Introduction

How Zionism's Six Traditional Schools of Thought Shape Today's Conversation

In the beginning was the idea, the Zionist idea. In 1959, when the rabbi, historian, and Zionist leader Arthur Hertzberg published what would become the classic Zionist anthology in English, the State of Israel was barely a decade old. *The* Zionist idea, recognizing the Jews as a people with rights to establish a state in their homeland, *Eretz Yisra'el,* was still relatively new. True, Zionism had biblical roots. True, Jews had spent 1,878 years longing to rebuild their homeland after the Romans destroyed the Second Temple. True, Europeans had spent more than a century debating "the Jewish problem"—what to do with this unassimilable and often-detested people. Still, it was hard to believe that the Wandering Jews had returned home.

Building toward Israel's establishment in 1948, the Zionist movement had to convince the world—and the skeptical Jewish supermajority—of the fundamental Zionist logic. The European Enlightenment's attempts to reduce Judaism just to a religion failed. The Jewish people always needed more than a synagogue as communal space. In modern times, Jews' unique national-religious fusion earned them collective rights to statehood, somewhere. Next, the Land of Israel, the ancestral Jewish homeland, was the logical, legitimate, and viable place to relaunch that Jewish national project. Finally, restoring Jewish sovereignty there was a pressing priority, to save the long-oppressed Jews—and let them rejuvenate, spawning a strong, proud, idealistic New Jew.

After realizing this primal Zionist idea in 1948, Zionism evolved. The Jewish national liberation movement now sought to defend and perfect the state—understanding, as the Israeli author A. B. Yehoshua writes, that "A Zionist is a person who accepts the principle that the State of Israel doesn't belong solely to its citizens, but to the entire Jewish people." As

Israel's builders steadied the state, this second-stage Zionism revolved around the question, What kind of nation should Israel be?

In today's third stage, with Israel safe, prosperous, thriving, yet still assailed, Zionism's torchbearers find themselves defending three politically unpopular assumptions: First, the Jews' status as what the philosopher Michael Walzer calls "an anomalous people," with its unique religious and national overlap, does not diminish Jews' collective rights to their homeland or the standard benefits enjoyed by every nation-state, particularly security and legitimacy. Second, the Palestinians' contesting land claims—whatever one thinks of them, from left to right—do not negate the Jewish title to Israel. Third, Israel has a dual mission: to save Jewish bodies and redeem the Jewish soul.

Zionists, therefore, recognize the Jewish people as a nation not just a religion, who, having established the Jewish state in their national homeland *Eretz Yisra'el*, now seek to perfect it. As Israel's first prime minister David Ben-Gurion said, "Israel cannot just be a refuge. . . . it has to be much, much more." Now, nearly sixty years after *The Zionist Idea* debuted, and as Israel celebrates its seventieth birthday, this successor anthology chronicles these Zionist challenges and opportunities—presenting different Israeli and Diaspora visions of how Israel should flourish.

The Zionist Ideas Today

Since 1959, *The Zionist Idea* has been the English speaker's Zionist Bible, the defining text for anyone interested in studying the Jewish national liberation movement. *The Zionist Idea* was so authoritative it took me decades before I realized that all the Zionist voices I heard in my head spoke in English, when few actually had.

Arthur Hertzberg's classic invited readers into sprawling conversations about Judaism, Jewish history, modernity, and industrialization, about nationalism's meaning and sovereignty's potential. Readers jumped from thinker to thinker, savoring the famous Zionists—Herzl, Ahad Ha'am, Gordon—while encountering unfamiliar ones—the Berdichevskys, Katznelsons, Brenners.

To some academics and activists, Hertzberg's tome was such a foundational work that any update is like digitizing the Mona Lisa or color-

izing *Casablanca*. As an avowed enthusiast, I can well understand this perspective. Nonetheless, history's affirmative answer—"Yes!"—to the first edition's fundamental question—is a Jewish state viable?—does necessitate a new volume. In the ensuing decades, political, religious, and social progress transformed the Zionist conversation. Israel's 1967 Six-Day War triumph stirred questions Hertzberg never imagined, especially how Israel and the Jewish people should understand Zionism when the world perceives Israel as Goliath not David. The Revisionist Likud's victory under Menachem Begin in 1977 generated new dilemmas regarding how increasingly left-wing, cosmopolitan Diaspora Jews should relate to an increasingly right-wing, nationalist Israel. And Israel's emergence as a high-tech powerhouse vindicated Zionism, even as some feared capitalism's corruptions.

Six decades of arguments, dreams, frustrations, and reality checks also intruded. Deciding what enduring historic selections merited inclusion in a new edition and which others were outdated required comparing the finalists with hundreds of other texts. What I thought would be a quick attempt to modernize *The Zionist Idea* blossomed into a major overhaul.

In contemplating what *The Zionist Ideas* should be, I returned to the original mandate. In 1955, Emanuel Neumann of the Theodor Herzl Foundation invited Arthur Hertzberg to publish, in English, the key Zionist texts showing "the internal moral and intellectual forces in Jewish life" that shaped this "idea which galvanized a people, forged a nation, and made history." As Neumann noted: "Behind the miracle of the Restoration lies more than a century of spiritual and intellectual ferment which produced a crystallized Zionist philosophy and a powerful Zionist movement."[1]

The golden age of Zionist manifesto writing is over. But the rich payload of ideas in this volume—and those left behind on my cutting room floor—testify to the Zionist debate's ongoing vitality. Readers will discover significant writings that advance our understanding of what Zionism achieved, sought to achieve, or still seeks to achieve. No reactive or headline-driven op-eds appear here—only enduring visions. Respecting Hertzberg's dual sensibility as scholar and activist, I sought only defining, aspirational, programmatic texts. The expanded Zionist debate as Zionism went from marginal to mainstream warranted including many

more essays, even if only excerpted briefly. Using this criteria, I reduced Hertzberg's thirty-seven thinkers to twenty-six. To reflect the burgeoning conversation since, I multiplied the number of entries to 169, while respecting the publisher's mandate to shorten the text to approximately 180,000 words—Hertzberg's was 240,000.

Of course, no volume could contain every significant Zionist essay, any more than the argumentative Jewish people could ever agree on a Zionist canon. Nevertheless, all these pieces help assemble the larger Zionist puzzle—an ever-changing movement of "becoming" not just "being," of saving the world while building a nation. Together, these texts help compare what key thinkers sought and what they wrought, while anticipating the next chapters of this dynamic process.

Non-Jewish voices do not appear here. There's a rich history of non-Jews defending Zionism eloquently—from George Eliot to Winston Churchill, from Martin Luther King Jr. to Daniel Patrick Moynihan, from President John Kennedy to the Reverend John Hagee. Moynihan's United Nations Speech in 1975, for example, galvanized Americans to defend democracy and decency when the General Assembly singled out one form of nationalism, Zionism, as racist. However, most such texts by non-Jews are defensive or explanatory rather than personal or visionary. Beyond this, including non-Jews would detract from the focus on how the Jewish conversation about Jewish nationalism established and now influences Israel. This book gives Jewish Zionists their say—demonstrating how their Zionist ideas evolved.

Like Abraham's welcoming shelter, the book's Big Tent Zionism is open to all sides, yet defined by certain boundaries. Looking left, staunch critics of Israeli policies belong—but not anti-Zionists who reject the Jewish state, universalists who reject Jewish nationalism, or post-Zionists who reject Zionism. Looking right, Religious Zionists who have declared a culture war today against secular Zionists fit. However, the self-styled "Canaanite" Yonatan Ratosh (1908–81), who allied with Revisionist Zionists but then claimed Jews who didn't live in Israel abandoned the Jewish people, fails Zionism's peoplehood test. Similarly, Meir Kahane (1932–90), whose party was banned from the Knesset for "incitement to racism," fails Zionism's democracy and decency tests. All the visions

included preserve Zionism's post-1948 principle of Israel as a Jewish democracy in the Jewish homeland—inviting debate regarding what Israel means for Israelis, the Jewish people, and the world.

The original work excluded female thinkers, overlooking Henrietta Szold the organizer, Rachel Bluwstein the poet, Rahel Ben Zvi the pioneer, and Golda Meir, the Labor leader. It bypassed the *Mizrahi* dimension. Given his Labor Zionist bias, writing two decades before Likud's 1977 victory, Hertzberg approached Ze'ev Jabotinsky as a fighter asserting Jewish rights but not as a dreamer envisioning a liberal nationalist state.

This new volume also reframes the Zionist conversation within six Zionist schools of thought which this introduction defines and traces: Political, Labor, Revisionist, Religious, Cultural, and Diaspora Zionism. Most histories of Zionism track the ideological ferment that shaped the first five. Diaspora Zionism, the sixth stream, has changed significantly. Zionism began, mostly, with European Jews debating their future individually and collectively; American Zionists checked out from the personal quest but bought in—gradually—to aid the communal state-building project. Today, most Diaspora Jews seek inspiration, not salvation, from Israel.

Organizing the debate around these six schools makes sense because most Zionisms were hyphenate Zionisms—crossbreeding the quest for Jewish statehood with other dreams regarding Judaism or the world. Historians must often be zoologists, categorizing ideas and individuals resistant to being forced tidily into a box. The French historian Marc Bloch—a Jew the Nazis murdered in 1944—explained in his classic *The Historian's Craft* that history should not just generate a "disjointed, and . . . nearly infinite enumeration." Worthwhile history delivers "a rational classification and progressive intelligibility."[2] This insight suits the Zionist narrative.

Refracting Zionism through the lens of these six visions places today's debates in historical context, illustrating the core values of each that sometimes united, sometimes fractured, the perpetually squabbling Zionist movement. Seeing how various ideas cumulatively molded broader ideological camps illuminates Zionist history—and many contemporary Jewish debates.

Some may question the choice to associate certain thinkers who seemingly defy categorization with particular schools of thought. Admittedly, great thinkers often demonstrate greatness through their range. Yet this general categorization locates the texts historically and ideologically, even if a particular Zionist thinker never waved that particular ideological banner. Putting these thinkers into conversation with one another can prove clarifying. For example, placing the philosopher Eliezer Schweid among Revisionists does not make this capacious thinker a Revisionist. Yet his analyses of the ongoing Zionist mission and the Promised Land's cosmic power explain certain directions of modern Revisionist thought. Similarly, the Jerusalem Platform, the vision statement of Herzl's Zionist Organization, later of the World Zionist Organization, defines Zionism broadly, embracing Political Zionism, saluting Cultural Zionism. Still, its multidimensionality best illustrates the many ways Diaspora Zionists engage Zionism today. Moreover, these six intellectual streams never came with membership cards, even though some of these schools of thought spawned some Israeli political parties.

Purists may thus insist that Labor Zionism has become left-wing Zionism and Revisionist Zionism, right-wing Zionism. Using the original terms contextualizes the ideologies, spotlighting how each faction perpetuates—or abandons—its historic legacy. Words like "Religious" in "Religious Zionism" risk fostering incorrect assumptions; some non-Orthodox Jews express a Religious Zionism, meaning their Zionism also stems from faith. Including them emphasizes that no one can monopolize or too narrowly define any one tendency.

The Zionist Ideas catalogues the thinkers within the six schools over these three major phases of Zionism:

1. Pioneers: Founding the Jewish State—until 1948: How dreamers like Theodor Herzl and A. D. Gordon, Ze'ev Jabotinsky and Rav Kook, Ahad Ha'am and Louis Brandeis, conceived of Jewish nationalism and a Jewish state;
2. Builders: Actualizing and modernizing the Zionist blueprints—from 1948 until 2000: How leaders like David Ben-Gurion, Golda

Meir, and Menachem Begin, along with thinkers as diverse as Naomi Shemer, Ovadia Yosef, and Yitz Greenberg built Israel.

3. Torchbearers: Reassessing, redirecting, reinvigorating in the twenty-first century: How heirs to Israel's dreamers and builders reconcile what Professor Ilan Troen calls the Zionism of Intention with the realities of modern Israel—and the Diaspora.

Although, history's progress always tweaks historians' periodization schemes, this division follows a compelling logic. The year 1948 divides the movement that might have failed—until the British mandate's final moments—from the movement that executed a stunning historical feat. Pivoting at 2000 satisfies our bias toward half-century and century markers to shape this splash of time. It also marks a shift in the Zionist conversation, as the campaign to delegitimize Zionism intensified just as Zionists recognized a more stable, prosperous, capitalist yet controversial Israel coexisting with a more confident yet identity-challenged Diaspora.

Sadly, the most frequent question non-Israeli Jews have asked me about this book is, "Will you include anti-Zionists, too?" When feminist anthologies include sexists, LGBT anthologies include homophobes, and civil rights anthologies include racists, I will consider anti-Zionists. This Jewish need to include our enemies when telling our own story tells its own story.

No volume can be everything to all readers. This edition, like the original, addresses English speakers. While sensitive to the Israeli conversation, the selection process reflects a Diaspora sensibility. Israelis need a Hebrew translation—keeping many texts, and adding others.

Zionism: The Prehistory

In his majestic introduction to *The Zionist Idea,* Arthur Hertzberg called Zionism the "twice-born movement," noting that by the 1860s, the dream Moses Hess and others had envisioned was "stillborn" because hopes of "assimilation and religious Reform" still dominated.[3] Antisemitism had yet to disillusion that first generation.

Actually, the Bible spawned the Zionist idea, making Zionism a thrice-born idea. That first premodern birth reflected the Jewish homeland's

centrality to Judaism. The second mid-nineteenth-century attempt emphasized peoplehood—that Jews are distinct not only religiously but sociologically and thus politically. The third incarnation succeeded by creating a movement that established a modern democratic state for this distinct people on their ancestral homeland.

Some start the Jewish story with Abram becoming Abraham in the Bible. Others note the archaeological evidence of neighboring villages in northern Israel: one left behind eaten pig bones, the other did not. Judaism's foundation, however, begins with a holy triangle: In the Land, the People fulfill God's vision.

While every homeland has historical and cultural landmarks, the Promised Land adds moral, and spiritual, dimensions. Jewish heroes—Deborah the poetess, Samuel the prophet, Samson the strongman—flourished in this greenhouse for great collective Jewish enterprises. Such leaders imparted abiding messages mixing pride in the Jewish peoplehood narrative with the universal moral quest for equality and freedom.

Jewish history crests toward David the charismatic founding the national capital, Jerusalem, and Solomon the wise building the magnificent Holy Temple, embodying Jewish piety, probity, and power. Kings I reports that King Solomon merited honors and riches because the justice he dispensed reflected his caring for the people. The Zionist movement sought to restore this glorious history brimming with spiritual and moral potential.

Although the wandering Jewish people could not always remain on the land, their land remained in their hearts. After the Second Temple's destruction in 70 CE and the mass dispersion of Jews, culminating with the infusion of Muslims after the Muslim conquest in 636, Jews nevertheless remained tethered to the Land of Israel. Jews always prayed toward Jerusalem, one of the four "holy cities," along with Safed, Tiberias, and Hebron, where Jewish communities maintained footholds. In considering themselves "exiled," Jews defined themselves by their homeland not their temporary homes.

While kept apart from Israel, the children of Israel remained a people apart. That idiosyncratic Jewish mix of religion and peoplehood kept the Jews in a true exilic condition, East and West. Jewish laws and communal

institutions encouraged self-government. In the West, after the eleventh century, most Ashkenazic Jews lived in *kehillot,* independent communities. As long as the community paid taxes and obeyed the external laws, Jews could maintain their rabbinical hierarchy, schools, social services, and community funds. They could be ethnically, nationally, ethically, and religiously Jewish, mastering democratic skills that would be useful centuries later. Their Judaism was so integrated they lacked a word for "religion." The modern Hebrew word for religion, *dat,* borrows the Persian word for law.

In the East—North Africa, the Middle East, and Asia—*Mizrahi* Jews also were detached. Islam imposed a second-class "dhimmi" status on Jews, Christians, and other minorities. This theoretical protection actually degraded non-Islamic peoples. Still, *Mizrahi* Jews' instinctive distinctiveness generated praise when the formal Zionist movement emerged in Europe. As "born Zionists" forever dreaming of the Land of Israel, these *Mizrahim* always were ready to return home.

Origins of the Zionist Movement

The nineteenth century resurrected the Zionist idea. Europe had emerged from the Middle Ages into an age of "isms," powerful modernizing movements. Rationalism celebrated the mind, trusting logic and science to advance humanity technologically and socially. Liberalism celebrated the individual, recognizing every individual's basic rights—a notion derived from biblical notions of equality. And nationalism celebrated the collective, organizing governments along ethnic, historical, Romantic, geographic connections—and shared destiny.

These movements revolutionized Jewish life. The Enlightenment, the modernizing movement of rationalism, liberalism, and individualism, promised to secure respect for Jews as equals in society. The Emancipation promised to grant Jews basic political rights. The Jews' version of the Enlightenment, melting their ghetto world, was the Haskalah. From the Hebrew root *s-k-l* for brain, the movement's name reflected its faith that reason would liberate the Jews.

The *maskilim,* the Enlightened Jews, wanted normalization, while valuing their Jewish heritage. In the 1700s, the philosopher Moses Mendels-

sohn advised: "be a cosmopolitan man in the street and a Jew at home." In 1862 the socialist philosopher Moses Hess further infuriated his former comrade Karl Marx by toasting Judaism's duality: "my nationality," he proclaimed, "is inseparably connected with my ancestral heritage, with the Holy Land and the Eternal City, the birthplace of the belief in the divine unity of life and of the hope for the ultimate brotherhood of all men." Fifteen years later, Peretz Smolenskin, born in Russia, living in Vienna, claimed Judaism survived exile because Jews "always regarded" themselves "as a people—a spiritual nation" with Torah "as the foundation of its statehood." These and a few other thinkers mapped out Zionism's core ideas, paralleling Jewish nationhood to the other European nations then coalescing. But history was not yet ready for Zionism.

European nationalism did not tolerate Jewish distinctiveness. In 1789, riled by French Revolutionary nationalism and egalitarianism, the liberal deputy Count Stanislas Adélaide de Clermont-Tonnerre, thinking he was defending Jews' basic human rights, proclaimed: "We must refuse everything to the Jews as a nation and accord everything to Jews as individuals." Then, in 1806 Napoleon Bonaparte convened an Assembly of Jewish Notables, christening it as the venerable Jewish tribunal, the Sanhedrin. Pushing French nationalism, the emperor posed twelve menacing questions probing Jewish stances on intermarriage, polygamy, divorce, and usury—testing whether Jews were French first. Telling Napoleon what he demanded to hear, calling themselves "Frenchmen of the Mosaic persuasion," these Jews unraveled three millennia of an integrated Jewish identity.

Six decades later, when Enlightenment and Emancipation spread from French and German Jewish elites to Eastern Europe, the Russian Jewish poet J. L. Gordon urged his fellow Russian Jews: "Raise your head high, straighten your back, And gaze with loving eyes open" at your new "brothers." Gordon echoed Moses Mendelssohn's formula for the new, double-thinking non-Zionist Jew: "Be a person on the street and a Jew at home."[4] He articulated the Haskalah's promise: an updated yet traditional Judaism at home, but acceptance, normalcy, outside in Europe.

Alas, that old-fashioned affliction—Jew hatred—combined with many Jews' submissive approach to assimilationism, soured other Jews on the

Enlightenment. Symbolic punches culminated with the big blow from 1881 to 1884: pogroms, more than two hundred anti-Jewish riots unleashing mass hooliganism and rape. "The mob, a ravenous wolf in search of prey," Smolenskin wrote, "has stalked the Jews with a cruelty unheard of since the Middle Ages."

The pogroms annihilated Jews' modern messianic hope of redemption via universal acceptance. Some sulked back into the despairing ghetto. Some began what became the two-million-strong immigration to America. Some escaped into socialism's class-based promise of universalism. And a determined, marginal minority sought salvation through nationalism. "We have no sense of national honor; our standards are those of second-class people," Smolenskin smoldered. "We find ourselves . . . exulting when we are tolerated and befriended."

The great optimism these modern "isms" stirred—rationalism, secularism, liberalism, socialism, communism—had also helped breed that virulent, racial "ism": antisemitism. Enlightenment fans and critics embraced this all-purpose hatred. Antisemites hated Jews as modernizers and traditionalists, rich and poor, capitalists and communists. Blood-and-soil nationalists said the Jews would never fit in and should stop trying to belong; liberal nationalists said the Jews weren't trying hard enough to fit in and should stop sticking out.

Antisemitism represented European blood-and-soil nationalism gone foul; perfuming it with lofty liberal nationalist rhetoric intensified the betrayal. The Russian Jewish physician Leon Pinsker, whose very profession epitomized Enlightenment hopes, diagnosed this European disease, writing, "the Jews are ghosts, ethereal, disconnected." He predicted: "This pathological Judeaophobia will haunt Europe until the Jews have a national home like all other nations."

This European double cross crushed enlightened Jews' pipedreams and helped launch a state-oriented Zionism. The "thrice-born" old-new movement finally took, at least among a small band who believed the Jews were a nation; assimilation could never overcome antisemitism, and a reconstituted Jewish national home offered the only hope.

That said, the Zionist backstory is more complex than antisemitism serving as the (unkosher) yeast fermenting Jewish nationalism. The

philosopher Jean Paul Sartre erred when claiming the antisemite makes the Jew. Similarly, antisemitism marks but does not make Zionism: the persecution of Jews has legitimized and popularized the Zionist movement without defining it. Zionism is and always was more than anti-antisemitism.

In 1878 three years before the Russian pogroms, religious Jews established Petah Tikvah, the Gates of Hope, as Palestine's first modern Jewish agricultural settlement. In 1882 members of the group BILU, intent on cultivating the Holy Land, responded to the pogroms with hopes that transcended those crimes, articulating what would be the First Aliyah's communal vision: "HEAR O ISRAEL! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one, and our land Zion is our only hope."

In 1890 the Viennese anti-religious rebel Nathan Birnbaum coined the terms "Zionist" and "Zionism." Birnbaum translated the name of the coalition of post-pogrom organizations in Russia, "Hovevei Zion," sometimes "Hibbat Zion," "lovers of Zion," into German as "*Zionismus*," which quickly became Zionism.

By then, the stubborn linguist most responsible for reviving Hebrew was already at work. Born in 1858 in Lithuania, Eliezer Ben-Yehuda arrived in Palestine in that turning-point year of 1881, understanding that a national revival required a land—Israel, only Israel—and a language—Hebrew, only Hebrew. Forever experimenting, cannibalizing, hijacking, synthesizing, Ben-Yehuda called a tablecloth "*mappah*," from the Talmudic term; ice cream "*glidah*" from "*galid*," the Mishnaic word for frost; and socks "*garbayim*" from "*jawrab*," Arabic for sock—or possibly "*gorba*," Aramaic for leg garment. In waves of intellectual creativity, Ben-Yehuda modernized the language. With steady cultural leadership, he peddled it to the people. On November 29, 1922, when the British authorities mandated Hebrew as the Palestinian Jews' language, this early Zionist miracle achieved official sanction.

Zionist Solutions to "The Jewish Problem"

Movements often romanticize their founding moments, overemphasizing epiphanies supposedly launching their crusade. One oversimplification claims that publishing Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* in

1963 triggered modern feminism. Similarly, many mistakenly point to Theodor Herzl's Zionist "aha" moment. A cultivated, assimilated Middle European, Herzl was a frustrated playwright, lawyer, and journalist covering the divisive 1894 treason trial of a French army captain, Alfred Dreyfus. Legend has it that Herzl's Jewish identity awakened—and his Zionist vision emerged—when the crowds shouted "Death to the Jews" rather than "Death to the Traitor," a particularly reprehensible Jew-hating indulgence because Dreyfus had been framed. Two years later, in 1896, Herzl published his manifesto, *Der Judenstaat* (The Jewish state).

Herzl's breakthrough is also overstated. Like Friedan's feminism, Zionism had been simmering for decades. And Herzl wasn't such a non-Jewish Jew. Some of his Jewish nationalist musings predated the Dreyfus trial.

Still, Herzl's impact shouldn't be understated. As the nineteenth century ended amid intellectual chaos, fragmenting identity, great anticipation, and sheer Jewish anguish, his vision resonated. Herzl's mid-course correction for the Jewish people in their flight from ghetto to modernity reoriented their messianic hopes from oblivion toward Zion. The model Jewish society Zionism now envisioned would heal the "Jewish Problem" of antisemitism and the Jews' problem of assimilation while—added bonus—inspiring the Western world too.

More than the mugged Jew, the reluctant Zionist, Herzl was the balanced Jew, the model Zionist. He had one foot in the past and one in the present, one in European "isms" and one in Judaism, one in nineteenth-century Romantic liberal nationalism and one in a centuries-old Jewish religio-nationalism. Herzl embodied the thrice-born Jewish nationalist movement's two main streams: he grafted its Jewish character onto a Western national liberation movement.

Herzl was also the great Jewish doer. He could be grandiose, trying to build a state top down through white-tie-and-tails diplomacy, rubbing elbows not sullying hands or straining muscles. But, like a fairy godmother, he turned Jewish fantasies into realities: a Zionist Congress; a World Zionist Organization; a Zionist newspaper, *Die Welt* (The world); a Zionist novel, *Altneuland* (Old-new land); a Zionist fundraising machine, the Jewish National Fund; and, eventually, a Jewish state. If David Ben-Gurion was the Jewish revolution's King David—magnetic leader and

Spartan statesman—Theodor Herzl was its Moses, delivering the core ideas without reaching the Promised Land.

Herzl's defining axiom testified to his magic: "If you will it, it is no dream." Before Herzl there were various Zionist initiatives. When he died, there was not just *a* Zionist movement but *the* Zionist Movement, building toward a Jewish state for the Jewish people.

Many remember Herzl as garrison Zionist not dream fulfiller, largely because Asher Ginsberg, writing under the pen name Ahad Ha'am, attacked Herzl as Jewishly ignorant and politically grandiose. Worrying about Judaism more than the Jews, Ahad Ha'am doubted a state was "attainable." For a people oppressed by persecution and seduced by assimilation, he prescribed a national cultural renaissance in the Jewish homeland.

The spread of nationalism and antisemitism, combined with the Zionist movement's surprising momentum, made most Zionists Herzlian. Nevertheless, Ahad Ha'am's Cultural Zionism—thanks especially to Eliezer Ben-Yehuda—steeped the movement in enduring Jewish values, folk practices, and redemptive aspirations. Ben-Yehuda's linguistic revolution bridged Political and Cultural Zionism. He understood that without an independent political infrastructure in its homeland, the Jewish body politic would never heal, but without a thriving culture in its historic language, the Jewish soul would never revive. Today, we are Herzl when we flash our passports to enter or exit the Jewish state he envisioned—a flourishing political and economic entity that saved Jews. We are Ben-Yehuda when we speak Hebrew. We are Ahad Ha'am when we enjoy an Israeli song, movie, book, sensibility, personality quirk. And we are all of them when we push Israel to redeem Judaism and improve the world.

In short, Zionism was a Jewish response to the crisis of modernity. Herzl, whose political Zionism is now remembered as pragmatic and unromantic, envisioned that with a Jewish state, "We shall live at last as free people on our own soil, and in our own homes peacefully die." Yet he could also be prophetic. Imagining this new home of the Jews, he wrote: "The world will be liberated by our freedom, enriched by our wealth, magnified by our greatness."

While rooted in Jewish tradition, while inhaling Herzl's utopian yet European spirit, Zionism was also radical. In the early 1900s, the Hebrew

novelist and yeshiva dropout Micah Joseph Berdichevsky flipped the rabbinic warning against being distracted by nature when studying holy books. Insisting that Israel will "be saved" only when Jews notice trees not texts, he cried: "Give us back our fine trees and fine fields! Give us back the Universe!"

This cry went beyond returning to the land. It called for purifying, electrifying revolution. The socialist and Political Zionist, David Ben-Gurion, thus described Zionism's double challenge: While rebelling against external powers, akin to the American, French, and Russian Revolutions, Zionism also rejected the internal, beaten, ghetto-Jewish personality. Zionism sought to spawn New Jews to form an *Am Segula*, an enlightened nation inspiring other nations—another revamped biblical concept.

Many entwined this personal Jewish revolution with the return to nature. Zionism's secular rebbe, Aharon David Gordon, preached that "a life of labor" binding "a people to its soil and to its national culture" would return Jews to "normal," finally acting, looking, feeling, working, and earning like other nations. The bearded, intense Gordon modeled this principle by moving from Russia to Palestine in 1904 at age forty-eight and eventually, awkwardly, wielding a shovel at Kibbutz Degania Aleph. His insistence on workers' dignity spurred today's Labor social justice activism, while his mystical love of the land inspired today's religious and Revisionist settlers.

As an enlightened movement disdaining ghetto Judaism, Zionism in extreme form mirror imaged Reform Judaism, with some Zionists jettisoning religious not national identity. Some Herzlian Zionists reasoned that, freed from antisemitism, Jews could flourish as cultivated Europeans away from Europeans. This quest for "normalcy" misread Jewish history and civilization: Zionism doesn't work as a de-Judaized movement or a movement lacking big ideas. It's as futile as trying to cap a geyser; Jewish civilization's intellectual, ideological, and spiritual energy is too great.

The symbol of this extreme was Herzl's consideration of the British offer of a homeland in Uganda—technically the Kenya highlands. Reeling from the Kishinev pogroms that spring, Herzl endorsed this immediate intervention to alleviate Jewish suffering. The proposal almost killed the movement. Recognizing the danger, Herzl concluded the divisive Sixth

Zionist Congress in August 1903, by saying, in Hebrew: "If I forget thee, O, Jerusalem, may my right hand forget its cunning"—reaffirming his commitment to the homeland.

The traditionalists' fury taught the territorialists how central Zion was to Zionism. It also underlay Chaim Weizmann's classic exchange with Lord Balfour—whose 1917 declaration validated modern Zionism officially, internationally. "Mr. Balfour, suppose I was to offer you Paris instead of London, would you take it?" Weizmann asked. "But Dr. Weizmann, we have London," Balfour replied, prompting Weizmann's line: "True, but we had Jerusalem when London was a marsh."[5]

The territorialists' defeat was defining. Zionism was a Western national movement seeking political independence and what German theorists called *Gewaltmonopol des Staates*, the monopoly on the legitimate use of violence within that political entity. Yet this Western hybrid, steeped in Jewish lore, needed the language to be Hebrew, the flag and national symbols to be Jewish, the land to be Israel, and the mission to be messianic. Zionism was Davidic in its pragmatism—kingly—and Isaiahan in its sweep—high-minded; this cosmic element was essential to its success. In loving the land and people, Zionism—at its most secular—remained a passionate, Romantic, religious movement. Most early secular Zionists could not take the Zion out of Zionism, or divorce the Jews and their future state from Judaism. (Similarly, today's "secular" Israelis denounce religion while living by the Jewish religious calendar, speaking the holy language, and often knowing Jewish texts better than many of their "religious" American cousins.)

The Zionist revolution also defied the twentieth-century trend toward individualism and the Jewish trend toward sectarianism. "Judaism is fundamentally national," Ahad Ha'am insisted, "and all the efforts of the 'Reformers' to separate the Jewish religion from its national element have no result except to ruin both the nationalism and the religion." "Hatikvah," the national anthem, rhapsodized about *the* one, ancient, enduring hope—and, like so many Jewish prayers, spoke of abstractions as singular, but the people as collective: *The* Jewish spirit sings as *the* eyes seek Zion, but *our* hope of two thousand years is to be a free nation in *our* land. Decades later, Rabbi David Hartman would compare Zionism's

rebellion against religion to the rebel teenager's loud vow to run away from home—without actually leaving.

Thus began a glorious exercise in state building, and nationalist myth making. The hearty *halutzim*, the pioneers, came to the land "*livnot u'lehibanot bah*," to build and be personally rebuilt. Their sweat irrigated the national revival. They drained swamps, paved roads, founded kibbutzim. They revitalized old cities, especially Jerusalem, and established new cities, most famously Tel Aviv, the rejuvenating "hill of spring." They put the passionate, land-loving words of writers such as Rachel Bluwstein to stirring, land-building melodies. And they fought like good New Jews—and ancient Israelites. They battled the elements. They skirmished with some Arab neighbors, while cooperating with others. They resisted despair. And as they created a bronzed, self-confident, battle-tested farmer-soldier, a New Jew, they quarreled ideologically with the intensity of their ghettoish Talmudist selves.

January 4, 1925, marked a milestone in national development: the founding of Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Opening a university reflected Zionism's rationalist, scientific side, its understanding that a true cultural revolution included what the national poet Hayyim Nahman Bialik called "all elements of life, from the lowest to the most sublime," and a certain confidence. If you can stop draining swamps temporarily to launch lasting cultural institutions, you're on your way to building a sophisticated nation-state.

Bialik, the poet who rejected exile, now offered prose of liberation. Standing on Mount Scopus with its view of Jerusalem's historic walls, he welcomed this new university into a long line of "nationalist schools in all its forms" that had started with the lowly *heder,* a one room Torah school for young Eastern European boys. He celebrated the union of the rough, secular pioneers with their ethereal religious cousins—the "Earthly Jerusalem" the youth were building alongside the traditional "Heavenly Jerusalem" of their parents' and grandparents' dreams.

Pioneers: Founding the Jewish State

Bialik's address marked a rare ceasefire amid the Zionist movement's characteristic factionalism—clashing schools of thought that illustrated Zion-

ism's vitality. The early Zionist movement was indeed a many-splendored thing: a rollicking conversation synthesizing Judaism, nationalism, liberalism, idealism, rationalism, socialism, and capitalism. These visionary, sometimes doctrinaire, intellectual pioneers tackled the world's problems—often while toiling to make the desert bloom.

The Zionist idea of creating a Jewish state united them. Thinkers in all six intellectual streams viewed the Jews as a people, Israel as its homeland, and the state as having an essential role in saving Jews and Judaism. All struggled with the despair antisemitism induced without ever burying *Hatikva*, the hope of making their Jewish state a model state too.

Political Zionism: Theodor Herzl's pragmatic yet utopian Zionism, his nineteenth-century Romantic liberal nationalism harnessed toward establishing a democratic Jewish state in Palestine, the Jewish homeland, prioritizing securing a state to save Jewish lives. Yet, "Jewish normalcy" would also help Jews cultivate their enlightened and traditional selves, saving the world—and perhaps even saving Judaism.

Labor Zionism: The utopian yet pragmatic Zionism of the kibbutz and the moshav championed rebuilding the Jewish self by working the land. Thinkers such as A. D. Gordon and Berl Katznelson grounded the intellectual, urbanized, ghettoized European Jew in the challenging practicalities of agriculture, while injecting dollops of Marxism and universalism. Although passionately secular, Labor Zionism fostered an enduring love for *Eretz Yisra'el*, the Land of Israel. Kibbutznikim became Bible-quoting amateur archaeologists.

At the same time, the socialists among these Laborites harnessed the prophetic tradition, the messianic impulse, fostering social justice, envisioning the New Jews as a socialist vanguard. The socialist political theorist Nahman Syrkin said the "tragic element" of Jews' "historic fate," meaning antisemitism, could free them to fulfill a "unique historic mission": being the first to realize socialism's "basic principles of peace, co-operation, and cultural progress." Like the secular Marxist Bundists, Labor Zionists were too conscious of antisemitism's toxicity to expect

class consciousness to unite all workers magically. Instead, they commissioned their virtuous people to create a socialist exemplar. By saving the world, they could save Judaism and Jews.

Revisionist Zionism: Ze'ev Jabotinsky's pragmatic, passionate, yet classically liberal democratic Zionism. Revisionists considered themselves Herzl's purest followers, accentuating the political goal of achieving a Jewish state as soon as possible to save as many Jews as possible. "Eliminate the Diaspora, or the Diaspora surely will eliminate you," Jabotinsky warned bluntly, characteristically, in 1937. Two "m's" characterized his approach: what Jabotinsky called "monism," excluding big theories about culture, economy, religion, or society to stress the immediate political mission of state-building; and "militancy," a gruff uncompromising strategy mixed with a martial style that occasionally flirted with fascism.

Although caricatured as a result as lacking in vision, these European Romantics were passionate about peoplehood, their common past, and their homeland. Their politics absorbed A. D. Gordon's love of land with Ahad Ha'am's nationalist cultural revivalism. Their secularism incorporated dashes of pride in their religious traditions too.

Certain Revisionists took Jabotinsky's discipline and land love to an extreme, stirring an ultranationalism. This monist zeal made some devotees very aggressive and others deeply depressed when the post-1948 state began with Jerusalem divided. Eventually, though, Jabotinskyite purists, steeped in his individualistic liberalism, would help Israel privatize, capitalize, modernize, and prosper.

Religious Zionism: This spiritual Zionism, harmonizing "Orthodoxy" and Zionism, rooted Zionism in Judaism's traditional land-based nationalism. According to adherents such as Abraham Isaac Kook, Jews could only fulfill all the mitzvot, commandments, in the homeland. Seeing the political state as the pathway to mystical salvation, religious Zionists accepted their secular allies. As Kook taught: "The state is not the supreme happiness of man." The typical nation-state is about as mystical or inspirational

as "a large insurance company." The State of Israel, by contrast, "is ideal in its foundation . . . the foundation of God's throne in the world." By saving Judaism, they could save Jews and the world.

Cultural Zionism: Ahad Ha'am's more secular spiritual Zionism called for cultivating the Jewish homeland as a national cultural center to revive Judaism and Jewish pride. Ahad Ha'am dismissed Herzl's state-building plans as chimerical. Also, as a Russian Jew, he instinctively mistrusted all governments, doubting that even a Jewish state could be virtuous.

This aloofness toward sovereignty anticipated contemporary Israel-Diaspora relations. With a literate Eastern European Jew's love of Jewish culture, Ahad Ha'am envisioned Israel as the Jewish people's spiritual, intellectual, cultural, and religious center. Israel would be the center of the wheel, connected to each Diaspora community by spokes. Palestine's blossoming Jewish culture would ennoble the Diaspora Jew. Trusting in this new Hebrew culture's redemptive richness, the poet Hayyim Nahman Bialik rejoiced in 1932: "Everything that is created in the Land of Israel by Jews becomes culture."

Diaspora Zionism: Louis Brandeis and Henrietta Szold developed this philanthropic, support-oriented Zionism reconciling American patriotism with Jewish nationalism. They emphasized Zionism's liberal democratic character while broadening the definition of a Zionist to include supporters of the Zionist idea. European Zionists were transforming themselves into New Jews; Diaspora Zionists were rescuing distressed fellow Jews. Initially, Jews migrated by the millions to America and by the thousands to Palestine. In the Diaspora, Zionism offered—and often became—a recipe for Jewish renewal the American migration lacked.

Builders: Actualizing—and Modernizing—the Zionist Blueprints

They had done it. They established a state. The Nazi's butchering of six million Jews had settled the ideological argument for most Jews and much of the world. And the death of six thousand more Jews fighting to

establish a 600,000-person state in 1948's Independence War settled the practical question. Ahad Ha'am was half-wrong: a state emerged despite his doubts. Theodor Herzl was half-right: the state existed, but it was more Jewish and surprisingly Eastern, not just European, especially after 850,000 Jewish refugees from Arab lands arrived.

Proving again that this state was not like any other, politicians and rabbis, novelists and poets, diplomats and soldiers, in Israel and globally, debated its mission. Political Zionism continued underscoring the state's survival, and significance. Political theorists, including Isaiah Berlin, Albert Memmi, and Emmanuel Levinas, assessed the meaning of a Jewish state after millennia of suffering and toasted this model of liberal nationalism. Jewish heroes, including Jerusalem's bridge-building mayor Teddy Kollek and the martyred anti-terrorist fighter Yoni Netanyahu, the eloquent Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel, and the heroic Soviet refusenik Natan Sharansky, offered old-new lessons about Jewish values, Zionist grit, and communal idealism. Israel's 1967 Six-Day War triumph, overcoming fears of a second Auschwitz, brought moral clarity and renewed energy to Political Zionism, the Jewish people's protector. By 2000, the scrappy yet still controversial Zionist movement had outlived communism, fascism, Sovietism, and Nazism.

The most revolutionary Zionism experienced a most revolutionary change. After being dethroned in 1977, the Labor Party absorbed the global, post-1960s human-rights revolutions' sensibilities, becoming more committed to women's rights, sexual liberation, gay rights, and Palestinian rights. Labor stopped being the socialist, collectivist, "Knesset-and-kibbutz" party of "us"; instead this party of "you and I" balanced individual rights and social responsibility. The transformed party built national pride through self-actualization and protection of individual rights, while still demanding social justice—and, increasingly, defining itself by insisting on ceding territory for peace.

Revisionist Zionists gained power in 1977, after nearly three decades in opposition, with their charismatic, Jabotinskyite leader Menachem Begin updating Revisionist ideology. As the liberal democratic and nationalist party, Likud competed with the rival Labor Party, juggling Jabotinsky's collectivist nationalism with his individualism. Laborites trusted the

government's ability to address economic and social matters. Likud's formula trusted individuals to prosper with less government supervision and ownership—yet trusted national security policies and national control of culture.

Menachem Begin's rise confused Zionists, right and left. The right-wing territorial maximalists who had spent the 1950s bemoaning the loss of Old Jerusalem and the rise of a socialist Zionist state could grumble no longer: Revisionists were now leading a post-1967 "Greater Land of Israel" movement, settling the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Golan Heights, and Sinai Peninsula—the areas Israel captured in 1967. Yet Begin's emergence in 1979 as the first Israeli leader to swap land for peace—with Egyptian President Anwar Sadat—rocked the Zionist Right. Simultaneously, Begin's emergence as a populist peacemaker and social welfare liberal beloved by Israel's neglected *Mizrahim* rocked the Zionist left, which considered itself more committed to social justice.

The Six-Day War repurposed Religious Zionism. Pre-state Religious Zionists, epitomized by the elder Rav Abraham Isaac Kook, loved secular pioneers, seeing beyond their rebellion into their Jewish souls. By contrast, post-1967 Religious Zionists, epitomized by the younger Rav Zvi Yehudah Kook, loved the biblical land so much they prioritized settling the newly conquered land over uniting the people. Resulting movements, such as Gush Emunim, the Bloc of the Faithful, seeking to reestablish Jewish settlements in the ancient Jewish heartland, despite Palestinian resistance and global opposition, radicalized much of National Religious society. Once-fanciful spiritual fantasies now spawned militant plans. This mobilization—and the rise of the Jabotinskyite right—also mainstreamed religious nationalists professionally and politically. The once-quiescent community became more central, powerful, and prosperous in Israel—sociologically and ideologically.

Other Religious Zionisms blossomed. Reform Jewry Zionized. These once universalist believers that Judaism was just a religion imbibed the Zionist faith when the Holocaust proved that oppressed Jews needed a homeland. Subsequently, the Reform rabbi Richard Hirsch and others recognized the Jewish state's theological significance. Traditional Reli-

gious Zionists, including Professor Eliezer Berkovits, started mining the Jewish state's ethical, religious, spiritual, even halakhic—legal—potential.

Meanwhile, Israel's dynamic culture vindicated Ahad Ha'am's Cultural Zionism. A distinctive culture in Hebrew, high and low, in literature and song, radiated throughout the Jewish world. Israel often provided a vivid triptych for Jewish lives: a rousing soundtrack, inspiring Jewish images, and a rich vocabulary for Jewish meaning. The New Jew was celebrated, mass marketed, and often mimicked throughout the Jewish world. Even as songwriters like Naomi Shemer delighted in "Jerusalem of Gold," poets like Yehuda Amichai emphasized a treasured new normalcy: the Jerusalemite shopper carrying his groceries whom tourists should photograph instead of the city's ancient ruins.

Like Reform Zionism, Diaspora Zionism buried its ambivalences, demonstrating a new American Jewish focus on supporting Israel—while benefitting culturally and spiritually from the Jewish state. Initially, Rabbi Arthur Hertzberg worried in 1949 that the movement was "now in search of a program" as American Jewish Committee president Jacob Blaustein demanded that David Ben-Gurion stop negating the Diaspora, pushing *aliyah*, and presuming to speak for American Jews. However, the euphoria after the Six-Day War and Entebbe Rescue "miracles," exorcising widespread Jewish fears of Israel's annihilation in May 1967, then October 1973, confirmed Israel's importance to most Jews, including those increasingly assimilated in the Diaspora.

Zionism brought "profound changes" to Diaspora Jewry, particularly in the United States the historian Jonathan Sarna notes, from strengthening the Jewish body to stretching the Jewish soul. Throughout the Jewish world, Israel instilled a sense of peoplehood and renewed Jewish pride. It inspired the teaching of Hebrew and the revitalizing of camps and Hebrew schools while religiously invigorating America's Conservative and Reform movements. Diaspora Jews in democracies learned how to mobilize politically, democratize their leadership, and galvanize generations of Israel-oriented fundraisers.[6]

Jews didn't only ask what they could do for their country; Diaspora Zionism became Identity Zionism as Jews realized what their country

could do for them, religiously, culturally, and personally. Writers like the passionate American immigrant to Israel, Hillel Halkin, and the ambivalent Upper West Side Jewish liberal, Anne Roiphe, endorsed Israeli Judaism, Israeli life, and Zionist values as healthy, non-materialistic alternatives to Western selfishness and American Jewish superficiality.

At the same time, by Israel's fiftieth anniversary in 1998, a new ambivalence seeped into the discourse: worries that modern Israel didn't measure up to history's now mythic heroism or Zion's lofty ideals. This disappointment had been building, especially after Menachem Begin shifted the country right in 1977, then led Israel into the 1982 Lebanon War, resulting in the Sabra and Shatila massacre Christian Phalangist soldiers perpetrated against Palestinians. Israel was no longer above criticism.

In 1973 the liberal rabbi Arnold Jacob Wolf blasted Israel's attitudes toward the Palestinians, the poor, the ultra-Orthodox, the rabbinate, and the Jewish left. Many jeremiads would follow. For a movement that considered itself exemplary, Zionism suffered as the Palestinian issue in particular muddied its self-image. Even as the worldwide obsession with the Palestinian issue reinforced paranoid Zionists' fears that "the world hates the Jews," the difficulties of a democracy depriving people of basic rights—no matter how justified by security threats—dimmed idealistic Zionists' hopes that Israel would be that light unto the nations. Dismissing generations of blue-and-white oversimplifications, Israel's great novelist Amos Oz bluntly admitted: "My Zionism is hard and complicated." Repudiating the settlement movement, Oz added: "I am a Zionist in all that concerns the redemption of the Jews, but not when it comes to the redemption of the Holy Land."

Torchbearers: Reassessing, Redirecting, Reinvigorating

By the twenty-first century, it had become fashionable in academic circles to declare Zionism irrelevant, anachronistic, racist, colonialist, imperialist, evil. Post-Zionist cynicism spread within Israel as a delegitimization campaign blackened the state's international reputation and the high hopes of the Oslo Peace Process collapsed into the deep dread of Palestinian terrorists' suicide bombings. Often the Zionist response was too defensive, reducing Zionism solely to Israel advocacy.

Eventually, a modern, mature, Zionist conversation emerged, weighing big questions about Jewish peoplehood and statehood, Jewish political power and religious influence, Jewish democracy and spirituality, Jewish traditions and universal ideals: How should a Jewish national liberation movement welcome Arabs who constitute 20 percent of Israel's citizenry? How should a Jewish democratic movement address anti-democratic voices? How should a liberal nationalist movement striving for perfection accommodate ugly realities—and failures? And how do you tend your own particular Jewish cocoon while soaring forth into the world with high ideals?

Although many thinkers often crossed wires, the six streams of Zionist discourse remain discernable. Each Zionist "school" has a characteristic institution or symbol. Political Zionism has the Knesset, Israel's temple of sovereignty and democracy. The kibbutz still embodies Labor Zionism's highest ideals. Revisionist Zionism's capitalist revolution has launched thousands of start-ups. Religious Zionism prizes the Western Wall's national and religious significance. Cultural Zionism, disseminated through the innovative *ulpan* method of Hebrew teaching, is today broadcast through *ulpanim*, television studios, among other media. And Taglit-Birthright Israel has epitomized Diaspora Zionism's new mutual, inspirational, identity-based approach to connecting Israeli and Diaspora Jewry.

Delving into the transformations:

Political Zionism: Increasingly sensitive to the attacks against Israel, Political Zionists now explain how a Jewish state can be democratic too. They press Israel to extend Herzl's founding vision beyond survival, applying Jewish and Western ethics to morally complex situations, from fighting asymmetric wars against terrorists hiding among civilians to achieving economic fairness without sacrificing prosperity.

Labor Zionism: Even as communism's collapse discredited socialism and Israel's culture of abundance led most kibbutzim to privatize, the desire to make the Zionist state epitomize liberal ideals with a Jewish twist persisted. The Israeli leftists who emerged were

often more urbanized, more individualistic, than their ideological forbears. Nevertheless, the Labor Zionist dream of an equitable Israeli society persisted. Even as many leftists repudiated Israel, Israel's liberal legacy could not be ignored. As some liberal Zionists countered: "Progressive Zionism is not an Oxymoron."

Israelis on the left have embraced the human-rights agenda, juggling individualism with liberal communal ideals advocating exchanging land for peace and pursuing social justice. The novelists David Grossman, Amos Oz, and A. B. Yehoshua, among others, have refused to let the settler movement define their Zionism, demanding a Zionism that respects Palestinian and Jewish rights. Especially after the Social Protests of 2011 against pricey cottage cheese and astronomical rent, the Labor Party became the voice of activists like Stav Shaffir. She and her peers speak about preserving *Hatikvah,* "the Hope," to synchronize egalitarianism with Zionism.

Revisionist Zionism: Years in power made many Revisionists fear that the necessary compromises governing entails trumped Jabotinsky's enduring principles. Yet Jabotinsky's proactive approach to fighting antisemitism and asserting Jewish pride spurred his heirs to treat the delegitimization campaign against Israel and Zionism as strategic threats. And while some right-wing Knesset members occasionally floated undemocratic proposals, Revisionist Zionist purists continued tempering their nationalism with Jabotinskyite liberalism, championing individual rights for all. As a result, Revisionists like Benny Begin and Reuven Rivlin now bring to Israeli politics a passionate patriotism combining a maximalist approach to the territories, with demands of equality for Israeli Arabs.

Religious Zionism: Post-1967 war triumphalism propelled Religious Zionism into a best-of-times, worst-of-times scenario. Religious Zionists have flourished as observant Jews in the Jewish state, far more than their grandparents imagined. Yet, Religious Zionism has been divided and demoralized. Those on the right, including

Rabbis Zvi Tau and Eli Sadan, often attack the government for being too secular and accommodating of Palestinian demands. The alienation peaked following the Gaza disengagement in 2005, which many called "the Expulsion"—heavy Jewish historical overtones intended. Meanwhile, those leaning toward the center or the left, from Rabbi Benjamin Lau to Leah Shakdiel, disdain their camp's triumphalism, rigidity, and occasional harshness toward others. Still, Religious Zionists seek a robust Judaism in the democratic State of Israel. If Political Zionists usually justify the Israeli experiment in modern Western terms, Religious Zionists usually explain it with traditional Jewish language.

Cultural Zionism: While the initial Zionist conversation revolved around addressing the core needs of the Jewish people and the state, today, with the Jewish refuge having become the hi-tech "Start-Up Nation," more personal and tribal concerns proliferate. Many Zionists today are hyphenate Zionists, in modern identity parlance rather than classical ideological terms: articulating Queer Zionism, Feminist Zionism, *Mizrahi* Zionism. Thus Cultural Zionism has also become Identity Zionism. In this way the Zionist idea has helped Diaspora Jews navigate what Taglit-Birthright Israel leaders call "their own Jewish journeys," individual quests for meaning.

Within the Jewish homeland, questions now arise about Israel's cultural mission: Should Israelis seek a generic normalcy or a particular Jewish identity? Should Israelis emphasize their membership in a globalizing world or a still healing and rebuilding Jewish one? And how does being steeped in full-time, total Jewish culture affect Israelis' conversation with their fellow Jewish worldwide?

Diaspora Zionism: Two demographic revolutions have recast the American Zionist debate. The Holocaust made the American Jewish community the world's largest. Then by 2013, Israel's Jewish community had outstripped American Jewry, a result of American Jewry's escalating intermarriage rate and Israel's thriving Jewish birth rate—even among secular Israelis.

Beyond supporting Israel, Diaspora Zionists found inspiration in Israel's integrated, authentic, 24–7 3-D people-powered Judaism. At the same time, many American Jewish intellectuals began negating the notion that the Diaspora was "exile." Some rejected the notion of a "Diaspora" with Jewish communities dispersed around Israel the center. Demanding mutuality, they reconceived of global Jewry with what Simon Rawidowicz of Brandeis University called two ellipses—Israel and North America. This reorientation sparked discussions about how Israel helps the Jewish people—and how the Jewish people help Israel.

Meanwhile, another, more controversial, institution—the settlement—defines Israel for millions. Originally, Political and Labor Zionists treasured settlements as the country's building blocks. Today, Political Zionists divide over the issue. Most Labor Zionists oppose most settlements. Nonetheless, the vast majority of Israelis endorse maintaining sovereignty over key Jerusalem neighborhoods and the five consensus suburban "Settlement Blocs." Negev land swaps could balance this potentially negotiable terrain, cumulatively comprising ninety square miles, housing about 200,000 people. Revisionist and Religious Zionism have thrived, partially by expanding settlements throughout the lands Israel acquired in 1967. These different perceptions of the same phenomenon emphasize the challenge the Palestinian problem poses to Zionist unity, purity, and popularity.

Controversies, Challenges, and Dreams

Inevitably, critics claim that Zionism's identity anomalies invalidate the movement. Such harsh verdicts show that Israel is targeted for special, obsessive condemnation as "the Jew among the nations"—in the Canadian academic and politician Irwin Cotler's phrase. Each of the world's 196 countries represents some kind of identity cocktail mixing religion and ethnicity. Yet only the Jewish mix is deemed toxic.

In fact, Zionism's seeming paradoxes highlight the legitimacy of the Zionist mission to establish a Jewish democratic state for the long-

suffering Jewish people in their traditional homeland. Judaism, as uniquely both a religion and a nation, allows individuals to convert to Judaism, then join the Jewish people—a biologically permeable, non-racist form of nationalism. Both the Zionist movement and the idea of nationalism formally began in Europe. Slightly less than half of the world's Jews live in the Jewish state today, but more Italians live outside of Italy and there are seven times more Irish Americans than Irish citizens. The Jews and the Palestinians assert rival claims to the same land, just as other nations have conflicting land claims without invalidating one another's essential claims to nationhood. Nationalism isn't an exclusive land deed; it's an identity-building process based on a shared past or present.

These exceptions demonstrate the Zionist idea's resilience—and Jewish civilization's post-1948 renaissance. Zionism was the great miracle maker. It reestablished Jewish sovereignty in the Jewish homeland as Israel cumulatively welcomed three million refugees from the Holocaust, the Arab expulsion, Soviet persecution, Ethiopian dislocation. It returned the Jews to history, transforming the world's perma-victims into robust actors on history's stage, with rights and responsibilities. It established a Western-style democracy in the hostile Middle East with a significant minority of Arabs and a majority of Jews, mostly from undemocratic countries. It started a Jewish cultural revolution: reviving Hebrew, modernizing the Holy Tongue into a language for blessing—and cursing. And while facilitating ultra-Orthodox and Orthodox revivals, it generated creative religious inspiration that revitalized Jewish life worldwide and offered the most viable home for perpetuating secular Jewish identity.

Today's Israel is robust. These miracles have become routine realities in a high-tech, science, and pharma behemoth; a breeding ground for do-gooding civil society NGOs; and a laboratory for creative Jewish living whose population has grown ten-fold, as its gross domestic product has multiplied thirty-fold—per capita.

Yet today's Zionist conversation is fragile. The anti-Zionist campaign against Israel has distorted the discussion. On the left, opponents of Israel's policies toward the Palestinians frequently join the delegitimization derby—sometimes consciously, sometimes not—emboldening those

who escalate from criticizing Israeli policy to rejecting Zionism. Some trendsetting intellectuals purport to reject all nationalisms. Yet somehow they favor politically correct nationalisms like the Palestinians' while disfavoring "First World" ones, with an obsessive disdain for Zionism. Even some Zionists, like Ari Shavit, speak about "Zionism" as a force compelled to displace and demean Palestinians.

On the right, Israel's defenders often become so defensive, they quash the open, critical discourse all democracies—and ideological movements—need to mature. Denying any wrongdoing, even any dilemmas, has alienated Zionist critics of Israeli policy, polarizing the community unnecessarily. Many on the right try monopolizing the word "Zionist"; many on the left oblige, abandoning Zionism. In 2014, Israel's center-left coalition called itself the Zionist Union to restore Zionist pluralism. However, beyond Israel, especially on Western university campuses, even some Israel advocates avoid the "Z-word" because "it doesn't poll well."

Retreating from "Zionism," which has inspired and empowered millions over generations, just because enemies target it, violates Zionism's main mission of nurturing Jewish dignity. Such submissiveness disregards the feminist example of "taking back the night." In weighing "the strange career" of the "troublesome" N-word, the Harvard Law professor Randall Kennedy, an African American, observes that "targets of abuse can themselves play significant roles in shaping the terrain of conflict and thus lessen their vulnerability through creative, intelligent, and supple reactions."[7]

If in Hertzberg's day, Zionist triumphalism overlooked Israeli imperfections, a creative, intelligent, supple Zionist conversation today should acknowledge problems—and tap Zionist ideas to fix them. To a West increasingly skeptical about liberal nationalism, Zionism might model its constructive form of democratic nationalism—that nations should stand for something, bound by a sense of the past that enriches the present and builds a better future. To a West that increasingly regards particularism as merely selfish, Zionism might model its understanding of particularist national identities as value anchors and launching pads for communal good works to benefit others.

A mere six decades but eons ago in terms of Jewish potency, dignity, and stability, the philosopher Sir Isaiah Berlin looked at his scattered, tattered, shattered people and praised the miracle of Israel at its most basic. "The creation of the State of Israel has rendered the greatest service that any human institution can perform for individuals," he avowed. Israel "has restored to Jews not merely their personal dignity and status as human beings, but what is vastly more important, their right to choose as individuals how they shall live." Today, even as Israel still faces lethal threats, Jews are stronger, prouder, safer—indeed freer.

If Zionism originally provided communal protection, most Zionists today would acknowledge that the Zionist future depends on helping to elevate the Israel that has been established. Traditionally, most Jews struggled to survive; today, most Jews seek meaning. Israel, a laboratory of authentic Jewish living, may offer the Jewish communal answer to individual ennui. In Israel, many Jews feel whole; they have integrated their "Jewish" and "modern," "secular" and "spiritual" selves; they live by a Jewish calendar; they are rooted in the Jewish home.

In this book, many Zionists share a dream for Israel to become a vast *tikkun olam* project: a noble experiment in democratic nationalism synthesizing the best of Jewish and Western teachings, a Jewish force for universal good. In pushing Israel to be a "Values Nation," Zionism activates what Israel's president Shimon Peres called the Jewish dissatisfaction gene—that predisposition to see what isn't right, then fix it.

Achieving this goal requires engaging Jews from right to left, in Israel and the Diaspora, in debate about why Jews need a Jewish state today—and what that state's character ought to be. In marrying the traditional Zionist sources with recent texts bearing new ideas, *The Zionist Ideas* can help reinvigorate this conversation. I submit *The Zionist Ideas* as a tool to reclaim the discussion from polarizing political wars into a robust, substantive debate about the meanings of Zionism, the missions of Judaism, and the value of liberal nationalism. Diverse texts spanning the political and religious spectrums invite ever more people of different backgrounds and beliefs to consider what Israel is, how it should grow, and how it addresses the contemporary debate about national identities—

especially when that debate roiling the Western world about how we organize and see ourselves has turned so venomous.

To help ignite this new Zionist conversation, readers can visit www.zionistideas.com. There they will find the discussion guides to this volume and can sign up, as many already have, to host Zionist salons—thoughtful, text-based discussions examining Zionist dreams, values, and visions of about the Zionism of yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

With such open-ended discussions in mind, there is no one, right way to read this book. While its logical, chronological flow lends itself to reading it "English style," from start to finish, others may find it more compelling to read it "Hebrew style," from right to left, meaning from today to yesterday. Still others may prefer a free-style reading, sampling thinkers, akin to how I read Hertzberg as a youth.

These quintessentially Zionist teachings can help guide all readers—scholars, teachers, students, religious leaders, members, activists, spectators, critics. As the 1944 Nobel laureate in physics, Isidor I. Rabi, recalled, he became a scientist because his mother never asked what he learned in school. Instead, she always queried: "Izzy, did you ask a good question today?"[8] Modern Zionists would best turn some exclamation points into question marks—while preserving some exclamation points. Second, in 1914 Henrietta Szold's protégé Jessica Sampter launched Hadassah's School of Zionism, because "knowledge is the only safe foundation for ideals." Considering Zionist education "our most important work," Szold agreed, cautioning, "A nation cannot be made by instinctive, vague, misty feeling, however fine the instinct may be. . . . We must bring emotion out of its obscurity into the clarification of thought."[9] Finally, the American Supreme Court justice Louis Brandeis observed: "The great quality of the Jews is that they have been able to dream through all the long and dreary centuries. . . ." At last, Zionism gives the Jews "the power to realize their dreams."[10]

The Zionist idea succeeded: it exists, it works. Today's mission involves questioning, studying, dreaming, and fulfilling different Zionist ideas. The challenge is to look back accurately—with a dash of romance—and to look forward creatively—with a touch of rigor—weighing what Zionism can mean and become, today and tomorrow.

Notes

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4. J. L. Gordon, "Awake My People" (1866), in *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History*, ed. Paul Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 384.
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The Zionist Ideas

PART ONE

Pioneers

Founding the Jewish State

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Pioneers

Political Zionism

Political Zionism identified the fundamentals that still define the Zionist project. As the Russian Jewish novelist Peretz Smolenskin exclaimed, "We are a people"—the Jews share national ties, not merely religious ones. Beyond that, as the Zionist pioneer Leon Pinsker and others proclaimed, this people, like all peoples, needed and deserved a state: "Since the Jew is nowhere at home, nowhere regarded as a native, he remains an alien everywhere." Finally, as Theodor Herzl discovered by the mass Jewish rejection of his Kenya Highlands–Uganda proposal in 1903, Jews must return to the Jewish homeland, *Eretz Yisra'el*, the Land of Israel.

Beyond these tenets, all Zionists assumed that creating a Jewish state would solve the Jewish Problem. Yet, as the following selections demonstrate, even the first Political Zionists differed regarding just what was *the* Jewish Problem. While most specified antisemitism, others addressed the drift toward assimilation, the shame of accommodation, the ongoing humiliation.

In short, Zionism arose from the dashed hopes of Emancipation, the European movement promising that Jews would be recognized fully as equal citizens communally and individually. The pogroms, the ranting and ravings of Jew haters, the continued toadying of Jews who wanted so badly to be accepted, all this tormented—and dispirited—many Jews.

The Haskalah, the enlightened Jewish intellectual movement, sought to reconcile tradition and modernity. In the early 1860s, a century after the German Jewish philosopher Moses Mendelssohn first started imagining it, the Russian Jewish poet J. L. Gordon articulated the sentiment exquisitely, endorsing "being a person on the street and a Jew at home." Although that model works for millions in the Diaspora today, Zionists

ultimately concluded that Jewish pride, dignity, and integrity required living on a Jewish street in a Jewish state.

Although Theodor Herzl is the central figure of this first founding phase of Political Zionism, other contemporaries offered similar diagnoses. After his death at age forty-four, the movement was blessed with worthy successors who took Herzl's dream and improvised a blueprint for a functional state—even if, as the Israeli writer Natan Alterman warned, it wouldn't be delivered on a silver platter.

Peretz Smolenskin (1842–85)

Yes, we are a people!

HaToeh BeDarchei HaChayim (The wanderer in life's ways) is the title of Peretz Smolenskin's autobiographical novel describing the adventures of an orphan who wanders through all of contemporary Jewish life until he dies defending his people in a Russian pogrom. This tale summarized not only Smolenskin's life but his generation's journey. This most widely read book of modern Hebrew letters in the 1870s depicted the painful halfway house many enlightened Jews lived in, between the ghetto and modernity.

Like his protagonist, Smolenskin was born in the Russian Pale of Settlement, the western provinces of the tsarist empire, which were alone open to the Jewish population. At the age of twenty he migrated to Odessa, the great Black Sea port that hosted Russia's most modern Jewish community. He spent five years there studying music and languages while earning his keep by teaching Hebrew—and writing.

In 1868 Smolenskin settled in Vienna. He and a collaborator founded a monthly publication, *HaShahar* (The dawn), which he issued until his death from tuberculosis in Meran, Austria, in 1885.

Smolenskin is modern Hebrew literature's transition figure between the "Enlightenment," which ended with the Russian pogroms of 1881, and the return to nationalist moorings. Until his last "Zionist" novel, written in the 1880s following the pogroms, his work in belles lettres expressed the usual notions that modernizing Jewish life was desirable and inevitable. Even then, however, he was no uncritical admirer of modernity. His novels emphasized a countertheme: the assimilation of the Jew would not necessarily yield acceptance by society or personal happiness.

In the aftermath of the pogroms, Smolenskin abandoned his theorizing about Jewish national culture and the definition of Jewry as a spiritual nation. Instead he endorsed the evacuation of Eastern Europe. He asked its Jews not to repeat the woeful cycles of their history by emigrating to America or to any other lands of exile. There was only one answer—Zionism.

The excerpts which follow are from a volume he published as a series of articles in his own *HaShahar* in the years 1857–77: from an essay reacting to the pogroms of 1881, which expressed his later Zionism of complete exodus; and from a late piece critiquing Reform Judaism and the Haskalah, which he regarded as the immediate enemies.

It Is Time to Plant (1875–77)

The Jewish people has outlived all others because it has always regarded itself as a people—a spiritual nation. . . . Yes, we are a people. We have been a people from our beginnings until today. We have never ceased being a people, even after our kingdom was destroyed and we were exiled from our land, and whatever may yet come over us will not eradicate our national character. But we are not today a people like all others, just as we were not a people like the others even when we dwelt in our own land. The foundation of our national identity was never the soil of the Holy Land, and we did not lose the basis of our nationality when we were exiled. We have always been a spiritual nation, one whose Torah was the foundation of its statehood.

From the start our people has believed that its Torah took precedence over its land and over its political identity. We are a people because in spirit and thought we regard ourselves bound to one another by ties of fraternity. Our unity has been conserved in a different way, through forms different from those of all other peoples, but does this make us any the less a people?

Let Us Search Our Ways (1881)

Calamity after calamity and disaster after disaster have afflicted the Jews of Russia. In many communities not a stone has been left standing. The shops of our brethren have been pillaged and looted, and whatever the mob could not carry off, it has utterly destroyed. Many Jews have been murdered and the wounded are without number. The mob, a ravenous wolf in search of prey, has stalked the Jews with a cruelty unheard of since the Middle Ages. Perhaps most shocking of all, many

supposedly decent people appeared among the makers of the pogroms. There is no end to the affliction that has already struck so many tens of thousands. . . .

We have no sense of national honor; our standards are those of second-class people. We find ourselves rejoicing when we are granted a favor and exulting when we are tolerated and befriended. . . .

The Haskalah of Berlin (1883)

The Haskalah of Berlin rested on this keystone: to imitate the gentiles, to abandon our own traditions, to disdain our own manners and ideas, and to conduct ourselves both at home and without—in the synagogue, within our families, everywhere—in imitation of others. As a reward for such a great achievement, so these upright and wise teachers assured us, our children, or our children's children, or their children, would be accepted as equals.

The consequences of this doctrine were: first, the destruction of the sentiment which is the unifying principle and strongest foundation of the House of Israel—that we are a nation; and, second, the abandonment of the hope of redemption. . . .

A false doctrine, that religion is the keystone of the House of Israel, was substituted. But this stone, too, crumbled into dust; the very people who paid all this lip service to religion condemned it and spurned all religious customs and laws because they were different from the ways of the gentiles. . . .

In assuring us that, as a reward for "Enlightenment," we would be able to establish our homes wherever we happened to be, they have told us to abandon all hope of returning to our own land and living there in dignity, as all peoples do. And we, having seen that all this did not get us anywhere, and that it did not even help us secure the love we sought—we declare: Only a dog neither has nor wants a home. A man who chooses to live his whole life as a transient, without a thought for the establishment of a permanent home for his children, will forever be regarded as a dog. And we must seek a home with all our hearts, our spirit, our soul. . . .

Leon Pinsker (1821–91)

Autoemancipation: Judeophobia! Since the Jews are nowhere at home, they remain aliens everywhere. . . .

Leon Pinsker was the most assimilated among the Russian Jews who turned Zionist under the impact of the events of 1881. A passionate patriot, he had believed the Russian regime would liberalize itself into a constitutional monarchy in which all people would be equals. Because he had staked his faith in Russia and had relatively little Jewish affiliation, he was even more disillusioned by the pogroms than most of his contemporaries.

Alongside an impressive medical career, after 1860 Pinsker took a considerable interest in Jewish affairs. He wrote for the two earliest Jewish weeklies in the Russian language and was active in the affairs of the Society for the Spread of Culture among the Jews of Russia, founded in 1863. Rejecting the "Enlighteners" who wrote in Hebrew, he believed the Russian language and culture should dominate the inner life, even the religion, of the Jew.

Outbreaks of violence were familiar phenomena in the life of Russian Jews. Why, then, did the 1881 pogroms constitute an emotional crisis for so many, Pinsker among them, and a break in modern Jewish history? There are two major reasons: their extent, and the composition of the mobs. The assassination of Tsar Alexander II in March 1881 (ironically as he was about to grant a liberal constitution) triggered violence in nearly two hundred cities and villages. These, moreover, were not lynchings carried out by an illiterate rabble. Leading newspapers whipped up the frenzy. Men of education and position participated in the attacks. And the government abetted the pogromists.

Pinsker left the Society for the Spread of Culture, declaring that "new remedies, new ways" would have to be found. He went to central and western Europe to advance his new ideas about concentrating the bulk of Jewry in a national state. Alas, he found no adherents. Returning to Russia, he published his views anonymously in German in a pamphlet entitled *Auto-Emancipation*.

Like Herzl fifteen years later, Pinsker was sufficiently outside the influence of the traditional emotions centering around the Holy Land not to argue that a Jewish state had to be only in Zion. Palestine was preferable, but any land suitable for a national establishment would do.

Pinsker's pamphlet was greeted with vociferous indignation in many circles. The Orthodox regarded the author, who did not remain anonymous for long, as lacking in religion. The liberals, especially those outside Russia, attacked him as a traitor to the faith in humanity's ultimate victory over prejudice and hatred.

Nevertheless, the personal prestige of the man and the intellectual impact of the pamphlet propelled Pinsker to the foreground of the ferment toward creating a Jewish nationalist organization. Pinsker became the leader of the new Hibbat Zion movement, also known as Hovevi Zion. These groups of "lovers of Zion," believing the best reaction to the pogroms was to establish agricultural settlements in Palestine, convened in a founding conference in 1884. Pinsker's "Auto-Emancipation" is the first great statement of the anguish of the Jew driven to assert his own nationalism because the wider world rejected him. The theme would recur in Theodor Herzl's writing.

Auto-Emancipation: An Appeal to His People by a Russian Jew (1882)

That age-old problem, long called the Jewish Question, yet again provokes discussion. . . .

This is the kernel of the problem as we see it: the Jews comprise a distinctive element among the nations under which they dwell, and as such can neither assimilate nor be readily digested by any nation.

Hence the solution lies in finding a means of readjusting this exclusive element to the family of nations, so that the essential reason for the Jewish Question will be permanently removed. . . .

The Jewish people lacks most of the essential attributes which define a nation. It lacks that authentic, rooted life which is inconceivable without a common language and customs and without geographic cohesion. The

Jewish people has no fatherland of its own, though many motherlands; no center of focus or gravity, no government of its own, no official representation. The Jews are home everywhere, but are nowhere at home. . . .

Among the living nations of the earth the Jews as a nation are long since dead.

With the loss of their country, the Jewish people lost their independence, and fell into the kind of decay that would suck the life out of any healthy organism. The state was crushed before the eyes of the nations. But after the Jewish people had ceased to exist as an actual state, as a political entity, they nevertheless resisted total annihilation—they lived on spiritually as a nation.

In this people the world saw the uncanny form of one of the dead walking among the living. The ghostlike apparition of a living corpse, of a people without unity or organization, without land or other bonds of unity, no longer alive, and yet walking among the living—this spectral form without precedence in history, unlike anything that preceded or followed it, was doomed to haunt the imagination of the nations. . . .

Judeophobia is a psychic aberration. As a psychic aberration it is hereditary, and as a disease transmitted for two thousand years it is incurable.

This fear of ghosts, the mother of Judeophobia, has evoked this pure—I might say Platonic—hatred. As a result, the whole Jewish nation is often blamed for the real or supposed misdeeds of its individual members; it is libeled in so many ways—and buffeted about so shamefully. . . .

Since the Jews are nowhere at home, nowhere regarded as a native, they remain aliens everywhere. . . .

To sum up then: to the living, the Jew is a corpse; to the native, a foreigner; to the homesteader, a vagrant; to the proprietary, a beggar; to the poor, an exploiter and a millionaire; to the patriot, a man without a country; for all, a hated rival. . . .

Consequently, we are duty-bound to devote all our remaining moral force to reestablishing ourselves as a living nation, so that we may ultimately assume a more fitting and dignified role among the family of the nations. . . .

In order to build a secure home, end our endless life of wandering, and rise to the dignity of a nation in our own eyes and in the eyes of the

world, we must, above all, not dream of restoring ancient Judaea. . . . We shall take with us the most sacred possessions which we have saved from the shipwreck of our former country, the God-idea and the Bible. It is these alone which have made our old fatherland the Holy Land, and not Jerusalem or the Jordan. Perhaps the Holy Land will again become ours. If so, all the better, but, first, we must determine—and this is the crucial point—what country is accessible to us, and at the same time suitable to offer the Jews of all lands who must leave their homes a secure and undisputed refuge, capable of flourishing. . . .

The people's consciousness is awake. The great ideas of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries have not passed us by without leaving a trace. We feel not only as Jews; we feel as people. As human beings, we, too, wish to live and be a nation as the others. And if we seriously desire that, we must first of all extricate ourselves from the old yoke, and rise courageously to our full height. We must first of all desire to help ourselves and then the help of others is sure to follow. . . .

Let "Now or never" be our watchword. Woe to our descendants, woe to the memory of our Jewish contemporaries, if we let this moment pass by! . . .

Help yourselves, and God will help you!

Theodor Herzl (1860–1904)

We are one people. . . . We are strong enough to form a State, and, indeed, a model State.

Theodor Herzl was born on May 2, 1860, in Budapest, Hungary, the second child and only son of a rich merchant. He received his preliminary education in a technical school and high school in Budapest. When he was eighteen, the family moved to Vienna after his sister's death from typhoid. Herzl enrolled in the University of Vienna's law school. After gaining his doctorate in 1884, Herzl practiced for a year as a minor civil servant but soon gave up the law to devote himself to writing. With relative ease he won regard as a feuilletonist, a familiar essayist, the favorite form of central European journalism, and as a

writer of light, fashionable plays. In 1892 he was appointed to the staff of the *Neue Freie Presse*, the most important Viennese newspaper. Later that year Herzl arrived in Paris as its resident correspondent.

On the surface of his consciousness Herzl shared the conventional view of the westernized Jewish intellectual in the late nineteenth century—progress was on the march and complete assimilation was desirable and inevitable. Nonetheless, the emotional explosion that was soon to take place in his life and result in his Zionism had its roots in his earlier life. His Jewish education had been skimpy, but his grandfather, Simon Loeb, a congregant of the proto-Zionist rabbi Yehudah Alkalai, visited Budapest regularly. While still at the university Herzl encountered antisemitism in its new, theoretical, pseudoscientific form as racism in the writings of Eugen Dühring. He withdrew from his fraternity because it had participated in a memorial meeting for the German nationalist composer Richard Wagner that had degenerated into an antisemitic rally.

When he arrived in Paris, Herzl confronted antisemitism again, as a rising phenomenon of French life. He wrote a long account of it for his paper, suggesting that hatred of the Jew was serving as a lightning rod to draw the masses' revolutionary life away from society's real woes.

The Jewish problem was now in the forefront of his attention. The result of two years of pondering, of intellectual and emotional zigzagging, was his 1893 play, *The New Ghetto*. Its hero, Dr. Jacob Samuel, is Herzl. Samuel ultimately dies in a duel, crying out that he wants to get "out of the ghetto." Herzl demonstrated that even the most assimilated Jews are in an invisible ghetto in a gentile world.

In 1894 Alfred Dreyfus, a Jewish captain on duty with the French general staff, was accused of spying for Germany. Herzl provided his Vienna paper with regular accounts of the Dreyfus trial and its effect on French public life. He was present at the Ecole Militaire when Dreyfus was stripped of his epaulets and drummed out the gate in disgrace. For Herzl this moment was a hammer blow. The howling of the mob outside the gates of the parade ground, shouting "*A bas les Juifs*"—"down with the Jews"—fully transformed him into a Zionist.

In the early days of May 1895 Herzl requested an interview with Baron Maurice de Hirsch, the founder of Jewish colonization in Argentina, to pitch his idea of a Jewish national state. Baron de Hirsch was not receptive. Herzl soon hoped that perhaps the Rothschilds would listen to him. In five days of feverish writing he poured into his diary a sixty-five-page pamphlet—essentially outlining his Jewish state—which he entitled "Address to the Rothschilds." "I have the solution to the Jewish question," he wrote. "I know it sounds mad; and at the beginning I shall be called mad more than once—until the truth of what I am saying is recognized in all its shattering force." Finally, after much reworking and some difficulty in finding a publisher, his "Jewish State" appeared in February 1896.

While Herzl continued to work as literary editor of the *Neue Freie Presse* to support his family, he spent the last eight years of his life in feverish, superhuman Zionist activity. In August 1897, more than two hundred delegates from all over the Jewish world answered his call to come to Basel, Switzerland, to found the World Zionist Organization. Here, its purpose was proclaimed: "Zionism seeks to secure for the Jewish people a publicly recognized, legally secured, home in Palestine." The delegates on August 30, 1897, endorsed what became "The Basel Program," emphasizing the push for a "home in Palestine" and the broader mission of revitalizing the Jewish people. Succeeding congresses, six in Herzl's lifetime, finalized the movement's organizational infrastructure—and culture.

In 1902 Herzl finished his utopian novel *Altneuland (Old New Land)*. This European fantasy showcased Herzl's idealism, romanticism, and liberalism. His Jewish state was Western but Jewish. Demonstrating this global vision, one character proclaimed, following "the restoration of the Jews, I should like to pave the way for the restoration of the Negroes. . . ." The character, expressing Herzl's commitment to social justice, then explained how national pride engenders world peace: "All human beings ought to have a home. Then they will be kinder to one another. Then they will understand and love one another more."

For Herzl, the most important aspect of his work was diplomacy—he negotiated with the sultan of Turkey, Kaiser Wilhelm, the

king of Italy, and Pope Pius X. Ironically, his one great success in the international arena almost wrecked the Zionist movement. In 1903 the British government offered him a large tract of land in Uganda, East Africa, for a Jewish self-governing settlement. That year, Herzl proposed to the World Zionist Congress that the offer be accepted as a "temporary haven," one that seemed urgently needed after the brutal pogrom in Kishinev, Russia. Yet the Zionists of Russia, led by the young Chaim Weizmann, among others, blocked him.

A Jewish state in Uganda was not meant to be in any case; the British government withdrew the offer a year or so later. The scenes of high drama that attended the discussion are, however, of crucial importance in the history of Zionism, for the seal was set on its devotion to a territorial state in Zion, and only in Zion.

Worn out by his exertions, Herzl died not far from Vienna on July 3, 1904. Forty-five years later, on August 17, 1949, an airplane flying the blue-white flag of the new State of Israel brought his remains to the country of which he was the principal architect.

The Jewish State (1896)

The idea which I have developed in this pamphlet is an ancient one: It is the restoration of the Jewish State.

The world denounces the Jews resoundingly, thus reawakening this once-dormant idea. . . .

The decisive factor is our propelling force. And what is that force? The plight of the Jews. . . . The world needs the Jewish State; therefore it will come to be. . . .

The Jewish Question still exists. It would be foolish to deny it. . . .

I think the Jewish Question is more than a social or religious one, notwithstanding that it sometimes takes these and other forms. It is a national question which can only be resolved by making it a political world-question to be discussed and settled by the civilized nations of the world in council.

We are a people—one people.

We have honestly endeavored everywhere to merge ourselves into the social life of surrounding communities and to preserve the faith of our fathers. We are not permitted to do so. In vain are we loyal patriots, our loyalty in some places running to extremes; in vain do we make the same sacrifices of life and property as our fellow-citizens; in vain do we strive to increase the fame of our native land in science and art, or her wealth by trade and commerce. In countries where we have lived for centuries we are still denounced as strangers, and often by those whose ancestors were not yet domiciled in the land where Jews had already started suffering. . . .

No human being is wealthy or powerful enough to transplant a nation from one habitat to another. An idea alone can achieve that and this idea of a state may have the requisite power to do so. The Jews have dreamt this kingly dream all through the long nights of their history. "Next year in Jerusalem" is our old phrase. It is now a question of showing that the dream can be converted into a living reality. . . .

Everything tends, in fact, to one and the same conclusion, which is clearly enunciated in that classic Berlin phrase: "*Juden Raus*" (Out with the Jews!)

I shall now put the question in the briefest possible form: Are we to "get out" now and where to?

Or, may we yet remain? And, how long? . . .

We are one people—our enemies have made us one without our consent, as repeatedly happens in history. Distress binds us together, and, thus united, we suddenly discover our strength. Yes, we are strong enough to form a state, and, indeed, a model state. We possess all human and material resources necessary for the purpose. . . .

Let sovereignty be granted us over a portion of the globe large enough to satisfy the rightful requirements of a nation; the rest we shall manage for ourselves.

The creation of a new state is neither ridiculous nor impossible. We have in our day witnessed the process in connection with nations which were not largely members of the middle class, but poorer, less educated, and consequently weaker than ourselves. The governments of all coun-

tries blighted by antisemitism will be keenly interested in assisting us to obtain the sovereignty we want. . . .

Palestine is our ever-memorable historic home. The very name of Palestine would attract our people with a force of marvelous potency. . . .

Here it is, fellow Jews! Neither fable nor deception! . . .

Therefore I believe that a wondrous generation of Jews will spring into existence. The Maccabeans will rise again.

Let me repeat once more my opening words: The Jews who wish for a state will have it. We shall live at last as free people on our own soil, and die peacefully in our own homes.

The world will be liberated by our freedom, enriched by our wealth, magnified by our greatness.

And whatever we attempt there to accomplish for our own welfare, will react powerfully and beneficially for the good of humanity.

From the Diaries of Theodor Herzl
(Begun in Paris, around Pentecost, 1895)

When did I actually begin to concern myself with the Jewish Question? Probably ever since it arose; certainly from the time that I read [Eugen] Dühring's [antisemitic] book, [*The Parties and the Jewish Question* (1881)]. . . . As the years went on, the Jewish Question bored into me and gnawed at me, tormented me, and made me very miserable. In fact, I kept coming back to it whenever my own personal experiences—joys and sorrows—permitted me to rise to broader considerations. . . .

At first, the Jewish Question grieved me bitterly. There might have been a time when I would have liked to get away from it—into the Christian fold, anywhere. But in any case, these were only vague desires born of youthful weakness. For I can say to myself with the honesty inherent in this diary—which would be completely worthless if I played the hypocrite with myself—that I never seriously thought of becoming baptized or changing my name. This latter point is even attested to by an incident. When as a green young writer I took a manuscript to the *Vienna Deutsche Wochenschrift*, Dr. Friedjung advised me to adopt a pen-name less Jewish than my own. I flatly refused, saying that I wanted to continue to

bear the name of my father and I offered to withdraw the manuscript. Friedjung accepted it anyway.

I then became a writer of sorts, with little ambition and petty vanities. . . .

In Paris I was in the midst of politics—at least as an observer. I saw how the world is run. I also stood amazed at the phenomenon of the crowd—for a long time without comprehending it.

Here too I reached a higher, more disinterested view of antisemitism, from which at least I did not have to suffer directly. In Austria or in Germany I must constantly fear that someone will shout "Hep, hep!" after me. But here I pass through the crowd unrecognized.

In Paris, then, I gained a freer attitude toward antisemitism which I now began to understand historically and make allowances for.

Above all, I recognized the emptiness and futility of efforts to "combat antisemitism." Declamations made in writing or in closed circles do no good whatever; they even have a comical effect. It is true that in addition to careerists and simpletons there may be very stalwart people serving on such "relief committees." These resemble the "relief committees" formed after—and before—floods, and they accomplish about as much. . . .

Antisemitism has grown and continues to grow—and so do I.

Third Letter to Baron Hirsch (Paris, June 3, 1895)

I spoke of an army, and you already interrupted me when I began to speak of the (moral) training necessary for its march. . . . I know all the things it involves: money, money, and more money; means of transportation; the provisioning of great multitudes (which does not mean just food and drink, as in the simple days of Moses); the maintenance of manly discipline; the organization of departments; emigration treaties with the heads of some states, transit treaties with others, formal guarantees from all of them; the construction of new, splendid dwelling places. Beforehand, tremendous propaganda, the popularization of the idea through newspapers, books, pamphlets, talks by travelling lecturers, pictures, songs. Everything directed from one center with sureness of purpose and with vision.

But I would have had to tell you eventually what flag I will unfurl and how. And then you would have asked mockingly: A flag, what is that? A stick with a rag on it?—No, sir, a flag is more than that. With a flag one can lead men wherever one wants to, even into the Promised Land.

For a flag men will live and die; it is indeed the only thing for which they are ready to die in masses, if one trains them for it; believe me, the policy of an entire people—particularly when it is scattered all over the earth—can be carried out only with imponderables that float in thin air. Do you know what went into the making of the German Empire? Dreams, songs, fantasies, and black-red-and-gold ribbons—and in short order. Bismarck merely shook the tree which the visionaries had planted.

What? You do not understand the imponderable? And what is religion? Consider, if you will, what the Jews have endured for the sake of this vision over a period of two thousand years. Yes, visions alone grip the souls of men. . . .

Max Nordau (1849–1923)

Antisemitism has also taught many educated Jews the way back to their people.

Max Nordau was Herzl's most important colleague and disciple. In 1896 when he accepted Herzl's Zionist faith, Nordau was much the more famous of the two. He already possessed a European-wide reputation as an avant-garde writer and critic of society.

Like Herzl, Nordau was born in Budapest and received a comparable education under German cultural influence. He began to write in his adolescence. By 1873 his literary gifts were sufficiently well regarded to earn him the post of Viennese correspondent of Budapest's important German language newspaper, the *Pester Lloyd*. By 1880 he was permanently domiciled in Paris, practicing as a doctor, writing for a number of newspapers, and publishing a succession of popular books.

As an old friend, Nordau was one of the first to whom Theodor Herzl came to expound his Zionist ideas. There is even a perhaps apocryphal story that Herzl came to Nordau to consult him as psy-

chiatrist in the fear that he was out of his mind. After several days of conversation Nordau supposedly stretched out his hand to Herzl to say: "If you are crazy, so am I." Nordau, at any rate, had also been present at the degradation of Dreyfus and was similarly deeply affected by the antisemitic outcries.

Nordau's adherence to Zionism gave it the stamp of approval as "advanced" thought and helped attract younger Jewish intellectuals to the new cause. A master of rhetoric, Nordau delivered an opening address on the state of Jewry at the First Zionist Congress and repeated this performance at every one until the tenth.

However, within a few years after Herzl's death, Nordau found himself estranged from the new leadership of the Zionist movement. He remained an uncompromising "messianist"—seeking a dramatic solution to the Jewish problem. That made him contemptuous both of philanthropic Zionism, the social work Zionism of the Americans helping their poor European cousins, and Cultural Zionism, with its focus on revitalizing Jewish culture more than building a state. The organization, however, was now in the hands of the "practical" Zionists who believed the ultimate political aim of the movement should be subordinated to the immediate work of building up the Jewish settlement in Palestine.

Nordau returned to the Zionist scene in 1919. He disdained the careful phraseology of the 1917 Balfour Declaration, in which the British foreign secretary declared "His Majesty's government views with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country."

Nordau kept demanding not merely "a Jewish National Home in Palestine," but the immediate establishment of a Jewish state. The border war among the Poles, Ukrainians, and Russians was then raging, resulting in the murder of tens of thousands of Jews. Though Nordau knew that conditions in Palestine were not ripe to absorb mass

immigration, he demanded that such be done. In his view, which approached the position of the young Vladimir Jabotinsky, the fast-tracked Jewish majority in Palestine that would result was considerably more important than careful colonization. In 1920 Nordau returned to Paris, where he died, on January 23, 1923. Three years later his remains were transferred to Tel Aviv.

Zionism (1902)

Zionism is the result of two impulses which came from without: first, the principle of nationality, which dominated thought and sentiment in Europe for half a century and determined the politics of the world; second, antisemitism, from which the Jews of all countries suffer to some degree.

The principle of nationality has awakened a sense of their own identity in all the peoples; it has taught them to regard their unique qualities as values and has given them a passionate desire for independence. . . .

Antisemitism has also taught many educated Jews the way back to their people. . . . But, in the case of most Zionists, the effect of antisemitism was only to force them to reflect upon their relationship to the nations of the world, and their reflection has led them to conclusions which would endure in their minds and hearts if antisemitism were to disappear completely. . . .

Whoever maintains and believes that the Jews are not a nation can indeed not be a Zionist; he cannot join a movement which has as its sole purpose the desire to normalize a people which is living and suffering under abnormal conditions. He who is convinced to the contrary that the Jews are a people must necessarily become Zionist, as only the return to their own country can save the Jewish nation which is everywhere hated, persecuted, and oppressed, from physical and intellectual destruction. . . .

The Zionists know that they have undertaken a work of unparalleled difficulty. Never before has the effort been made to transplant several million people peacefully and in a short space of time, from various countries; never has the attempt been made to transform millions of physically degenerate proletarians, without trade or profession, into farmers

and herdsmen; to bring town-bred hucksters and tradesmen, clerks and men of sedentary occupation, into contact again with the plough and with Mother Earth. It will be necessary to get Jews of different origins to adjust to one another, to train them practically for national unity, and at the same time to overcome the superhuman obstacles of differences of language, cultural level, ways of thought, and varying prejudices of people who will come to Palestine from all the countries of the world. . . .

Muskeljudentum, Jewry of Muscle (1903)

For too long, all too long, we have been engaged in the mortification of our own flesh.

Or rather, to put it more precisely—others did the killing of our flesh for us. Their extraordinary success is measured by hundreds of Jewish corpses in the ghettos, in the churchyards, along the highways of medieval Europe. We ourselves would have gladly done without this "virtue." We would have preferred to develop our bodies rather than kill them or to have them—figuratively and actually—killed by others. . . .

In the narrow Jewish street our poor limbs soon forgot their gay movements; in the dimness of sunless houses our eyes began to blink shyly; the fear of constant persecution turned our powerful voices into frightened whispers, which rose in a crescendo only when our martyrs on the stakes cried out their dying prayers in the face of their executioners. But now, all coercion has become a memory of the past, and at least we are allowed space enough for our bodies to live again. Let us take up our oldest traditions; let us once more become deep-chested, sturdy, sharp-eyed men. . . .

For no other people will gymnastics fulfill a more educational purpose than for us Jews. It shall straighten us in body and in character. It shall give us self-confidence, although our enemies maintain that we already have too much self-confidence as it is. But who knows better than we do that their imputations are wrong. We completely lack a sober confidence in our physical prowess.

Our new muscle-Jews [*Muskeljuden*] have not yet regained the heroism of our forefathers who in large numbers eagerly entered the sport arenas to take part in competition and to pit themselves against the highly trained Hellenistic athletes and powerful Nordic barbarians. But morally,

even now the new muscle-Jews surpass their ancestors, for the ancient Jewish circus fighters were ashamed of their Judaism and tried to conceal the sign of the Covenant by means of a surgical operation, . . . while the members of the Bar Kokhba [Association] loudly and proudly affirm their national loyalty.

May the gymnastic club flourish and thrive and become an example to be imitated in all the centers of Jewish life!

Jacob Klatzkin (1882–1948)

Strip Zionism of the territorial principle and you have destroyed its character.

Jacob Klatzkin was the most temperate stylist and yet perhaps the most devastating anti-traditionalist of all the rebels within Zionism. In Zionist literature he has been known chiefly as the most radical denier of any possibility of a future Jewish life in the Diaspora. He is the most important Zionist thinker to affirm that a third-rate, normal, national Jewish state and culture in Palestine would be enough.

Like Berdichevski and Ahad Ha'Am, Klatzkin was born within the ghetto aristocracy of Russia. His father was a distinguished rabbi. Klatzkin's first published book, in 1902 when he was but twenty, belonged to the genre of traditional rabbinic scholarship. He was, however, already attracted to secular culture and Zionism. After a few years of study in Western Europe, his transformation was complete. From 1909 to 1911 he served the World Zionist Organization as the editor of its official organ, *Die Welt*, founded by Theodor Herzl, and then directed the main office of the Jewish National Fund. Concurrently Klatzkin crystallized his own views in a number of essays in Hebrew that were collected in 1914 under the title *Tehumim* (Boundaries).

Klatzkin based his Zionist position on his general definition of nationalism. What makes a nation, he asserted, is land and language. Therefore, the Jews needed to reacquire their land and again speak their language—Hebrew. Let there be no talk of spiritual uniqueness, of destiny and mission for all this is a mark of the diseased abnormality

of an un-nation. Moreover, he insisted, all Jews must, with deliberate speed, either immigrate to Palestine or disappear by intermarriage. There can be neither a middle ground nor an alternative.

When Hitler came to power in 1933, Klatzkin left for Switzerland, and in 1941 he arrived in the United States. After World War II he returned to Europe. He died in Switzerland in 1948.

Boundaries: Judaism Is Nationalism (1914–21)

To be a Jew means the acceptance of neither a religious nor an ethical creed. We are neither a denomination nor a school of thought, but members of one family, bearers of a common history. Denying the Jewish spiritual teaching does not place one outside the community, and accepting it does not make one a Jew. In short, to be part of the nation one need not believe in the Jewish religion or the Jewish spiritual outlook. . . .

The national definition, too, requires an act of will. It defines our nationalism by two criteria: partnership in the past and the conscious desire to continue such partnership in the future. There are, therefore, two bases for Jewish nationalism—the compulsion of history and a will expressed in that history. A Jew who no longer wishes to belong to the Jewish people, who betrays the covenant and deserts his fellows in their collective battle for redemption, has thereby abandoned his share in the heritage of the past and seceded from his people. . . .

The assimilated Jews claim that we have ceased being a nation in the Diaspora. Jewish nationalists must reply: We are a nation even in the Diaspora, so long as our goal is to be redeemed from it, so long as we labor for the rebirth of our land and our language. . . .

What is really new in Zionism is its territorial-political definition of Jewish nationalism. Strip Zionism of the territorial principle and you have destroyed its character and erased the distinctions between it and the preceding periods. This is its originality—that Judaism depends on form and not on content. For it the alternatives are clear: Either the Jewish people shall redeem the land and thereby continue to live, even if the spiritual content of Judaism changes radically, or we shall remain in exile and rot away, even if the spiritual tradition continues to exist. . . .

Zionism began a new era, not only for the purpose of making an end to the Diaspora but also in order to establish a new definition of Jewish identity—a secular definition. I am certain that the builders of our land will in the future sacrifice themselves for national forms, for land and language, as our ancestors accepted martyrdom for the sake of the religious content of Judaism. . . .

Assimilation is infecting ever greater segments of our people and its impact is becoming ever more profound. It has not yet obscured our national identity nor has it solved the Jewish problem, but this is no proof that it will not come to that. Assimilation is still in mid-career. And yet even in its earlier stages it has managed to disfigure and impoverish our people. . . .

The Judaism of the *galut* is not worthy of survival. . . . The *galut* falsifies our national character. . . .

Perhaps our people can maintain itself in the *galut*, but it will not exist in its true dimensions—not in the prime of its national character. *Galut* can only drag out the disgrace of our people and sustain the existence of a people disfigured in both body and soul—in a word, of a horror. At the very most it can maintain us in a state of national impurity and breed some sort of outlandish creature in an environment of disintegration of cultures and of darkening spiritual horizons. The result will be something neither Jew nor gentile—in any case, not a pure national type. . . .

The *galut* is corrupting our human character and dignity. . . .

It is no accident that Zionism arose in the West and not in the East. Herzl appeared among us not from the national consciousness of a Jew but from a universal human consciousness. Not the Jew but the man in him brought him back to his people. He recognized the moral collapse of assimilation and its disgrace. There is a moral-aesthetic power throbbing in every one of his Zionist speeches; it is he who said to the assimilationists: We must begin by creating decent people. He told us nothing new, but everything he said was new. A new spirit found utterance in him, the spirit of a person restoring his human dignity . . . for Zionism is an aspiration toward morality and beauty. It has come, as one of its chief purposes, to redeem the man in us. . . .

Chaim Weizmann (1874–1952)

We have the right to build our home in *Eretz Yisra'el*, harming no one, helping all.

To write a brief biography of Chaim Weizmann is impossible, for his was the central career of Jewish history in the first half of the twentieth century. As he reminded a thousand audiences, Weizmann's roots were in the old ghetto of the Russian Pale of Settlement. He was born in the village of Motol, near the city of Pinsk, and received the usual pious early training. He attained a doctorate from the University of Geneva in 1900 and remained in the city to teach chemistry there for the next four years.

Weizmann moved to England in 1904. After some months in Manchester, he was appointed to the university faculty. During the First World War, he transferred to London to direct a special laboratory that the British government had created for his important work on the production of acetone, a vital ingredient of naval gunpowder. Weizmann remained at this post until after the war, when he became almost totally involved in Zionism. Nonetheless, throughout his life, he continued, with some fraction of his time, to work as a research chemist. During the Second World War he again pursued chemical research of military importance, both in England and the United States.

Weizmann's Zionism was a natural outgrowth of his early upbringing. He adhered to the movement announced by Herzl at the very beginning and was already a delegate to the Second Zionist Congress in 1898. He was never in complete sympathy with Herzl, whom he faulted for not loving Judaism as much as he loved Jews, although he understood that "Had Herzl been to a *heder* [religious school], never would the Jews have followed him. He charmed the Jews because he came to them from the European culture."

From the beginning of his days in England, Weizmann was busy as a Zionist making contacts and converts in the highest political circles. He led the complex negotiations in London that resulted in the Balfour Declaration. After the British general Edmund Allenby occu-

pied southern Palestine, Weizmann headed the Zionist Commission, which went out to advise the British military government on behalf of Jewish national interest in the country.

In 1919 Weizmann was among the delegation leaders who appeared before the Versailles Peace Conference to present the case for Zionist aspirations in Palestine.

At the London Zionist Conference of 1920, Weizmann was elected president of the World Zionist Organization; he would retain this office, with an interruption from 1931 to 1935, until 1946. As the responsible leader of Zionism, he had to deal with many internal rows. Moreover, in political crisis after crisis he had to defend the Zionist position before the world and often had to induce his followers to swallow bitter pills. For example, in the emotional speech excerpted here, he asked them to accept the Peel Commission's partition proposal as at least a beginning for negotiation.

At the first Zionist Congress after the Second World War, Weizmann was not reelected to the presidency. Abba Hillel Silver and David Ben-Gurion both stood against him in favor of a more active policy of resistance to the British. Nonetheless, his personal eminence was unchallenged. When the state was declared, Weizmann was immediately invited to be president of its Provisional Government Council. Then, from 1949 to his death in 1952, he was the first president of Israel.

On the Report of the Palestine Commission (Twentieth Zionist Congress, Zurich, August 4, 1937)

I say to the Mandatory Power: You shall not outrage the Jewish nation. You shall not play fast and loose with the Jewish people. Say to us frankly that the National Home is closed, and we shall know where we stand. But this trifling with a nation bleeding from a thousand wounds must not be done by the British whose Empire is built on moral principles—that mighty Empire must not commit this sin against the People of the Book. Tell us the truth. This at least we have deserved.

[Here Weizmann broke down and wept, and then continued after a pause.]

Permit me, at this historic juncture, to say a word to the Arab people. We know that the Mufti [of Jerusalem, Haj Amin al-Husseini] and [another Nazi collaborator Fawzi al-] Kawkaji are not the Arab nation. In the present world those who have bombs and revolvers at command wield political power. But in the history of a nation their life is like one day, even if it extends over years.

There is an Arab nation with a glorious past. To that nation we have stretched out our hand, and do so even now—but on one condition. Just as we wish them to overcome their crisis and to revert to the great tradition of a mighty and civilized Arab people, so must they know that we have the right to build our home in *Eretz Yisra'el*, harming no one, helping all. When they acknowledge this we shall reach common ground, and I hope for the time when we shall once more recognize each other. . . .

I consider that two criteria have to be applied in appraising such a principle. The first—does it offer a basis for a genuine growth of Jewish life? I mean both in quality and in volume; does it offer a basis for the development of our young Palestinian culture, of which the Report speaks with true respect? Does this principle afford a basis for building up such a Jewish life as we picture, for rearing true men and women, for creating a Jewish agriculture, industry, literature, etc.—in short, all that the ideal of Zionism comprises?

This is one test. For our great teacher, Ahad Ha'Am, who is with us no longer, it might have been the only one. But times have changed, and Jewish history, which, alas! for the most part, is not ours to mold, faces us with a tragic problem. We must, therefore, apply yet another test. Does the proposal contribute to the solution of the Jewish problem, a problem pregnant with danger to ourselves and to the world? . . .

Natan Alterman (1910–70)

The silver platter Zionist

The great Zionist poet Natan Alterman was born in Warsaw in 1910 and moved to Mandatory Palestine in 1925. While honing his literary talents, Alterman also wrote a weekly column, first for *Ha'aretz* start-

ing in 1934, and after 1943, for the Histadrut Labor Federation daily, *Davar*. Alterman's lyricism and nationalism, often linked to current events as the State of Israel emerged, made him, in David Ben-Gurion's words, "The Conscience of the Nation."

In 1934 his poem, "Shir Moledet" (Song of the homeland), expressed the simple love of homeland sharpened by working the land. Eleven years later, his song "Kalaniot" (Anemones), celebrating the joy even one such flower blooming can bring for generations, became a classic. Jewish underground fighters sang it to warn one another when British soldiers were around; then in 1948 the singer Shoshana Damari made it her signature song—and that founding generation's anthem.

In 1936 Alterman's bitter poem, "Horgai HaSadot" (The killers of the fields), contextualized the fears of the Yishuv, the Jewish residents of Mandatory Palestine, within the broader sweep of Jewish history. Describing marauders emerging "like massive-jawed raptors / At a desert crawl," he concluded: "For ancient destiny has not let go, no he hasn't. / For amid her tranquility and the songs of her tents, / He's been holding her in a headlock since Vespasian,/ And brandishing his whip."

Alterman's anguish during the Shoah had him penning sarcastic mockeries of the prayers, writing, "Praised are You . . . who has chosen us out of all the nations" in 1942. But Alterman refused to become a traumatized, isolationist Jew. A year later, on October 8, 1943, in "The Swedish Tongue," he thanked the Swedes for welcoming the Danish Jews, while bashing the rest of Europe for erecting lethal barriers with fancy legal terms and politicized fears.

In 1947 Alterman achieved Zionist immortality with his poem "Magash HaKesef" (The silver platter). During the difficult debate over whether or not to accept the November 29, 1947, United Nations Partition Plan that divided Palestine and internationalized Jerusalem, Chaim Weizmann had warned, "The state will not be given to the Jewish people on a silver platter." Alterman's weekly posting, "The Seventh Column," in *Davar*, on December 19, 1947, captured the sense of sacrifice that would be necessary to create the state. These words became among the most famous in the Zionist lexicon and are still read throughout Israel, especially on Remembrance Day.

Once the state was declared, this iconoclast ranged widely in his political beliefs. He assailed the Israeli military regime controlling Israeli Arabs until November 1966 and championed equal rights among all Israelis, both Jews and Arabs. Yet after 1967, once Israel had captured the Gaza Strip, the Sinai Peninsula, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights in the Six-Day War, Alterman joined other literary figures to endorse the Greater Land of Israel Movement, which called for the Israeli government to maintain the captured areas and settle them with Jews.

Shir Moledet (Song of the homeland) (1935)

On the mountains the sun already blazes
And in the valley the dew still shines
We love you, homeland,
With joy, with song and with toil.
From the slopes of Lebanon to the Dead Sea
We shall crisscross you with ploughs
We shall yet cultivate and build you
We shall yet beautify you.

We will dress you in a gown of concrete and cement
And lay for you a carpet of gardens,
On the soils of your redeemed fields
The harvest will chime with bells.
The desert wilderness, we will cross,
The swamps, we will drain.
What we give is for your glory and satisfaction,
What has not yet been given, we shall give.

In the hills, in the hills our light shined,
We will climb the mountain.
We will leave yesterday behind,
Although the path to tomorrow remains long.

Even if the difficult path is treacherous,
And even if some of us may fall,
We will love you, our homeland, forever,
We are yours in battle and in toil.

Magash HaKesef (The silver platter) (1947)

And the land quiets, the crimson sky slowly dimming over smoking frontiers
And the nation arises, heartbroken but breathing,
To receive the miracle, the only one, there is no other. . . .

As the ceremony approaches, it will rise amid the moon, standing erect in terror and joy. When across from it a young man and woman emerge and slowly, slowly march toward the people.

Dressed in battle gear, dirty,
Shoes heavy with grime, they climb the path quietly.
They didn't change their clothes, they didn't wipe their brows,
Still bone weary from days and nights in the battlefield

Interminably exhausted, abstainers from rest,
Yet wearing their youth like dew glistening on their head.
Silently, the two approach and stand immobile at attention, giving no sign of living or dying.

Then, enveloped in tears and wonder, the nation will ask: "Who are you?"
And the two reply quietly, "We are the silver platter on which the Jewish state was given."

This they will say and fall back encased in shadows
And the rest will be told in Israel's chronicles.

Albert Einstein (1879–1955)

Jewish nationalism as necessary nationalism.

Albert Einstein was a most reluctant Zionist. Born in Germany in 1879 to a secular family, Einstein wanted to live in a world without borders—and in some ways intellectually he did. But his internationalism and discomfort with nationalism were no match for German antisemitism. By 1919 a decade and a half before Adolf Hitler and the Nazis dismissed Einstein's groundbreaking scientific work as "Jewish Physics" and a "Jewish perversion," the already legendary physicist would proclaim: "I am as a human being, an opponent of nationalism. But as a Jew, I am from today a supporter of the Zionist effort." Einstein wrote to one friend: "One can be an internationalist without being indifferent to members of one's own tribe. . . . The Zionist cause is very close to my heart. . . . I am glad that there should be a little patch of earth on which our kindred brethren are not considered aliens."

Acting on his Zionist impulses, Einstein visited Palestine, fundraised for Hebrew University, and endorsed Zionism before, during, and after World War II. His worldwide fame and his Jewish pride made him, as his biographer Walter Isaacson wrote, "a living patron saint for Jews." But as a pacifist, Einstein feared the impact a Jewish state would have on the Palestinian Arabs—then, on the Jewish soul. In 1946 he testified before the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, saying, "The state idea is not according to my heart. I cannot understand why it is needed." While endorsing the development of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, he preferred to see a bi-national state at best.

Partisans on all side of the issue would seek the approval of the man reputed to be the greatest intellect of his time, whom *Time* magazine had crowned as the "person of the century," the master scientist in an age of science. Indeed, anti-Zionists still quote Einstein's testimony and other sayings to try to delegitimize Israel. But for all his ambivalence, Einstein endorsed the Jewish claim to Palestine. He saw Jewish anti-Zionists as engaged in "a pitiable attempt to obtain favor and toleration from our enemies by betraying true Jewish ideals."

Once the Jewish state was established, Einstein supported Israel. On the symbolically significant date of November 29, 1949, two years after the United Nations General Assembly voted to endorse a Jewish state and partition Palestine, Einstein delivered an NBC radio address lauding Israelis' self-sacrifice in absorbing hundreds of thousands of Jewish refugees from East and West who had nowhere else to go. "The Jews of Palestine did not fight for political independence for its own sake," he insisted, "but they fought to achieve free immigration for the Jews of many countries where their very existence was in danger."

When Chaim Weizmann died, David Ben-Gurion offered Einstein the presidency of the State of Israel. Einstein turned down the offer elegantly, saying he was too independent for politics; Ben-Gurion, aware of Einstein's iconoclasm, was relieved.

Yet in refusing, Einstein added: "I am the more distressed over these circumstances, because my relationship to the Jewish people has become my strongest human bond, ever since I became fully aware of our precarious situation among the nations of the world." Raised to be what Isaac Deutscher called a non-Jewish Jew, Albert Einstein felt forced by the world to be the always Jewish Jew, and the reluctant Zionist.

Palestine, Setting of Sacred History of the Jewish Race (with Erich Kahler, April 14, 1944)

Even if we put aside the spiritual, religious and cultural ties making Palestine the only place in the world which persecuted Jews could consider their home and develop with all the devotion a homeland inspires—there is not even any other country acceptable to human beings which the numerous refugee conferences were able to offer to this hounded people. The Jews are prepared for extreme sacrifices and hardest work to convert this narrow strip which is Palestine into a prosperous country and model civilization. . . .

For the true source of Arab resistance and hostility toward a Jewish Palestine is neither religious nor political, but social and economic. . . . The big Effendis fear the example and the impulse which the Jewish

colonization of Palestine presents to the peoples of the Near East, they resent the social and economic uplift of the Arabian workers in Palestine. They act as all fascist forces have acted: they screen their fear of social reform behind nationalistic slogans and demagoguery. . . .

The purpose of this statement is not a nationalistic one. We do not, and the vast majority of Jews does not, advocate the establishment of a state for the sake of national greed and self-glorification, which would run counter to all the traditional values of Judaism and which we consider obsolete everywhere. In speaking up for a Jewish Palestine, we want to promote the establishment of a place of refuge where persecuted human beings may find security and peace and the undisputed right to live under a law and order of their making. The experience of many centuries has taught us that this can be provided only by home rule and not by a foreign administration. This is why we stand for a Jewish controlled Palestine, be it ever so modest and small.

We do not refer to historic rights, although if there exists something like a historic right on a country, the Jews, at least as well as the Arabs, could claim it on Palestine. We do not resort to threats of power, for the Jews have no power; they are, in fact, the most powerless group on earth. If they had had any power they should have been able to prevent the annihilation of millions of their people and the closing of the last door to the helpless victims of the Nazi. What we appeal to is an elementary sense of justice and humanity. . . .