

# Development of the Roadmap of Political Zionism in the State of Israel



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By

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To my parents Francisco and Carmen



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements .....	viii
General Introduction.....	1
Chapter 1 .....	4
The Rise of the Zionist Project in Europe	
Chapter 2 .....	21
The Zionist Project and Its Development in Israel	
Chapter 3 .....	37
The Roadmap of the Zionist Project in Historical Events of the 20th and 21st Centuries	
Chapter 4 .....	100
The Violence Carried Out by Israel and Its Violation of Rights of the Palestinians	
Chapter 5 .....	124
The Violence Carried Out by Palestinian Terrorist Organisations and Its Violation of the Rights of Israelis and Palestinians	
Concluding Remarks .....	157
Sources Consulted .....	159

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## INTRODUCTION

The aim of this book is not to present one of the most protracted and complex conflicts that has generated the greatest number of academic debates, but rather to gain an in-depth understanding of how the Zionist project has been implemented and developed in the State of Israel and the conflict it has generated between Israelis and Palestinians during the 20th and 21st centuries.

In order to find a solution to the problem that has arisen, a great effort will be made to analyse not only the Zionist project and its implementation and development in Israel, but also all those principles that it defends and that have prevented peace negotiations between Palestinians and Israelis from prospering and that have generated violence between these two peoples, and which, as Javier Parrando, Deputy Consul of the Spanish Consulate General in Jerusalem, states, have caused the conflict to become entrenched due to its prolongation over time.<sup>1</sup> In contrast to Javier Parrando, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas declared on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2013<sup>2</sup>, that during the last negotiations presided over by the US there had been some progress, as issues such as security, territorial occupation, water resources, border relations, the symbolism of Jerusalem and the return of refugees had been addressed. But, as so often before, these negotiations failed due to the construction of new settlements. The following day, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu said at Bar-Ilan University<sup>3</sup> that the problem underlying the solution to the conflict is that the Palestinians recognise the right of return of Jews to their historic homeland. Unlike Netanyahu, the problems for the Palestinians are that they will not be allowed to create an independent Palestinian state in the occupied territories of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank with East Jerusalem as its capital, and that millions of refugees will be able to return to their homeland.

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<sup>1</sup> FORRIOL, M C, "Telephone interview with Javier Parrando," Deputy Consul at the Consulate General of Spain in Jerusalem, 7 March 2014.

<sup>2</sup> EFE, 'Abbas says this may be last chance for peace', *Google Alerts*, 8 October 2013.

<sup>3</sup> JEWISH NEWS AGENCY, "Netanyahu: For peace, Palestinians must recognise Jewish Homeland," 12 November 2013.

The problem that generated the conflict arose when the Zionist movement set out to create a national home for the Jewish community; especially when Zionism began to expropriate land from the Palestinians, committing massacres against the native Arabs, and enforcing this historic homeland with inalienable rights which overshadowed the resident Arabs who had resided in those territories for centuries.

Initially, both political Zionism and Labour did not rule out the existence of a binational state in which the majority would be Jewish and the Arab community would be respected in all their civil and political rights. But where has the creation of such a binational state gone? In a way, this binational state exists in the sense that the state of Israel is a territory where Israelis and Palestinians cohabit, but not as it should be, because it does not meet the conditions of a binational state in which the rights of both Jews and Palestinians must be respected. Will it be possible in the medium term to establish this de facto binational state in which both Palestinians and Israelis enjoy the same rights? It is difficult to predict, but what does not seem possible is that this two-state solution will become a reality as long as violence between the two peoples persists and agreements are not reached on the problems that have given rise to the conflict. Agreements which, as Shlomo Ben Ami states, will be difficult to reach as long as the lack of dialogue and understanding between the parties persists.

The aim of this book is, on the one hand, to contribute to a better understanding of the Zionist movement, with special emphasis on what gave rise to it, how it has developed and the problems it has caused for Palestinians living in Israel.

The book consists of five chapters. The first chapter will analyse why and how the Zionist project began to take shape in Europe in the late 19th and 20th centuries. The second chapter will examine how the Zionist project has developed in Israel and the mechanisms that this ideology uses to achieve its goal of taking control of Palestinian territory and establishing a fully Jewish state, with the help of the US. The third chapter will analyse how Zionist ideology has been implemented in the state of Israel throughout its history.

The fourth chapter is both a study and an analysis; it details Israeli paramilitary organisations and their intelligence services to find out to what extent they might have carried out terrorist attacks, war crimes, crimes against humanity or armed reprisals against Palestinians. On the

other hand, it will try to find out to what extent Israel might be violating the rights of Palestinians. The fifth chapter will study secular Palestinian terrorist organisations under the umbrella of the PLO and religious Palestinian organisations with Sunni leanings, such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad. It will also seek to understand to what extent the PNA and Hamas may be violating the rights not only of Israelis but also of the Palestinian population itself.

The book ends with some concluding remarks by the author.

# CHAPTER 1

## THE RISE OF THE ZIONIST PROJECT IN EUROPE

To understand what has given rise to the complex and protracted Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the violence it has generated, one must first understand what has produced the clash between these two peoples and marked the lives of generations of Palestinian and Israeli Arabs to the point where it has become an unresolved problem.

The various failures of the peace process raise the question of why a mutually acceptable solution has not been found. The problem is that this is a conflict that involves not only these two peoples cohabiting the same territory, but also, due to its internationalisation, European powers such as the United Kingdom and France, Arab countries such as Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, along with Russia and the United States. The latter has supported Israel for decades, according to Shlomo Ben Ami, the United States would not be able to rescind its support because this would mean a change in historical conditions. The alliance between Israel and the US responds not only to the support it receives from the Jewish *lobby*, but also to the religious affinity that has existed for decades between the two nations and that arose from the Protestant and Evangelical religions in the US, based on the belief that “the Jews are the new Jerusalem”.<sup>4</sup> In order to explain this religious affinity, Shlomo Ben Ami told the author of this book about a conversation he had with former President Bill Clinton. The latter told him that in Arkansas, there was an evangelist pastor whom, before being elected president, asked of him that if he became President, he should never harm Israel during his term of office, because in the USA there are millions of evangelist Protestants, whose support he might lose. This affinity also refers to the fact that the US and Israel are nations of

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<sup>4</sup> FORRIOL, MC. Personal interview with Shlomo Ben Ami, Thursday 30 January 2014, at the *Toledo International Centre for Peace*, Madrid.

<sup>4</sup> FORRIOL, M C. Telephone interview with Mr Javier Parrondo, Deputy Consul General of Spain in Jerusalem, on Friday, 7 March 2014.

<sup>4</sup> Á LVAR EZ-OSSORIO 1 & IZQUIERDO, F. *Why has Peace Failed?* Los Libros de La Catarata. 2007, p. 234.

<sup>4</sup> COLE, J. "AIPAC's Overt and Covert Ops." *Antiwar.com*. 30/08/ 2004.

immigrants, and because the US continues to hold a certain sense of guilt for not helping Jews during the Holocaust. It is true that there is an affinity between the US and Israel, but it is also true that at times some Israeli leaders have pursued policies against the Palestinians that have undermined that relationship.<sup>5</sup> Shlomo Ben Ami thinks it is an exaggeration to refer to the affinity between the US and Israel to the Jewish *lobby*. However, Don Javier Parrondo believes that the Israeli *lobby* in Washington has great power in conditioning and shaping US policy in the Middle East and in particular within Palestine, following the direction of US policy<sup>6</sup>. The Jewish *lobby* has at times gone so far as to torpedo the careers of presidential candidates who have not supported its demands. For example, in the event that a candidate for the US presidency does not follow the instructions of the Jewish *lobby*, he or she will switch candidates and in the next election it will be the challenger from the opposing party who will be favoured by AIPAC (American Israel Public Affairs Committee), with donations, influencing the media and mobilising groups under its umbrella. Hence, presidential candidates who are supported by the Jewish lobby try not to become their enemy during the election campaign and follow AIPAC's instructions so as not to risk losing their support and that of the media that maintains contact with the pro-Israel lobby.<sup>7</sup> Both Democratic and Republican politicians in the US benefit from the Jewish *lobby*. Republican politicians, moreover, receive support from Christian fundamentalists allied to the pro-Israel *lobby*. By way of example, all senior members of the Bush administration in charge of policy-making in Israel and the Middle East remained connected to AIPAC and its think tank, the Institute for Near East Policy. For example, Donald Rumsfeld and Dick Cheney did not miss a single AIPAC Convention where Israel's policy towards Palestine is endorsed and anyone who opposes it is considered an enemy of the *lobby*.<sup>8</sup>

The Jewish *lobby* not only pressures Congress to pass laws that are in its specific economic or regional interest, tax breaks or increased budget subsidies, but mobilised by its demands the US has supported in 1967,

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<sup>5</sup> FORRIOL, M C. Personal interview with Shlomo Ben Ami, Thursday 30 January 2014, at the *Toledo International Centre for Peace*, Madrid.

<sup>6</sup> FORRIOL, M C. Telephone interview with Mr Javier Parrondo, Deputy Consul General of Spain in Jerusalem, on Friday, 7 March 2014.

<sup>7</sup> ÁLVAREZ-OSSORIO, I & IZQUIERDO, F. *¿Por qué ha fracasado la Paz?*, Los Libros de La Catarata. 2007, p. 234.

<sup>8</sup> COLE, J. "AIPAC's Overt and Covert Ops," in *Antiwar.com*, 30 August 2004.

1973 and 1982 Israel's wars against the Arab states, and carried out in 1991 and 2003 the Iraq wars.

## **Anti-Semitism and Its Zionist Overthrow in Europe**

Zionism, or Jewish nationalism, was a product of the upsurge of anti-Semitism in 19th century Central and Eastern Europe. In the late 18th century, the rise of secular trends in Europe led to a shift from hating Jews on religious grounds to rejecting them because of their race. Until then their way of life had revolved around their religious precepts, but with the cultural and social change brought about by the cult of progress, some Jews succeeded in assimilating into a select section of the intelligentsia. Others became the vanguard of the most progressive and revolutionary ideas in society, assuming a liberal political position and even, in time, a Marxist and anti-capitalist one. But with the advance of scientific knowledge and technological progress in the last third of the 19th century, especially in the fields of biology, genetics and the evolution of the species, some European intellectuals and politicians developed a racist perception of the Jewish community, according to which the white race was superior to all others. This idea of the superiority of the white race was consolidated by a misrepresentation of the Darwinian theory of evolution. According to this theory, human beings were divided into different races, which were destined to fight for their superiority, and only races with superior qualities could win this battle. This racial anti-Semitism was based on the belief that Jews formed a distinct race, possessing inferior or different physical traits from the rest of society. As a different race, even if they converted to Christianity, they would still be Jews. Thus, over time, this racial anti-Semitism became much more dangerous than religious anti-Judaism, as happened when Hitler came to power and established Nazism.

For Hitler, all groups, races or peoples possess inherent and immutable traits which are passed on from generation to generation. These characteristics do not only relate to external form and physical structure, but also influence the way of thinking skills, culture and intelligence. For Hitler and Nazism the Aryan race is a superior race and as such has not only the right but the obligation to exterminate the inferior race in particular. For Hitler the Jews were “undesirable parasites” who would end up corrupting the purity of the Aryan race. It is for this reason that the inferior races and especially the Jews living in Europe were to be eradicated during the genocide in which millions of Jews are murdered.

## Anti-Semitism in 19th century Europe

The 19th century saw the emergence of a political anti-Semitism, which, while incorporating elements of religious anti-Semitism, did not seek conversion, but rather the expulsion, persecution and eventual annihilation of the Jews. In 1881 the history of the Jews underwent a major change, largely due to the revival of anti-Semitism in countries such as France, the United Kingdom, Germany and Austria. Republican France, the birthplace of the rights of man and the citizen, did not remain immune to the anti-Semitism championed by Count Joseph Arthur de Gabineau, who was noted for centring his theory of history on the concept of the master race. According to him, there are superior races such as the Aryan race and inferior races such as the Jewish race. The former are virile and tend towards state organisation, while the latter are essentially feminine and tend towards art. When the two races intermingle, they eventually degenerate. Any means for a race to remain immune to degeneration is to keep the purity of the race intact. Hence, the need to declare the Aryan race as the dominator of the other races. This same anti-Semitic theory was spread in the penultimate decade of the 19th century by Edouard Drumont, a nostalgic for France under the Ancien Régime and a xenophobic nationalist, who, through his newspaper *La Libre Parole*, helped to make the Jewish community an enemy of France, of Europe and of humanity; because in his opinion, the Jews were responsible for the distortion of genuine French values. In 1886, he wrote his work *La France juive* in which he attacked the role of the Jews in France and defended their exclusion from society. For him, Jews could only be treated like dogs, because when Jews go up, France goes down, and when Jews go down, France goes up.<sup>9</sup> Drumont founded the Ligue Antisémitique Nationale de France in 1890 and published a libel, subtitled *La France aux Français*, in which he sowed hatred against the Jews, whom he described as corrupters and traitors.

An example of such anti-Semitism in France is what happened in 1894 to Raphael Dreyfus, a French army officer and a Jew fully integrated into French society, whom was accused, despite the lack of evidence, of high treason, stripped of his military rank and deported to a fortress on Devil's Island for four years. While his family fought for his release, anti-Semitism grew throughout France. Through articles and drawings published in the *Libre Parole*, Dreyfus was presented as a symbol of the

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<sup>9</sup> DRUMONT, E. *La France juive. Essai d'histoire contemporaine*. Paris. C. Marpon et E. Flammarin. 1886, vol I, p. 248-515.

Jews' supposed disloyalty to France. In 1896 Lieutenant Colonel Georges Picqart, head of the army intelligence unit, identified the real traitor, Major Ferdinand Esterhazy. Unlike Dreyfus, Esterhazy was acquitted because he was French and not Jewish, and to escape prosecution he travelled to Belgium and London.

On 13<sup>th</sup> January 1898, the novelist Emile Zola wrote a public letter denouncing the army for fabricating evidence and lying. Eventually the documents with which Dreyfus had been accused of being a traitor were exposed as forgeries. Eventually, the President pardoned him and he was reinstated in the army. In July 1906 Dreyfus was reinstated, but his innocence was not publicly declared until 1995. This political scandal resulted in senior army officers facing charges of conspiracy, falsifying evidence and covering up for the real villain. This case inspired Theodor Herzl to realise his Zionist dream of the Jews having their own homeland.

In the Germany of the Second Reich, it was Wilhem Marr who first used the term "anti-Semite" in naming the association he founded in 1879, the "League of Anti-Semites". Wilhem Marr rejected the premise of assimilation as a means for Jews to become Germans. In his essay "The Victory of Judaism over Germanism: From a Non-Denominational Point of View" he introduced the idea that Germans and Jews were locked in a long-standing conflict, the origins of which he attributed to race. He warned that the Jewish spirit and Jewish consciousness had conquered the world, and that this foreign power had to be resisted. For a Jewish victory would mean the end of the German people. To prevent this from happening, in 1879 he set up the "League of Anti-Semites", the first German organisation committed to combating the supposed threat to Germany posed by the Jews and advocating their forced expulsion from the country. Despite his influence, Marr's ideas were not immediately adopted by German nationalists. Indeed, it was not until 1912 that the Pan-German League, founded in 1891, declared racism to be an underlying principle. Nevertheless, Marr was an important link in the evolutionary chain of German racism that ended in genocide under Hitler.

In the Austro-Hungarian Empire, some German politicians used the idea of Aryan racial superiority in their election campaigns to win votes. This was the case with the anti-Semitic MPs Georg von Shönerer (1842-1921) and Karl Lüger (1844-1910). Shönerer introduced racist anti-Semitic content into Austrian politics in the 1880s and 1890s. Lüger was elected mayor of Vienna for having appealed to racial and economic anti-Semitic sentiment, blaming the Jews for the bad economic times the country was



going through. This racial and economic anti-Semitism shaped the ideas that Hitler formulated in the following years and which gave rise to Nazism.

Unlike Central Europe, in Eastern Europe, the Jews were a nation in the ethnic and religious sense; they retained and even spoke Yiddish and Hebrew, and had developed a culture in which religion was but one element. They had also had a territory of their own, although they had been dispossessed of it in the distant past. At first, Zionism in Eastern Europe was a minority idea that did not have a grip on the masses, nor on the intellectuals. However, this movement began to gain momentum in Eastern Europe when modernity and secularisation sparked a cultural revolution among Jewish residents in Russia and Poland called "Hohmat Israel" (Wisdom of Israel). Among its main representatives is Péretz Smolensky, who asserts the national character of Jewish identity, not so much based on religion as a cohesive element, but emphasising the importance of cultural attributes, a sense of belonging, and a spiritual and ethical heritage. Smolensky expresses his wish for the Jewish people to achieve cultural and linguistic autonomy, in which the linguistic and literary revival of Hebrew as the official Jewish language is one of the ideological prerequisites for the Jewish nation to exist. But this wish could not come true, because after the assassination of Tsar Alexander II in 1881, Tsar Alexander III ascended to the throne. This tsar was repressive towards non-Russian communities of the Empire, including the Jewish community, and unleashed a wave of terror (the *pogroms*)<sup>10</sup> from 1881 to mid-1882 against the Jewish communities of western Ukraine, Poland, Belarus and Lithuania.

During this period of severe repression, discrimination, restrictions, hardship and having to submit to the "May Laws" of 1882 led to increasing insecurity among Jews, causing 30,000 to 40,000 Jews to flee. In the following decades, almost three million Jews had to leave Eastern Europe in search of greater recognition of civil rights and better living conditions.

Two thirds of the total number of emigrants went to the USA, where over the next two generations the Jewish community became one of the most active groups in the country, while the remaining third emigrated to Argentina, Australia and Canada, among others. This was not the first time

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<sup>10</sup> Pogroms is a Russian word in which it's historical meaning refers to the attacks by the Russian population on Jewish communities during the Tsarist empire.

this had happened in the Russian Empire: a few decades earlier, as a result of the Jewish population explosion and the economic hardship experienced by the Jewish community in the Zone of Residence<sup>11</sup>, thousands of Jews emigrated to Vienna, Budapest, Paris or London. Nevertheless, there was a group of young Jewish students and workers who stayed in the USSR in order to join some subversive, anti-Czarist movements and eventually committed themselves to Marxism in the struggle for the Revolution. Among these, there were some who were sympathetic to Jewish nationalism and called for local Jewish autonomy within the framework of an emancipated Polish, Russian or Romanian nation. Its main political expression was the BUND, a secular Jewish socialist party, formed in Vilna in 1897. In 1989 the BUND became the core of the new Russian Social Democratic Party.

Given their secular and socialist outlook, they opposed what they saw as the reactionary nature of traditional Jewish life in Russia. It focused on culture, rather than a state or place, and promoted Yiddish as the Jewish national language, to some extent opposing the Zionist project to revive Hebrew. For the BUND recognised Yiddish as a social identifier. In order to maintain its national-cultural autonomy, it advocated that the Polish Jewish minority should use its own language and maintain its cultural institutions in areas where it considered itself a considerable part of the local population.

### **The founding ideologues of the Zionist movement**

Of particular relevance to the Jewish community was Jewish enlightenment (*Haskalah*), which provided a turning point in traditional Jewish thought. In its initial stage, it was essentially a middle-class movement, and the Jewish masses remained aloof from it, even hostile to the idea of cultural assimilation, believing that in so doing they were disavowing Judaism.

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<sup>11</sup> Catherine II, her attempts to convert the Jews having failed, forbade them to leave their traditional areas of residence, i.e. the lands where the Jews resided prior to the Russian annexation of the Polish-Lithuanian and Moldavian territories. The "Zone of Residence" comprising the new Polish-Lithuanian territories stretched along the western and southern border of the Russian Empire and had a Jewish population of over 5 million people, which at the time represented the largest concentration of Jews in the world. The "Zone of Residence" was a so-called settlement area for Russian Jews and other minorities. But they could not settle elsewhere, except on the condition that they embraced Christianity. This phenomenon persisted until 1917 in Russia.

Because much of the Jewish population in Europe was Orthodox, the *Haskalah* was perceived as a threat to their values. In contrast, Jewish supporters of Jewish enlightenment advocated secular values and the supplanting of traditional education with modern schools.

The *Haskalah* was a programme promoted by Moses Mendelsson to internalise Jews with the culture, customs, language and education of each of the European countries where Jews lived, in particular Germany, in order to integrate them into European societies. The intention was that a Jew in Germany, France, Great Britain or any other Western European country should be a German Jew, a French Jew or an English Jew, i.e., not be distinguishable from a Catholic or Protestant. The achievement of this equality allowed in a way the degradation of the traditional moulds shaping the behaviour of the Jewish community, and pushed religious matters into the realm of the private sphere. Despite the attempt of assimilation and political-legal transformation by European countries towards the Jewish community, the secular enlightenment movement failed. Consequently, there were Jews who chose to convert to Christianity either out of conviction or as a way of adapting to the environment and circumstances of the time.

The Zionist movement adopted the characteristics of the ethnic nationalisms widespread among the stateless peoples of Central and Eastern Europe, where most of the Jewish communities originated. But unlike the other peoples, Jews were not united by the same language or territory, and the cultural differences between Jews living in one country or another were very different. The only thing that identified, united and differentiated the Jews from other peoples was their religion. A religion that was associated with a reference to a sacred homeland, historic Palestine. Hence, the aim of the Zionist movement has been from the beginning to build a Jewish national home in Palestine. In addition, two phenomena converged in Europe at the end of the 19th century that had a negative impact on Jewish communities in Europe: the limits of integration in Western Europe and a revival of the old anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe. Zionism had from its origin two main currents with many overlapping elements: the one based on basically religious assumptions, which is the older one, and the one built on nationalist political conceptions, which was strongly influenced by the events of the 19th century. In fact, although there were already doctrinal precedents for Zionism, Theodor Herzl is considered the father of modern Zionism, having managed to bring together the different currents of modern Zionism, such as mystical Zionism, nationalist political Zionism and Labour Zionism, in favour of the creation of a Jewish state.

In addition to his conceptual contribution, he also began to establish the mechanisms that would make it possible to realise this idea.

It is with mystical Zionism that the origins of Zionist thought can be found, because the religious factor played a major role in the genesis of Israel. However, other currents defend the secular character of the movement, so that if the political objective of these Zionist strands was also the creation of the State of Israel, the existing vision of it was not the same.

Zionism of the political and nationalist type aspired to the creation of a Jewish nation-state in Palestine that would belong to them in its entirety. In this case, Zionism was based on the "normalisation of Jewish community life and the affirmation of a Jewish personality, the assertion of dignity and identity, cultural awakening and the realisation of one's own values"<sup>12</sup>. This Zionist strand thought of the Jewish question in nationalist terms. Following the nationalist currents of the 19th century, which argued that there are ties that bind certain people and exclude others; and that is why each organically organised community must have an independent state; a common state for a common people. The aim of this political formula was to create a state that belonged entirely to the Jewish people, but for this to happen, the Jews had to become a numerical majority.

Labour Zionism saw the Jewish problem as lying not only in the lack of a state, but in an absence of the class structure of the Jewish nation, which had become deformed as a result of its prolonged dispersion<sup>13</sup>, leading to an excess of middle class, small landowners and a shortage of workers. This strand sought to create a 'healthy' state that would take responsibility for the reconstruction of the working class. Since the interests of this social class demanded a socialist state, this was the only way to solve the Jewish problem. In this case a Jewish numerical majority was required in order to be able to decide the future of the community. In contrast to mystical Zionism, political Zionism and Labour Zionism did not rule out the existence of an Arab minority in the future state of Israel, whose civil and political rights should be respected in the same way as the rights of the Jews. They were in favour of a binational state, in which the Jewish community would be the demographic majority of the State of Israel.

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<sup>12</sup> MÁRTINEZ CARRERAS, J V. *El mundo árabe e Israel*. Madrid: Istmo. 1992, p. 29.

<sup>13</sup> FINKELSTEIN, N G. *Image and Reality of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*. Madrid. Akal. 2003, p. 61

Einstein was one of the advocates of such a binational coexistence between Jews and Arabs. Not only Einstein, but also a minority of Zionist intellectuals at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and some members of left-wing organisations such as Ha-Shomer ha-Tza'ir<sup>14</sup> or Po'alé Tzion<sup>15</sup>.

### **Theodor Herzl and political Zionism**

Zionism was presented at the end of the 19th century as a liberation movement for the Jewish people in the face of growing anti-Semitism in Central and Eastern Europe. However, this vision was not shared by the Jewish community as a whole, as it was strongly opposed by progressive groups, socialist and communist tendencies and orthodox religious groups. The progressive groups were against Zionism because they considered that it was too late to bring together millions of Jews scattered around the world, who had their lives organised on the basis of even power where they lived. Socialist and communist tendencies accused the Zionist project of being colonising, and of seeking the endorsement of the great powers in order to achieve its goals. Religious groups, for their part, considered that the Zionist discourse sought to justify its colonising strategy under religious pretexts. Moreover, most religious sectors saw Zionism as a threat to Judaism, for unlike Judaism, the goal of Judaism was not political or national, but spiritual.

Theodor Herzl was born in Hungary into an emerging Jewish bourgeois family in which the practice of Judaism was limited to the observance of certain holidays. From 1878 he lived in Vienna, where he worked as a playwright and journalist. He was perfectly assimilated with the customs and culture of his native country and showed no interest in matters relating to the Jewish world, and even lived on the fringes of what other Jews were proposing to solve the Jewish problem. In order to better assimilate with Germanic culture, he became a member of the Akademische Lessehalle and the Albia Fraternity, both German nationalist organisations that sought to make their Jewish members conform to German culture and customs and forget their own<sup>16</sup>. Despite this, and the view of the Jewish people that

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<sup>14</sup> Ha Shomer ha-Tza'ir is a Zionist, Marxist, bi-national organisation, which opposed the expulsion of Arab workers from enterprises and believed in building socialism through collectivist colonies, avoiding class struggle.

<sup>15</sup> Left Po'alé Tzion was a party, which, although participating in the Histadrut trade union, criticised the discriminatory attitude against Arab workers.

<sup>16</sup> KONBERG, J. *Theodor Herzl: from Assimilation to Zionism*. Bloomington and Indiana polis, Indiana University Press, 1993. p. 35.

he had acquired through anti-Semitic literature, Herzl remained loyal to his people. In 1891, he was offered a job as Paris correspondent for the *Neue Freie Presse*<sup>17</sup>. It was while in Paris witnessing the Dreyfus trial that his interest in the Jewish question was awakened. The false accusation of this character made Herzl realise that there was irrational anti-Semitism against the Jewish people in Europe, and the need to resolve the Jewish question. He considered various options for ending this discrimination, including a return to the Judaism of his ancestors, the conversion of the Jewish community to Christianity, the entry of Jews into socialism, and even a duel between a Jew and an anti-Semite in order to restore honour to the Jewish people. None of these options convinced him. He finally came to the conclusion that the solution was for the imperialist powers of the time to solve the Jewish problem by offering them a territorial state to which all the Jews of the world would emigrate. In this way the Jewish people would have a state like all other nations, in which the Jews could be citizens of that place, just as the French, the Germans or anyone else was a citizen of theirs. Thus, Herzl became the founder of political Zionism, understood as a national movement. What he was not so clear about in the beginning was what was to be done with the existing local population in what was to be the future state of Israel, for in 1896 when he published *Der Judenstaat* it was not yet clear to him that the future state of Israel would be Palestine. His plans included the possibility of acquiring land in Patagonia, Uganda or Kenya. In 1902, with Palestine already established as a goal, Herzl published his second work, *Altneuland*. In this work, Herzl already presented the future Zionist state project as a political project to be established in historic Palestine, but with the aim of promoting religious tolerance, respect for legality, emancipation of women and fraternisation between Jews and Muslims<sup>18</sup>. Despite promoting tolerance and fraternisation, Herzl speaks in this work that Jews should be the majority in the future state of Israel and that it would be the Jews who would have the right to recognise the rights of other minorities. While he said this in this work and publicly, in his private diaries he talked about the expulsion or displacement of the Palestinian Arab population, about the purchase of their land, about the total dispossession of this local population, and about negotiations with the local and international rulers. For him, as for the other Zionist leaders, the creation of the state of Israel, his

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<sup>17</sup> The *Neue Freie Presse* was not only a newspaper, but also a socio-political institution. It represented the banner of Austrian liberalism and was the elitist reference point for the bourgeoisie and the liberal middle classes

<sup>18</sup> HERZL, T. *Terre anciane, terre nouvelle*, in CHARBIT, Denis (ed.): *Sionismes textes fondamentaux*. Paris, Edition Albin Michel. 1998, p. 145.

historical homeland of Palestine, would constitute for Europe a wall against Asia. That is why, according to Herzl, Europe had to guarantee the existence of the future state of Israel. Herzl, aware that Palestine was not empty, but had been populated for generations by a majority of indigenous Arabs, and that they would not agree to mass Jewish immigration, decided to make every effort to convince leaders such as the Sultan of Turkey or the British to support not only the creation of a Jewish state, but also mass Jewish immigration. These efforts proved fruitless.

Between 29 and 31 August 1897 the first World Zionist Congress was held in Basel, the main purpose of which was to bring together all the Zionist organisations of the world, in order to establish a line of action. This Congress was attended by 200 delegates from seventeen countries, mostly representatives of the Lovers of Zion. It was during this Congress that the Basel Programme was established, the World Zionist Organisation was created, and an anthem, the *Hatikwak*, was adopted, which later became the anthem of the State of Israel. It was also during this congress that proposals were made regarding the choice of various territories in which to establish the future Jewish state. Argentina was considered, where there were numerous colonies of European Jewish emigrants; along with Uganda, Cyprus, Madagascar and Palestine, the "Promised Land", which had in its favour the appeal of the religious factor that has had an extraordinary importance in the genesis of Israel.

Following the Congress of Basel and in order to investigate the status of Palestine, the rabbis of Vienna proposed to send two representatives to find out. The investigation concluded that the land on which the Jews intended to settle was inhabited by a native Arab population. The Zionist movement, with the exception of a few fringe groups, decided to ignore the fact that Arabs inhabited Palestine, since for the majority of the Zionist movement Jewish settlement had to take place in the land of Palestine, because there was no Zionism without Zion.

### **Chaim Weizmann and synthetic Zionism**

After Herzl's death, although there was an internal crisis among the possible successors of the founder of the Zionist movement, this crisis was overcome at the 7th Basel Congress in 1905, on the one hand by electing Weissman as the leader of the movement, and on the other hand by establishing that the most important principle of the movement was to establish a Jewish state on Palestinian land.

Chaim Weissman, born in Motal (present-day Belarus), emigrated to the United Kingdom in 1904, where he worked with Arthur Balfour on the drafting of the Balfour Declaration in favour of the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine. Chaim Weizmann, a representative of synthetic Zionism, is credited with persuading Balfour to persuade the British government to support the establishment of a national homeland for the Jewish people in Palestine rather than in Uganda, as most British politicians were proposing at the time.

One of his first contributions to the Zionist cause was to settle the differences between the political Zionists and the practical Zionists. The former was in favour of using diplomatic channels to secure international support for the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine. On the other hand, the latter's priority was to encourage Jewish immigration to Palestine, to buy the land of the Palestinian Arabs, to develop settlements and to advance the Jewish economy in Palestine. In order to resolve these differences Weizmann presented at the Eighth Zionist Congress (1907) a new form of Zionism, "synthetic Zionism" - a combination of political and practical Zionism - which dominated the Zionist movement from the Tenth Congress onwards.

While in December 1914, Herbert Samuel offered Weissman a Jewish homeland complete with funded developments, between 1915 and 1917 the Zionist project met with great opposition not only within the British cabinet, but among Jews who, like Moshe Gaster and his followers, did not share Weissman's yearning for the Jewish people to have a national homeland.

In 1918, having won the support of the international Jewish community in Britain, France and Italy, Weissman went to historic Palestine as part of a Zionist commission to meet with Arab leaders, including some Palestinian leaders, in an attempt to reassure them of Zionist intentions. As the Arabs assured the local Palestinian leaders that it was only a matter of providing a place of welcome for Diaspora Jews, leaving the question of Palestine's political status to a more or less uncertain future, the Palestinians were not opposed to the Jewish presence, as long as it did not seek to impose itself on the Arab majority. If this conversation was fruitful for the Jews, even more so were the agreements signed two weeks before the Paris Conference of 1919 between Weissman and the Hashemite Prince Faisal Ibn Husayn, who recognised in the agreement signed on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 1919 the Zionists' right to develop the Balfour Declaration, including mass Jewish immigration, on the sole condition that equality between the two



communities was preserved. In return, the Zionists were to support the creation of a unified Arab state throughout the region (excluding Palestine) promised by Mac Mahon to Husayn. The signing of this agreement, along with a letter signed by T. E. Lawrence on behalf of Faisal to Felix Frankfurter in March of the same year, were two of the documents used by the Zionist delegation at the Paris Conference to argue that Zionist plans for Palestine had been previously approved by the Arabs. The Zionist Organisation headed by Weizmann manoeuvred during the Versailles Conference to get the major nations of the world to accept the central tenet of the Balfour Declaration, that is, the legitimate right of the Jewish people to return to Eretz Israel and to create historic Palestine as a state for the Jewish people. He presented the agreement to the Paris Peace Conference without Faisal's warning that the agreement was conditional on Palestine being within the area of Arab independence. When Faisal found out, he refused to allow the previously signed agreement to go through. A year later, the Supreme Council of the San Remo Peace Conference allocated Palestine to Britain with a provision to implement the Balfour Declaration. As seen before in Paris, the views of the Palestinian majority were ignored. In 1920 Weissman assumed the leadership of the World Zionist Organisation, in which he served from 1920 to 1931 and again from 1935 to 1946. Due to his remarkable diplomatic skills, in 1929 he was elected Chairman of the Jewish Agency for Palestine.

In 1936 Izzat Tanous, a Christian Arab who headed the Arab Centre in London, sympathetic to Mufti Hadj Amin al Husseini, along with other Palestinians, strongly opposed the Zionists' development of a Jewish home in Palestine and in particular the British policy of encouraging the 1937 partition of Palestine into an Arab and a Jewish state. In 1937 Britain withdrew the idea of partition as soon as the Peel report was raised, because it considered the idea of an Arab state unworkable and because the Arab leaders of the surrounding countries were not in favour of partition. In order to get the Arab states to accept the creation of a Jewish National Home in the former Palestine, Weizmann was prepared to accept the Palestinian Arabs as partners within a Council elected on the basis of parity. Weizmann hoped that the native Arabs of Palestine would accept this proposal, but they did not, because the Mufti wanted a Palestine free of Jews, although he would allow the Jewish *yishuv* to live in this land, because for him, this ancient Jewish community had the right to live in this place with the Muslims, as *dimnis* or protégés of Islam. In 1939, as a response to the Arab revolt of 1936-1939 in Palestine and following the failure of the London Arab-Zionist Conference, the British government

issued the 1939 White Paper in order to appease the Arabs, fearing that the impending Second World War would cause the Arab states to align themselves with Germany. In this new policy statement on Palestine, Britain proposed to drastically limit immigration to 75,000 for five years, although after that time Britain would have no justification for facilitating the further development of the Jewish national home through immigration; to limit Jewish land acquisition or to establish a unitary state in Palestine that would become a reality within a decade. In such a state, the Arab population would have become a majority. Tannous and the members of the Arab High Committee were willing to accept this solution, but not for the representatives of the Palestinian Arab parties, acting under the influence of Haj Amin Effendi al-Husseini, for whom the White Paper contained too many loopholes and ambiguities to benefit them. For Husseini, the ten-year period was too long and the special status of the creation of the Jewish home too ambiguous to accept.

Two days after the proclamation of the State of Israel, Weissman was appointed, replacing Ben Gurion as chairman of the Provisional Council of State, a position he held until 17<sup>th</sup> February 1949, when he was elected President of the State of Israel until his death in 1952.

### **Zeev Jabotinsky and Revisionist Zionism**

Zeev Jabotinsky was the founder of Revisionist Zionism. For Jabotinsky, the future state of Israel was to extend into the Eretz Isral, which he believed consisted of the lands of the Jordanian and Palestinian Mandates. In order to control this vast portion of land, Jabotinsky proposed the establishment of a colonial-style regime, very similar to the apartheid system in South Africa. For Jabotinsky, colonisation can only take place under the protection of a force independent of the local population, an *iron wall* that the native population cannot break through<sup>19</sup>. For Jabotinsky, the expropriation of the Arab people to give it to the Jewish people was an act of historical justice<sup>20</sup>. Jabotinsky, unlike Ben Gurion, believed that the state of Israel could begin to develop with a large Palestinian Arab population within its borders, for with the imposition of *apartheid* colonial rule the Arabs would eventually have no choice but to leave the state of Israel or adapt to the new way of life. Likewise, the establishment of a

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<sup>19</sup> MASALHA, N. *The Expulsion of the Palestinians. The concept of "transfer" in Zionist political thought 1882-1948*. Canaan Publishing House. 2008, p.52.

<sup>20</sup> JABOTINSKY, Z. La morale de la muraille de fer, in CHABIT, Denis (ed.): *Sionismes textes fondamentaux*. Paris, Éditions Albin Michel. 1998, p. 545.

Jewish majority in historic Palestine will have to be achieved against the wishes of the country's Arab majority by the use of armed force, for Jabotinsky saw Zionism as a colonising enterprise to be imposed by military coercion. For Jabotinsky, the primary concern was to maintain the territorial integrity of the historic land of Israel and to establish a Jewish state with a Jewish majority on both sides of the Jordan River (the West Bank and Transjordan). For Jabotinsky, the partition of Eretz Israel into an Arab and a Jewish state is unacceptable. Moreover, every Jew who is committed to Zionism and who is involved in the founding of the State of Israel must enjoy a moral superiority over his fellow Jews.

## **2.4. David Ben Gurion and Labour Zionism**

Ben Gurion was one of the representatives of Labour Zionism and the one who realised the Zionist dream of the creation of the State of Israel, becoming the Prime Minister of this new state in 1948 until he retired from political life in 1963, except for a brief pause between 1953 and 1955. From 1921 to 1935, he was Secretary General of the General Federation of Labour in Palestine (the Histadrut)<sup>21</sup>. Between 1933 and 1948, he was Chairman of the Jewish Executive Agency.

His main goal was to create a Jewish state in Palestine that would include all the Jews of the world, that would be governed by Jews for Jews, and in which Jews would be in the majority. For Ben Gurion, the primary goal of Zionism was to gain full sovereignty over a piece of land, even if it was not the full extent of Eretz Israel. The plan was to obtain a state in order to arm itself and expel the Arab population. For Labour believed that once the Jews were in possession of a state apparatus, they could continue to acquire more land, through negotiation or military force. But the most important thing was to maintain the stability of the Jewish state. Thus, when the UN adopted the partition of Palestinian lands in 1947, Ben Gurion considered it necessary to expel the Arabs, since the Jewish state's 42% non-Jewish population called into question the ability to maintain Jewish sovereignty and would prevent the future Jewish state from maintaining stability. Nevertheless, Ben Gurion wanted to avoid replicating the South African colonial model in Israel, so he proposed to the pro-Palestinian politician Musa Alami to help find work for the Palestinian Arab population in the surrounding countries, since the fundamentals of Zionist thinking demanded 100% Jewish settlement,

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<sup>21</sup> Histadrut was the Zionist trade union that eventually became a large Zionist economic enterprise.

100% Hebrew agriculture and 100% Hebrew port. This proclaimed the superiority of the Hebrew working class over the local Arab working class, which was to be relocated or expelled outside the borders of the Jewish state. These ideas put forward by the Labour current were dominant in Israel from its founding as a state until the 1970s.

## CHAPTER 2

# THE ZIONIST PROJECT AND ITS DEVELOPMENT IN ISRAEL

The aim of Zionism was not to colonise Palestine, as colonial and imperial movements had done during the 19th and 20th centuries in Africa and Asia, but to dispossess and eradicate the Palestinian people from their land and history. Its aim was to replace the native Arab population with Jewish settlers. To this end, not only did it seek imperial patrons to support its enterprise, such as the British and Ottoman empires, but it began to fabricate myths to shape the consciousness of the majority of Jewish society in favour of Zionism, and to organise mass emigrations of Jews (*aliyahs*) to Israel even before the creation of the State of Israel.

### **Zionism is a Nationalist Movement**

Zionism as a political movement is an ethnic and organic nationalism. One has to start from the idea contrary to what Jewish nationalism maintains, the nation is a relatively recent historical construct, not having existed since biblical times. But the rabbinic vision of their religion reinforced their ethnic consciousness. Persecution in Europe due to anti-Semitism and the longing for Zion (the belief in a homeland to which they were destined to return when their exile ended), both of which were religious in nature, facilitated the development of Zionism. This ideology emerged in the late 19th century in a context of nationalist effervescence in Europe, influenced by it, and because its promoters instrumentalised the biblical paradigm of 'the promised land - the chosen people' as a mobilising slogan for the Jewish community abroad, whose aim was to seize the entire Palestinian land or at least the territory between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean. This official ideological and political movement of the state of Israel carries three fundamental connotations: nationalism, racism and colonialism, which will determine what happens to the Palestinian people and the future of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Zionism is a nationalist movement of an ethnic character in that it conceptualises the nation in terms of ethnicity, conceiving nationality as hereditary, and identifying the state with the nation - the people - and not with citizenship, as well as the belonging of the state as territory to the nation and not to its inhabitants. It is the nationalism of a romantic character that glorifies the nation as an organic entity, united by blood and the Hebrew language. In this sense, it is worth noting Zionism's presumption of ethnicity: the idea that for three thousand years there has existed a Jewish people with a common and unique genealogy and with a blood different from the rest of Europeans. Thus, one of the peculiarities of the State of Israel is that it grants citizenship and nationality to Jews all over the world, even if they do not reside in this state and do not have its citizenship. They interpret "Jewishness" as a community of blood, and that is why the State of Israel is the true homeland of all the Jews of the world. Hence, all people in the world considered by the Israeli authorities to be "Jewish" or descendants of Jews up to the third generation can immigrate to Israel and receive Israeli citizenship. Nationalism has been a precondition for the emergence of racism. Racism that Zionism encouraged; not only by adopting the German racial concept of purity of blood, but in order to strengthen its position in Europe vis-à-vis the European Jewish majority that was alien to Zionism. Thus, in seeking to encourage the emigration of European Jews to Palestine, they ended up encouraging racism and even collaborating with anti-Semitism. Particularly illuminating are the words of Zeev Jabotinsky in the Charter of Autonomy, in which he says that it is impossible for anyone to assimilate with people of different blood, since the preservation of national integrity is only possible through racial purity. Therefore, the solution lies in the construction of a Jewish society separate from gentile society and made up of "racially pure inhabitants" (quoted in Shoeman, 1988:19). This feeling of being a superior race in the colonial context favoured the elaboration of the concept of "transfer"<sup>22</sup> by Zionist leaders, a term used to refer to the expulsion of Palestinian Arabs. A policy that was pursued in particular during the 1930s and 1940s, and which allowed for a systematic and well-planned ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian Arab population between 1948 and 1949. The idea of transfer had two key objectives: on the one hand, to clear the land of Palestinian Arabs for occupation by European Jewish settlers and by future Jewish immigrants; and on the other hand, to establish an ethnocratic, mono-religious and homogenous Jewish state.

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<sup>22</sup> The idea of transfer pursued two fundamental objectives: to clear the land of Arabs for Jewish settlers and future immigrants; and to establish an ethnocratic, mono-religious and homogenous Jewish state'.