against the Zionist gangs, which seek to uproot the Palestinian people from its homeland and expel it from its land.

Arabic Language – Reading, Literature and Critique, Grade 12 (2006) pp. 143-144

*The following poetry verse implicitly likens the Jews to invading snakes and wonders whether Muslims should continue tolerating Jews in general in accordance with the traditional Islamic *Dhimma* arrangement (regarding non-Muslims who live among Muslims).*

By your life! How come that snakes invade us
And we [still] observe a protection covenant [*dhimmah*], which respects commitments

Arabic Language – Linguistic Sciences, Grade 12 (2006) p. 67

C. Zionism

Grade 11

The history of the Zionist movement is told in full in a history textbooks for grade 11. Though the description is mostly objective – without the inclusion of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion as “the confidential resolutions of the first Zionist congress” (as done in a history textbook for grade 10 in 2005¹⁰), there are several negative references implying that Zionism aspired, for example, to have under its control vast areas of the Middle East stretching from the Euphrates River to the Nile.

¹⁰ See in History of the Modern and Contemporary World, Grade 10 (2004) p. 63 and in CMIP report “Jews, Israel and Peace in the Palestinian Authority Textbooks – The New Textbooks for Grades 5 and 10, June 2005, p. 22.

The beginning of modern Zionism is presented as a European, mostly British, innovation.

The idea of establishing Jewish national home in Palestine spread in England during the nineteenth century, as a number of English politicians and some influential people adopted this idea. An example of these [people] was the English [non-Jewish] Zionist [Lord] Shaftesbury who was one of the propagandists of Jewish settlement in Palestine. He is the author of the famous saying: "There is a land without a people and God now directs us with His wisdom and compassion toward it."

By that he was meaning that Palestine is a land without a people and that the Jews are a people without a land. This saying was later adopted by the Zionist movement and became [one] of its slogans. Is this saying correct? Why?

Shaftesbury also tried to convince some of the European politicians with his idea of Jewish settlement in Palestine such as Palmerston, who held the office of British foreign minister and, later, [that of] prime minister and who opened a [British] consulate in Jerusalem in 1838. He defined the goals of this consulate in his letters, which he sent to his ambassadors in the Ottoman Empire, including his memorandum which he sent in 1840: "Among the Jews scattered all over Europe there exists a strong feeling that the time in which their nation will return to Palestine is imminent. It is well known that the Jews of Europe possess immense fortunes. It is obvious that any country a great number of Jews will choose to settle in will obtain much benefit from the wealth these Jews will bring along with them. If the Jewish people returns under the protection and with the blessing of the [Ottoman] sultan, this will be a barrier between Muhammad Ali [of Egypt] and those who will succeed him [in power] and between the realization of his vicious plan in the future."

What was Palmerston aiming at by his call for making the Jews settle in Palestine?

There were many Englishmen who worked for the purpose of Jewish immigration and settlement in Palestine. This matter was not restricted to Britain alone but rather spread to France where it found people who promoted this idea.

The second half of the nineteenth century was a turning point in the history of the Zionist movement as the idea of establishing the Jewish national home spread from the European circles to the Jews themselves who began to work for the realization of this aim. Thus, the interests of the great Imperialist states joined with the Jewish interests and that was the decisive factor in the realization of Zionism's dream of establishing the state of the Jews on the land of Palestine.

There appeared some Jewish personalities who adopted the idea of the Jewish national home. One of them was the German Jew Di Hirtch Kalisher [sic and should be Tsevi-Hirsch Kalischer] and the Russian Jew Leo Pinsker. There also appeared operative movements and associations with the view of carrying out the idea of the Jewish national home such as the Zion Lovers Association and the Bilu Movement (the return of Jacob's people to Palestine). But the great success realized by Zionism was with the appearance of the Zionist Organization at the hand of Theodore Herzl who succeeded in convening the first Zionist congress in the city of Basel in Switzerland in 1897.

Question: What are the most important resolutions of the Basel Congress?

The Zion Lovers Movement: It emerged among the Jews of Russia in the mid nineteenth century and spread to all countries of Eastern Europe. It called for the establishment of a national home for the Jews on the land of Palestine specifically.

Herzl was fully convinced that the settlement project in Palestine would not be successful unless it found support and backing from one of the great Imperialist states, as the establishment of such a state (the Jewish state) would serve as a trustworthy keeper of its imperialistic interests in the region. In order to realize this goal he began his international contacts and asked Germany to back him in his settlement project, because of the existence of large numbers of Jews there, hoping that Germany would adopt this project and mediate with the Ottoman Empire in order to obtain the Ottoman sultan's consent to grant the Zionist movement the lands spreading from the Euphrates River to El-Arish and the Nile River and allow the Jews to live and settle in Palestine, in return for their separation from the revolutionary movements in Germany, the spread of German culture and influence [by them in the East] and [their] protection of Germany's interests in the East. Herzl managed to meet the German emperor Wilhelm II twice: The first time [was] in Istanbul and the second [was] in Jerusalem in 1898. It was the only visit made by Herzl to Palestine where he presented his project to the Emperor in a letter saying:

“Therefore we truly believe that the realization of the Zionist program will bring good to Turkey as well. It will bring to it financial and practical resources and will make vast areas of arid lands fertile in the future. More happiness and civilized life for many people will emanate from this all. We plan to establish a Jewish company for the lands of Palestine and Syria, which will undertake this great project and [we] ask for the German emperor's protection of this company. Our idea will not cause harm to anyone's rights and to anyone's religious feelings. It will safeguard a reconciliation long sought. We understand and respect the attachment of all the religions, which rose on this land where our forefathers' religion also rose.”

Did Herzl reveal in his letter the truth of the Zionist project? I will explain my response.

The German emperor Wilhelm II was not enthusiastic about the idea and answered Herzl that he did not mean to pressure the Ottoman sultan. By that time Herzl had already established a direct channel of communication with the Ottoman Empire with the aim of meeting with Sultan Abdul Hamid II in order to obtain his consent and approval of Jewish immigration to Palestine. He knew that obtaining a promise from the sultan himself is matchless to any other promise. Contacts between Herzl and Sultan Abdul Hamid II continued for six years and money was Herzl's means of tempting Sultan Abdul Hamid. Herzl visited Istanbul for the first time in 1896 but he met with the prime minister and did not meet with the sultan. The sultan's response to Herzl was sent to [Philip de] Newlinski, [a person] of Polish origin who was Herzl's friend and also Sultan Abdul Hamid's:

“If Mr. Herzl is your friend as much as you are my friend, then advise him not to take any steps in this matter. I cannot sell even a single [square] foot of the land because it is not mine. Rather, it is my people's. The sons of my people obtained this Empire with their blood, fed it with their blood and we shall cover it with our blood before we let someone usurp it from us... Let the Jews save their millions. If my Empire is to be divided, they then may have Palestine for nothing. But it will never be divided, except on our own bodies. I shall not agree that we be dismembered while we are still alive.”

What do you think of Sultan Abdul Hamid's response to Herzl?

Sultan Abdul Hamid stressed his position in a law he enacted in 1900 saying:

“We already emphasized [our order] to prevent the Jews from entering the land of Palestine. The officials slackened the implementation of this order and misinterpreted it. The Jews come under the pretext of pilgrimage and settle down [in the country], as the Governor of the Jerusalem District has informed me. Their stay is not permissible by any means. The state's officials are firmly and especially responsible for the carrying out of this order meticulously. Even the Jews who are subjects of the Ottoman State are not allowed to live [in Palestine] permanently. These orders do not object visits by Jews to the holy lands, either as individuals or

in groups. But they do not allow their permanent dwelling [there]. A commitment should be taken from the consulates through which they have arrived. This order was issued as a resolution of the State's Consultative Council and the Cabinet and as a Sublime Decree by the Caliph [i.e., the Ottoman sultan]."

Do the measures appearing in the law guarantee the prevention of the Jews' immigration to Palestine? Why?

This position by the Ottoman government was not new. The government had already introduced in 1887 the red certificate for the Jews coming to Palestine, following clashes between the Arab fellahin and the invading immigrants in Hadera, Mlabbes [Petah Tiqvah] and Yazur. The Jews had established colonies on the lands of Palestine, among which was the colony of Petah Tiqvah (Key of Hope [sic and should be "Gate of Hope"]) on the lands of the Arab village of Mlabbes in 1882 [sic and should be 1878].

The Red Certificate: A provisional certificate which used to be given to an alien Jew coming to Palestine in return for his passport which the Ottoman authorities would keep as a guarantee of his departure after the expiration of his sojourn [period] which was three months at the most and which was not renewable.

Herzl did not despair of the response by Sultan Abdul Hamid II and aspired to meeting him personally, which he achieved in 1901. He [then] visited Istanbul again in 1902 and then he became aware of the sultan's final position regarding Herzl's settlement project in Palestine, namely, the sultan's insistence on rejecting Herzl's project.

Herzl's eyes began turning to Britain for helping him realize his settlement project, after his failure with both Germany and the Ottoman Empire. [But] in spite of Sultan Abdul Hamid's opposed position to the Jews' residence in Palestine, his reign witnessed Zionist immigrations, which totaled 25 thousand immigrants who lived in Jerusalem, Safed, Tiberias and Hebron, which were among the main cities in Palestine, and established colonies there.

How would you explain the Zionist infiltration into Palestine in spite of Sultan Abdul Hamid opposing position regarding the Jews' immigration to Palestine and their living there?

The Zionist movement continued its efforts within the Ottoman Empire with the Union and Progress Association ["the Young Turks"], which came to power in 1908, and was successful in this field having relied on individuals in the government who belonged to the Dönme Jews.

The Dönme Jews: These are Jews who appeared as Muslims and played a prominent role in the revolution against Sultan Abdul Hamid.¹¹

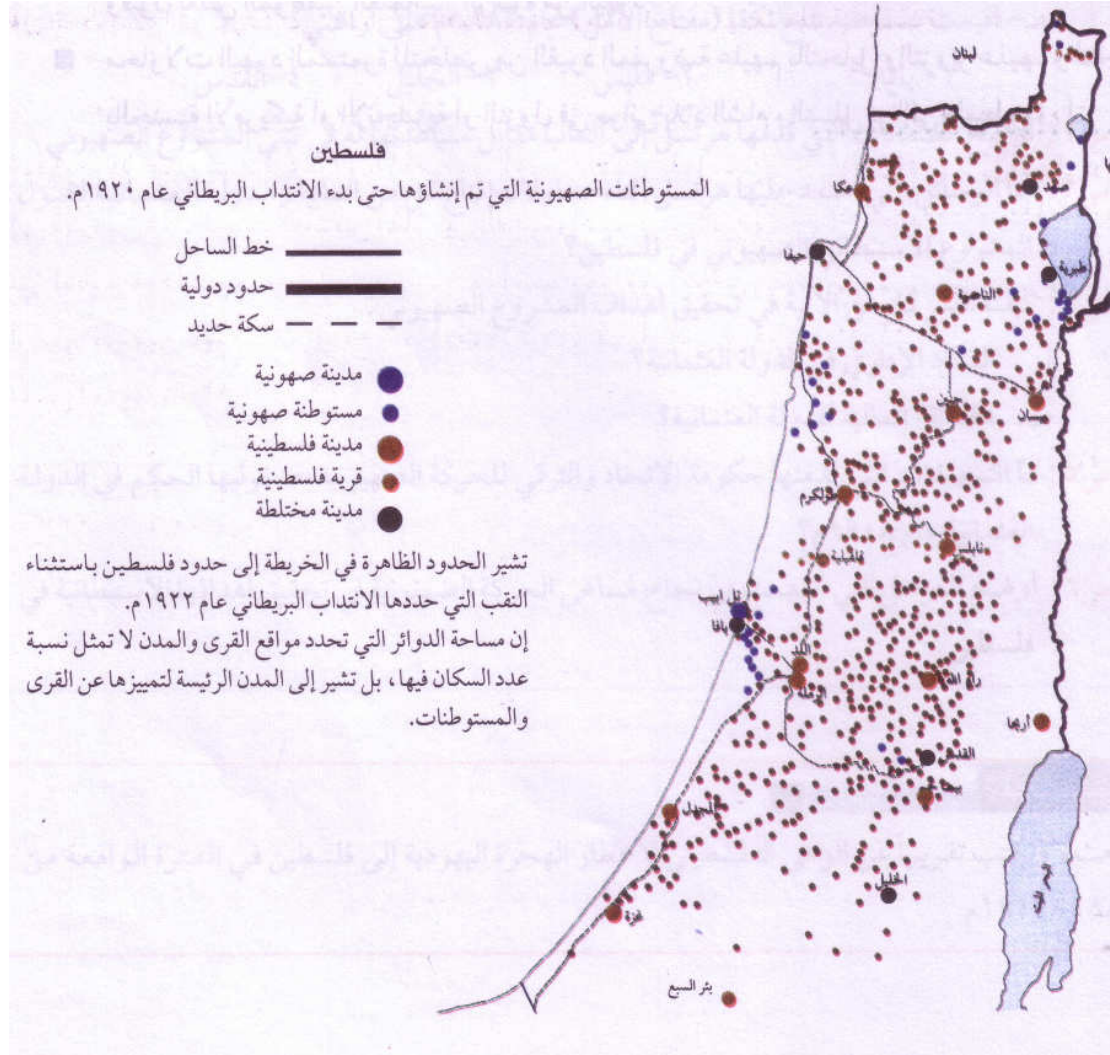
The Zionist movement established in Istanbul an office, which was known as "the Palestine Office", despite protests by the Jerusalem district deputies in the Ottoman parliament who demanded the implementation of the decisions regarding the prevention of the Jews' immigration and the reactivation of the limitations imposed [on that immigration] by Sultan Abdul Hamid's government.

In 1913 the Unionists abolished the limitations imposed on the Jews' immigration to Palestine because of the debt pressure and the [government's] need for money. In 1914 the limitations imposed on acquiring lands by Jews in Palestine were abolished [as well]. Thus, all the

¹¹ More correctly, the Dönme are the descendents of the followers of the Jewish false Messiah Shabetai Tsevi in the 17th century who converted to Islam following his example. One of the Dönme community members is said to have participated in the 1908 coup.

limitations imposed by the government of Sultan Abdul Hamid II in order to confront Jewish immigration disappeared.

How did the Unionists' revolution and the deposition of Sultan Abdul Hamid contribute to the realization of the Zionist movement's goals?



Palestine: Zionist settlements established before the beginning of the British Mandate in 1920

[Large blue circle:] A Zionist city

[Small blue circle:] A Zionist settlement

[Large red circle:] A Palestinian city

[Small red circle:] A Palestinian village

[Large black circle:] A mixed city

Modern and Contemporary History of Palestine, Grade 11, Part 1 (2005) p. 65

The Palestinian Arab position played a role in the opposition to Zionist immigration to Palestine and its dangers through books such the book by Is'af al-Nashashibi "the Magician and the Jew" and the manuscript by Ruhi al-Khaledi [titled] "History of Zionism", as well as newspapers such as Al-Manar, Al-Carmel and Al-Munadi.

Nevertheless, several factors contributed to the success of the Zionist movement's efforts and the failure of Ottoman efforts to prevent Jewish immigration, such as:

- Intervention on the part of foreign ambassadors in Istanbul, Jerusalem and Beirut, their protests and their adherence to the privileges hindered the implementation of the limitations on Jewish immigration to Palestine
The Foreign Privileges: Facilitations and guarantees granted by the Ottoman government to the foreign subjects residing on its lands. [Sultan] Suleiman the Magnificent [originally] granted them to the French in 1536 [and they included privileges] such as the freedom of residence, acquirement [of property] and resort to their consuls in order to solve their [judicial] problems.
- Corruption of some members of the Ottoman administrative apparatus in the capital and in the Ottoman provinces of Jerusalem and Beirut and the acceptance of bribes by some Ottoman officials from the Jews.
- Continued attempts by the Jews to get rid of the limitations imposed on them by way of trickery, forgery, taking up American or English citizenship, or disembarking in the ports of the Levant and thence infiltrating into Palestine via land routes.

[Questions:]

- I will encircle the number of the correct answer.
 - The region demanded by Herzl for the settlement project was:
 1. Palestine
 2. The Levant
 3. The region stretching between the Euphrates and the Nile rivers.

Activity

Let us study and write a report on the Palestinian awareness of the dangers posed by Jewish immigration to Palestine during the period 1882-1924.

Modern and Contemporary History of Palestine, Grade 11, Part 1 (2005) pp. 61-63, 65-67

What would you expect the Zionist movement's reaction to the Sykes-Picot Agreement would be?

The Balfour Declaration

After the Zionist movement's failure in obtaining the consent of Germany and the Ottoman Empire to [Jewish] settlement in Palestine, it turned its eyes to Britain, having considered it the biggest Imperialist state, which might help the Zionist movement in the realization of its goals. The confluence of British imperialistic interests and the interests of the Zionist movement had great influence on this movement's success. The British foreign ministry issued the Balfour Declaration on November 2, 1917 in the form of a letter from Arthur Balfour, British foreign minister, to Edmond Rothschild, one of the Jews' wealthiest people. Following is the text of the letter in Arabic and English:

The Arabic text mostly conforms to the English one. Following is the English text.

Dear Lord Rothschild,

I have such [sic and should be "much"] pleasure in conveying to you, on behalf of his Majesty's Government the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations which has been submitted to and approved by the Cabinet.

"His Majesty's Government view with favors [sic and should be "favour"] the establishment in Palestine ["of" has been omitted] a national home for the Jewish people and will use their best endeavourer [sic and should be "endeavours"] to facilitate ["the" has been omitted] 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.”

I should be grateful if you would bring this declaration on [sic and should be “to”] the knowledge of the Zionist Federation.

[Questions:]

- Does Britain have the right to grant this declaration regarding Palestine to the Jews? Why?
- Who are those ones intended by the phrase ‘non-Jewish communities’ which appeared in the text?
- Did this actually apply to the population in Palestine when the declaration was issued? Why?
- Britain was conducting negotiations with three parties at the same time over the same region. How would you explain that?

Drafting the Balfour Declaration

The preparation for this declaration took several years. As for the formulation of the text alone, it lasted for two full years under the supervision of the Zionist organization. The declaration in its final formulation was issued after it had been amended six times.

Britain’s Motives behind the Issuance of the Balfour Declaration

1. The political factor, i.e., winning over the Zionist elements in Germany and Austria, acquiring [the solidarity of] the Jews of Russia who played a role in the Communist revolution with a view to keeping Russia in the war on the Allies’ side, and making use of the Jews in the United States to pressure the American government in order to push it into the war.
2. The strategic and Imperialist factor: The First World War demonstrated the importance of Palestine’s position due to its proximity to Egypt and to the Suez Canal, especially after the success of the Turkish forces in crossing the Sinai desert...
3. The strong alliance between Imperialism and Zionism. That was expressed by Winston Churchill, British minister of colonies, who is considered one of the builders of the Jewish national home:
”If we are destined in our lifetime – and this is what is surely going to happen – to witness the birth of a Jewish state not only in Palestine alone, but rather on both banks of River Jordan, which will rise under the protection of the British crown and will embrace three or four million Jews, we shall witness an event fully corresponding to the real interests of the British Empire.”¹²

What may the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine achieve for the British Empire and the West [in general]?

Whatever has been said about Britain’s motives in its issuance of this declaration, the [following] pivotal question still remains: Why did the issuance of the Balfour Declaration come that late, rather than why the Balfour Declaration was issued. I will think of this question and answer it in the light of the following:

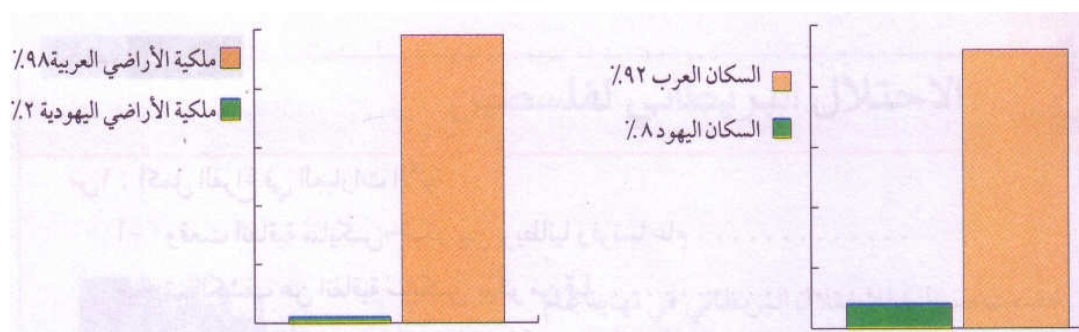
- The Zionist movement’s birth and coming to maturity.
- The eruption of the First World War and the defeat of the Ottoman Empire of which dominions Palestine was a part.

¹² Notwithstanding this statement, it was Churchill himself who, in 1921, detached Trans-Jordan from the area designated for the establishment of the Jewish national home and gave it to the Hashemite Amir Abdallah.

The Legal and Historical Dimensions of the Balfour Declaration

Although the Balfour Declaration was but a political document unbinding legally or internationally, this document is still engulfed by obscurity, much the same as many [other] British documents and treaties. The phrases in this document can be interpreted in various ways, such as the following:

- “The Jewish national home”. The Declaration did not openly say “the Jewish state”. Why?
- “The non-Jewish communities”, although the literal translation of the English text was “the non-Jewish groups”. In both cases, the Declaration denies the existence of the Palestinian Arab people which constituted 92% of the total population, while the Jews’ percentage did not exceed 8% when the Declaration was issued and did not own more than 2% of the total land in Palestine, as illustrated in the following graph:



Percentage of the population and of land ownership in Palestine in 1917

[Orange:] Arab land ownership 98%

[Orange:] Arab population 92%

[Green:] Jewish land ownership 2%

[Green:] Jewish population 8%¹³

Modern and Contemporary History of Palestine, Grade 11, Part 1 (2005) p. 81

- That could also be said regarding the civil rights the safeguarding of which was promised and which the [British] Mandate’s period over Palestine and its repressive policies [later] proved that even the guarantees given to the Arab Palestinians were not fulfilled.
- The text [of the Declaration] stressed the Jews’ political guarantees and rights in the European states. This is the greatest proof that Britain was planning to establish a Jewish state. Had the phrase “national home” meant that Palestine would be their spiritual center, these guaranties would not have been necessary.

As much as the Declaration was legally null and void it was also invalid historically, for the following reasons:

1. Britain did not have the right to issue this Declaration because Palestine was [then] under the sovereignty of the Ottoman State and was not [part] of Britain’s possessions, so that it would give it to the Jews. The Jews were not controlling Palestine and did not have the right of possessing it.
2. The Declaration fully contradicted the liberation appeals emanating from the great powers, whether during the First World War or after its cessation. Those appeals focused on the peoples’ freedom and on their right for self determination, as appeared in the principles [introduced by] the American president Woodrow Wilson.

¹³ No one would refute the fact that at that time the Jews were a small minority in Palestine and they owned a small portion of the land only. The numbers given here, though, are partly conjectural, as exact statistics of population and land ownership did not exist at that time, and partly distorted, as most lands in Palestine at that time were owned by the State and not by Arab or Jewish individuals, communities or organizations.

3. The Balfour Declaration fully contradicted what had been agreed upon with *Sharif Hussein* [ruler of Mecca who had started the Arab revolt against Turkish rule in 1916] within the Hussein-McMahon correspondence, where Palestine was included within the borders of the [promised] independent Arab state [under Hussein].

Why is the Balfour Declaration considered invalid legally and historically?

Activity

Let us study and discuss: How did the British internal conditions emanating from the First World War contribute to the issuance of the Balfour Declaration?

Modern and Contemporary History of Palestine, Grade 11, Part 1 (2005) pp. 78-82

...In 1975 Israel was denounced by the UN General Assembly in its thirtieth session within Resolution No. 3379 which said: "The United Nations General Assembly affirms that Zionism is a form of racism and racial discrimination."

This resolution was cancelled by the United Nations in 1991.

Modern and Contemporary History of Palestine, Grade 11, Part 2 (2006) p. 71

Grade 12

References to Zionism in books for grade 12 are very few.

The Zionist movement focused its attention on Turkey since its inception. Against this background I will explain:

- A. The Zionist movement's attempts to have close relations with Turkey.
- B. The implications of the Israeli-Turkish cooperation on each of Syria and Iraq.

History of the Arabs and the World in the Twentieth Century, Grade 12 (2006) p. 155

These racist practices by Israel since its establishment in 1948 prompted the United Nations to issue its resolution no. 3379 on 10.11.1975, which considered Zionism a form of racism and denounced all its racist practices against the Palestinians. It is worth noting that this resolution was abolished according to a proposal presented by the United States on 16.12.1991, following the implications of the second Gulf War and the beginning of the peace process...

History of the Arabs and the World in the Twentieth Century, Grade 12 (2006) p. 125-126

D. Jewish Holy Places

A prominent feature of all Palestinian textbooks is non-recognition of any Jewish holy place in the Holy Land. This line is continued in books for grades 11 and 12 as well. A Christian Education textbook for grade 11, however, does admit that the country is holy to the monotheistic religions, but it does not elaborate and does not mention the issue of Jewish holy places specifically. In any case, this is a book used by Christian students only who form a minority in Palestinian society.

Grade 11

Our land is sacred also to the other monotheistic religions because of the events that took place here, which interest the followers of these religions.

Christian Education, Grade 11 (2005) p. 78

The conflict between Jews and Muslim over the Wailing Wall is referred to in the following piece, without the slightest recognition of the fact that the Wall is holy to the Jews. In fact, they are presented here as attempting to take hold of a Muslim holy place.

Al-Buraq Wall [the Wailing Wall]

This is the western wall of the Noble Sanctuary [Al-Haram al-Sharif – Temple Mount], and it is a Muslim endowment [*Waqf*]. It was named Al-Buraq after the [heavenly winged] beast, which the Messenger [i.e., Prophet Muhammad] rode in [his] nocturnal journey and ascension to Heaven [*Al-Isra' wa al-Mi'raj* – according to Muslim belief] and it stopped next to the western wall. The Jews call it the Wailing Wall.¹⁴ The Muslims permitted the Jews in the reign of the Ottoman sultan Suleiman the Magnificent to visit the western wall of the Noble Sanctuary and that was reconfirmed during the rule of [the Egyptian governor] Ibrahim Pasha in the period between the years 1831-1840. But the Jews took advantage of Muslim tolerance and tried to take hold of the wall by various means among which was their attempt to buy the open space [in front of it] from the Muslims. In addition, they put there a screen to separate between men and women, put [there] tables and a wooden cabin, lit candles, put [small pieces of paper carrying] prayers in the wall's cracks, brought horns and blew them. These practices aimed at taking control of it, which instigated the Muslims. Therefore the Arabs complained to Britain against these practices and, accordingly, all that the Jews had put in the Al-Buraq yard was removed, which led to their staging a demonstration in protest of British measures.

Modern and Contemporary History of Palestine, Grade 11, Part 2 (2006) p. 9

Grade 12

The following piece connects between Muslim and Christian holy places and the Arab-Palestinian character of the country. The Jewish connection to some of those holy places is ignored.

Palestine was and still is an integral part of the essence of the Arab and Muslim state in history]. The architecture styles within it are connected to its geographic position and to its spiritual and historical standing, being the meeting place of the monotheistic religions and a refuge of prophets and messengers [of God]. In it gathered cultures of peoples and tribes, which came to know one another on its lands and formed in its daily chronicles unique events and pages filled with this place's distinctness, especially in patterns of its architecture, cities, villages, mosques, churches, the forms of its houses, roads, neighborhoods, alleys, markets...

The architectural and cultural heritage in Palestine takes the form of ancient buildings and installations built by man on this blessed land... like the ones found in the Holy Sanctuary in Jerusalem [Temple Mount], the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem and the Ibrahim Sanctuary in Hebron [the Machpelah Sanctuary, or the Cave of the Patriarchs]...

These buildings and installations symbolize and distinguish the Palestinian people and its national identity, which it is proud of and strives to preserve and which serves as a clear evidence of its right to this land...

The destruction attempts by the enemies of this people with a view to changing the facts and hiding any remnant showing the depth of Arab and Muslim civilization in this land, and obliterating its authentic face in order to replace it with another, alien, face...

The neglect of historical buildings of heritage... threatens to cut off the sentimental connection between the people and its heritage and past, and makes of it an object to dissolution and annexation [to others].

Arabic Language – Reading, Literature and Critique, Grade 12 (2006) pp. 16-17

Following is a text about Muslim and Christian holy places in Palestine. Jewish holy places there are ignored.

¹⁴ “The Wailing Wall” is a Christian name. The Jews call it “the Western Wall”.

The Arab homeland contains important religious sites to which Muslim and Christian pilgrims come from different parts of the world... as the case is with Palestine where Muslim and Christian holy places are found in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Hebron, Nazareth and other Palestinian cities.

Physical and Human Geography, Grade 12 (2006) p. 143