



SPECIAL BULLETIN

History

Palestine was under the rule of the Eastern Roman Emperors since 400 AC and until it was conquered by Omar Ibn Al-Khattab, who was given the keys of Jerusalem from Patriarch Safronios in 638 AC. The city then remained under Islamic-Arab rule until the Crusaders captured it in 1099 AC. Christian rule lasted until 1187 AC when Salah Eddin reconquered the city, which then was ruled by the Ayyubids until being recaptured by the Crusaders in 1129. Some 15 years later, the Arabs regained Jerusalem and the city remained in their hands until 1917.

In 1517, Turkish Sultan Selim I conquered Jerusalem and Palestine and incorporated both into the Ottoman Empire, which remained in control until the British occupation in 1917, with the exception of a short period of Egyptian rule (from 1831 until 1840). In the course of World War I, the Ottoman forces capitulated in Jerusalem on 9 December 1917 and mayor Selim Effendi Al-Husseini surrendered to the allied forces led by British Gen. Edmond Allenby, who officially entered the city two days later and established the British military administration in Jerusalem.

In April 1920, the San Remo Conference awarded administration of the former Turkish territories of Syria and Lebanon to France, and Palestine, Transjordan and Mesopotamia (Iraq) to Britain. On 24 July 1922, the League of Nations Council approved the Mandate for Palestine without the consent of Palestinians (The terms of the Mandate became official on 29 Sept. 1923, until which time British military rule remained in place).

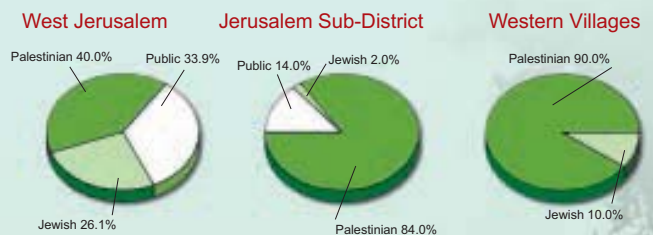


British Mandate and the War of 1948

During the British Mandate, Jerusalem (the Old City and Palestinian neighborhoods such as Talbiyeh, Baq'a, and Katamon south-west of the city) was surrounded by 66 Palestinian villages (e.g., Deir Yassin, Lifta, Malha, Ein Karem), while the mainly ultra-orthodox Jewish population was concentrated in part of the Old City and neighborhoods north-west of it. Palestinians formed the overwhelming majority in the Jerusalem district and owned most of the land. The last British Survey of Palestine (Dec. 1946) made the following demographic estimates:

1948	Population of Jerusalem	Jerusalem Sub-District
Palestinians	65,010	150,590
Jews	99,320	102,520
Other	110	160
Total	164,440	253,270

Property Ownership 1948



(Sources: A Survey of Palestine, Britain, 1946; Sami Hadawi, *Palestinian Rights and Losses in 1948*. London, 1988.

NB: 'Public' includes land owned by Palestinian religious institutions and government land.)