

Palestine 1936

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Synopsis

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In spring 1936, the Holy Land erupted in a rebellion that targeted both the local Jewish community and the British Mandate authorities. The Great Arab Revolt would last three years, cost thousands of lives, and cast the trajectory for the Middle East conflict. The revolt was the crucible in which Palestinian identity coalesced, uniting all in a single struggle for independence. Yet the rebellion would ultimately turn on itself. British forces' aggressive counterinsurgency took care of the rest, finally quashing the uprising on the eve of World War II.

To the Jews, the insurgency would leave a very different legacy. It was then that Zionist leaders began to abandon illusions over Arab acquiescence, to face the prospect that fulfilling their dream of sovereignty might mean forever clinging to the sword. The revolt saw thousands of Jews trained and armed by Britain. This is the story of two national movements and the first sustained confrontation between them. The rebellion was Arab, but the Zionist counter-rebellion—the Jews' transformation—is a vital element in how Palestine became Israel. Today, the revolt's legacy endures.

Palestine 1936 is the origin story of the world's most intractable conflict, but it is also more than that. It reveals world-changing events through extraordinary individuals on all sides.

Reader's comments

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