

iii **ZIONISM AND THE POLITICS OF AUTHENTICITY**

The Yisrael Beyteinu [Israel Our Home] Party decorates its platform with an¹ embrace of Zionism. Contrast this with the Labor Party's website that does not mention Zionism but prominently displays a picture of David Ben Gurion, Israel's first Prime Minister and esteemed founding father. The difference between one party's proclaimed Zionist identity and another's implicit gesture in the direction of the set of ideas and institutions that gave Jews their state means that the value and purpose of Zionism may be critical for some but not for others. But we might ask, critical for what? For example, what might those who still consider it necessary to pronounce their commitment to Zionism, sometimes with campaign slogans in Russian, make of Ahad Ha'Am's insistence that the land is primarily a means to the reinvigoration of the Hebrew language? Or how might this party respond to Ben-Gurion's call for Jews to remake themselves and their society into a class of workers that could be transformed into a nation? Would many of Israel's new breed of self-proclaimed Zionists even understand the meaning of the concepts once critical to the political philosophy of Zionism?ⁱⁱⁱ And if this is the sort of question that ought to be raised, should we add: what is intended by the absence of the word, Zionism, on the Labor Party's home page? Does this mean that for some Israelis, Zionism is simply a vestige of a bygone era?

Even when they mention Zionism, most Israeli politicians have little to say in general, and nothing that matches the thoughtful legacy of past discussions and heated debates.^{iv} No wonder it is hard for Israelis who are just growing up to grasp the ways in which for most of their country's early years, Zionist ideas and practices dominated public discourse. So, why focus an analysis of Israeli politics by directing attention to

Zionism? I would be more comfortable consigning Zionism to Israel's history if there weren't startling parallels between how Zionism operated as a nationalist movement in the struggle for a Jewish state and how it works in the contemporary political scene. But I hasten to add that focusing on Zionism's relevance does not deny the possibility of giving its changes in form and function their full significance. Zionism may have lost its sanctity but certainly not its purpose.

Zionism has always attempted to frame Israel's understanding of itself, but the first question to pose is which Zionism? Israel's founding as a Jewish state in 1948 was largely the work of nationalists who deemed themselves 'secular'^v and who led the Zionist movement from its establishment in the last decades of the nineteenth century. But some number of these Zionists, driven by necessity to seek a political solution to the problems encountered in an age of nationalism and dictatorship, generated ambitions not simply for a state and society like all other nations but also for redemption, the hope that a Jewish state and society would provide a new kind of social order without hierarchy, without exploitation, and with justice and equality for all. By tying a humanistic mission to a struggle for sovereignty, Zionist politics were frequently pulled in different directions. The tensions between the movement's utopian idealism and its capacity to set priorities meant having to come to terms with the fact that the promises of founding a Jewish state on the purest of Zionist visions could not always be kept.^{vi} And while the differences could often be hidden in abstractions or ambiguous language, they could not be entirely avoided.

Despite the multiplicity of its goals and values, however, Zionism did manage to establish the coordinates of a widely accepted and highly regarded relationship between

land, people, and language. Reviving the Hebrew language was to be an instrument to transform a people once defined by their religious traditions and law into a nation bound together by a shared, albeit often newly invented, set of mores and by living as citizens in a sovereign state. The creation of a culture whose literature and ideas were expressed in Hebrew and whose ancient laws and rituals could be translated into national traditions was the groundwork for both a liberation Zionists sought from religious authority and for a state offering Jews something they believed could be found nowhere else--full rights and the opportunity to adapt and take advantage of the modern world.^{vii} Zionism imagined Jews could interact with other societies without risking their distinctiveness only if their culture and society had a permanent address.

With an independent Jewish state since 1948 and generations achieving fluency in a Hebrew restored as a national language, then, is the country's dominant culture still framed by the same coordinates once elevated by the original Zionist vernacular into a national creed? Or has Zionism simply been remade by the new global forces Israel has rushed to embrace thus necessarily making room not only for other languages--English, Arabic, Russian, and even Yiddish--but also for religious resources once thought an expression of subordination and a metaphor for the stagnation of Jewish culture?

If globalization beckons Israel to enter the world economy and benefit from its market forces, does it simultaneously undermine the predisposition to dismiss the culture of Jews living in other lands? Has the conception of a Diaspora once described as the place where Jews are scattered and live as outsiders that is now filled with so many Israelis who cross oceans and continents for business, education, and careers changed the discourse on homeland as much as on exile?

In common speech, Israel's recovery of the sacred sites of Jerusalem and the West Bank in the aftermath of the 1967 June War is depicted as marking a rebirth of Zionism.^{viii} But since Israel's public discourse has also become at once more religious by building new categories of holiness around the territories conquered in 1967, has it thereby weakened the classical Zionist impulse to seek international legitimacy and find accommodation with those asserting their own claims to this most contested of lands?

Zionism gave the Jewish nationalist mission its energy and direction. If the establishment of a state in 1948 did not totally complete the Zionist mission, it certainly began to recast it. Once Zionism's vision defined a marker of social change. Today it provides one of the several signs of assimilation and of the intention to integrate into Israeli society. Once Zionism aimed to change the Jewish people. Today, the Jewish people, at least in Israel, have changed Zionism not by degrading it as a pivotal cultural resource but rather by deploying it to wage particular kinds of political battles. While few scholars recognize and acknowledge its role, fewer still understand how Zionism, albeit reformatted to fit the times and circumstances, continues to guide Israelis through the dynamics and contradictions of life in the Jewish state.

LAND AND DEMOGRAPHY

Not surprisingly, the experience of living in a state eroded the excitement of pursuing utopian ideals,^{ix} but just as Israel approached the end of its founding ideology, the 1967 War, with its conquest of the West Bank territories, resurrected one long dormant dream, preserved through seemingly unrealistic slogans, that conjured up the possibility of actually building homes on the historic land of Israel. For most Israelis,

their military victory in 1967 rescued the country from an existential threat; for some, it fostered a determination to revive and revise a Zionist goal that promised personal and collective redemption on a land made sacred by ancestors and one that could now be remade as holy through the establishment of Jewish settlements. ^x Like the dominant visions of the past, this one, too, possessed an imaginative and moral power for many, but it was also accompanied by a clear weakening of the public acclaim for Zionism's original egalitarian transformative mission.

Small groups developed a narrative of spiritual rebirth based on building homes and communities on sites woven into Judaism's sacred story. These communities were intended to symbolize a strengthened dedication to Zionism and Judaism and to give both a new scale of expression. But the many Jewish settlements and religious institutions that dot the hills and towns of the West Bank also tapped into ideals of individuality and personal prosperity, sentiments that had in the past been marginalized or even buried in Israel's dominant labor Zionist culture. After the 1967 War, the country's economic expansion enabled many Israelis--aided by government subsidies--to build their dream house and recast Israeli culture from a celebration of a Spartan labor ideal into a nation that could offer more liberty to its citizens in their quest for material prosperity and for communities of like-minded families provided with the kinds of local services--religious or not--congruent with their life styles.^{xi} The word *settlement*--once conjuring up images of a return to the soil, to agricultural labor, and to a work imbued with an egalitarian ethic--became the incarnation of a new bourgeois spirit taking over the society.

If, in earlier years, Zionist debates revolved around which lands the Jews could safely hold and which they could rightfully claim, after 1967, discussions focused as

much on communities and demography as on historic rights.^{xiii} Israelis became more disposed to talking about the land as a critical element in forming homogeneous local communities, many around shared religious values and practices. Thus when the Israeli Government renamed the West Bank Judea and Samaria, stamping the territories with their Biblical names, it invented a language to symbolize that this new settlement mission was as Jewish as it was Zionist and injected a linguistic currency that further destabilized the classical Zionist nation building paradigm with its secular thrust even as it sought to co-opt it with a powerful historic resonance.

DIASPORA

Nationalisms typically look backward to a reconstructed past to define identity and forward to an imagined future to secure it. In fusing memory to vision, Zionism drew on Judaism's biblical text for its primary historical traditions, claiming the stories of ancient glory as proof of a correlation between political dominance in the land of Israel and the production of everlasting cultural achievements, a generative power supposedly lost as Jews were scattered across the globe and dispossessed of a homeland.

Rhetorically and ideologically, then, the classic Zionist nationalist narrative was selective, offering a lofty interpretation of the most remote and unknowable periods of Jewish history while disparaging the most verifiable record of its achievements in what to most Jews was the most familiar of circumstances. A national solidarity tied to Judaism's ancient history and to its classical textual language was a hard call for Zionists to issue. It devalued what most European Jews shared with one another--religion and language--and demanded they accept a vision whose meaning was so new and different that it could not be instantly apprehended. The claim that without a land of their own, Jews had no

capacity for action or creativity was, at the very least, inconsistent with the expectation that Jews, by a collective act of national will, would be able to bring their global dispersion to an end. Zionists insisted that the European Jewish culture in which they were raised and nurtured could not furnish a normative model for the rehabilitation of Jewish life. But could the new Jewish life be so totally unlike and detached from the civilization that gave it life and purpose?

The story of Israel's national identity was never simply a tale of two cities and cultures. Imagining a Jewish nation often took on wildly improbable proportions and was quite different from the process of trying to transform one into a sovereign state.^{xiii} While the Zionist nation-building project took a particularly powerful form in a set of propositions that presumably explained not only the Jewish past but also the direction of its national future, a narrative preoccupied with fashioning a new collective identity was more easily written than actually summoned into existence.

Although Zionism's social engineering axioms called on Jews to shed their Diaspora traditions, multitudes sustained the customs of their families and/or of their countries of origin even as such practices were often labeled an impediment to advancement. The assertion that this new and uniform national identity left no place for the celebration of ethnic and religious traditions exacted a heavy price on those whose lifestyle did not fit into what became the authorized culture and whose communities were frequently blamed for holding in check the forces and benefits of progress. Only one vision was considered sufficient to inspire the transformational change necessary to create and sustain Jewish sovereignty, and it was given expression in poetry, song, theater, and school curricula. The pressure to conform to this newly defined image of

what Israel was supposed to become was at times so intense that it could easily turn ugly and justify all sorts of abuse for the sake of realizing this widely proclaimed national mission. While there have been important explorations of the damages done to those who did not embrace this vision of change and whose activities were distinguished by their desire to remember so much of what this new vision wanted to banish,^{xiv} the language of protest remained suppressed until 1977 when the political movement presiding for so long over these society and culture was driven from power. By tapping into the reserves of anger and anxieties, groups marginalized by the dominant labor Zionist discourse began to introduce a new language that would aid them in their quest for access to power and privilege. Wanting to give the 1977 elections their full due, Asher Arian observed that,

The 1977 election turnover signaled a realignment of the party system, of the electorate, of the elites, and of public policy. Ethnic and religious group allegiances crystallized, and demography, combined with the sharp split on the territorial issue, led to a redefining of the political system. From among an electorate that identified with positions espoused by the Israeli "left" there was a surge of support for the "right" and its symbols. After having been dominated by the Labor party until 1977, the party system became increasingly competitive. Before 1977, the question decided by elections was which party would be second largest, since it was a foregone conclusion that Labor would have the greatest number of Knesset seats. After 1977, the question was now which would be the largest party, and what was the likelihood that it would be capable of forming a coalition that could survive in the face of frequent crises. The pattern was strengthened rather than diminished by the aborted direct election of prime minister electoral system...^{xv}

Today, several Israeli political parties comfortably assume the mantle of Jewishness not so much to discard their Zionism--though some like the Shas Party do so more in name than in practice--as to dismantle the hegemony and elitism inscribed into the country's public discourse seemingly committed to remaking the Jewish people, emblazoned in Zionism's storied achievements--Kibbutz and Moshav--that presumably

stood as testimonials to the capacity of the political system to translate egalitarian ideals into reality. But however tightly they gripped the imagination, these institutions could not operate without generous subsidies from the nation's treasury. When the 1977 election upheaval brought to power political movements dedicated more to the cause of bringing Jews to the territories conquered in 1967 than to the idea of sustaining the productive capacity of agricultural collectives, however venerable their status, even these self-proclaimed egalitarian communities, burdened with heavy debts and high operating costs, had to engage in enterprises turning a profit to survive. Instead of transforming 'class into nation', one is tempted to say, that in 1977, the country began to reformat its mission away from a celebration of workers to a reverence for its bourgeoisie.

Zionists initially wanted to draw a distinction between the Jewish culture in the lands of their birth immigrants were encouraged to abandon and the new one surrounding them in the land of Israel. But while the narrative of negating the Diaspora may have hovered over Israel's early history, it could not be sustained as the country sought its place as the 'start-up nation' prepared to insert its innovative enterprises in the global market and to list its own companies on the US Stock Exchange. Fostering a new Jewish identity that claimed to diminish the value of the old complicated the need to engage with people [including Jews] across the globe for economic ties and political support. Israel is now more disposed to proclaiming a common Jewish identity than to asserting the need to 'negate' the attributes of the Diaspora.^{xvi} Geography no longer delineates a dividing line between the values of the old, rejected Diaspora Jew and the new Jew created in Israel. No longer compelled or motivated to 'negate' the Diaspora, Israelis seem anxious to open up their culture and society to the lands their ancestors left and rejected.

Moreover, even when they devalued what they regarded as a culture made moribund by its rigid piety and political passivity, Zionists always preserved connections to the lands of their birth. But integration into the global economy, even if it arose from the narrowest of economic motivations, has generated profound consequences for that relationship. No longer propagating an indictment against Diaspora culture, Zionism now joins together a vocabulary of national attachment with a language of religious identity. Israel sponsors programs like Birth Rate to bring young Diaspora Jews to Israel to enable them to feel they are stepping not only on holy but also and more importantly, on common ground as well.

Even before the most recent controversies over military service for the ultra-orthodox or over the attempt to create separate and unequal space for men and women in buses and on sidewalks in ultra-orthodox neighborhoods, Judaism and Zionism were cast as adversaries. Paradoxically, some on both sides in this debate about how to strengthen Jewish identity and defend Jewish interests presumed that nationalism and religion were disjunctive and for that reason, a wedge issue driving Israeli and Diaspora Jews apart. Although Zionism aimed to transform the structure of Jewish life without totally detaching it from its history and from many of its traditions, it preached rebellion as much against the shackling of Jews by the agents of Jewish religion as by alien rulers-- independence was supposed to liberate Jews from the rule of rabbis no less than from that of the Czars. Drawing the line sharply led to the supposition that all Jews in Israel fell clearly on one or another side of the cultural divide even as the Religious Zionist movement should have exposed the fallacy of such an assertion.

But Zionism, alone, is no longer sufficient to pitch the claims this population wishes to advance. In the past, Zionism's ambition to redefine what it was to be a Jew, lodged itself in the imagination even for many of those who abided by the traditions and religious rulings they carried from past generations. Today, Judaism has refashioned what it means to be a Zionist by conveying an absolute conviction in the holiness of the territories now named, Judea and Samaria, thereby converting what was asserted as an historic right into a powerful religious imperative. Thus, any political calculation that deems withdrawing from these areas congruent with Israel's national interest would confront not only the charge of violating critical Zionist principles but also the accusation of transgressing sacred obligations. Cloaking nationalism in a religious framework has, however, generated considerable tensions with many Diaspora Jews who are more likely to regard the disposition of these territories on a security grid that preserves the possibility of resolving the conflicts bred by the competing claims to this overly promised land.

HEBREW

Reviving the Hebrew language was also part of the grand vision aiming to transform the Jewish people. The creation of a culture whose literature and ideas were expressed in Hebrew and whose ancient laws and rituals could be translated into national traditions was the groundwork for both a liberation Zionists sought from religious authority and for a people seeking to recover not only its ancient land and political status but also its national voice. Zionists equated the language with the Jewish nation because both could be traced back to a territory they claimed as historic homeland. But Hebrew

raised several issues for new immigrants. Gaining sufficient fluency in Hebrew typically delayed the acquisition of political power. Becoming Israeli meant not only controlling the discourse but also assimilating into the newly forming culture. Hebrew was the language symbolizing not only resistance to the many native tongues spoken by a people dispersed across the globe but also to the so-called Diaspora values carried by immigrants to the Jewish state.

Israel took on a new form with the significant Russian immigration of the past several decades. Because of its size and set of skills, Israel was compelled to allow them to see themselves as coming home as quickly as possible and that meant in their own language. Election campaigns rapidly incorporated Russian words and phrases. Hebrew was once at the center of the Zionist project partly because it moved immigrants away from both the languages and lands of their birth. The commitment to Hebrew that cut people off from the countries and from friends and relatives left behind was intended to make it possible to feel a sense of belonging to the nation state they were called on to help create. But in this globalized age, people can live steeped in more than one culture and draw on multiple languages to explain their affiliations and establish priorities among them. In the past, speaking a language other than Hebrew was couched as appealing to something smaller than the nation; now, it is cast in exactly the opposite way as reaching out beyond the geography and strengthening Jewish identity. Zionism is no longer waging war against the Diaspora or against the many different languages spoken by the Jewish people; rather, it is trying to incorporate them.

EXPANDING ZIONISM

Zionism has now become a powerful resource serving the rhetorical needs of political parties that are competing for votes in a highly charged system where economic and social issues are often viewed as consequences of how well or poorly the outgoing government has handled security and stood its ground against international diplomatic assaults.^{xvii} As long as Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state is contested, Zionism is likely to be embraced as an emblem of Jewish national rights and as a defense against what is perceived by many as yet another attempt to destroy the Jewish people. But when deposited in the public arena, Zionism is made available for servicing other political interests as well.

Zionism's deployment in Israeli political discourse says less about Israel's past than about how one or another particular political party intends to navigate the country's present. And while Zionism always attempted to signal the hope for inclusiveness and solidarity, it also could not avoid sending out vectors of dissent to those whose lifestyles did not measure up to the ideals it advanced. But even today, Zionism still supplies momentum to a people who find themselves strangers in a strange land.

For Yisrael Beyteinu, a political party supported by relatively recent Russian arrivals, a public commitment to Zionism, above all, functions as a sign of its integration into Israeli society and a willingness to contest a national identity that fails to accommodate its secular orientation to citizenship. Zionism, in contemporary Israeli politics, has become a marker of absorption and a demand for inclusion into the national culture. But because the template of the past cannot be entirely discarded, Zionism is a term still not elastic enough to include those Israelis who see themselves as tied to religious traditions. For them, a language of identity must include Judaism. The

difference between a Zionist vocabulary and a language replete with references to God and religious values reflects not only shifting contours of power, it also promotes them. If invoking Judaism is employed to dampen the classical Zionist claims to transforming Jewish identity, references to Zionism are constructed around arguments for a separation between the religious and public spheres.

For some Israelis, Zionism reminds them of their own alienation, an awareness of their own dispossession and the sense that the country still belongs to the descendants of the European pioneers who built the state. But the language filled with references to Jewish values and the deference displayed to clergy and to a religious point of view makes others feel as though they are the foreigners, the people exiled from their homeland. Fortunately, not only are the vocabularies replete with religious values as open to appropriation as the languages formed from Zionist principles but combinations and fusions are also options available to Israel's citizens. Together they comprise a public discourse allowing more of Israel's Jewish citizens to recognize themselves as part of the country's national narrative and may be an example of what Charles Taylor calls 'the politics of recognition' whereby subaltern groups demand that their identities and presence be recognized as valid.^{xviii}

THE CONSEQUENCES

How did a country once emulated for the dominance of its party system descend into one whose governing coalitions comprise larger numbers of smaller political groups that struggle mightily to retain their name, identity, and voter base from one election to another? For the first decades after Israel's founding in 1948, the Labor Party managed

both the transition to statehood and more than the average number of crises. The Labor Party created the state's institutions and empowered them. It framed and expressed a public consensus on significant matters of state. It also provided a number of services to its members ranging from health care to subsidized vacations. But as the population grew and the economy developed, Israelis demanded more than any single political movement could give them. Quality health care could no longer be offered through the labor movement's union just as jobs could not be guaranteed if industries could not generate a profit. The Labor Party lost its dominance partly because of its success in building relatively effective state institutions and partly because its own party agencies could no longer meet the needs of a population that had become larger, richer, and more diverse.

The Israeli party system has been undergoing a dealignment process since the 1990s. Dealignment is a major characteristic of most advanced industrial democracies. Its essential feature is the weakening of party bonds, which results from the declining role of parties as political institutions as well as from the public's changing norms and political mobilization patterns. The major characteristic of politics in an era of dealignment is volatility.^{xix}

But while Israel's party system was weakened by internal domestic forces, it was driven to the edge by the question of Palestine.

For if Zionism did not give birth to Palestinian nationalism, it certainly gave it political momentum. Israel's conquest of the West Bank territories in the 1967 June War transformed a people once characterized by their plight as homeless, desperately in need of international charity and passively taking refuge in the abstract hope that its Arab supporters and overseers would set it free into a nation actively and publicly--and often violently--organizing itself against its enemy. Because Israel's military victory gave Palestinians a geographic base for their national liberation struggle, it also provided them

with the capacity to depict the map to which they laid their sovereign claims thereby inserting the question of Palestine into the politics of the Jewish state and as a consequence, reviving many of the old and troubling disputes confronting Zionism from its very origins.

Thus the Palestinian issue has not only increasingly shaped the very structure of Israel's party system, it has also affected the practical meaning of Zionism as a rubric for the country's core values. Ironically, however, while complicated political and economic policies are enfolded into the Palestine question, they have often been typically defined as addressing something else--security or foreign affairs or public relations. Still, the crippling share of the nation's resources and attention committed to this issue, however thick the veil covering it, means that the question of Palestine is like no other not only because it challenges the capacity of the party system but also because it questions the legitimacy of Jewish sovereignty. At every stage of Zionist and Israeli history, complicated political compromises have surrounded the Palestinian question, each one managing it for a time but, despite the hopes of many, never settling it once and for all--not by might or power and not by peace. As one approach failed, it was supplanted or combined with another, the recipe depending on the governing coalition.

Without resolution, the question of Palestine has become indissolubly linked to the general social and economic development of the country and, of course, to its international standing. As long as Palestinian political aims are understood, by some in Israel, as calling for the extinction of Israel as a Jewish state, Zionism will be reclaimed in one or another way, by others, to suggest how Israel will once again find its salvation. But proclaiming loyalty to Zionism as a core element of political identity does little to

provide the working principles for actual policies to resolve the question of Palestine as it has come to be called.

Paradoxically, however, as they summon up the will to fight for what they believe is survival, Israeli politicians have also incorporated the Palestine issue into their national life in a process that has fractured the country's political system and increased its volatility. The frustration and bitterness that fills Israeli politics these days reflects not only a failure to understand where the 1967 conquest of the 'territories,' even when renamed Judea and Samaria, would take the county but also the incapacity of existing governmental institutions to prevent the Palestine issue from engulfing national political life. A country established to address the Jewish problem has now been forced to assume responsibility for resolving the Palestinian question. There is, of course, no reason to believe that re-enacting a commitment to Zionism will serve as a means of resolving the Middle East Conflict. There is much more evidence to posit that even as abstract rhetoric, Zionist metaphors will sound an alarm for Palestinians. But Zionism has lent a certain magnitude to the country's fears about the Palestinian question even as it has also been imprinted with an instrumental value capable of addressing cultural anxieties. This incongruity can produce political outcomes that are hard to reconcile. "Voters were expressing conciliatory attitudes toward territorial compromises but also voting for parties and symbols of the right."^{xx}

The Palestine question wreaks such havoc with Israel's political system because the issue periodically spirals into violence fed by a rhetoric of contempt streaming frequently from the media but sometimes as well from officials. Not surprisingly, then, although public opinion largely supports establishing a Palestinian state as a way to end

the country's occupation of the lands conquered in 1967, that consensus has not gained a secure foothold for any single party endorsing it, particularly as one of its founding principles. When a centrist party promises to end the country's long-standing dispute with the Palestinians but delivers no agreements, voters are unlikely to be convinced that they have much to lose by turning to smaller parties with narrower goals more likely to serve their immediate concrete material or social interests.

The results of the 2009 elections in Israel signaled the lowest point ever achieved by what are known as the Zionist Left parties, the Labor party and Meretz, which combined for only sixteen parliamentary seats. This low stage followed a long process of decline from a high point in 1992 when the two parties combined for a total of fifty-six seats.^{xxi}

The Palestine question has also magnified what had always been a cultural fault line between those who see in Zionism a liberating Jewish power and those who view it as normalizing the Jewish people. This is not a new fault line but it has taken the form as a choice between that Zionists imagine should be done and what actually can be done. A national narrative of great expectations has more trouble than ever before being harmonized with achievements that necessarily must be matched with a set of diminished possibilities. Because of the Palestine burden, the political system is now less able than in the past to serve as an arena that can put together a combination of words or deeds powerful enough to temper ideological differences that have been elevated into a clash of civilization. Ironically, then, Israelis find more agreement about how to prepare their defenses against violence perpetrated by Palestinians than when they are confronted with Arab bids for peace and reconciliation.

But feuding over the meaning of Jewish identity or Zionism is nothing new. It is inscribed in Zionist history and nowhere more compellingly than at its beginnings. Ever

since Zionism crystallized into an organization that had to hammer out policies and mobilize resources, more than a few of the members summoned up contradictory arguments over how to move their cause forward. Introducing the subject of what Zionism might mean for the Arabs in the land of Israel frequently had a tendency to destabilize the debates or fracture the context in which they were conducted. Mapai's decision to accept the principle of partitioning the land split the Labor Movement. Those preoccupied with finding ways to bridge the differences between Jews and Arabs in British Mandate Palestine never gained political traction for their proposals. A minority may have anticipated a final harmony, with the majority, projecting a grudging accommodation, but while Zionist leaders advanced compelling arguments for Jewish rights and development, they had little to say about how to meet Arab needs and recognize Arab rights without diminishing Jewish claims or stretching limited Zionist resources to the breaking point.

It is also important to stress that even in 1948, the messianic visions that gave Zionism its vision and universal ethical appeal did not bring it its greatest success-- the establishment of a state. Although the conventional wisdom of Israel's founding tends to confirm the notion that a Jewish nation was remade and a new collective identity formed, this view possesses more convention than wisdom. Israel was not established simply by a collective act of will. Zionist discourse may have been permeated with utopian urges, but Zionist policies, particularly after accepting the 1947 Partition Plan, succumbed to reality and were structured around the need to choose among the limited options available. While Zionist discourse celebrated the future as more imperative than either the past or the present, its state-making decisions recognized the need to deal with the possibilities of

the moment and the political landscape as it actually was. Above all, the process of creating a state depended on the centrality of compromise. Nation-building and state-making could be entirely distinct processes and while they were related, they sometimes worked not in tandem but rather, ironically, directly against one another.

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33. Troen, S. Ilan, *Imagining Zion Dreams, Designs, and Realities in a Century of Jewish Settlement*, Yale, 2003.
34. Vital, David, *The Origins of Zionism*, Oxford, 1975.
35. *Israel Affairs: Israel's 2009 Elections*, Volume 16 Number 1 [January 2010].

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ⁱⁱⁱ Eyal Chowers, *The Political Philosophy of Zionism*, Cambridge, 2012.

^{iv} See the interviews with Naftali Bennett who heads the Jewish Home Party. He contrasts the Zionism of Herzl which he equates as concerned only with the safety for Jews with that of Ben-Gurion who understood the value of land as he insisted on proclaiming Jerusalem, Israel's capital despite the position then adopted by the international community that insisted the city be accorded an international status.

^v Of course, the followers of Ahad Ha'Am were quite different from those subscribing to the views of Micha Berdyczewski even if all considered themselves operating outside of a religious context and adopting a term that suggests a willingness to violate religious norms and strictures.

^{vi} See my *Exiled in the Homeland Zionism and The Return to Mandate Palestine*, University of Texas Press, 2009.

^{vii} Ben Halpern, *The Idea of the Jewish State*, Cambridge, 1969; David Vital, *The Origins of Zionism*, Oxford, 1975; Gideon Shimoni, *The Zionist Ideology*, Hanover and London, 1995; Shlomo Avineri, *The Making of Modern Zionism: The Intellectual Origins of the Jewish State*, New York, 1981.

^{viii} Ohana, David, *The Origins of Israeli Mythology*, Cambridge, 2012.

^{ix} Orit Rozin, *The Rise of the Individual in 1950s Israel*, Brandeis, 2011.

^x Michael Feige, *Settling in the Hearts: Jewish Fundamentalism in the Occupied Territories*, Wayne State, 2009; Gadi Taub, *The Settlers and The Struggle Over The Meaning of Zionism*, Yale, 2010.

^{xi} Nahum Barnea, *Yorim u-Vochim [They Shoot and They Cry]*, Zmora-Bitan, 1997.

^{xii} S. Ilan Troen, *Imagining Zion Dreams, Designs, and Realities in a Century of Jewish Settlement*, Yale, 2003.

^{xiii} Boaz Neumann, *Land and Desire in Early Zionism*, Brandeis, 2011.

^{xiv} Nadav G. Shelef, *Evolving Nationalism Homeland, Identity, and Religion in Israel, 1925-2005*, Cornell, 2010. See also, Sergio DellaPergola, "Sephardic and Oriental Jews in Israel and Western Countries: Migration, Social Change, and Identification," and Nissim Leon, "Zikui Harabim: Ovadia Yosef's

Approach toward Religious Activism and His Place in the Haredi Movement Within Mizrahi Jewry," in *Studies in Contemporary Jewry XXII*, edited by Peter Medding, Oxford, 2007, pps. 3-43 and 150-168.

^{xv} Asher Arian and Michal Shamir, eds. *The Elections in Israel 2003*, SUNY, page 14.

^{xvi} Examples abound from the 2013 General Election campaign with Jewish artifacts and religious garb featured in videos for the so-called secular parties. Perhaps, the most striking example of the religious embrace is found in the newly formed party--There is A Future--founded by Yair Lapid, the son of the person most associated, in earlier elections, with attacking the ultra-Orthodox. Yair Lapid has included Rabbis, including one classified as ultra-Orthodox, into his party.

^{xvii} Shmuel Sandler, M. Ben Mollov and Jonathan Rynhold, eds. *Israel at the Polls 2003*, Routledge, 2005.

^{xviii} Charles Taylor, *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, Princeton, 1994.

^{xix} Asher Arian and Michal Shamir, eds. *The Elections in Israel 2003*, SUNY, page 24.

^{xx} Asher Arian and Michal Shamir, eds. *The Elections in Israel 2003*, SUNY, page 15.

^{xxi} Asher Arian and Michal Shamir, eds. *The Elections in Israel 2009*, Transaction, page 41.