

## The Origins and Trajectory of the Israeli-Palestinian Wars

Richard Wood

“We [Israelis] are the only ones in the world concerned about Palestinian civilians in Gaza.”

Ophir Falk, Foreign Policy Advisor to Israeli P.M. Netanyahu

“The problem was a “racial” one, Ben Gurion said...an ostensibly superior race, the Ashkenazi race stands out and in practice leads the nation, as opposed to the eastern race of “inferior level.” ...As [Ben Gurion] saw it, the Jews of the Arab countries were a poor substitute for the murdered Jews of Europe...In recent centuries, the Jews of the Arab countries had played only a passive role in the history of the Jewish people. The lands in which they resided were replete with ignorance, poverty, and slavery and had fallen behind the European...We are alien to them and they are alien to us...We came here [Israel] as Europeans, our roots are in the East and we are returning to the East, but we bear European culture with us. We will not want to cut out ties or Palestines’s ties to European culture.”

Tom Segev, quoting David Ben-Gurion in 1948

“We the Jews have nothing in common with what is called the East, Thank God.”

Ze’ev Jabotinsky<sup>1</sup>

On January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024 the government of South Africa accused Israel of genocide at the International Court of Justice in the Hague. Although the outcome at the Hague will have limited impact in the short term insofar as international law has no serious enforcement mechanism and is largely controlled by the same states abetting the accused, the case is still important because through it Israel has lost all credibility to international civil society. In this sense, the case brought by South Africa is much more than a symbolic gesture; it has material ideological effects that globally discredit the state of Israel to world opinion. The case has also brought significant enthusiasm in the Muslim world because as an event it shatters all Israeli representation of itself as the ideal state for the ideal victim of modern history. Notably, Israel was founded in the same year as Apartheid South Africa, on May 14-

15th of 1948 and was rooted in the racist assumptions of Ashkenazi Europeans toward Palestinians, Arabs, and Ottoman Jews. The Zionist movement was politically articulated from the *Haskala*, the Jewish interpretation of European jurisprudence in which the rule of law, democratic processes, and human rights were embraced for Jewish citizens but not for the Palestinians, whose land Israel occupied through violent conquest; it was also rooted in the conscious, deliberate expulsion of over 700,000 people from their land and their homes. That process of conquest and ethnic cleansing took place after the U.N. Partition Plan was rejected by Palestinians and after the outbreak of a civil war between European Jewish immigrant settlers (Zionists) and Palestinians in the fall of 1947. Both the Apartheid system of South Africa and the Jewish State in Israel were founded on inherently racial conflicts in areas that had been subject to massive European colonization (since 1652 in South Africa and since 1882 in Palestine).

Both the European settlers of South Africa and the European settlers of Palestine were confident of their cultural, racial, and political superiority. They based their hubris upon a belief in their own possession of superior education, training, culture, and an explicit confidence of racial superiority underwritten by the 'success' of the violence they deployed to control the actions of those who were to be colonized, which they claimed with colonial arrogance demonstrated the superiority of their social and logistical organization as well as of finance and the control of weaponry and technology necessary to dominate larger populations of Africans and Palestinian Arabs.

Both the Afrikaners and the Ashkenazi Jews experienced oppression at the hands of other Europeans. Afrikaners experienced dispossession of their colony by the British Empire in 1806 and through violent wars in which British colonial settlers seized their lands through conquest, displaced them from their lands and homes (i.e. The Great Trek), and interned them in concentration camps. Ashkenazi Jews were systematically attacked, killed, and oppressed by centuries of European Christian violence, from the Inquisition in the Iberian Peninsula to the pogroms in Ukraine in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and across Eastern Europe and Russia from 1818 through the 1930s, concluding in the Holocaust in Western and Eastern Europe from 1939 until 1945. Both the Afrikaners and Ashkenazi Jews transformed the bitterness of their own domination and oppression into systems of violent governance that they then foisted onto other peoples in their respective colonial settings. Both chose political systems of separation and domination encoded in law, exemplary of nineteenth century theories of racial hierarchy and civilizational ranking, in which Africans and Arabs occupied lower orders than Europeans.

Israeli dominance of the political and military landscape of the Arab world since 1948 has been articulated via its victories in the 1947-49 War, the expansionist project of the 1954-56 War (Plan Nevo), 1967 War, the 1973 War, the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, and its ability to utilize negotiations with the U.S. and the Palestinians to delay and derail the implementation of Palestinian statehood as envisioned in the Oslo Accords—accords

prompted by the crisis engendered by the 1987-91 Intifada (Uprising) in Occupied Gaza and the West Bank. Israeli destruction of the Gaza Strip in attacks in 2008-09, 2012, and 2014, framed as reprisals for Hamas attacks, have continued this process of displaying overwhelming military superiority, facilitated by U.S. economic and military assistance. But as Israel was in the process of consolidating its domination of the West Asian political landscape through the Abraham Accords of normalization with the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and Morocco, brokered by both the Trump and Biden Administrations, a political crisis in the Netanyahu Administration erupted in the streets of Tel Aviv. Facing criminal indictments for corruption in January of 2000, Netanyahu attempted to subvert the authority of the Israeli judicial system and the Supreme Court, so as to avoid and/or nullify his criminal prosecution and probable conviction. Demonstrations across Israel in 2023 precipitated an unprecedented domestic political crisis in Israeli political life, just as Far Right cabinet ministers (Jewish Power Party National Security Minister, Itamar Ben-Gvir and Religious Zionism Party Finance Minister, Bezalel Smotrich) expressed their intention to annex the occupied territories and forcibly transfer the Palestinian population (as all Israeli leaders have systematically planned since the 1948 War). At the very height of this crisis, on October 7<sup>th</sup>, Hamas launched deadly attacks against Israel of the like not experienced since the 1973 Arab-Israeli Yom Kippur War (when 2200 Israelis were killed) and the 1947-49 War (when 6000 Israelis were killed).

The technological and militaristic sophistication of the October 7<sup>th</sup> Hamas attack on the Israeli surveillance system and military outposts along the Gaza border was highlighted in a Washington Post report published on November 17, 2023.<sup>2</sup> The report did not mention that these efforts resulted in the killing of at least 327 IDF soldiers (and over 150 more in Gaza, since the Israeli invasion), 10 Shin Bet officers, and 59 police officers (and 5137 others wounded), as Hamas fighters drove vehicles, flew hang gliders, and crossed on foot through 14 entry points along the entire border fence, a military blow to Israel unparalleled in the history of Palestinian resistance. Other militants entered 22 Israeli towns and kibbutzim, as far as 15 miles beyond Gaza, and attacked Israeli youth at the Supernova Sukkot Gathering music festival, near kibbutz Re'im, aware in detail of what structures existed in these locations from their use of drones that had mapped out their geographic positions, allegedly discovered on documents carried into Israeli-occupied land by Hamas fighters. These shocking attacks beyond the immediate border zone killed 1139 people, over 700 civilians and 32 of them Americans; 224 people of several nationalities, some of whom are reportedly IDF soldiers, were forcibly taken into Gaza as hostages while at least 2200 rockets were simultaneously fired into Ashkelon, Sderot, Tel Aviv, and other Israeli cities. While western governments and media, as well as many in the Arab world have thus condemned Hamas, the deeper historical context has been largely, if predictably, ignored.<sup>3</sup>

Israeli military and governmental officials claimed that they had not anticipated that Hamas had the capacity to thwart (even for a few hours) their automated intelligence apparatus or launch such effective and devastating attacks upon Israelis without their foreknowledge; yet

subsequent reporting indicated that Israeli intelligence possessed Hamas battle plans a full year earlier and issued urgent warnings three months before October 7<sup>th</sup>.<sup>4</sup> The Israeli response in Gaza has been to vow to destroy the ‘savages’ of Hamas, resulting in the bombing and killing of more than 28,000 Palestinians as of February 2024, at least 8000 of them reportedly children. The response has also produced a global proliferation of grotesque images of injuries, deaths, and the destruction of hospitals, immense crowds of Palestinians sifting through the ruins for survivors and fleeing for their lives toward Khan Younis and then Rafah, trying to avoid relentless sniper fire and shelling. Israel has used over 24,000 kilotons of explosives in Gaza since October 7<sup>th</sup>, the equivalent of the Hiroshima nuclear attack. In the West Bank, during the course of this war, at least 235 Palestinians have been killed, 3100 injured, and over 3000 imprisoned (as of 11/2023). Israel has driven 80-90% of Gaza Palestinians (1.5 million people) from Gaza City, into an embattled 80 square miles, in southern Gaza, which they have also subjected to relentless aerial bombing and shelling both before the ceasefire began on November 24 and after it ended on Dec.1, 2023.

### **The Origins of the Jewish Nationalist Movement**

The assumptions of European and subsequently Israeli technological, military, and moral/civilizational superiority over their Palestinian rivals have been used as pretext and justification for the Zionist antagonism for 140 years, since the first Eastern European and Ukrainian/Russian Jews began planning their emigration to America and Palestine. Ashkenazi Jews, from Ukraine to Poland, as well as from Germany, France, and Britain justified their colonial aggression via the purported supremacy of liberal European doctrines of rationality, scientific inquiry, progressive societal and religious reform, technological innovation, secular cultural advancement, and a specifically Jewish Enlightenment (the *Haskala*) championed by Moses Mendelssohn and others. Nevertheless, European Christian persecution and racialized demonization of Jews persisted over time, and Jewish nationalists lost their faith in liberal European thought, turning instead to their own people, culture, and tradition for an alternative path to Jewish collective survival and cultural renewal. They had for over a century pinned their hopes on gradual emancipation and assimilation into modern European societies as well as the more modest reforms in the Russian Empire since 1856, under Tsar Alexander II. The modernist Jewish nationalists who became Zionists assumed from 1881 until the present day that their orthodox and Sephardi Jewish opponents in Europe, Russia, and Jerusalem, as well as the Arab notables, villagers and peasantry that contested their arrival, were backward people who could not immediately comprehend the multitude of benefits their migration and a modern Jewish state would inevitably bring.

The assumptions of civilizational superiority, despite the loss of faith in the possibility of assimilation, were reinforced by the Palestinian resistance to the British Government’s Balfour Declaration in 1917, and the subsequent riots and killings in Jerusalem, Jaffa, and Hebron in 1920, 1921, and 1929, the latter being inflamed by rumors of Jewish settler plans to wrest control of the Haram al-Sharif (Temple Mount), which was also a contributing

factor in the October 7<sup>th</sup> attacks. The British Occupation of Palestine of 1917-18 and the British Mandate, authorized by the League of Nations in 1922, legalized massive Jewish migration and more extensive land purchases, previously limited by Ottoman authorities. A Zionist ideology was forged (from the First Zionist Congress in Basle, Switzerland in 1897) to ideologically insist upon the importance of securing a Jewish state regardless of local Palestinian, Jewish, and Ottoman imperial opposition; this ideology sought to justify and implement the conquest of Palestinian lands and to overcome the limitations of the 1947 U.N. Partition Plan (revised from earlier plans by the British Peel Commission of 1937), which would have awarded 57% of the land to Jews, a mere third of the existing population (and 43% to Palestinians, two thirds of the population). That plan was rejected by the Palestinians but was celebrated by Zionists as a stepping-stone to a larger state; war settled the debate in 1948 seemingly resolving the Jewish Question.<sup>5</sup>

The Jewish state, conceived in the waning years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was to be established in a geographic space that Ashkenazi Jews assumed was their birthright, despite over a millennium of habitation elsewhere in Europe and Russia. They based this conception on ancient Hebrew scriptures that were decidedly premodern and have yet to be verified by credible archaeological research. The inability of European Jews to persuade Ottoman officials or Palestinians of the justification for or practical benefits of a Jewish state led them ultimately to rely on the British Empire's military and diplomatic power, and later that of the U.N., the United States (Truman's Administration), and the U.S.S.R. Great Powers found a Jewish State useful at various junctures; for example, this was the case in the pursuit of their foreign policy goals in the oil-rich Arab World (and Iran), after substantial petroleum reserves were discovered in Iran and Iraq from 1908 to 1914. Belarusian chemist Chaim Weizmann (who helped produce explosive propellants for British use in World War I and later became a British Munitions Ministry official and Zionist diplomat, as well as founder of Hebrew University) collaborated with British government Zionist advisors Herbert Samuel and Mark Sykes, Christian Prime Minister Lloyd George, Christian Foreign Secretary Lord Arthur James Balfour and Prime Minister Winston Churchill. Weizmann also helped secure the consent of American President Woodrow Wilson, which was followed by Harry Truman's official recognition of Israel (after months of hesitation) in 1948. Weizmann's intimate friendships and association with British and American officials was a critical aspect of Zionist success, up until the Palestinian Uprising of 1936-39, which then transformed British policy for the next decade. Weizmann's continued pursuit of British favor became controversial in the last stage, from the end of WWII until the 1947-49 War, when he was ousted from the Zionist executive, as Zionist militants (Ben-Gurion, the Haganah, Irgun/Etzel, and Lehi) turned to armed struggle to end the British Mandate.

With British support for Zionism wavering (though it never fully ended, especially during Churchill's tenure), the conflict intensified. Ben-Gurion of the MAPAI Party and the Jewish Agency secretly approved of attacks carried out by Menachem Begin, Yitzhak Shamir, and others. Zionist militants deployed terrorist attacks on British officials in the Jerusalem Hotel

in July of 1946 during which Irgun explosives killed 91 people, including 15 Jews. Attacks also included the assassination of Swedish mediator Count Folke Bernadotte in September of 1948 (by the Lehi/Stern Gang). Additionally, Zionists carried out massacres of Palestinian villagers in 1948 in Tantura,<sup>6</sup> Dayr Yasin, and Lydda as well as in Qibya and Kafr Qasim in the West Bank in 1953 and 1956 (by Ariel Sharon's IDF Special Forces Unit 101). This violence was intended to eliminate the British administrative role in Palestine, act as a deterrent to Palestinian attacks on Jewish settlers, and eventually to force the vast majority of the Palestinian Arabs (Christian and Muslim) from their land. Zionist use of brute force through terrorism and armed struggle was not unprecedented. European, Russian, and American empires also relied upon overwhelming violence in other colonial 'theatres' in Africa, Asia, South America, and the Islamic world, all of whom similarly promoted their invasion as demonstrative of civilizational superiority, papering over the carnage with promises of its benefits to colonized populations.

Colonized peoples, including Palestinians, responded to colonial settlers and settlements with counterviolence of their own, often terrifying white European Jewish settlers with relentless attacks by small groups of guerillas. Europeans, including Zionists, routinely called these attacks, in distinction from their own, "barbaric, savage, fanatical, communist, and terrorist." The colonies on every continent eventually asserted independence, most through 'wars of national liberation' or negotiations to avoid them. The exception to this has been the Palestinians who faced Zionist colonization, a truly unique form of European domination conducted by Jewish settlers who themselves had been victims of horrific European Christian oppression and violence for centuries. The uniqueness of the European Jewish experience as victims of genocide and subsequently as expansionist colonial settlers backed by British and American political elites and military power has been a major obstacle for Palestinian nationalists, who have been associated by their opponents with anti-Semitic fascism for their opposition to the formation of an exclusively Jewish State on their own land, in which Jews were initially a small minority (for example, 56,000 Jews lived in Palestine in 1919, down from 80,000 in 1914; Jews were one third of the population of Palestine in 1948 (500,000, of the 1.5 million total), and reached 1 million only in December of 1949, after three decades of migration from Europe allowed by British Mandate authorities, as well as the migration of 500,000 more Jews, during and after the 1948 War).<sup>7</sup>

From 1947 through 2023, when Palestinians did not surrender or submit sufficiently to Israeli political subjugation, Israelis have repeatedly used earthmoving equipment, tanks, infantry, artillery, and aircraft to level any physical trace of over 400 Palestinian villages and much of the physical infrastructure of Palestine (including Gaza and the West Bank). Gaza was attacked three times in the years preceding the October 1956 attack on Egypt, killing hundreds of Egyptian soldiers and Palestinian civilians in Rafah and Khan Younis. Since 2008, Israel has bombarded the Palestinian population and reduced Gaza City to rubble four times (2008-09, 2012, 2014, 2023-24). Once again, during the current Gaza crisis, the supposed "benefits" of the modern civilization introduced by German, American, and

Swedish settlers, the British Mandate, and by the 'Jewish State' into Palestine are largely irrelevant to the Palestinians who scramble to survive, with all sources of food, water, medicine, fuel, electricity, and sewage treatment withheld by the Netanyahu Government's War Cabinet—a war cabinet seeking the utter destruction of Hamas as well as, by design or default, the entire Palestinian community of Gaza in which Hamas has long been embedded (since 1987: 36 years). With their homes leveled, Palestinian civilians who sought safety in their hospitals or U.N. schools or in southern Gaza, have been attacked and killed even as they follow Israeli instructions for safe passage. This campaign is now over four months in duration and Israeli officials continue to speak about their intention to expel much of the remaining Gazan population into Egypt, or some other location.

On the other hand, Israeli Jews have consistently denied that the implantation of agricultural and later suburban colonies in Palestine from 1881 until the present day was in any way analogous to European colonization. They have stressed in their argumentation that the history of the Jewish people in Europe, Russia, and Palestine is unique, having originated from centuries of religious persecution by Christians of the Catholic Church, the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisition of the late 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, by Ukrainian, Belorussian and Russian peasants, and by regimes affiliated with the Nazis provoked by their aristocratic and bourgeois leaders to blame Jews for their economic deprivation. Ukrainian Cossack nobles and peasants as well as the Russian nobility, tsars, Orthodox Christian and bourgeois leaders led and tolerated the modern religious and ethnic persecution of Jews. After the initial Muslim welcome of refugees from the Inquisition (from Morocco and Algiers, to Jerusalem and Istanbul), less deadly discrimination and infrequent riots by Muslims in North Africa, in West Asia, southeastern Europe, and the Ottoman Empire also contributed to Jewish insecurity. No Euro-American colonial force could ever ascribe their actions to the redress of that kind of historic oppression, Israelis argue. According to this logic, this unique history with settlements established as a refuge could not be regarded as colonial, but as a form of self-defense for all Jews despite the fact that most Orthodox, traditional, Hasidic and Haredi Jews until 1948 did not support Zionism or even embrace the pretext of Enlightenment for that matter. Thousands of Jews today are also disavowing militaristic Zionism as a form of colonial violence against Palestinians, certainly more than at any time since 1948.<sup>8</sup>

### **The Late Ottoman Era in Palestine and the First Jewish Settlements**

The Ottoman Government, while initially sympathetic and cooperative, refused to facilitate Jewish nationalists' repeated requests and demands for increased immigration in the 1890s, as well as for an ambiguous 'homeland for the Jews' despite the persecution or discrimination by their European and Christian neighbors (and in the case of Russia, the Ottomans' most dangerous enemies). Under these circumstances, a Jewish homeland was unlikely; but after British, French, and Russian plans to dismember the Ottoman Empire took shape in the late stages of World War I, Jewish nationalists' prospects improved dramatically as European power overwhelmed the Ottomans and offered the British

occupation forces in Egypt (and of the Suez Canal, since 1882) a possible buffer state between itself and whatever expansive power might emerge in the East (Turkey, an Arab State, Iran, or a new threat, the U.S.S.R.).<sup>9</sup> During and after the Holocaust in Germany from 1941-1945, Zionist advocates and their supporters in Britain, the U.S., and the Soviet Union evoked and utilized the horror of the German Nazi-orchestrated genocide of 6 million Jews to justify their pursuit of the Jewish state. None of these plans, however, offered any provision for Palestinian sovereignty for a people who constituted two thirds of the population in 1947 (and at least 92% in 1900) in lands that Palestinians and their ancestors had inhabited for nearly 1400 years (since the Muslim conquest of 637-638 CE).

The Israeli war with the Palestinians (1937-2023) is historically speaking a very brief if horrendous chapter of the history of Jews and Arabs in the “Holy Lands.” The Jewish population in Jerusalem was only around 1000 just prior to 1700 and may have doubled that year as a result of the first Ashkenazi migration, although other smaller Jewish communities also existed in Hebron, Safad, and Tiberias. The Jewish community in Palestine as a whole had grown to 13,000 in 1850, but had increased only to 14,731 in 1880 (3.2% of the total). Thirty years later, just after the First Aliya, or first phase of Ashkenazi Jewish immigration to Palestine, 17,991 Jews lived there (3.5% in 1890); by 1910 the number was at 32,843 (4.87 %). In 1914, on the eve of World War I and just before the British occupied Palestine, 38,754 Jews lived in Palestine (5.36%). Assuming that many Jews lived in Palestine without official registration by Ottoman authorities or without being counted in surveys, one could estimate that the figures during and after the Second Aliya (1905-1914) might be revised upward by at least 50% from 1910-1914 (perhaps 80,000 Jews in Palestine in 1914, although the war certainly resulted in many deaths from combat and famine and induced many to flee); this would indicate that Jews in Palestine constituted less than 10% of the population after World War I, approximately 56,000 in 1919 and slightly more by 1922 when the British Mandate was approved by the League of Nations. By 1948, Jews were roughly a third of the population, reaching 1 million in December of 1949. By 2023, Israeli Jews and Palestinians both claim populations of over 6 million (with much higher Arab birth rates), after the Israeli-enforced displacement of at least 2.5 million Palestinians.<sup>10</sup>

Geographically-speaking, Jews in Palestine during the Ottoman period (1516-1914) lived mostly in Jerusalem, Hebron, Akka (Acre, on the northern coast), and in Safad and Tiberias (in the Galilee). Jews were so impoverished in Palestine from the late 17<sup>th</sup> century until the early 19<sup>th</sup> century that an elaborate, charitable network was established across European Jewish communities, organized and led by Sephardi Jews long resident in Constantinople/Istanbul and associated closely with and sanctioned by imperial officials. Emissaries from these Ottoman Sephardi Jews (Hevrat Erets Y'isre'al in the 1500s and its successor, called the *pekidim*, officials of Istanbul: the *Pekidei Kushta*) from Jerusalem and from the Ottoman capitol traveled throughout the Jewish exile and its diasporic communities in Europe, collecting funds to relieve the impoverishment of the *yishuv* and to support Orthodox Jewish scholars so as to continue their studies, worship, meager trade,



and subsistence work in Palestine.<sup>11</sup> This network was first organized in order to support a small destitute and indebted community of supporters of Sabbatai Zevi's aborted Jewish messianic movement in the early 1700s, and the network continued to assist the several thousand resident Sephardi, Ottoman-Palestinian Jews until 1826. Most of the Sephardi Palestinian Jews were descendants of Sephardi refugees from Spain and Portugal, having absorbed the few thousand indigenous Jews who had lived there even before the Inquisition (which instigated the expulsion of Jews and Muslims from the Iberian Peninsula from 1492 until the early 1600s). This international network of Ottoman-era charity (*tzedakah*: reciprocal philanthropy as ethics) was a forerunner of the Jewish nationalist and Zionist movements of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries; however, modern Jews and Zionists also sought to avoid the hoary dependency of the Jerusalem Sephardim and committed themselves to disciplined self-sufficiency and a quasi-socialist work ethic (despite the ubiquity of the blue and white *pushke* contribution boxes in Zionist homes and synagogues, and the early settlers' notorious lack of preparation for agricultural work and manual labor).<sup>12</sup>

While the Zionist settlements of the 1880s, which were formed by those who fled from Ukraine, Poland, Belarus, and Romania were determined to avoid the humiliation of this dependency, they soon became dangerously reliant on low-wage Arab labor and night guards, echoing the typical colonial syndrome. Without the knowledge and experience of the earlier German Templar colonies in Palestine (established near Haifa in 1869 (Neuhardhof and Betlehem) and Jaffa in 1871 (Sarona and Wilhelma)) with treating malaria, the use of manure fertilizers, crop rotation, the cultivation of vines, potatoes, cereals, and fodder, dairy farming, and iron plows, Jewish settlers would have been far more seriously challenged than they were. The Templars also developed engineering and new building techniques, improved roads from Jaffa to Jerusalem with a carriage service, and introduced mechanized farming machinery and drilling for deep wells. German settlers remained largely aloof from Palestinians, who resisted their settlements; but they were far more willing to assist and advise Jews, from World War I to the 1930s, when a considerable number of them contributed to German (and Ottoman) war efforts and even joined the Nazi Party and organized in support of German nationalism across Palestine (and were interned by the British during both wars). American Protestant millenarian and charitable settlements near Bethlehem (Artas) from 1847-1872 and just outside Jerusalem's Old City (the American Colony, along with several Swedish immigrant families) from 1871-1950s were far more modest and much more integrated through their charitable work into surrounding Palestinian communities than the Germans. The forms of technological innovation of the Germans and Americans were adopted in part by the Jewish agricultural school, Mikve Y'isra'el, near Jerusalem in 1870, but proved of little use until 1908-14 when the World Zionist Organization's technocrats assumed control of settlement organization and spent four million francs to improve the infrastructure and viability of the colonies.<sup>13</sup>

To avoid insolvency, all the first settlements were soon placed under an administrative structure (the *pekidut* of the Jewish Colonization Association) financed and organized by

German philanthropist Baron Mortiz von Hirsch with 11 million British pounds (some of it on settlements outside Palestine) and the Rothschild banking family of Paris and London, who spent 60 million francs on the settlements. Approximately 11,000 Ashkenazi Jews lived in 48 rural settlements by 1914 (perhaps 20-25% of the total Jewish population). Before the second wave of immigration (the Second Aliya) from 1905-1914, the vast majority of Jews in Palestine were Ottoman citizens, spoke Arabic, and engaged with local Christians and Muslims relatively harmoniously, socializing amicably and celebrating religious holidays, holy men, and festivals together there. As a *dhimmi*, a minority religious community within Islamic societies, they had enough autonomy to govern themselves for the most part (as did Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholics, and Armenians), while paying taxes that were required of religious minorities (*jizya*); they experienced occasional religious and legal discrimination even in Jerusalem, where they were the majority by the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Most Orthodox, Haredi, and Ottoman Jews opposed Zionism and Jewish nationalists, because they held that Judaism did not sanction the humanist presumption of control over the fate of Jews. Zionist ambitions were seen as an affront to God.

Beyond Palestine, other Jewish socialists and Marxists like the Russian, Lithuanian, and Polish Labor Bund (1897-1920s) were opposed to Jewish nationalism and were later absorbed into Communist Parties (and many were purged by Stalin in the 1930s). Members of the Second Aliya, including David Ben-Gurion, went on to lead the Zionist movement and the state of Israel into the 1950s. Many of the leaders of Labor Zionism, such as Ben-Gurion, were contemptuous of Marxist Jews who saw internationalism as more important than Zionism and the fate of the Jewish people. Ben-Gurion and the MAPAI Party were also skeptical of the egalitarian, socialist, and communal values of the young settlers of the kibbutzim, whom they regarded as utopian socialists. The kibbutzim were organized in their own federations, not affiliated with Histadrut or MAPAI.<sup>14</sup> They constituted between 3 and 8% of settlers at their peak, before the 1950s when many of the communes divided bitterly between advocates of Stalin and Eisenhower, even within the same families.

### **Palestine in the Late Ottoman Era**

In the 18th century Jewish, Christian, and Muslim peasants had all been supported in their agricultural and mercantile activities in Tiberias, Safad, and Nazareth in the Galilee by the independent Palestinian *amir*, Dhaher al-Umar al-Zaydani, whose own livelihood as a regional merchant and tax farmer propelled him to a remarkable military and political career in northern Palestine from the 1730s until 1775. His defeat of Ottoman forces from Damascus in the Majr al-‘Amer plains (the Jezreel Valley), considered the granary of Palestine, made him a legendary figure, an autonomous sovereign known as the ‘King of Galilee;’ after further victories over Ottoman governors, Istanbul recognized him as the ‘Sheikh of Akka, Sidon and Galilee and Emir of Nazareth, Tiberias and Safed.’ Under Dhaher al-Umar and his successor, Ottoman governor Ahmad Pasha al-Jazzar (r. 1776-1804), Jewish and Greek farmers and merchants (as well as Palestinians) prospered in a

regional trade across northern Palestine to Acre, from Galilee and Nazareth, for exports of cotton, olive oil, soap, tobacco, and wheat, to French and British merchants on the coast. Jews and Greeks also participated in Dhaher al-Umar's administration, export trade with Europeans (in which he enforced a state monopoly for export), finance, and in the defense of the cities of Acre and Haifa (in 1764-65), which he developed and fortified and in which the Palestinians and other peoples prospered. Jews, Greeks, and Palestinians were also armed in Akka by al-Umar to defend the city when under threat from the sea (from Maltese pirates, French merchants, and Ottoman governors from Damascus); even so, there was rarely any serious military opposition to his regime until 1774.<sup>15</sup>

Under al-Umar's considerably autonomous and better-known successor Ahmad Pasha, also a nominally Ottoman official, who expanded his control of territory to Sidon, Beirut and Nablus, the vizier of the regime was a powerful Jewish merchant and administrator, the Damascene 'ayan Ha'im Farhi. Ahmad Pasha was reviled by Europeans as a cruel tyrant (al-Jazzar: the butcher), which he may have been; but he was also greatly admired by Arabs for his courageous battle against Napoleon Bonaparte's unsuccessful siege of Acre in 1799, which ended the general's fantasies of an Islamic Empire under French hegemony. Napoleon's slaughter of 6000 Palestinians in Jaffa who had resisted his invasion was certainly, in the words of author Thomas Philipp, a far greater human toll than ever inflicted by Ahmad Pasha.<sup>16</sup>

Rivalry over control of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in the Old City of Jerusalem since the 18<sup>th</sup> century provoked intense Russian, European, and Ottoman anxiety and intervention over the status of Jerusalem's religious sites, Ottoman sovereignty in Palestine, and increasing multi-national Christian and Muslim rivalry over the whole region. Repeated arguments concerning Russian jurisdiction over Orthodox Christians since the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and over which church had control over ceremonial rites between quarreling Catholic and Orthodox representatives there provoked Russian Emperor Nicholas I, a notoriously autocratic and repressive ruler, to assert his rights against a claim by Napoleon III in France for more Catholic control. These disputes took place in the midst of Nicholas I's blatant conjectures to British diplomats about the inevitable independence of Eastern European provinces of the Ottoman Empire (Wallachia, Moldova, Serbia, and Bulgaria), as well as a Russian occupation of Constantinople. The Ottomans refused to grant Nicholas I the exclusive control he sought, and Russia threatened war. The British and French, already alarmed over Russian expansion around the Black Sea and its naval presence in the Mediterranean, sailed warships into the Dardanelles and attacked Russian Crimea, causing Russian humiliation and heavy losses for all sides and defeat by 1856. The Ottomans knew that without European military action they would have lost even more ground to Russia and were thus humbled and forced to institute further reforms and access to European merchants. It was in this context, as well as European intervention on behalf of Greek independence in the 1820s, that increased Jewish immigration from Russian territory a generation later became such a fraught dilemma for Ottoman officials.<sup>17</sup>

The Jewish community in Jerusalem was the majority of the small urban populace in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but it was never ruled by Dhaher al-Umar (d. 1775) or Ahmad Pasha (d. 1804). Jerusalem was continuously if very delicately governed by Ottoman appointees based in Damascus (as a *mutassarraflik*, a special administrative district). In Hebron, likewise, Jews lived in very similar circumstances to their Muslim and Christian neighbors. Pilgrimages by European Christians increased throughout the late 19<sup>th</sup> century (and nearly 80% were Russian Orthodox at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century) as well as the German and American colonial experiments, heightening both commercial activity and intra-ethnic religious tensions in the city. British Jewish financier and philanthropist Moses Montefiore (1784-1885) purchased a piece of land for a Jewish settlement (Mishkenot Sha'ananim) outside Jerusalem's Old City in 1860; but it was never able to flourish as more than a curiosity. Montefiore did visit the German 'Templers' settlements in Jaffa and was reportedly embarrassed that Jews could not have accomplished as much. Ottoman Jews in Palestine, until the 1890s, had no political aspirations beyond leadership of the Jewish community in Palestine and remaining an integral part of the larger Islamic society that had welcomed them from the early 16<sup>th</sup> century. Undoubtedly there was some degree of insecurity and small-scale attacks and plunder of Jews and Christian pilgrims in the Arab provinces at times, especially by Bedouin nomads in rural regions between large towns, but these were rare; Jews suffered from lawlessness and violence in these centuries primarily as isolated incidents rather than systemic campaigns. Eventually, the presence of Christian pilgrims in Jaffa, Nazareth, Jerusalem, and Bethlehem improved the safety of the roads (but with little help from Ottoman administrators, who did not want to facilitate European penetration of Palestine). From 8,000-15,000 Ashkenazi Jews arrived and remained in Palestine between 1880 and 1900, and many traveled to and lived in Jerusalem, Haifa and its environs, as well as in the Galilee. Intense debates began between newly arrived Jewish nationalists and the long-resident, religiously inclined Sephardi and Haredi Jews, who felt affinity with local Ottoman officials, local Muslims, and clashed with the newcomers' political activism, rather than their reliance upon 'the will of God' for the realization of Jewish aspirations in Palestine.<sup>18</sup>

### **The Pogroms in Eastern Europe and Russia and the Jewish Response**

The pogroms (a term derived from Russian words for destroy or devastation) against Jews in Ukraine were a stark contrast to their experience in Palestine. From 1648-54, during the Khmelnytsky Uprising, again from 1881-1884, as well as later in 1903-05 and 1918-21 nationalist Cossack nobles and their peasant followers killed and expelled Jews by the tens of thousands, events that strangely enough lie at the heart of the current conflict between Israelis and Palestinians. The Ukrainian Nationalists, led by Jozef Pilzudski, were responsible for the deaths of 50-100,000 Ukrainian Jews between 1918-21 (as were White Russian nationalists and the USSR). These pogroms, in a frontier zone of the Polish and Russian Empires, made life quite precarious for Jews for several centuries and shattered the hopes for emancipation and assimilation that educated Jews from Western Europe to Russia had

harbored before the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. These brutal attacks, in which Jews were blamed collectively for tumultuous events in or near the Russian Empire—such as autocratic Polish rule in Ukraine in the 17<sup>th</sup> century (in which Jews often served as lessees of Polish estates), to the assassination of Tsar Alexander II in 1881 (by the revolutionary movement, *Narodnaya Volya*/People’s Will, that included revolutionary Jews, one of whom was involved in the assassination)—provoked a movement of Jewish intellectuals, journalists, and activists to turn their backs on Europe and Russia and seek a new beginning in Palestine. Jews were also targeted by violence across Europe in 1818 and again in 1848, in the wake of the socialist, communist, and liberal revolutionary movements of that era.<sup>19</sup>

By the late nineteenth century, Palestine was regarded by modernist and nationalist European Jews as a neglected and impoverished backwater of the Ottoman Empire, one that had suffered oppression, violence, and depopulation since a Palestinian uprising against Egyptian invaders under Isma’il Pasha (Mehmet Ali’s son and Egyptian military commander) in 1834. The British and Ottomans forced these Egyptians to evacuate Palestine and Syria in 1840, after their very real threat to conquer the Ottomans was thwarted by British intervention. This view was reinforced by the waning of the prosperous days of Palestinian export agriculture and European trade in Akka of the mid-18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>20</sup>

Formerly religious Jewish intellectuals, who became reformist or secular Jews in Eastern Europe (Ukraine, Poland, Lithuania, Belarus, Russia), were profoundly influenced by European liberal thought, which eventually shattered the certainty of the religious orthodox upbringing most of them had undergone. The major ideas and themes of this thought (e.g., rationality, scientific discovery, secular critique of religion, technological and industrial progress, and tolerance for religious and cultural difference) had influenced their turn away from Judaism and toward these prevailing trends in Western humanism. Following the deadly outbreak of violence in a series of pogroms, however, Jewish nationalists regarded intellectual investment in Europeans’ moral and political evolution as a fatal misjudgment on their part. They concluded that Europeans and Russians could never accept Jews in their Christian societies and that periodic spasms of violence against Jews were inevitable, regardless of their adoption of European modes of thought, dress, technology, cultural values, and even their marginal but growing presence in Russian and European civil society (in universities, administrative posts, business, professions, and residence in their cities and towns). The marginal enfranchisement occurred simultaneous with serious, ongoing discrimination in all of these spheres of social life.

Significant numbers of Jewish writers, scholars, editors, and community activists collectively turned to the possibility of emigrating and establishing colonies in Palestine, the ancient homeland of their ancestors, which they knew nothing about but which stimulated their utopian imagination at a time of severe crisis. As residents of the Russian Empire in the 1880s, they had adopted the Russian and Western European disdain for the Ottoman Muslim sultans as “Oriental despots” and allegedly “corrupt Oriental culture,” tropes

advanced by European scholars such as Voltaire, Diderot, de Montesquieu, comte de Volney (de Chassboeuf) and Herder, as well as the commonly held assumption that the Empire was in fatal decline, the “Sick Man of Europe.”<sup>21</sup> The Orthodox Sephardi Jews of Palestine were similarly regarded with contempt for their ignorance of European culture and their assimilation into local Muslim society as well as the Arabic linguistic milieu. For the Ashkenazi Jews Palestine, assumed to be a mostly uninhabited rural province of that diminishing state, would present no serious obstacle to their return and the rehabilitation of their ancient patrimony. Jewish organizations were formed to explore and implement both emigration to Palestine and the purchase of land for settlements outside the urban centers, where (according to modernist Jewish nationalists) Ottoman Jews were lost in their stagnant religious obscurantism. The leaders of the Sephardi *yishuv* remained loyal to the Ottoman Empire, and largely unacquainted with European liberalism; they steered Jewish urban institutions (especially in Jerusalem) in such a way that the Ashkenazi newcomers felt quite alienated from them until World War I.

Among the most important of the Ashkenazi Jews most involved in imagining and encouraging both a Jewish cultural revival and immigration to Palestine were the following: Russian novelist and journalist Peretz Smolenskin (1842-1885) from Smolensk, who also lived in Vienna and Odessa; Lithuanian and Odessa Talmud scholar turned *maskilim* writer and activist, Moshe Leib Lilienblum (1843-1910); and Belarusian colonial activist, banker, and founder of Rishon LeTzion, Zalman David Levontin (also of Kharkov University and Kremenchug; 1856-1940) who organized Hovevei Tzion (Lovers of Zion). Joining Hovevei Tzion/Lovers of Zion and later organizing the Odessa Committee in 1884 were Polish physician Dr. Leon Pinsker (later an activist in Odessa; 1821-1891), Belarusian Hebrew scholar, linguist, and journalist Eliezer Ben-Yehuda (1858-1922; later of Jerusalem), and Ukrainian journalist and writer Ahad Ha'am (Asher Ginzberg; 1856-1927) of Odessa. These men were writing and working in Odessa (a Black Sea port and center of modernist thought and culture on the Russian/European/Ottoman frontier). Lilienblum and Levontin, who was a student in Kharkiv (Ukraine), organized Hovevei Tzion and historian, writer, and editor Israel Belkind (1861-1929) mobilized many from that city to organize the Bilu Society/Bilium (all of which were forerunners of Zionism). The members of Bilium who migrated to Palestine founded two early settlements in the 1880s, and those who remained in Ukraine organized the effort by Eastern European and Russian Jews to emigrate. Ahad Ha'am was the founder of cultural Zionism, which included the revival (and secularization) of Hebrew so important to the work and legacy of Ben-Yehuda and eventually the entire Zionist Movement. He moved from Odessa to London, where he met and worked with Weizmann, and then later to Tel Aviv. Ha'am's critique of the early settlements in 1891 led to more serious efforts to make them more efficient and viable. Ben Yehuda's Hebrew language papers *Ha Or* and *Ta'ufot* were major organs for the cultural Zionist movement, based in Jerusalem, despite suppression by the Ottomans.<sup>22</sup>

The first generation of Jewish cultural and political nationalists was followed by the far more popular (and more assimilated) leadership of Viennese writer, law school graduate, and activist Theodor Herzl (1860-1904). Herzl wrote the seminal text *The Jewish State/ Der Judenstaat* in 1896 and established the World Zionist Organization in the first six Zionist Congresses in Basel (1897-1903) and elsewhere in Europe. The organizational skills and accomplishments of Herzl and his circle disseminated Zionist ideas and local chapters across Europe and beyond. His organizational skills spawned the even more effective activities and diplomacy among British and French elites by the renowned chemist Chaim Weizmann, whose work with British officials resulted in the Balfour Declaration of 1917. Beyond these political developments, the military domain was first theorized and put into practice by the Odessa Ukrainian, Vladimir (Ze'ev) Jabotinsky (1880-1940), a writer, orator, soldier, and colonial military theorist. In anticipation of the Odessa pogrom of 1903, Jabotinsky organized the armed Jewish Self-Defense Organization, later fought with British occupation forces in Palestine (recruited in Egypt), helped to organize the Haganah in Palestine, and was the first to call for an armed struggle to overcome Ottoman and Palestinian opposition and establish a Jewish state in Palestine by force in the 1920-30s.<sup>23</sup> His Haganah followers later formed the Irgun, under Menachem Begun, which bombed the British in the Jerusalem Hotel in 1946.

In the wake of the organizing efforts of Herzl, Weizmann, and Jabotinsky, beginning in 1881 a few thousand Jews migrated to Palestine where the far older and smaller community of Jews had been living for centuries. The emigrating Ashkenazi Jews sold their properties and left their homes in Ukraine, Poland, Lithuania, Romania, and Russia and established their first eight colonies in the coastal area south of Haifa, around Jaffa, and near Safad and Tiberias in the Galilee. From these initial eight communities, with no more than several thousand people, the Ashkenazi Jewish presence in Palestine began. From the earliest encounters, conflicts erupted with local Arab villagers, many of whom had been tenant farmers on state lands (*miri*) or large, nearly private estates (*musha'*), and who were virtually evicted when these lands were sold to Jews for the purpose of establishing the colonies. These lands were sold to Jewish groups and organizations by German Templer settlers, Ottoman officials who were relatives of Jamal Pasha of the CUP Government of the Ottomans, Circassian refugees settled by the Ottomans in the late 1870s, absentee landlords such as the Greek Orthodox Christian Sursuq merchant and banking family of Beirut, and the Arab Karkabi, Farah, Tunei, and Khuri families of Lebanon, as well as Qasim Abdel Hadi, an elite Palestinian from an Arab family from Nablus, among others.<sup>24</sup> Palestinian villagers evicted from this land were often accused of theft and other suspicious behavior, but soon became both a critical source of food, water, and labor (like Indigenous Americans to the Jamestown and Pilgrim settlers from England in the 1600s), as well as a serious problem for the Jewish settlers, when they grazed their animals on their newly settled lands, contested the boundaries, uprooted trees, or launched attacks. These conflicts intensified over time into collective brawls with gunfire and a few fatalities (usually Arabs), as well as prolonged legal battles that required extensive mediation, negotiation, and Ottoman

administrative intervention. Around 97% of the first generation of settlers migrated back to Europe, Russia, the U.S., Canada, Brazil, and Argentina. From the early 1880s, Palestinian peasants and European Jewish colonial settlers grew very suspicious of each other and at odds over control of the land they both now inhabited.

According to Alan Dowty, Michelle Campos, Matthias Lehmann, David Vital, Thomas Phillip, Rashid Khalidi, Nur Masalha, and Ussama Maqdisi,<sup>25</sup> authors of recent books on Jews and Arabs in the Ottoman era of Palestinian and Lebanese/Syrian history, these European Jews behaved very differently from the Sephardi Jews that had lived in Palestine before them. They had little or no interest in learning Arabic, socializing with Arab notables or villagers; neither did they regard them as a serious factor in planning their colonial projects. They assumed that the Palestinians would benefit from their introduction of European modernity and would welcome what they felt were obvious technical and cultural advantages (e.g., new agricultural methods, modern medicine, personal hygiene, literacy, educational opportunities, the understanding of contemporary technology, European manners, modern housing, furniture, and transportation). For over twenty years, these modern Jews could not imagine that the Palestinian love for their own land, culture, and ancestry would motivate them to contest with all of their collective energies, the foreign, European Jewish presence among them. The European Jews had no interest in reckoning with the implications of Palestinian resistance to the Ottomans from the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the invasion by Napoleon in 1799, or the resistance to the Egyptians in a nationwide revolt just a half century before in 1834. Their lack of interest in the history of Palestine, Islam, the Arabic language, the culture of the Ottomans, and the Arab people was due to their preoccupation with their own cultural mythos, of a return to and reclaiming of Zion. Jewish migrants from Europe were so absorbed in their own collective trauma, cultural renewal, and communal affairs that they downplayed the profound crisis emerging among the Palestinian people, who were far more deeply rooted in the land than they were, interpreting it only in terms of their own concerns.

One early settler, Russian teacher Yitzhak Epstein, who moved to Rosh Pina in the upper Galilee in 1886 and who observed the displacement and sorrow of Druze and Arab villagers (in the village of Metullah) by Jewish land purchases there, made an eloquent speech in 1905 and later wrote an equally poignant article in 1907 that presented a divergent and prophetic vision of the relationship of Jews and Arabs in Palestine, compared to other contemporary Zionists. He described Arabs as a “mighty people,” “proud, resolute, and zealous,” who possessed a “feeling heart and loving soul,” who loved their land and revered the graves of their ancestors on it. Epstein urged Jews to understand their culture and language and in the usual paternalistic tone of that era, to “build them up” with their modern education and civic institutions. He cautioned the Jewish people not to conquer the Arabs but develop a partnership with them, to share the land and seek justice, rather than dominate them with force. Epstein wrote that Palestinian women, “weeping bitterly” as they left their lands behind, paused to “kiss the stones and the earth” as they departed.<sup>26</sup> These sentiments were



echoed 25 years later by the Brit Shalom initiative for a bi-national state, endorsed by Jewish Agency official Arthur Ruppin, a critical figure in the Second Aliya in Jaffa and the technical reforms of the settlements' infrastructure before and after World War I, as well as mystic Martin Buber, writer Gershom Scholem, Albert Einstein, and others; but these efforts proved ephemeral in a wider movement steeped in efforts to assert 'racial and cultural supremacy' of both Jewish and European modernist culture. Notably, Einstein refused an invitation by Ben-Gurion to serve as Israel's second President after the death of Chaim Weizmann in 1952.<sup>27</sup>

### **Palestinian Identity and Culture in the Ottoman Era and during the British Mandate (1922-1948)**

A specific Palestinian sense of identity (always blended to some degree with Islamic, Arab, and Syrian/al-Sham conceptualizations) was probably first articulated by the geographer Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Muqadassi, who identified himself as a Palestinian to Iranian masons he was conversing with in 10<sup>th</sup> century Shiraz. In conversations with these stone cutters, one of the Iranians referred to him as an Egyptian because he was working at the time for the Fatamids. He corrected them and asserted "forthrightly" that he was Palestinian. Al-Muqadassdi wrote a work of geography entitled *Ahsan al-taqasim fi ma'rifat al-aqalm* (The Best Divisions for Knowledge of the Regions). Nearly 500 years later, Islamic Hanbali scholar and *qadi* (Islamic judge) of Ramla and Jerusalem, Mujir al-Din al-'Ulaymi (1456-1522) in the late 15th century, wrote *The History of Jerusalem and Hebron*. Shaykh al-'Ulaymi used the term 'Filastin' repeatedly in his texts, while Jerusalem scholar Khayr al-Din al-Ramli (d. 1671), whose well-known and utilized collection of *fatawa* (*al-fatawa al-Khayriyya*; Islamic legal judgements) in the 17th century, also used the term 'Filastin' and 'biladuna' (our country) interchangeably in his work. 17th century writer Salih al-Tumurtashi and the modern journalist and historian Arif al-Arif (1893-1973) both wrote histories of Palestinian urban communities that expressed a specific Palestinian identity, referring to both 'Filastin' and 'Ard al-Muqadassah' (Holy Land). Al-Arif, born in Jerusalem, was an Ottoman soldier and Arab nationalist (later, a district officer of the British Mandate Authority the Mayor of East Jerusalem, 1949-1955) and was a well-known advocate of non-violent political action before and after the 1948 war. The Palestinian Uprising of 1834 against Egyptian military commander Isma'il Pasha's invasion in 1832 served to unify the Palestinian social classes across north, central, and southern regions; but it was brutally repressed with devastating impact on the entire society for decades. The uprising, despite its failure, had a dramatic unifying impact on forging a common Palestinian national identity separate from Ottoman and Syrian affiliations.<sup>28</sup>

Palestinian historian Nur Masalha and scholar Edward Said made the case that Khalil Ibrahim Beidas (1874-1949), a Christian Palestinian from Nazareth (and later in Jerusalem), initiated a dramatically innovative literary tradition through his literary and political magazine (*al-Nafais al-Asriyya*, from 1908-1914 and 1918-1923), novels, short stories, and translations

of the greatest 19<sup>th</sup> century Russian writers into Arabic (often in his magazine), the first of their kind in Palestine. He was educated in one of three dozen Russian-Arabic schools established in Palestine and Syria by the Imperial Orthodox Palestinian Society from 1882-1918. His modernist education and outlook mirrored the *Haskalah* of European Jews only slightly later than their experiences, and he also wrote a political critique of tyranny, *Ahwal al-Istibad (Conditions of Tyranny)*. His use of the terms Palestine and Palestinian (*Filastin* and *Filistiniyyah*) throughout his work was unique in the local written works of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, as was his publication of articles on the Bolshevik Revolution after 1918. He also established a 6000-volume library in Jerusalem, one of the largest in the country, which was stolen by Israeli forces in the 1948 Nakba.<sup>29</sup>

By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century Palestinian Christians, often educated in European Christian colleges, were publishing important newspapers that were widely read and by 1910 often expressed defiant rejections of Zionism. They included *al-Quds*, in 1908-1914 (also, the Hananiya Press from 1894) by Jurji Habib Hananiya, who helped establish a proto-nationalist organization, *Filastin al-Fatat*, in Palestine and Egypt. The most widely read and influential newspaper was *Falastin*, published in Jaffa and later East Jerusalem intermittently from 1911-1967 by Isa al-Isa (1878-1950) and his brother Yousef (1870-1948), who were Greek Orthodox. Isa was jailed and exiled by Ottoman authorities for his publishing and provocative anti-Zionist activism; but both brothers were engaged in Palestinian and Arab political and journalistic work (and Yousef in Damascus and Cairo) throughout their lives. According to historian Nur Masalha, *Falastin* published a series of articles on the sale of lands in al-Fulah, near Nazareth by Ottoman district official Shukri al-Asali (1878-1916), which alerted many Palestinians to the dangers of Jewish/Zionist land purchases. The defiantly anti-Zionist *al-Karmil* was published in Haifa from 1908 by Najib Nassar (1865-1947), a Christian and former pharmacist, journalist, critical Ottomanist, and fervent Palestinian nationalist writer. Nassar's 1911 book, *al-Sihyuniyya: Tarikhua, gharadua, abamiyyatuba (Zionism: Its History, Purpose, and Importance)* was the first on Zionism in Arabic. Nassar was among the first and most passionate literary opponents of Zionism in Palestine.<sup>30</sup>

Elite Palestinian families (*'ayan*, or notables) that dominated religious, political, and economic affairs in Jerusalem, Jaffa, Nablus, and other major Palestinian cities, included the al-Husayni, al-Khalidi, and al-Nashashibi families, all of whom were deeply involved in the leadership of Palestinian national movements until the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Especially important was Yousef Diya al-Khalidi (1842-1906), who was many times the mayor of Jerusalem and a loyal Ottomanist as MP there. al-Khalidi wrote to France's Chief Rabbi and to Theodor Herzl himself to persuade Herzl to choose another location for the Jewish homeland. Also important was his more nationalist nephew, Ruhi al-Khalidi (1864-1913), who was a liberal thinker and lectured in Islamic Studies at the Sorbonne while serving the Ottoman Consul-General in Paris. Ruhi al-Khalidi was an opponent of Zionism while an MP and deputy to the leader of the Majlis in Istanbul from 1908-1911. Neither of the al-Khalidis were hostile to the Jewish desire for a homeland (although located somewhere other than in Palestine);

but they staunchly defended their own and criticized the intentions of Zionists.<sup>31</sup> In 1897, an Arab Commission was formed to investigate land sales to foreigners. The Muslim-Christian Association sponsored the first of seven Palestinian National Congresses from 1919-1928 (until the British banned Muslims and Christians organizing together), after which it was led by the Mayor of Jerusalem, Musa Qasim al-Husayni (1918-1920), President of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Arab Congress (*al-Mutamarr al-Arabi al-Filastini*) from 1922-1934, until he died from injuries sustained in demonstrations in Jaffa in 1933.<sup>32</sup>

The British Mandate Authority issued passports, currency, and stamps under the name of Palestine from 1927-1948, reinforcing the Palestinians' sense of national identity. That unity of Islamic and Christian opposition to the Zionist project and eventually the British authorities, culminated in the Palestine Revival Society (*al-Nahdah al-Filistiniyyah*), the Palestinian and Pan-Islamic Congresses (1919-28 and 1931), the Supreme Muslim Council (*al-Majlis al-Islami al-A'ala bi Filastin*, or *al-Majlisiyyun*), and the Arab Higher Committee—cultural and political organizations and movements that encouraged the protests against the Balfour Declaration, Jewish immigration and land purchases, the 1936-39 uprising, and participation in wider Arab nationalist organizations in Damascus and Cairo. These movements were in part led by Muhammad Izzat Darwazah (1888-1984) of Nablus and Damascus, an Ottoman official, Palestinian and Arab nationalist and Islamic writer, 'Abd al-Qader al-Muzaffar (1880-1949) of Jerusalem, and Rushdie al-Shawah (1889-1965), builder, developer, and four-term mayor of Gaza—all of whom were involved in the Palestinian congresses, diplomacy, and nationalist and Ottoman military organizations. The Palestinian National Movement developed to its climax in the outbreak of the 1936-39 Uprising through the work of the Istiqlal Party, led by Awni 'Abd al-Hadi (1889-1970) of Jenin and Nablus, the Arab Higher Committee, and the Palestine Arab Party led by the indefatigable and infamous Mufti of Jerusalem, Hajj Amin al-Husayni (1892-1974), one of the most important 20<sup>th</sup> century Palestinian nationalist leaders and spokesmen of the Arab Higher Committee. Al-Husayni was later disgraced by his collaboration with the Nazis on radio broadcasts in World War II and remained a thorn in the side of the British until well after World War II.<sup>33</sup>

Shaykh Izz al-Din al-Qassam, a Syrian *alim* and Qadiriyya Sufi, was the first Islamist to organize an armed resistance against Zionist colonies in the Haifa area (from 1830-31) and was killed while engaged in attacks near Jenin in 1835. The Palestinian Uprising of 1936-39 against the British Mandate and Zionist colonization was led in its organization of the peasantry and the military action by 'Abd al-Qadir al-Husayni (1907-1948), whose Organization for Sacred Jihad (*Munathamat al-Jihad al-Muqaddas*) and Army of Jihad (*Jaysh al-Jihad*), which mobilized thousands of peasant fighters from 1936-39, were the forerunners of the 1948 Palestinian national resistance; this was despite the fact that the notable class that had led Palestinians to that point were all killed, jailed, or exiled. About 4,000 Palestinians were killed by the British in the 1930s uprising; nearly 20,000 were wounded, and a tenth of the population was killed, imprisoned, or exiled. Hundreds of Jews were also killed in the uprising, which was violently suppressed by British Mandate forces, a suppression that

implemented many of the colonial strategies later adopted by the Israelis (and which also enlisted between 10-14,000 Jewish settlers as auxiliary police forces). These British colonial strategies included collective punishment, the destruction of houses, and the leveling of the hundreds of buildings in Jaffa. Both al-Husaynis were driven into exile, and ‘Abd al-Qadir al-Husayni was killed in battle early in the 1948 war, while the Mufti escaped French custody in 1946, fled to Egypt, and continued his anti-Zionist organizing until his old age, dying in 1974.<sup>34</sup>

After the 1948 war it took a new generation of leaders to emerge. From 1959-1964 Fatah was organized by the eventual leadership of the PLO, led by Yasir Arafat (Abu ‘Ammar), Salah Khalaf (Abu Iyad) and Khalil al-Wazir (Abu Jihad). George Habash and Wadi Haddad organized the Movement of Arab Nationalism (MAN) and soon after, the Marxist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) of the 1960s-2020. The Islamist Hamas and Jihad movements of 1987-2023, organized by activists from the Muslim Brothers, was led by Shaykh Ahmad Yasin and Abd al-Aziz al-Rantisi, who were both assassinated in 2004 in Gaza. Hamas has been led today by Ismail Haniyah in Doha, Qatar, who succeeded Khaled Meshal (who left Damascus in 2012 for Doha), Hassan Yousef in the West Bank (imprisoned in October, 2023), Saleh al-Arouri in Beirut (assassinated in January of 2024), and in Gaza by Muhammad Deif, leader of the Izz al-Di al-Qassam Brigades since 2002, and Yahya Sinwar, elected as the leader of Hamas in Gaza since 2107. Deif and Sinwar are thought to be the architects of the October 7<sup>th</sup> attacks.

### **The Three Forces of Zionism until Statehood**

The Zionist Movement was dominated in London and across Europe by the effective and indefatigable diplomacy of Chaim Weizmann, who spent 30 years (from 1915-1947) in the Executive Action Committee of the Zionist Organization wooing British officials. After initially being forced out of leadership by David Ben-Gurion in the era following World War II due to Prime Minister Attlee’s refusal to endorse the formation of a Jewish State, Weizmann eventually became the first President of Israel. His close personal relationships with British officials was credited with securing the Balfour Declaration in 1917 and substantial support from British conservatives throughout most of the Mandate period (1922-1947). During the years of the Palestinian Uprising (the Great Revolt; *al-thawra al-kubra*; 1936-39), British officials withdrew their support for land purchases and significant levels of immigration (1933-35 saw the highest levels, reaching a total of 130,000). Weizmann was forced to resign from leadership for three years and was also sidelined after World War II, when despite the deaths of six million Jews in the Holocaust Britain would still not endorse the formation of a Jewish State for fear of alienating Arab allies in the region. Weizmann was known as a cautious leader who refrained from demanding the establishment of a Jewish State for fear of alienating the patronage of a great power thought necessary for success of the Zionist project.

Ze'ev Jabotinsky was the leader of Revisionist Zionism, which broke with the Zionist Movement briefly in 1931 because of the official reluctance to declare that a Jewish State was the objective of the movement. Jabotinsky had favored the preparation for armed defense of the Yishuv and a Jewish Legion during World War I to fight with the British. He trained and armed volunteers before and after the Palestinian riots in the Old City in 1920 and was briefly jailed for such activities. He advocated the eventual offensive conquest of the land of Palestine on both sides of the Jordan river. Jabotinsky flirted briefly with a fascist style of organizing akin to that of Mussolini in Italy, but after the rise of the Nazis in 1933 he denounced dictatorship and fascism and advocated democratic rule, liberal individual rights, and the autonomy of minority communities including that of Palestinians. His hesitancy in the early 1930s to fight Labor Zionists, who had encouraged cooperation with Transjordanian Arabs, led to the assassination of Chaim Arlosoroff of the Jewish Agency in Tel Aviv, in 1933. This was after the Ha'avara Agreement was concluded to import German industrial goods in exchange for increased immigration of Jews from Germany. A dissident faction of Revisionists formed, led by Abba Ahimeir, and apparently assassinated Arlosoroff. Revisionists quickly lost their credibility and half of their support in the Zionist movement. Later dissident Revisionists joined with Haganah and Ben-Gurion to lead the 1945-47 campaign of sabotage, assassination, and terror against the British, which forced the British to end the Mandate and leave Palestine to armed Israelis for conquest of the land.

David Ben-Gurion of Poland had been a leader of the labor movement in the settlements for a decade before the 1920 foundation of Histadrut, the General Organization of the Workers of Israel; Histadrut was the largest trade union organization, which also became the largest employer in the Jewish sector of the Palestinian economy before statehood. In 1930, Ben-Gurion used his role as leader of Histadrut to forge the MAPAI political party among the Jewish settlers in Palestine, which advocated for a welfare state, free access to housing and health care, social services, and a minimum national income. MAPAI became the largest component of the Labour Party of Israel in 1968. Ben-Gurion and his allies, such as Yitzhak Ben Zvi and Berl Katznelson, were not advocates of class struggle or social democracy; but their welfare state socialism was clearly secondary to the Jewish nationalism of the mainstream labor movement. Ben-Gurion became quite comfortable with large scale capitalist investment in Jewish settlements and industries as a necessary stage in the development of the Israeli state, despite his and his compatriots' focus on agricultural labor for the decades up to the mid-1930s. From 1935-1963 Ben-Gurion was the acknowledged leader of the Jewish Agency, the Zionist Movement, and the state of Israel. The rise of Nazism in Germany in the 1930s and the emergence of militant Palestinian resistance from 1937-39 led Ben-Gurion to seriously organize militias for self-defense (the Haganah and Palmach). He also began to prepare and conduct terrorist operations in cooperation with radical Revisionist successors to Jabotinsky in the 1945-48 era. Ben-Gurion's role in the organization of the Haganah with leader Elyahu Golomb (d. 1945) of the Jewish Legion with Jabotinsky and Trumpeldor during World War I, as well as the defense of Tel Hai with Trumpeldor in 1920, Hashomer Hatza'ir, the Haganah, and the elite Palmach units and the

conquests and expulsions of Palestinian cities, towns and villages in Plan Dalet from 1947-48 prepared him for the role of the first Prime Minister of Israel (1948-1963, with a brief absence from 1954 to February of 1955 due to mental fatigue).

### **The Triumph of Zionism: Patronage, Effective Organization, and War**

There is little doubt that Zionists were far better organized and far more politically astute than their Palestinian rivals from the last years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century until 1948 and well beyond. The mortal danger that Jews faced in Ukraine, Russia, Poland, and other areas of Eastern Europe (e.g. Romania, Hungary, Belarus, etc.) after their growing expectations of assimilation into an enlightened European society and culture that they had helped to develop was the usual recipe for revolution, as outlined by Harvard historian Crane Brinton in 1938 in his text *The Anatomy of Revolution* and later by historical sociologist Theda Skocpol in her text of 1979 *States and Social Revolutions*. Although Jews did have significant ties to Polish elites, and of course to British elites in Western Europe, they were largely unable to actualize their revolutionary ambitions and insights in regions of empires in which they were hated minorities, such as in regions of Eastern Europe (in the Russian and Habsburg Empires). Eastern European Jews decided to carry out their plans in a frontier zone between empires (the Holy Land). Despite these advantages, the Zionist project was extremely difficult to accomplish. Had it not been for the British, French, and Russian elites that coveted the lands and economic potential of the Ottoman Empire and the military capacity to seize them, Zionism would have remained a fantasy of a few intellectuals. Without the financial resources of European and American Jewish philanthropists and supporters of Zionism, the project could not have succeeded, and certainly not without the arms provided by the post-war Republican regime in Czechoslovakia.

The mobilization of Zionists in European Congresses beginning in 1897, the publication of books and pamphlets outlining political goals decades before they were realized, and the financial and logistical preparation for the construction of a parallel state in Palestine were superior to those of the Palestinian notables, who could scarcely imagine what the European Jews were planning and building on the ground. The modernist, Eurocentric education of the Ashkenazi of Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Germany, and Britain made it far easier for them to mobilize people, organize them into settlement projects, attract substantial investment, and lobby European officials for their support. Palestinian Arabs did their best to communicate with Ottoman officials and like-minded Arab nationalists across the region, publish newspapers to alert their people and motivate them to act on their own behalf, but the Ottoman world in which they lived was being rapidly made obsolete by the industrial and global capitalist economy and its war machines. Zionists had been raised in a European world and were ready to expand its hegemony, along with an imagined renewal of some aspects of contemporary, secularized Jewish culture, into the rural and urban zones of Palestine. By the end of World War I and the recovery of the capitalist economy in the late 1930s, Zionists knew that Ottoman and Arab capacities for war were grossly inferior to their

own and success merely awaited British acquiescence. When the British realized that the religious and cultural centrality of Palestine in the Western imaginary was also adjacent to some of the largest deposits of petroleum, as well as global trade routes (the Suez Canal, the Red Sea, the Hajj Caravan from Damascus to the Hijaz, and from the Persian Gulf to the Levant), allowing it to fall entirely into the hands of Zionists or provoking Arab hostility seemed to be a strategic error. Yet the costs of World War II included the inability to defend imperial territories from South Asia to Africa to the Middle East. Britain had lost its empire and was now indebted to the U.S., and the U.S. saw Israel as a useful strategic asset in an important region far from its own shores. The British alliance with Zionists ended during the Palestinian Uprising; but the U.S. knew only Israeli triumphs and by 1967 that was all it needed to begin investing in the expansion of the Israeli state and the taming of Arab nationalism, then dangerously flirting with the U.S.S.R.

Israelis, with a few notable exceptions, have continued to materially reinforce the pattern of Eurocentric and Judeocentric colonial arrogance from the early era of colony construction (1881-1914). They consistently question the humanity of Palestinians who dare to resist the Israeli State (“What kind of people...?”) and regard them as immoral, savage terrorists and anti-Semitic Nazis (and routinely attempt to position ordinary Palestinians as synonymous with the resistance organizations), always referring to European historical events and paradigms rather than attempting to comprehend the deeply rooted Palestinian antipathy to foreign invasion and the parallel colonization of Arabs and Muslims by Europeans in North Africa, Egypt, Syria, Iraq, and Iran. That colonial history in Palestine began with the Napoleon Bonaparte’s invasion (1798-1800) and elsewhere in the French conquest of Algeria from 1830-1962, the French intervention in Lebanon in 1860 (which precipitated the Maronite-Druze War and the consequent slaughter of Christians in Damascus that year), the French conquest of Amir Faysal’s state in Syria in July of 1920, the French protectorate in Tunisia in 1881, the British occupation of Egypt in 1882, and the Russian threat to the Ottoman Empire from the late 1700s through World War I.<sup>35</sup>

The European colonization of Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, and North Africa (aside from Russian wars with the Ottomans) was of little significance to European and Russian Jews who faced the violence of pogroms and the slaughter of their own kinsmen. They assumed that European political and military dominance would continue, especially after the defeat of the Germans and Ottomans in World War I. These historical events are virtually unknown and irrelevant to Americans today. American and Israeli preoccupation with anti-Semitism as a phenomenon of European and American history does not resonate with Palestinians, who see such discourse as a distraction and deflection of the colonial violence of Europeans and European Jews in their own lands since the 1880s and particularly since 1948.

Only Vladimir Ze’ev Jabotinsky and his dissident Revisionist factions (later represented by the leadership of Menachem Begin, Yitzhak Shamir, Ariel Sharon, and Benjamin Netanyahu) spelled out the coercive colonial implications of Zionism in theory or in detail, beginning

with his 1923 essay *The Iron Wall* and continuing through the Jewish militias' reprisal actions during the Palestinian Uprising. That vision of conquest and subjugation was unofficially embraced by mainstream Labor Zionism against the British from the late 1930s and the Holocaust. Jabotinsky knew there were two nations vying for power in Palestine, and he had no hesitation in calling for a colonial war to achieve victory for Jews. Despite Ben-Gurion's intense rivalries with both Weizmann's pro-British diplomacy and with Jabotinsky's bourgeois, anti-socialist, and militaristic Revisionism, he enacted Jabotinsky's Revisionist military program thoroughly in the 1945-47 era and in Plan Dalet (despite Ben-Gurion's previous moderation). He did this through the militarism of the Haganah (from 1920) and the Palmach from 1941-56. Israeli military superiority over the Arab States and the Palestinians was assured by purchases of aircraft, pilot training, machine guns, and ammunition from the Czechoslovakian Republic, which was an ally of the British, the U.S., and the U.S.S.R., who had acted in concert to defeat Germany in World War II and restore Czechoslovakian sovereignty.<sup>36</sup>

The Israeli plans for military subjugation of the Palestinians and the expansion of Israeli territory to include the Gaza Strip and Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, the Tiran Straits in the Gulf of Aqaba, Syrian territory beyond the Golan Heights, and east of the Jordan River into Transjordan continued throughout the 1950s until the defeat of the planned overthrow of Gamal Abdel Nasser in the invasion of the newly nationalized Suez Canal with the French and British in 1956. The Israeli Defense Forces continued to pursue these goals in 1967 and beyond, during the two intifadas a generation later, and to this day in the slaughter and destruction in Gaza.

The message behind the attacks by Hamas in October of 2023, that Palestinians will relentlessly resist the colonization of their land, including the use of tactics that Israelis had systematically used themselves, as well as martyrdom operations and mass self-sacrifice, was scarcely imagined by the settlers of the 1880s who didn't take the Arabs seriously and assumed that they would eventually welcome their control due to their supposedly obvious civilizational superiority and liberal values. The abject hypocrisy and contradiction of those liberal values (demonstrated by Europeans in colonial massacres across the planet, from Algeria to South Africa and Vietnam) was evident in Zionist terror campaigns and continued at the al-Shifa Hospital (and other medical facilities and schools) and across Gaza in November and December of 2023. The horrors of the Holocaust may underlie the justification for the Israelis' abandonment of their purported liberalism in the atrocities of the 1947-49 war, but the question of why the Palestinians have to pay the price for European genocide is still a pressing one that lingers, unanswered.

Further, one million Russian Jews migrated to Israel in 1991 after the collapse of the Soviet Union, an influx of immigrants that mirrored but dwarfed the scale of the two waves of the century before, but which in the closing years of the first Palestinian Intifada had an indescribably powerful reinforcing effect on the Jewish demographic and political



dominance of Palestinian popular resistance. These Russians enjoyed a 'Right of Return' infamously denied to Palestinian refugees for over seventy-five years, one of the core issues that led to the collapse of the Oslo Accords and subsequent negotiations in 1995. At that historical juncture, the resistance of the Intifada had been overwhelmingly non-violent, as the PLO had been driven from Lebanon to Tunis a decade before (after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982) and had only the slightest impact on the youthful insurrection erupting in the streets of Gaza, Nablus, Jenin, Hebron, and East Jerusalem. The Palestinians inside Israel were a fifth of the population, placed under military administration (martial law) and regarded as enemies of the state from 1948 until late 1966, even after Ben-Gurion resigned in 1963; but the Israeli Palestinians had not reacted to the 1987-91 Intifada with massive popular demonstrations or with significant political defiance. The Oslo Accords were negotiated in 1994-95, but Israel's leader in its initiative with the PLO, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin (1974-77; 1992-95) was assassinated by a far-right extremist and *yeshiva* student (Yigal Amir) in November 1995. This assassination ended the long hegemony of Labor Zionism and initiated the leadership of the Revisionist wing of Israel's Far Right, increasingly committed to the violent subjugation of the Palestinians and their eventual expulsion from Israel.

From 1995-96 Hamas began a series of bus bombings and suicide attacks. The Israelis reacted with a fierce sense of revenge for the murder of Jewish civilians that brought the conflict to a fever pitch and by 1996 Israelis had abandoned any intention for coexistence and instead opted for a perpetual war against the Palestinian people. The shift to Israeli intransigence after 2001 (under Likud/Kadima Party leaders Ariel Sharon and Benjamin Netanyahu), accompanied by the massive privatization of the Israeli economy, soon provoked the militancy of Islamic fury that had been building across the Arab and Muslim worlds since Khomeini's Revolution in Iran in 1979 and erupted later in the attack by al-Qa'ida on New York and Washington in 2001. Jabotinsky's Wall was built along the Green Line from 2002-2005 and 27 years after those climactic moments and after the Global War on Terror, Israel resembles the U.S. in its permanent resort to unchecked brutality with competing claims of terror and genocide. In 2023, the world is again roiling over Israeli overkill against a colonized society in the ruins of Gaza.

From the original eight settlements of the early 1880s, Israeli settlement-building in the Occupied West Bank (and Gaza until 2006) expanded after the 1967 War, and the population of these settlements in the outskirts of Jerusalem and the West Bank grew to a population of 250,000 by 1993. In the thirty years since, the number of settlements has grown to over 150, with an additional 129 smaller "outposts" with a population of nearly 700,000 (10% of the total Israeli Jewish population of 7.15 million; 20% are Arab residents of Israel (not including the West Bank and Gaza)). At least 9,000 Jewish settlers in 21 Gaza settlements were forced to evacuate into Israel or other settlements in 2005. And 12 settlements in the suburbs of East Jerusalem have greatly expanded the size and the percentage of the Jewish population in the city. Since October 7<sup>th</sup> attacks on Palestinian

civilians by these heavily armed settlers (with even more made available by Netanyahu after October 7<sup>th</sup>) have increased seven-fold from the level of 2021, many of whom have forced Palestinians to abandon over a dozen small villages. These fortified and expansive settlements and the military forces deployed to defend them continue to be the key instrument of Jewish colonization of Palestinian land in violation of the Geneva Conventions. The location of these settlements, the Jewish-only highways that conjoin them, and the hundreds of checkpoints that sever Palestinian communities from each other are intended to eliminate any possibility of a future, territorially contiguous, sovereign Palestinian state. In 2016, a U.N. Security Council resolution stated that these Israeli settlements in occupied territory have no legal standing.<sup>37</sup>

Since 1967, U.S. military aid of \$2-3 billion per year and \$150 billion total (in absolute numbers) as well as arms and technology transfers have transformed the Israeli military and technological dominance over Palestinians (and all potential Arab and Iranian allies) to an unprecedented level. This was especially so by the time of the commencement of the War on Terror (2001-2011), including the Iron Dome anti-missile defense system. U.S. aid was \$3.6 billion in 2023, until Biden increased the amount by an additional \$14 billion to pay for the Gaza War, an increase that has still not been approved by the U.S. Congress. Due to this American economic, military, and diplomatic support (and that of the British before them), the war can no longer be understood solely as a Palestinian and Israeli struggle for the land, a framing that is increasingly obsolete as U.S. sponsorship of the Israeli slaughter in Gaza has become clear. Looking back, the wars from 1973-2009 became a global contest for domination of West Asia and the Arab World for control of petroleum resources. Today the war is framed by the U.S. as one for control of global perceptions of the West and the Rest, including Islam. The U.S. claims to represent “a rules-based international order” against the “savage violence” of Islamic terrorism (as well as Putin’s Russian and Xi’s Chinese regimes). Despite this moralizing rhetoric, the U.S. is backing without hesitation a bloody and inhumane campaign of genocidal war against Palestinian civilians (with at least 28,000 dead as of mid-February 2024 in three and a half months in Gaza and Israel compared to 15,000 in the first eight years of the US-condemned Russian attacks on Ukraine). U.S. hypocrisy is now (once again) so obvious, and the racial and religious implications of its alliances and its preferred forms of violence so clear, that U.S. and Israeli credibility (and that of Joe Biden and Benjamin Netanyahu) are fatally damaged.

Liberal values are still occasionally invoked by Western leaders and apologists, as a mere rhetorical reflex when reciting the homily of the superiority of Western civilization; but after the brutality of the French Revolution, the world wars, the Holocaust, and the War on Terror as well as escalating climate change, these values are obsolescent. Digital Techno-Savagery (i.e., Full Spectrum Dominance) has now supplanted them.<sup>38</sup> While a few Palestinians were introduced or subjected to those antiquated values in ‘Humanities’ courses in French, American, British and Russian schools, Islamic principles were clearly far more important touchstones for the late Ottoman era leaders who lived before and during the

Nakba in 1948 (such as Dhaher al-Umar al-Zaydani, Khalil Ibrahim Breitas, the al-Khalidis and al-Husaynis). After the 1948 war, many more Palestinians managed to secure university educations and became acquainted with European history, the sciences, liberalism and Marxism; but they were far more oriented toward the legacies of the Third World national liberation movements and more recently, the history of jihad and other forms of Islamic renewal and resistance. While Israel received the most advanced forms of military and technological assistance from the U.S., the Palestinians were under siege for over half a century, smuggling everything they could into their rapidly disappearing territories under ever-present Israeli control and surveillance.

Only a determined international effort to curb Israel's hyper-aggression and impose some formation of sovereignty for the Palestinians will be sufficient to re-establish any stability in the region. The Zionist vision of an uncontested (Ashkenazi) Jewish modernist supremacy (now only 44 % of the Jewish population of Israel; while 44-49 % identify as secular, 20% Orthodox, and 8% Haredi) that would benefit the Arabs and persuade their acquiescence to a Jewish state was abandoned decades ago.<sup>39</sup> Perhaps most religious Jews in Israel have been convinced, but that remains to be seen. The fragile hopes that U.S-Israeli military dominance had permanently subdued the Palestinian resistance enough to normalize relations between Israel and Gulf State Arabs (a move to counter Iranian influence in Shi'i communities of the Arab world) have now been dashed. Finally, some truly serious work must be coordinated internationally to avoid a perpetually escalating racial and religious war, the nightmare of the last surviving Apartheid colony of the global capitalist economy pitted against profoundly aggrieved Muslim peoples. This brutal assault, which has eclipsed any last remnant of liberalism in the West, is a harbinger of the diminishing prospects for U.S. global hegemony and the vast dangers looming over this planet in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Since 1955 Palestinians have continued to fight Israel's invasion of Gaza and the violent assaults on the West Bank, as well as to resist its efforts at forcible transfer of the population of Gaza to Egypt. Israel has exacted a terrible price since October 7th. In addition to relentless threats from the air, those in Gaza also suffer a near-total blockade on food and supplies into the area with mass starvation looming in January of 2024. They continue to ask the world to intervene and prevent more Israeli violence against them. South Africa has now taken the case of Israeli genocide in Gaza to the International Court of Justice. They are utilizing the values of the resistance of the colonized to European power in a European judicial setting to expose the hypocrisy and mark a new turning point in the decolonization of this planet, to enforce limits on what Israel and the U.S. can do to a Muslim and Christian people facing annihilation at the hands of two interlocked colonial-imperial powers. South Africa and Palestine stand together, along with the Muslim and other formerly colonized populations of the world, but not with most leaders of Arab or Muslim nation states, the preponderance of whom tremble before U.S. military supremacy, most recently displayed in attacks on the Ansar Allah in Yemen. The question remains: what must we do to protect Palestinian lives, to advance their sovereignty, and to save ourselves in a world built upon

and increasingly ruled by brazen and brutal violence? The juxtaposition of the concurrency of South African Apartheid and the birth of the Jewish State in 1948, three years after the genocide of the Holocaust and the use of nuclear weapons, after five centuries of European colonialism and imperialism, is a startling reminder of the momentous stakes we face today. The end of imperialist racial and ethnic separation and domination, whether in Eastern Europe, Russia, Germany, Asia, or across Africa and in Palestine, requires the dismantling of the entire structure of that domination, first and foremost of European, American and Israeli control over Palestinian lives and lands.

Richard Wood is the retired Chair of Sociology at DeAnza College, Cupertino, CA, and is currently writing a History of Western Imperialism in the Muslim World. He spent many months in Occupied Gaza, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem on five separate trips from 1988-2002.

### Notes:

1. Tom Segev, quoting Ben-Gurion and Ze'ev Jabotinsky in *A State at Any Cost: The Life of David Ben Gurion* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2019), 461-65.
2. Jon Swaine, Joyce Sohyun Lee, Sarah Cahlan, Imogen Piper, Brian Monroe, Evan Hill, and Meg Kelly, "How Hamas Exploited Israel's Reliance on Tech to Breach Barrier on Oct.7," *Washington Post*, November 17, 2023, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/investigations/2023/11/17/how-hamas-breached-israel-iron-wall/>.
3. Nadim Khoury asserts that 327 IDF soldiers were killed on Oct. 7<sup>th</sup>, and I will use his more conservative figures. He also cites the figure of 24,000 kilotons of explosives used by Israel in Gaza since Oct. 7<sup>th</sup>: Nadim Khoury, "Israel-Palestine War: Why the West can't conceive of a Palestinian right to security," *Middle East Eye*, Nov. 30, 2023, <https://www.middleeasteye.net/opinion/israel-palestine-war-west-palestinian-right-security-conceive-why>. The following sources use the figures of 368 and 372 IDF dead, respectively: Yaniv Kubovich, "Israeli Army Releases Names of Three Additional Soldiers Killed in Gaza Strip," *Haaretz*, Nov. 16, 2023, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2023-11-16/ty-article/.premium/israeli-army-releases-names-of-three-additional-soldiers-killed-in-gaza-strip/0000018b-d8a5-d168-a3ef-ddff591c0000>; Emanuel Fabian, "Authorities name 372 soldiers, 59 police officers killed in Gaza War," *The Times of Israel*, October 8, 2023, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/authorities-name-44-soldiers-30-police-officers-killed-in-hamas-attack/>. On the more recent historical context of the current war than this article provides, see Joseph Massad, "Why Israeli Claims Have No Credibility Outside the West," *Middle East Eye*, Nov. 30, 2023, <https://www.middleeasteye.net/opinion/israeli-claims-no-credibility-outside-of-west-gaza>. According to Israel, 137 hostages remained in Gaza when fighting resumed on Dec. 1, 2023. David Hearst asserts that the Hamas tunnel system in Gaza is also an astounding technological achievement that has frustrated Israel's attempts to control Gaza since the invasion after the Oct. 7<sup>th</sup> attacks. He compares it to North Korean tunnels: David Hearst, "War on Gaza: 100 Days On, a Regional Catastrophe Looms," *Middle East Eye*, January 11, 2024, <https://www.middleeasteye.net/opinion/war-gaza-100-days-regional-catastrophe-looms>.

4. Ronen Bergman and Adam Goldman, "Israel Knew Hamas' Battle Plan more than a Year ago," *New York Times*, Nov. 30, 2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/11/30/world/middleeast/israel-hamas-attack-intelligence.html>.
5. Jews in Europe and Palestine often warned Zionists that the pursuit of an exclusively Jewish state would increase anti-Semitism in Europe and in the Ottoman Empire, which governed Palestine. The debates over increasing anti-Semitism in the wake of Israeli attacks on Gaza echo these warnings of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. On the opposition of both Arabs and Jews to the 1947 U.N. Partition Plan, see Simha Flapan, *The Birth of Israel: Myths and Realities* (New York: Pantheon, Random House, 1988); Ben Norton, "U.N. Voted to Partition Palestine 68 Years ago, in an Unfair Plan Made Worse by Israel's Ethnic Cleansing," *Salon*, Nov. 15, 2015 [https://www.salon.com/2015/11/30/u\\_n\\_voted\\_to\\_partition\\_palestine\\_68\\_years\\_ago\\_in\\_an\\_unfair\\_plan\\_made\\_even\\_worse\\_by\\_israels\\_ethnic\\_cleansing/](https://www.salon.com/2015/11/30/u_n_voted_to_partition_palestine_68_years_ago_in_an_unfair_plan_made_even_worse_by_israels_ethnic_cleansing/).
6. The film *Tantura* (2022) by Israeli filmmaker Alon Schwarz about the research done by Teddy Katz on the massacre in Tantura (now the kibbutz Nahsholim) in north central coastal Israel is a startling expose of the 1948 massacre and its coverup by the perpetrators, academics, and the Israeli legal system. The massacres in Qibya and Kafr Qasim are described in Segev, *A State at Any Cost*, 513-17 and 582-84 and in Avi Shlaim, *The Iron Wall, Israel, and the Arab World*, (New York: W.W. Norton, 2001), 91.
7. Segev, *A State at Any Cost*, 460-61.
8. The Rabbinical, Orthodox, Hasidic, and Haredi Jewish arguments against Zionism are summarized in Aviezer Ravitsky's introduction and the first chapters of his book, *Messianism, Zionism, and Jewish Religious Radicalism*, trans. Michael Swirsky and Jonathan Chipman, (Tel Aviv: Am Ovd Pub., Ltd., 1993 and Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 1-39. Anti-Zionist Jewish organizations and those recently opposed to Israeli attacks on Gaza Palestinians include Jewish Voice for Peace, Not in My Name, If Not Now, the American Council for Judaism, in the U.S.; Na'amod in the U.K.; French Jewish Union for Peace, in France; Independent Jewish Voices in Canada; Een Ander Joods Geluid, in the Netherlands; and various small Haredi groups in Israel, such as Edah HaCheredi: The Haredi Council of Jerusalem, Shomer Emunim, Neturei Karta, and Mishkenos HoRoim, and Satmar, in the U.S. For an account of the American Council for Judaism, see Thomas Kolskey, *Jews Against Zionism: The American Council for Judaism, 1942-1948* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990). There is no question that the Jewish opposition to Zionism and the policies of Israel have reached a level today not seen since before the 1947-48 war.
9. On the British, French, and Russian plans for the conquest and dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire before World War I and the possible distribution of Ottoman territories to these three empires see Sean McMeekin, *The Russian Origins of the First World War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013).
10. Justin McCarthy, *The Population of Palestine: Population History and Statistics of the Late Ottoman Period and the Mandate* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 10-38. The Jewish population of Palestine was 85,000 in 1914, but by the end of the war it had been reduced to 56,000 (a result of deaths, famine, and emigration). 35,000 immigrants arrived in the Fourth Aliya of 1919-1923. 82,000 arrived in the Fifth Aliya of 1924-1931. By the end of 1931, 174,600 Jews lived in Palestine, approximately 17% of the 1 million total population. Between 1932 and 1939, 274,000 Jews arrived

in Palestine, fleeing the Nazis, with the largest numbers arriving from 1933-35 (130,000). 17,000 arrived through illegal immigration from 1939-1941. 3.1 million Jews have migrated to Israel since 1948, including 1 million from the U.S.S.R. from 1990-1991. In 1947-48, Jews constituted one third of the population of Palestine and owned between 6-8% of the land of historic Palestine: Walter Laqueur, *A History of Zionism* (New York: Schocken Books, 2003), 129-130, 313-14, 354, 374, 404-09, 445-50, 480-81, 486, 664-66, 747, 751-52, 768-69, 776-80, 785-86, 802, 817, 829. Also see Rashid Khalidi, *The Hundred Years War on Palestine: A History of Settler Colonialism and Resistance, 1917-2017* (New York: Macmillan, 2020). Matthias B. Lehmann estimates the Jewish population of Jerusalem at 1000 just before 1700 in his book, *Emissaries from the Holy Land: The Sephardic Diaspora and the Practice of Pan-Judaism in the Eighteenth Century* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2014), 26. For other statistics, see McCarthy, *The Population of Palestine*. According to McCarthy, 13,000 Jews lived in Palestine in 1850 (of a total of 340,000; 3.8 %). 14,731 Jews lived there in 1880 (of a total of 456,929; 3.2 %). 17,991 Jews lived there in 1890 (of a total of 516,131; 3.5 %). And by 1910, there were 32,843 Jews living there (of a total population of 673,259; 4.87 %). In 2023, Israeli Jews were a slim majority (6.9 million Jews to 6.2 million Palestinians), after millions of Palestinians have been forced to migrate to and inhabit expansive refugee camps (many now sprawling towns) in Gaza, the West Bank, and in Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria (and 20% of Israeli citizens are Palestinian).

11. Lehmann, *Emissaries from the Holy Land*, 1-118 and 215-60.

12. On Sabbatai Zevi, see Gershom Scholem, *Sabbatai Zevi; The Mystical Messiah, 1626-1676* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975/2016) and David J. Halperin, *Sabbatai Zevi; Testimonies to a Fallen Messiah* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007). On the Rothschilds, see Ran Aaronsohn, *Rothschilds and Early Jewish Colonization*, (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000), 53-118, 119-45. On the Istanbul Jewish community's evolution from the 16<sup>th</sup> through 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, its relation to similar efforts in Venice (for the ransom of captives from piracy) and Livorno (for ransom and aid to refugees from Ukraine in the 17<sup>th</sup> century), and its aid to the Ashkenazi migration of 1000 Jews to Jerusalem c. 1700, see Lehmann, *Emissaries from the Holy Land*, 19-26, as well as 26-32 specifically on aid to Jerusalem Ashkenazi.

13. Among those Eastern European Jewish immigrants, were the first Israeli Prime Minister, Polish/Russian David (Gruen) Ben-Gurion (1886-1973) of Plonsk (son of a Zionist Lawyer) and the first Israeli President, Chaim Weizmann (1874-1952) from Motol, near Pinsk, Belarus (whose ultraconservative family still provided a secular education); Nick Reynold, *The War of the Zionist Giants; David Ben Gurion and Chaim Weizmann*, (New York: Lexington, Rowman and Littlefield, 2018), 6-9; Derek J. Penslar, *Zionism and Technocracy: The Engineering of Jewish Settlement in Palestine, 1870-1918* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 1-110; See also Helmut Glenk, with Horst Blaich and Manfred Haering, *From Desert Sands to Golden Oranges: The History of the German Templar Settlement of Samona in Palestine, 1871-1947* (Bloomington: Trafford Publishing, 2005). The Mikve Y'israel agricultural school was financed by the French philanthropic organization Alliance Israelite Universelle. On the American colonies, see Naili Falestin, "The Millenarist Settlement in Artas and its Support Network in Britain and North America, 1845-1878," *Jerusalem Quarterly* 45 (Spring 2011); also see The Library of Congress exhibition: The American Colony in Jerusalem from 2005 at <https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/americancolony/amcolony-overview.html>; on the Nazi affiliation of German Templer settlers in Palestine in the 1930s, see Heidemarie Wawrzyn, *Nazis in the Holy Lands, 1933-1948* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013). The Government House and the offices of Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion were located in a three-story building, previously built and owned by the German Templer Colony in Tel Aviv (previously in the outskirts of Jaffa) following the 1948-49 War.

14. On Rothschild's spending on settlements, see Penslar, *Zionism and Technocracy*, 18. On arguments against Zionism from Rabbinical, Orthodox, and Hasidic/Haredi perspectives, see Israel Bartal, *Responses to Modernity: Haskalah, Orthodoxy, and Nationalism in Eastern Europe*, in *Zionism and Religion*, eds. Shmuel Almog, Jehuda Reinharz, and Anita Shapira (Hanover: Brandeis University Press, 1998), 13-20; Alan Dowty, *Arabs and Jews in Ottoman Palestine: Two World Collide*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2019), 108-137. On Ben-Gurion and the leaders from the Second and Third Aliya, see Laqueur, *A History of Zionism*, 445-79 and Segev, *A State at Any Cost*; on Ben-Gurion's tense relations with the kibbutzniks, see 524.

15. Nur Masalha, *Palestine: A Four Thousand Year History*, (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018) 220-240. The Istanbul Sephardi/Ottoman Jewish charitable network, *pekidim*, also contributed generously to the Safad and Tiberias Jewish communities, simultaneously with Dhaher al-Umar's efforts, and the Palestinian *amir* was viewed by local Jews as a very supportive ally of the community. Al-Umar's mercantile activity in the region, from Damascus to Nazareth as a young man, undoubtedly made him quite familiar with Jewish merchants there. His first political strongholds were in these towns, near the Sea of Galilee and in Nazareth. See Thomas Philipp, *Acre: The Rise and Fall of a Palestinian City 1730-1831*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001).

16. See Philipp, *Acre*, 5-17, 42-55, 80-90, 136-48. Philipp describes al-Dhaher al-Umar's serious challenges to French merchants (over monopoly control of the sale of his produce and prices) on whom his foreign trade depended. These Frenchmen often complained about his mercantile practices as "tyrannical" and "despotic," which clearly indicated his success in dictating the terms of trade. Philipp also discusses the important linkages of al-Umar and Ahmad Pasha with the neo-Mamluks of Egypt. Al-Umar forged a brief alliance with the Mamluk *amir* Ali Bey al-Kabir to preserve his independence from the Ottomans, and he gave him refuge from a more powerful Mamluk rival, Salih Bey, before Ali Bay's assassination in Egypt. Ahmad Pasha, who performed loyalty to the Ottomans but also ruled autonomously, was raised in the Mamluk household of the same Salih Bey, and fashioned his realm after his former Egyptian mentors, despite life-threatening conflicts with them. Salih Bey tried to have Ahmad Pasha murdered for disloyalty, a suspicion that was unwarranted but still ended Ahmad Bay's direct ties to the Mamluks. Nevertheless, his style of life and governance were guided by Egyptian Mamluk principles, unlike that of his northern Palestinian/Galilean predecessor Dhaher al-Umar al-Zaydani.

17. W. Bruce Lincoln, *Nicholas I; Emperor and Autocrat of All the Russias* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1989), 330-57. Russian cultural intervention into Palestinian society was far more effective a generation later through the activities of the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Committee, which built 37 bilingual schools (in Arabic and Russian) from 1881-1914, as well as via the availing of literary works and translations of Russian literature of the Nazarene Christian Palestinian and Jerusalem native, Khalil Ibrahim Beitas. This explains some of the affection many Palestinians have for Russian culture, which clearly predates the Marxist era of the late 1960-70s and aid from the U.S.S.R. to the P.L.O. See Nur Masalha, *Palestine: A Four Thousand Year History* (London: Zed Books, 2018), 268-274.

18. Bartal, *Responses to Modernity*, 1-92.

19. On the pogroms and the Jewish reaction to them in Ukraine, Poland, Lithuania, and Russia that led to Jewish nationalism and the first written proposals to emigrate to Palestine, see Dowty, *Arabs and Jews*, 2019, 58-83. It is unclear how responsible Pilsudski was for the Ukrainian Nationalists'

killing of Ukrainian Jews, but Ze'ev Jabotinsky's efforts to work with his regime discredited him among more moderate Zionists for a period, after events there became known.

20. Baruch Kimmerling and Joel S. Migdal, *The Palestinian People: A History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 6-11.

21. Felix Conrad, "From the "Turkish Menace" to Exoticism and Orientalism: Islam as Antithesis of Europe (1453-1914)?" *European History Online (EGO)*, <http://ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/models-and-stereotypes/from-the-turkish-menace-to-orientalism>.

22. Dowty, *Arabs and Jews*, 2019, 76-183.

23. Laqueur, *A History of Zionism*, 319-320; Reynold, *The War of the Zionist Giants*, 117-200; Avi Schlaim, *The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2001).

24. Dowty, *Arabs and Jews*, 2019, 115-44. According to Alan Dowty these were: 1. Rosh Pina, near Safad; 2. Yesud HaMa'ala, in the Jordan Valley north of the Sea of Galilee; 3. Zikhron Ya'akov, 23 miles south of Haifa; 4. Petah Tikva, 12 miles from Jaffa; 5. Rishon LeTzion, 8 miles from Jaffa; 6. Nes Tsiona (near Rishon); 7. Mazkeret Batya (near Rishon and Nes Tsiona), 20 miles south of Jaffa; and 8. Gedera, the most isolated, 30 miles south of Jaffa. Also see Kenneth Stein, *The Land Question in Palestine, 1917-1939* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987), 60. According to Stein, the Sursuq families sold Palestinian lands in many villages and towns, including Jinujar, Tal al-Adas, Jabata, Afula, Khunelfis (Sarid Kibbutz), in the Galilee (south and west of Nazareth), Harbaj and Jeida (near Haifa), Harithiya (near Jenin), Shuna (near Safad), Jidra (near Acre/Akka), and Majdal (later Ashkelon, Israel). Also, see Lorenzo Trombetta, "The Private Archive of the Sursuqs, a Beirut Family of Christian Notables: An Early Investigation," *Nuova Serie*, 82, Fasc.1/4 (2009): 197-228; Anysh Avneri, "The Claim of Dispossession: Jewish Land Settlement and the Arabs, 1878-1948," *Yad Tabenkin Kibbutz* (2009): 105-111; Steven P. Halbrook, "The Alienation of a Homeland: How Palestine Became Israel," *The Journal of Libertarian Studies* 5, no. 4 (Fall, 1981): 357-74; Ruth Fark, "Consequences of the Ottoman Land Law: Agrarian and Privatization Processes in Palestine, 1858-1918," in *Societies, Inequalities and Marginalization: Marginal Regions in the 21st Century*, eds. Raghuraj Chand, Etienne Nil, and Stancko Pelc (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2017), 101-20; Nadav Solomonovich and Ruth Fark, "Land Privatization in Nineteenth-century Palestine," *Islamic Law and Society*, 22 (2018): 211-52; Amos Nadan, "The Route from Informal Peasant Land Ownership to Formal Tenancy and Eviction in Palestine, 1800s-1947," *Continuity and Change*, 36 (2021): 233-256. Holbrook and Fark point out that Palestinian land, inhabited by peasants for decades or centuries, was often claimed and placed under the legal control of Ottoman officials, including Sultan Abdulhamid and elite Arab families in Jerusalem and Nablus in the middle and late 19th century. This occurred as land ownership shifted from collective ownership to increasingly private ownership under the Tanzimat (Ottoman Reorganization) and other economic 'reforms' (Hatt-i Serif of Gulhane of 1839 and the Hatt-i Humayun Land Law of 1856), and under the influence of European diplomats. Fark's articles describe in great detail the lengthy, convoluted, and often corrupt process of privatization and sale of lands in late Ottoman Palestine, which was accelerated by German Templers and German diplomats in the process of establishing Templer colonies in Palestine. This European intervention on behalf of Christian colonists in the 1870s paved the way for Zionists to follow their example in the decades that followed. The Templers were sympathetic to Zionists and sold land to them for settlements in the 1880s and 1890s.



25. On the French intervention in Lebanon, which was a forerunner of the British and Zionist intervention in Palestine, see Ussama Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism: Community, History and Violence in Nineteenth Century Ottoman Lebanon* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000). The French conquest and defeat of Amir Faysal al-Husayni's fledgling Syrian state in Damascus in July of 1920, as well as the nationwide Egyptian revolt in 1919 against British rule and the jihad in Iraq (1914-1921) against the British invasion of Iraq to secure the Iranian oil fields near the border and near Mosul, during World War I, served as a political backdrop to the eruption of Palestinian riots in the Old City of Jerusalem in 1920 and in Jaffa in 1921. These riots, in which dozens of Jews as well as Palestinians were killed (Palestinians in reprisals and by British Mandate police), were the first examples of mass communal violence between Palestinians and Jews in Palestine. Ze'ev Jabotinsky had been drilling up to 600 armed Zionist settlers in Jerusalem prior to the riots, and Zionist crowds mocked the Palestinians rallying in the Nabi Musa Festival to honor the Prophet Musa (Moses) before the violence began. The defeat of the first independent Arab state in Syria in 1920 was a colonial forerunner to the implantation of a Jewish state in Palestine.

26. Alan Dowty, "A Question Outweighing All Others," *Israel Studies* 6, no. 1 (Spring, 2001): 34-54, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/30245563?seq=2>. This article includes an English translation of Yitzhak Epstein's article *A Hidden Question*, published in the Russian Hebrew journal *HaShiloah* in 1907; Dowty, *Arabs and Jews*, 2019, 224-231; Laqueur, *A History of Zionism*, 307-08.

27. Laqueur, *A History of Zionism*, 319-20. Segev, *A State at Any Cost*.

28. Rashid Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 35-88; Masalha, *Palestine*, 214-18. On the Palestinian geographer al-Muqadassi (941-991 CE), see Sylvia Wu, "In the Name of Shiraz: The Stone Mosques of the East African Coast Reconsidered," *Postmedieval: A Journal of Medieval Cultural Studies*, 13, (2022): 502-502 and Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Muqadassi, *The Best Divisions for Knowledge of the Regions: A Translation of Absan al-Taqasim Fi Ma'rifat al-Aqalm*, trans. Basil Anthony Collins (Reading, UK: Garnet Publishing, 1994); Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity*, p.35-88; Masalha, *Palestine*, 214-18.

29. On Beitas, see Masalha, *Palestine*, 268-274, 276-286. Khalil Beitas was followed as a literary figure by novelist Ghassan Kanafani and poet Mahmoud Darwish, whose work in the post-Nakba era defined the Palestinian literary canon for a revolutionary generation; also see Magdalena Pycinska, *Local and International Politics and the Expression of Palestinian Identity* for a speech given at the Dakam International Studies Conference in Istanbul during September of 2017 in *Proceedings of the Dakam International Studies Conference*, 145-162, available through [www.dakam.org](http://www.dakam.org); accessed 11/24/2023, 3pm PT; 28.

30. See Masalha, *Palestine*, 278-286 and on Mayor Musa Qasim al-Husayni, 291; Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity*, 17-19, 35-88, 119-44; Mary Hanania, "Jurji Habib Hanania; History of the Earliest Press in Palestine, 1908-1014," *The Palestine Chronicle*, 32 (Autumn 20017), <https://www.palestine-studies.org/en/node/77872>.

31. Masalha, *Palestine*, 290-98. Al-Darwazah, al-Muzaffar, al-Shawa and 'Abd al-Hadi were Palestinian nationalists and Arab Nationalists; they saw no contradictions between these movements, being far less concerned with narrow notions of nationalist specificity and more concerned with fluid regional affiliations (similar to the Islamists, such as Rashid al-Rida, et al). Al-Darwazah served as Mayor of East Jerusalem while it was still under Jordanian control (prior to 1967); and according to Nur

Masalha al-Shawa, mayor of Gaza City, was involved in weapons distribution for Palestinian resistance as early as 1919 between Damascus and Gaza. Mufti al-Hajj Amin al-Husayni, despite his central role in organizing the Palestinian National Movement from 1918-1936, is rarely acknowledged in contemporary Palestine for his significant role, due to the horror associated with the Nazis and the Holocaust and the damage done by Zionist and Israeli literature and polemics about Palestinian and Arab sympathy for Nazism, which aside from the Mufti was negligible. See Philip Mattar, *The Mufti of Jerusalem, al-Hajj Amin al-Husayni and the Palestinian National Movement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 1-18, 33-64, 140-54. For more insight on the convergences and divides between Arab and Palestinian nationalism and Islamist movements in the late Ottoman era and beyond, see Bashir al-Nafi, *Arabism and Islamism and the Palestine Question, 1908-1941* (Reading, UK: Ithaca Press, 1998).

32. Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity*, 119-35; Masalha, *Palestine*, 278-86.

33. Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity*, 119-35; Masalha, *Palestine*, p. 278-86.

34. Mark Sanagan, *Lightning Through the Clouds: Izz al-Din al-Qassam and the Making of the Modern Middle East* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2020), 1-9, 92-105, 134-46; Matthew Hughes, "The Banality of Brutality: British Armed Forces and the repression of the Arab revolt in Palestine, 1936-39," *English Historical Review*, 124, 314-54, <https://v-scheiner.brunel.ac.uk/bitstream/2438/725/4/The%20banality%20of%20brutality.pdf>. Hughes basically accepts the statistics provided by Palestinian historian Walid Khalidi, in *Before Their Diaspora: A Photographic History of the Palestinians 1876-1948*, published by the Institute for Palestinian Studies in Beirut, 1984. On the role of Abd al-Qadir al-Husayni in the Palestinian Uprising, see Ted Swedenburg, *Memories of Revolt, The 1936-39 Rebellion and the Palestinian National Past* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2003), 76-137 and Rosemary Sayigh, *Palestinians: From Peasants to Revolutionaries: A People's History* (London: Zed Books, 1979).

35. The European colonization of the Muslim World began with the Portuguese and Spanish conquests of Morocco (from 1415-1578) and across North Africa and the Philippines by the Spanish in the 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> centuries. Portuguese imperial domination included East Africa, Hormuz, Oman, Western India, Malacca (Malay Peninsula) and in the Maluku Islands (of Indonesia) in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Russian colonization began in Muslim Kazan, Astrakhan, and Siberia in the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century; it continued in the Caucasus and Central Asia in the 18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The Dutch colonized Indonesia in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. British colonization in India, Gambia, Nigeria, Egypt, Palestine, Iraq, Iran, Malaysia, et al began in the 17<sup>th</sup>. French colonization occurred in Egypt under Napoleon Bonaparte 1798-1800 and also in West Asia; the French continued in West Africa in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and across North Africa, beginning with Algeria in 1830 and continuing through the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Tunisia, Morocco, and Syria/Lebanon. The U.S. invaded and occupied the Southern Philippines of the Muslim Moros in 1898 and into the 20<sup>th</sup> century; it continued its imperialism in Iran in 1953, as well as Lebanon in 1958 and 1983-84, and in Iraq, Afghanistan, and across the African Sahel well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The U.S. support for Israel from 1948 and especially since 1967 is perhaps among the most important U.S. foreign policy commitments. For an analysis of the French intervention in Lebanon that was a precursor to the British occupation in Palestine, see Makdisi, *The Culture of Sectarianism*.

36. Tomas Zdechovsky, "The Czech Republic and Israel: A Unique Friendship," *Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs*, <https://jcpa.org/mission-impossible-repairing-the-ties-between-europe-and-israel/the-czech-republic-and-israel-a-unique->

[friendship/#:~:text=The%20exact%20numbers%20are%20hard,heavy%20machine%20guns%2C%20and%2050](#) (accessed 02/08/2024, 6pm, PT). The Republic of Czechoslovakia, an ally of Britain and the U.S. since World War I, led by Tomas Masaryk, Edvard Benes, and Jan Masaryk, fought German settlement in Czechoslovakia and German domination throughout World War II, returning to power in 1945 in a coalition with the popular Communist Party and its leader, Klement Gottwald, who succeeded Benes and Masaryk in the February 1948 Communist Coup. The coup was orchestrated by the U.S.S.R. Gottwald served as President after Benes' resignation in June of 1948. Benes was ill from several strokes in 1947, so aid to Israel was facilitated by Jan Masaryk and Klement Gottwald, acting as Foreign Minister and Prime Minister respectively. During 1947-48 era, Czechoslovakia provide crucial military arms to Israel, including 25 Avia-S 199 Fighter jets, 61 Supermarine Spitfire fighter aircraft, 34,500 Mauser P-18 guns, 6000 light machine guns, 900 heavy machine guns, 50 pistols, and 50 million bullets as well as training 82 Zionist-Israeli pilots and 69 ground technicians. Ben-Gurion acknowledged that without this military equipment and training, Israel could not have won the 1947-49 War of Independence. The Soviet-orchestrated coup did not stop this military assistance to Israel until well after the conclusion of the war; the U.S.S.R. was among the first nation states to recognize Israel.

37. Israel maintains complete control of Area C in the West Bank (mostly the eastern half; the entire Jordan Valley, except for Jericho, and the western border area), which is 60% of the West Bank. The Palestinian Authority solely controls only 18% of the West Bank, in the Jabal Nablus, Jenin, and Tulkarem region in the north, two separated zones in and near Ramallah, two separated zones near Bethlehem, three separated zones in and to the southwest of Hebron, and the small, isolated Jericho area. Israel and the Palestinian Authority (PA) exercise "joint control" of Area B, which constitutes of 22 % of the West Bank. Gaza, which has been under the control of Hamas, elected to power there in 2006, is a coastal strip of 141 square miles (365 sq. kilometers) and is 25 miles long and 3.7-7.5 miles wide (41 kilometers long and 6-12 kilometers wide). See Isabel Kershner, "Israel's Push to Expand West Bank Settlements, Explained," *New York Times*, June 29, 2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/06/29/world/middleeast/israel-west-bank-settlements-expansion.html>; "Settlements," *B'tselem*, 2019, <https://www.btselem.org/settlements>; "Israel's Occupation: 50 Years of Dispossession," *Amnesty International*, June, 2017, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2017/06/israel-occupation-50-years-of-dispossession/>; "Who are Israeli Settlers and Why Do They Live on Palestinians Lands?" *Aljazeera*, June 11, 2023, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/11/6/who-are-israeli-settlers-and-why-do-they-live-on-palestinian-lands>; "Israeli Settler Population Now Surpasses Half a Million," *Associated Press* via *PBS*, February 2, 2023, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/israeli-settler-population-in-west-bank-surpasses-half-a-million>; this figure does not include more than 200,000 settlers in the expanded East Jerusalem area; Tara John and Adi Koplewitz, "Israelis are arming up since Hamas' Attack. Some Are Worried That it's Playing to the Far-Right's Vision for the Country," *CNN*, Nov. 14, 2023, <https://www.cnn.com/2023/11/14/middleeast/israel-guns-hamas-far-right/index.html>; Alex Harris and Sander Eizen, "Tracking the Religious Zionist Bloc in the Settlements," *Fikra Forum*, Nov. 22, 2022, <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/tracking-religious-zionist-party-bloc-settlements>; Reham Owda, "How Israeli Settlements Impede the Two-State Solution," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, March 7, 2023, <https://carnegieendowment.org/sada/89215>; Eric Cortollessa, "Choosing Not to Veto, Obama Lets Anti-Settlement Resolution Pass at UN Security Council," *The Times of Israel*, Dec. 23, 2106, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/choosing-not-to-veto-obama-lets-anti-settlement-resolution-pass-at-un-security-council/>.

38. On Full Spectrum Dominance, see General William S. Wallace of the U.S. Army in “FM 3-O Operations; The Army’s Blueprint,” *Military Review* (March-April 2008): 50-55, <https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/PDF-UA-docs/Wallace-2008-UA.pdf>.

39. Adam Bilinski, “Israel: Overview and Demographic,” *Study*, November 11, 2023, <https://study.com/learn/lesson/israel-population-ethnic-groups-demographics.html>; Claudia de Martino and Ruth Hanau Santini, “Israel: A Demographic Ticking Bomb in Today’s One-State Reality,” *Aspenia Online*, July 10, 2023, <https://aspensiaonline.it/israel-a-demographic-ticking-bomb-in-todays-one-state-reality/>; “Israel’s Increasingly Divided Society,” *Pew Research Center*, March 8, 2016, <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2016/03/08/israels-religiously-divided-society/>; Nadeem Karkabi, “Jewish Religious Nationalism I Israel and the Racist Exclusion of Palestinians,” *Berkeley Forum, Berkeley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs*, Georgetown University, August 6, 2021, <https://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/responses/jewish-religious-nationalism-in-israel-and-the-racist-exclusion-of-palestinians>.