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REVISITING ZIONISM AS A STATE IDEOLOGY OF ISRAEL: A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF THE ISRAEL—PALESTINE CONFLICT

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ABSTRACT

This paper critically examines Zionism as the state ideology of Israel, with a particular focus on its role and impact within the Israel-Palestine conflict. Zionism, originally a movement for the re-establishment of a Jewish homeland, has evolved into a complex and contentious political ideology. This study revisits its historical roots, ideological foundations, and contemporary interpretations. By exploring the intersection of Zionism with nationalism, religion, and politics, the paper aims to provide a nuanced understanding of how Zionism shapes Israeli policies and influences the ongoing conflict with Palestine. The analysis delves into the narratives and counter-narratives surrounding Zionism, addressing the perspectives of various stakeholders, including Israeli Jews, Palestinians, and the international community. Through a critical lens, the paper assesses the implications of Zionist ideology for peace prospects, human rights, and regional stability. The findings underscore the need to re-evaluate Zionism in light of its practical outcomes and ethical considerations. This study contributes to the broader discourse on state ideologies, conflict resolution, and Middle Eastern politics, offering insights into the possibilities for a just and sustainable resolution to the Israel-Palestine conflict.

الملخص

تقوم هذه الورقة بفحص نقدي للصهيونية كإيديولوجية دولة إسرائيل، مع التركيز بشكل خاص على دورها وتأثيرها في سياق الصراع الإسرائيلي–الفلسطيني. كانت الصهيونية في الأصل حركة لإعادة إقامة وطن يهودي، لكنها تطورت لتصبح إيديولوجية سياسية معقدة ومثيرة للجدل. تعيد هذه الدراسة النظر في جذورها التاريخية، وأسسها الإيديولوجية، وتفسيراتها المعاصرة. من خلال استكشاف تقاطع الصهيونية مع القومية والدين والسياسة، تهدف الورقة إلى تقديم فهم دقيق لكيفية تشكيل الصهيونية للسياسات الإسرائيلية وتأثيرها على الصراع المستمر مع فلسطين. يتناول التحليل الروايات والروايات المضادة المحيطة بالصهيونية، مع التركيز على وجهات نظر مختلف أصحاب المصلحة، بما في ذلك اليهود الإسرائيليين والفلسطينيين والمجتمع الدولي. من خلال عدسة نقدية، تقيم الورقة تداعيات الإيديولوجية الصهيونية على آفاق السلام وحقوق الإنسان واستقرار المنطقة. وتشير النتائج إلى الحاجة إلى إعادة تقييم الصهيونية في ضوء نتائجها العملية والاعتبارات الأخلاقية. تسهم هذه الدراسة في الخطاب الأوسع حول إيديولوجيات الدولة، وحل النزاعات، والسياسة في الشرق الأوسط، مقدمة رؤى حول إمكانية التوصل إلى حل عادل ومستدام للصراع الإسرائيلي–الفلسطيني.

INTRODUCTION

The notion of making Zionism the fundamental ideology of Israel has come a long way and gained momentum when the first Zionist Congress was held in 1897 (Avineri, 1998, p. 35). Since then, thanks to this idea, Israel has been among the countries that have been influencing the world. However, morally, Israel's attitude towards Palestinians and the independence of Palestine is still far from developed. Since the making of Israel, the world has been witnessing a series of violence, injustice, misery, and so forth. It is not only the Palestinians that have been suffering from this extraordinary situation, but also Israelis, regardless of its intensity and level of suffering.

The given situation, unfortunately, happened during the struggle for peace between Israel and Palestine. It could mean that, with that many miserable occurrences for both Israel and Palestine, achieving peace is still far from reality. That is not to say that peace is such an unrealistic goal. However, from the occurrences people around the world see every day, it is merely hard to achieve, given that the peace process for the Israel-Palestine conflict has been making many efforts since 1947 (The UN Partition Plan). Still, there is no such progressive and significant result. Conversely, the situation in the area could be said to be getting more unstable in Israeli illegal settlements, for example.

Further questions then emerged around the Israel-Palestine conflict discourse as for problem there must be a cause. From any perspective, the idea of making Israel could be considered a problematic idea. It is well known that before the establishment of Israel, Palestine, in which Jews, Christians, and Muslims lived, had been living together peacefully in a stable land. However, since then, instability has been taking place. Something must be discussed about this to solve the problem, and for this long-drawn conflict, the root of the problem should be sought. As it is the root of the problem, the reason must also be fundamental. In other words, there would be a great possibility of Zionism as the root of the conflict.

Ilan Halevi of the Revolutionary Communist Alliance, as quoted by Glass (1976, pp. 63-64), emphasized the Zionist State's significance to Israel's left: "In all aspects of social, cultural, and economic life, a Zionist state is defined as one in which Jews are dominant. It is a legal requirement." He claimed that the Zionist worldview is directly responsible for widespread racism in Israel: "It is not as if these folks [i.e., Israeli Jews who despise and abuse Arabs] are racist criminals." These individuals are part of a vision formally indoctrinated, taught, and ingrained in them and their descendants, which is the state's core official philosophy. It also states that this state must become Jewish. We must hope that it will be Jewish and compel it to be such. This state's political aim is to ensure that Jews have the upper hand over non-Jews.

Moreover, as indicated by the attitudes the Israeli government always shows through its barbarism policy, the suspicious view that Zionism as a state ideology of Israel serves a hidden agenda that contradicts the peace process struggle. One of its many forms might be for the interest of third- party, as argued by Glass (1976, p. 67) that Jewish settlement in ArabPalestine "required the economic, military, and political assistance of one or more imperialist powers" by moving significant numbers of European Jews into Arab Palestine. Israel, after that, became a willing agent and collaborator of the American-led Middle East successor to the British Empire. According to the Revolutionary Communist Alliance, American colonial goals have evolved since the October 1973 War, which is concerning to a Zionist State that relies nearly entirely on American aid. The Alliance stated in their position paper, "It has become clear that American Imperialism - which is facing its own political and economic crisis - cannot afford to give Israel unconditional backing on all of her moves," according to "The Palestinian Question and Our Present Tasks," and that it is willing to maneuver among its various allies in the region if necessary. The ambition of US capital to penetrate deeper into the region's markets demands the development of ties with the Arab bourgeoisie, limiting the role and importance of Israel as the region's main base of American

Imperialism. This is not to say that Imperialism is going to "forsake Israel." Israel's relative weakness, both internationally and regionally, further strengthens its dependency on the US and its willingness to sell Imperialism services in exchange for weaponry and financial backing. This merely implies that the US will "distribute" its support and search for gendarmes and agents in the area, at least for the time being, without abandoning anybody, most minor of all Israel. In this situation, Zionism runs the risk of losing its historic role as the "lone protector of Western civilization against Asian barbarism."

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
The Origins of Zionism

Distinguishing the term Zionism is, first and foremost, a fundamental and essential task to do, although it is no easy task at all. The complexity accompanying this term derives from many attitudes attributed to Zionism, encompassing the Jewish exodus from antisemitism to establishing the Israeli state. It will be even more confusing as in both activities of exodus and state establishment, many motives are involved, which further distorts Zionism's definition.

Nevertheless, the distinction task, at least, could be done by distinguishing the term from two perspectives. The Zion-love view, which refers to The love that Diaspora Jews have for Zion or their relationship with it, as well as the community movement's outlook, which is marked by some particular features without which it would lack purpose and historic identity and would not have completed its mission: the influx of 600,000 Jews onto the area prior to the creation of the state, and the founding of the despite significant barriers (Livneh, 1964, p. 30). From its two perspectives, one point of view that gained much attention among people is the latter, since it influenced many Jews to join the movement. As it is considered essential to consider the second view, distinguishing its specific characteristics would be beneficial.

According to Livneh (1964: 30-32), Zionism could be distinguished from three characteristics: as a national-secular movement, as a movement that came on the scene as a "solution" to a Jewish problem which arose at the beginning of the Emancipation, and the essential principle and nucleus of Zionism was Aliyah (settlement in Israel).

Men who were brainwashed by the Haskalah (the Enlightenment) and Western absorption formed Zionism as a national-secular movement. It was neither an extension of Israel's religious heritage nor the world of its mitzvot-derived living laws. The Zionist movement was viewed by its visionaries and founders, Hess, Pinsker, Herzl, Nordau, and Jabotinsky, as one of the nationalistic issues (in Europe). Although religiously conservative people and organizations joined the movement early on, they did not choose its structure or central ideas. The Zionist leaders saw a Jewish community in the territory of Israel in the future as an outgrowth of secular European society. Zionist utopian literature attested to this, including works by Herzl, Levinsky, and others. The movement would have been entirely different from the start if it had started during the time of Rabbi Yehudah Chai Alkalai and those of his ilk. The fact that Zionism was founded and solidified by those who had experienced the process of secularization following the spread of secularism among Jews is troubling and perhaps fatal (Livneh, 1964, pp. 30-31).

About the Zionist movement, which emerged as a "solution" to a Jewish problem that surfaced at the start of the Emancipation, Livneh (1964: 31) further clarifies the second characteristic by stating that the notion of the Jewish problem did not refer to the general relationship between Judaism and the (Christian) environment. The breakdown of the ghetto and its aftermath gave rise to the unique Jewish issue of the 19th century. Within the confines of their environment of segregation, the Jews could not—or rather, they were unwilling to—live. In the Christian setting, they were either not assimilated or not assimilated in a kindly manner. As a result of the strain and tension this problem created, Jews found themselves in a difficult economic situation; there were widespread migrations,

there were violent anti-Jewish reactions, and there was an overall oppressive and fermentative syndrome that both Jews and Gentiles referred to as "The Jewish Problem." For both Jews and Gentiles, the Zionist movement sought to find a solution to this Jewish issue.

Finally, the last characteristic would sum up the essence of the Zionist movement as it contains the most fundamental idea of Zionism. Livneh (1964: 31–32) contends that since Aliyah (settlement in Israel) served as the fundamental tenet and hub of Zionism, no amount of semantic wrangling can disregard this crucial historical truth. The goal of the Zionist movement's founding was to encourage Aliyah inside the movement's borders and to focus all migration toward Israel. Jews from these nations would not have come to the land of Israel if it were not for the Chovevei Zion (Lovers of Zion) and the Zionist parties in Russia, Romania, Poland, Austria, Hungary, etc. In a certain respect, this Aliyah was in the true pioneering spirit: the immigrants came of their own free will, propelled by an inner drive and in the face of alternatives for immigration to America, Canada, Australia, South Africa, and even some Western European countries. This Aliyah accomplished its goal of serving as a sufficient nucleus for establishing a Jewish state in Israel. Without Aliyah, there would be no meaning to Zionism.

Zionism in the Initial Establishment of Israel

The establishment of Israel could not be separated from the Jewish exodus from Europe. Massad (1996: 53) argues that since The establishment of the State of Israel was based on the reconfiguration of Jewish identities, European Zionist leaders contended that the establishment of a Jewish state would normalize the anomalous position of European Jewry insofar as it would grant them, like Christian Europeans, a state of their own. Zionism would not only defend European Jews against anti-Semitic attacks, but it would also allow them to participate in activities that were previously unavailable to them in Europe, particularly in agriculture and the military. As a result, the Zionist movement aimed to alter the essential nature of Jewish society in Europe, as it had been in the Diaspora until then, rather than merely transplanting them to a new location.

As a movement one of the most recent European national movements to arise was Zionism. According to popular belief, the Zionist effort was late appearing and achieving its objectives. The rise of an Arab national movement and the Holocaust of European Jewry are both mentioned in this connection. In the final days of European imperialism, Herzlian Zionism made its first appearance. Colonization of an Eastern land by a European nation, which had been accepted as a legitimate and even moral phenomenon throughout the nineteenth century (e.g., Rudyard Kipling's "the white man's burden"), turned out to be all but impossible in the twentieth century, with the emergence of non-European national movements that undermined the moral underpinnings of European colonialism and brought about chauvinism. According to this school of thought, had Zionism been established fifty years earlier, nationalism and avoided Herzlian Zionism intended in Europe in its existential in creating a safe Jewish state and the Jews; since it was established only in its wake, Europe would have been a safer place for Jews (Saphira, 1998, pp. 217-218).

One of the difficulties, However, Vital (1998: 206) believes that, on the plus side, Zionists were rarely precise about what they were genuinely fighting for. They were inconsistent and disjointed even when they were specific. Instead, a variety of hyphenated versions of the movement developed, including socialist Zionism, religious Zionism, political Zionism, cultural Zionism, practical Zionism, "general" Zionism, "monistic" Zionism, and other minor variations on the core notion, all of which evolved through time. It should be remembered, for instance, that quite decent supporters of the movement were willing to accept less than the political freedom for which we now imagine everyone was striving at the period. A large percentage of Zionists were prepared to retreat even when

they reached the point of no return in May 1948. On the grounds of natural justice, several protested. Some because they hoped for a broad-based social revolution. Moreover, some feared disaster and a devastating military defeat in the grave circumstances of 1948, precisely as Mr. Secretary Marshall had gone out of his way to picture for them.

Two thousand Yemeni Jews were the first non-European Jews recruited to Palestine between 1910 and 1914; their migration was planned in 1907 during a controversy about the use of Arab labor in Ashkenazi colonies. Socialist Zionists emphasized the idea of exclusive Avodah 'Ivrit (Hebrew labor) as a requirement for the Jewish people's economic "normalization," and the employment of inexpensive Palestinian labor in many early settlements was regarded as degrading Zionist objectives. Shmuel Yavne'eli, an Ashkenazi Zionist, argued during this argument that Yemeni Jewish labor "may take the place of the Arabs." Yemenis, on the other hand, were determined to be unsuitable laborers and were evicted from numerous villages; some were eventually permitted to work in southern settlements if they established their homes outside. The presence of Yemeni Jews alarmed the Ashkenazi leadership so much that because of their diverse culture and mentality, Ahad Ha'Am, a prominent Zionist humanist, is concerned that Yemenite immigration would harm the essence of the Zionist settlement. (Massad, 1996:54).

The Ashkenazi Zionist leadership did not resolve to mass recruit Jews from Asia and Africa until after the death of six million (mainly European) Jews during World War II. When it became evident that Jews from the former Soviet Union would no longer be allowed to relocate to Israel, this recruitment accelerated. Between 1948 and 1956, 450,000 Asian and African Jews arrived in Israel, compared to 360,000 Jews from Europe and America. It was during this time that the social "gap" between Ashkenazi and Mizrahi communities was irreversibly constructed, with Ashkenazi receiving preferential treatment and Mizrahi being deemed marginalized (Massad, 1996, p. 56). A fascinating development of the 1980s was a growing tendency of solidarity with Palestinians; Mizrahim from all walks of life-related injustice against them to discrimination against Palestinians. Mizrahim was a vital member of the Committee for Israeli-Palestinian Dialogue, which was established in 1986 and whose talks with Palestinians caused the government to pass the "Counter-Terrorism Act" in August 1986, prohibiting contact with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) (Massad, 1996, p. 64).

Zionism in its Manifestations

The indication of problematic ideology could be seen from its attitudes and its application to many issues. Zionism, as an ideology, when it is applied to a state named Israel, has been bringing many problems. The problems, unfortunately, are not only with Palestine but also with many countries, especially Arab countries. In this case, Said (1979: 9) reveals the fact that after Israel's 1967 occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, the same program of destruction was used there; by the end of 1969, 7,554 Arab dwellings had been demolished, and by August 1971, 16,212 had been destroyed. This was not the end of it. Around 780,000 Arab Palestinians were dispossessed and relocated in 1948 in order to enable the "reconstruction and rebuilding" of Palestine, according to the most precise calculations yet done. This is the Palestinian refugee population, which has grown to well over 2 million people. Finally, we should mention that there are currently 1.7 million Arabs in the Occupied Territories (which Menachem Begin claims to have "liberated"), with well over half a million Arabs living in pre-1967 Israel. The Arab Palestinians, in particular, have paid a high price for the transformation of Palestine that has culminated in Israel.

The report above reflects Israel's genuine purpose. It is scrutinized; it is not Israel as an entity that causes such long-lasting conflict. Instead, Zionism as an ideology state does since the idea of Israel came from it, and as predicted, it caused a conflict that until now has not been solved. Such a long way, difficulties, and complexity in achieving peace between Israel and Palestine are expressed perfectly by Wedgwood (2009: 86) by stating that The

Palestinian people have undoubtedly suffered dramatically over the last half-century. Alternatively, Israel's actions may have exacerbated the suffering. However, does what has gone wrong in the Palestinian-Israeli relationship represent what is wrong in the Arab world? Nondemocratic and insecure regimes serve as the bullfight's picadors. The issues of Palestinians and Jews act as a diversion from the problems of misgovernment and instability that beset Arab states in places like the United Nations, rather than a solution, and serve as a goad to war rather than a solution. The diplomatic showdown also hurts moderate Palestinian leaders' chances of success, as they must compete with more showy and well-publicized radicals who see the eternal struggle as a way of life.

Furthermore, the assumptions on problematic Zionism are confirmed by Halevi (1985:3-4), who says that the Zionist movement is an almost perfect illustration of the process whereby an ideology is transformed into a material force. The Zionist movement and the Zionist State, if not Zionism as such, have become the subject of this particular colonial relation. The establishment of the State of Israel converted Zionism into the central ideology of the newly formed entity, a state ideology supported by all the influence of institutions from kindergarten to university, from synagogue to army, and capable of self-replication without the necessity to appeal to an individual philosophical choice. At the same time, however, Zionism, with the tremendous material support of that State, continues to develop and function outside Palestine, among Jews and non-Jews alike, as an ideological movement aimed at supporting and reinforcing Israeli state policies and practices. For that reason, an analysis of Zionism, past and present, cannot be avoided if we want to understand the specific mechanisms that determine not the character of the spoliation itself but rather the shaping of the regional, local, and international balance of power that has permitted the enactment and perpetration of the Palestinian tragedy.

Above all, as discussions on Zionism develop, a new perspective has emerged regarding examining the genuine purpose of Zionism. Even though not relatively new, this new perspective of settler-colonialism would give a better understanding of distinguishing Zionism, as mentioned above, and that settlement is the nucleus of Zionism. According to Pappe (unknown, pp. 41-42), this particular interaction or attitude might be considered excluding and racist. Its basic assumption is that the local population is made up of immigrants who have seized control of their homeland and are obligated to try to prevent a Jewish presence in Palestine as long as they are there. This viewpoint led to the ethnic cleansing campaign in 1948 and the creation of military rule over the surviving Palestinians, who were viewed as a "fifth column" within the state between 1948 and 1967. Following the incorporation of a significant Palestinian population into the state in 1967, this attitude grew even more entrenched, resulting in a harsh occupation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, as well as discriminatory policies against Palestinian Israeli residents. It is a policy that might render Israel a pariah state, even if it has not yet prevented Israel from remaining a member of the world's "civilized and developed" nations.

CONCLUSION

Works on the Israel-Palestine conflict, whether it is politics, history, culture, and so forth, by all means aim to achieve peace for both sides and would always be linked to the idea of achieving peace. Likewise, this essay also seeks a meeting point between the state ideology of Israel (Zionism) and the need for peace. Even though, in reality, a progressive development could hardly be seen, as Pappe (2013: 22) stated, the government did not discover anything new. Israel had already imposed military rule on Palestinians, lifting it after eighteen years, only to replace it with a regime of inspection, control, and coercion. The regime became more concealed and convoluted with time, easing some pressures. While the restricted citizenship provided to the Palestinian minority in Israel looked to preserve a decisive Jewish majority in the state, the same would not have been true if such citizenship had been extended to the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. As a

result, it was necessary to preserve the regions without expelling the people who lived there and without awarding them citizenship. To this day, these three characteristics or presumptions have not changed.

Furthermore, good intention and willingness, which means cooperation in the peace process, are preconditions that conflicting sides should have. It would be a merely useless effort whenever the same orientation is absent from this effort. Unfortunately, based on the attitudes the Israeli government has been showing to the world, Pappe (2013: 14) argues that The two-state solution and the method for achieving it are an Israeli proposal whose rationale has been accepted by a powerful coalition of the United States, the European Union, Russia, the United Nations, most Arab states, the Fatah Palestinian leadership, Israel's Zionist Left and Center, and some distinguished figures in the Palestinian solidarity movement, with certain adjustments. Despite its apparent failure, the 'peace process' has been sustained for so long because of the alliance's strength, not the sense of the resolution or the process.

Another perspective of revisiting Zionism as one way of approaching peace is revealed by Tyler (2011: 80), saying that acknowledging the historical milestones of modern Zionism is essential, but this should not distort the wide range of religious, cultural, and intellectual positions taken to endorse and interpret the ideology's purpose. While its chronological development as a political idea and movement can be broadly outlined, one should be circumspect to ascribe a singular narrative to Zionism. Instead, true to the complexity associated with the Jewish experience in Eretz Israel, the story is more accurately portrayed as one of diverse, contradictory cases and conflicting visions of what it means to be a Jewish nation in Israel.

To replace Zionism as a state ideology might be an impossible task to do. The most realistic yet moderate way to deal with the complexity of keeping the state ideology and the need to achieve peace is to revisit Zionism. This is not to say to change Zionism as a state ideology of Israel; instead, to look for the incompatible ideas of Zionism with regards to the idea of the peace process and the independence of Palestine whatever the form of peace would be. A relatively moderate idea of this might be offered by what is so-called post-Zionism. As mentioned by Pappe (1997: 30), Post-Zionism is a phrase that combines anti-Zionist ideas with a postmodernist understanding of reality. In Israeli academia and politics, it has become a valuable word for combining Zionist and anti-Zionist Jews. The labels anti-Zionist and Zionist are essentially a question of self-definition in the academic world. Among this group, publications by authors who identify themselves as Zionist are, in general, as anti-Zionist as those by writers who openly declare themselves anti-Zionist. Given their ideological slant and lack of background in history or sociology (Israel et al., for example, are professors of chemistry and psychology, respectively), dismissing their findings as the assertions of isolated political activists was simple. On the other hand, the "new historians" and "new sociologists" were the first to question conventional wisdom from within the system as academics recognized by formal academia to study and instruct the nation's past.

Nevertheless, it should be carefully distinguished that, according to Gorny, as cited by Ben-Moshe (2005: 15), the phrase "post-Zionism" has a variety of meanings and interpretations. For some, it is an expressive term for Israel's situation, while for others, it is a goal they are working to achieve. He also distinguishes between positive and negative post-Zionism. ' Positive post-Zionists do not deny the Zionist ideology and movement's historical significance but feel that once its aims have been realized, Israel should go into a post-Zionist or post-ideological era. Negative post-Zionists are anti-Zionists and so reject Jewish nationalism as a doctrine since they believe it is colonialist in origin and racist in reality. As a result, they claim that it obstructs the formation of a democratic state for all citizens, which they hope will replace the current unequal Jewish state.

By all means, the peace process could not be separated from involving Palestine in

the discussion. A justified and legitimate reason for this, of course, is because Palestine plays a role alongside Israel on another side. Thus, both sides influence each other. This includes discussing the solution that both could accept. The two-state solution offered since 1947 in the UN Partition Plan could be considered a failure as it shows a lack of progress; some even consider it worsening. Moreover, as argued by Karmi (2011: 66), the one-state solution is a radical departure from previous proposals for resolving the conflict. The establishment of a Palestinian state on the occupied territory and the cessation of Israel's 1967 occupation are the only objectives of the two-state solution. It is solely focused on the fallout from the 1967 conflict as if the conflict with Israel had started at that time and the area that would later become Israel had not been occupied by Palestinians who had been forced to flee their land. Therefore, the essential nature of the Israeli state remains unaltered by the two-state solution.

By contrast, the one-state solution (Karmi, 2011, pp. 66-67) gets to the heart of the matter: Israel's survival as a Zionist state. It makes no sense for a peace accord to maintain the status quo since the imposition of Zionism on the Arabs was the source of Palestinian displacement, rejection of their rights, and the permanent state of tension between Israel and its neighbors. The crucial year in the conflict for Palestinians is 1948, and the occupation of the 1967 areas is a symptom, not the cause, of the sickness. The problem is that the two-state treatment does not just deal with the symptoms; it also actively aids in maintaining the cause.

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