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Dentistry in Israel

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INTRODUCTION

The State of Israel was founded in 1948 in a part of the territory and as the successor of Palestine, a country which had been under British Mandatory rule since 1919. Up to that year Palestine had been a province of the Ottoman Empire. The Mandate given by the League of Nations after World War I contained the "Balfour Declaration" according to which the mandatory power was under obligation to facilitate immigration of Jews with the aim to establish a Jewish National Home in Palestine.

A Jewish minority had always lived among the Arab population of Palestine, especially in the larger cities for more than 100 years. Immigration of some size began in the eighties of the previous century as a result of intolerable persecutions. The immigrants came predominantly from Russia and they founded agricultural settlements in marginal areas of the country. The influx of newcomers grew after World War I mostly from Eastern and Central Europe. The ascendance of Hitler and his conquest of Europe drove those few who could escape the Nazi crematoria to seek asylum in Palestine. With the partition of Palestine and the establishment of the new state, the greater part of the Arab population fled, and a mass immigration of Jews from many countries soon turned the former minority into a majority. These general historical features are reflected in the development of dentistry in Israel since each wave of immigration brought dentists with it.

LEGISLATION

In 1919, the British Administration found no regulations concerning the medical and dental professions. A few dozen persons, many of them women, were practicing dentistry, a great proportion without formal training. The newly established Department of Health set about bringing order to this field.

The first ordinance to regulate the practice of dentistry was issued

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