

The Peace on The Horizon - 70 Years after The World War 2 in the Middle East (11)

[\(Japanese Version\)](#)

[\(Arabic Version\)](#)

Chapter 1 Wave of nationalism and socialism (1945-1956)

1-5(11) Israel independence(3): Palestinians extruded by invading Jewish immigrants



The population of Jews the world is estimated around 14 million. Most of them live in the US and Israel. Jewish population in Israel is 6.3 million. They consist of the third-quarter of the country's population of 8.5 million.

However, Jews were not so many before Israeli independence in 1948. The total population of Palestine in the early 1920s after the World War I was 750,000, of which the Jews were about only 80,000. It meant that the ratio of Jews was only 10%. Compared with current figure, the number was one-eighties, and the ratio was about one-eighth.

With the support of the Zionism movement and the Balfour Declaration, numerous Jews from all over European countries migrated to Palestine, namely "the land of Zion", before and after the World War I. It was called "Aliyah". Nearly 200,000 Jews were rushing into Palestine during the first and fourth Aliyah from the late 19th century to the 1920s. When the Holocaust by Nazis in Germany took place in 1930s, the Jews escaped from Europe. Most of them headed to the US. The rest moved to Israel, and its number reached 250 thousand (Fifth Aliyah). As a result, the total population of Palestine immediately doubled to 1.5 million from 750 thousand within 20 years after World War 1.

The land of Palestine was not so wide. It was wide barren desert and narrow farmland. The fertile land has already been cultivated by Arabs who were indigenous people. Sheep and camels were grazing on land, which was unsuitable for cultivation.

The newly migrated Jewish immigrant needed the farmland at first. Most of them had been poor in the Jewish community in Europe. Poor Jews looked for new horizon. In contrast, rich Jews did not migrate to underdeveloped Palestine. Wealthy Jews stayed in Europe or migrated to rich New World; the United States.

How did Jewish in Palestine get the farmland? Did the Jews kick out the indigenous Arab farmers by force? No. If Israel had own independent state, they could clear off Arabs by force. But the Jews of those days have no such power. They took a measure to buy the land from the landlord. Arabs were

peasant farmers and the land was monopolized by absentee landlords in the Ottoman Empire.

The Jewish settlers showed a lot of money and bought the land from the absentee landlord. It was unlikely that they had such a lot of money. It was the donation from rich brotherhood who remained in Europe like Lord Rothschild, or successful brotherhood in the United States. Some of rich Jews stayed in Europe, or Jews with talent and academic background moved to the United States. Most Jews who migrated to Palestine were poor people who had no money, no talent and no education. Jews who escaped from Pogrom in Russia in 1909 (Pogrom means persecution and destruction against Jews in Russia) settled the joint farm "Kibbutz". Kibbutz was the cooperative agricultural society combined with socialism and Zionism. New type of firms prevailed to other Jewish settlements.

When they acquired the land, next step was the eviction of the Arab farmers. Arabs could not complain because land ownership was transferred to Jewish immigrants. Arab farmers either had to be employed as laborer by the Jews, or if they did dislike it, they had to move to neighboring Arab countries such as Jordan. They became refugees under the umbrella of their relatives in Jordan. It was the beginning of Palestinian economic refugees.

Political refugees who occupy the majority of Palestinian refugees had grown in the Arab-Israeli War. Approximately 700,000 Jews flowed in during three years after Israel independence, almost the same number of Palestinian Arabs became political refugees and rushed into Jordan. Arabs were pushed out by Jews. There were two families in refugees; the Shatilas and the Al-Yassins. They had been living next to each other in the town of Tulkarm on the West Bank of the Jordan River. The father of Al-Shatila family was a teacher and Al-Yassin was a doctor. Shatila escaped to Jordan with his sixteen-years son, Amin.

(To be continued ----)

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Home Page: [OCIN INITIATIVE](#)

([Table of contents](#))