

תמצית המאמרים באנגלית

TEL-AVIV UNIVERSITY
THE CHAIM ROSENBERG SCHOOL OF JEWISH STUDIES
THE INSTITUTE FOR ZIONIST RESEARCH
FOUNDED IN MEMORY OF CHAIM WEIZMANN



ZIONISM

STUDIES IN THE HISTORY OF THE ZIONIST MOVEMENT
AND OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN PALESTINE

VI

Tel-Aviv University
Hakibbutz Hameuchad
Publishing House
Printed in Israel 1981

Editor: Gedalia Yogev
Editorial Board: Anita Shapira (Chairwoman),
Daniel Carpi, Gavriel Cohen, Yosef Gorni,
Michael Heymann, Jehuda Nini

Style Editor: Immanuel Byhovski

The Institute for Zionist Research founded in memory of Chaim Weizmann was set up in 1962 at Tel-Aviv University through the initiative and with the assistance of the Executive of the World Zionist Organization, with the aim of furthering the research and the teaching of the history of the Zionist idea, the Zionist movement and the Land of Israel in modern times

CONTENTS

ARTICLES:

YITZHAK GIL-HAR

The origins of the political organization of the *Yishuv*
at the beginning of the Twentieth Century

7

BARUCH BEN-AVRAM

The German Hapoel Hatzair – the history
of an intellectual group (1917–1920)

49

ALLON GAL

Brandeis's views on the upbuilding of Palestine, 1914–1923

97

YEHOSHUA FREUNDLICH

The first discussion on Palestine in the Permanent Mandates Commission

147

YORAM NIMROD

The Husseini Party and the non-Zionists – an attempt
at Arab-Jewish cooperation against the establishment of
a Jewish state in Palestine, 1937

161

Yael YISHAI

Aliyah Hadasha and Mapai: the problem of dual membership

241

AMITZUR ILAN

The shelving of the implementation of the constitutional clause
of the Palestine White Paper in 1940–1942

275

SOURCES:

YAACOV SHAVIT

Ze'ev Jabotinsky: the status of the Jewish community and
the crystallization of Jewish nationality in Palestine

323

ANITA SHAPIRA

Restraint or terror – the conference of *Yishuv* representatives in July 1938

359

ENGLISH SUMMARIES

[IX] 440

SUMMARIES

THE ORIGINS OF THE POLITICAL ORGANIZATION OF THE *YISHUV* AT THE BEGINNING OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

by Yitzhak Gil-Har

Historians of the *Yishuv* have tended to ascribe the origins of the first attempts to establish a comprehensive, central, self-governing organization in Palestine to persons and bodies outside the *Yishuv*, such as Ahad Ha'am, M. Ussishkin and the Odessa Committee of the Hovevei Zion.

This article argues that the *Yishuv* itself played a more important role than the diaspora in these early essays at centralized self-rule.

The organizations arose out of the crisis, more psychological than real, that the *Yishuv* had gone through at the turn of the century, following the transfer of authority over the colonies from Baron Rothschild's administration to the Jewish Colonization Association (I.C.A.).

The establishment of a General Committee of the Colonies reflected the wish of the farmers to achieve economic independence and freedom of action. The workers' organization had been initiated even before the crisis, and of the two artisans' societies that existed in Jaffa, only one had been established in conjunction with the Odessa Committee.

The establishment of a central self-governing organization in the summer of 1903 was the result of designs — first set in motion during the 1890s — to provide an authority that would answer the political, economic and social needs of the *Yishuv*.

A commission of the Odessa Committee arrived in Palestine in the summer of 1903, and assisted the local leaders in establishing the

Palestinian Organization. The organization, however, soon became entangled in the 'Uganda Affair' which divided the Zionist movement at the time. The majority of the Zionist societies in the colonies and towns enthusiastically supported Herzl and opposed the anti-Ugandist Ussishkin. As a consequence, most of the members quit the Palestinian Organization, which was identified with Ussishkin.

The *Yishuv* adapted to local needs political and organizational ideas which had originated in the diaspora; it contributed the idea of an official Jewish community — the *Milet*, recognized by the Ottoman regime; the old and new sectors of the *Yishuv* participated in the creation of the unified Palestine Organization.

The Palestinian Organization failed not only because it could not free itself from dependence on outside philanthropic and Zionist bodies, but also because the forces working towards unification and centralization were not yet powerful enough to overcome the particularist tendencies of certain sectors in the *Yishuv*.

THE GERMAN HAPOEL HATZAIR
THE HISTORY OF AN INTELLECTUAL GROUP
(1917–1920)
by Baruch Ben-Avram

The German Hapoel Hatzair was founded in 1917 by Israel Reichert, a pioneer of the Second Aliya, the young Arlosoroff, a group of Jewish workers from Eastern Europe, and a number of students from secondary schools in Berlin. This group reached a position of influence in the German Zionist movement during the years 1918–1920 and played an important role in the creation of the 'Hitahdut', the world-wide organization of the Palestinian Hapoel Hatzair.

The German Hapoel Hatzair was the ideological link between the Hapoel Hatzair in Palestine, who rejected any specific socialist definition, and the Tzeirei Zion of Eastern Europe who had

developed a non-Marxist brand of socialism based on the concept of a 'Working People'. Such a concept, in their opinion, suited the social structure of the Jewish people.

For the young German Jewish intellectuals who founded the Hapoel Hatzair, socialism was a more profound form of nationalism. They were sympathetic to the non-Marxist socialism of Tzeirei Zion, but anchored their own socialism in the idealistic striving of men of all classes for a just society. Socialism was for them a matter of attitude. Their ideology was largely inspired by the anarchist socialism of Gustav Landauer. Like many young people of the bourgeois classes, they conceived of a socialist society as one comprised of small communities, similar to the Kvutzot in Palestine.

Since they denied the existing society in a radical manner, they also denied political parties. Parties represented interests, whereas they wanted to found politics on ethical principles. These young Zionists were weary of the theoretical discussions which were characteristic of German Zionism. They were familiar with the Second Aliya and strove for the implementation of Zionism (*hagshama*) in accordance with their socialist conceptions.

After the Balfour Declaration, the German Zionists became interested in the social problems of the emerging Jewish National Home and many were attracted by the ideas of Hapoel Hatzair.

Inspired primarily by their ethical principles, these young intellectuals proved more sensitive to the Arab question than other sectors of the Zionist movement. Further, they did not consider Zionism a movement aimed at achieving a majority in Palestine, but rather one which would lead to the creation of a cultural centre and model society in the spirit of Ahad Ha'am, as they understood him. Their ethical nationalism was free from any power drive. In their beliefs, they were typical of many left-wing intellectuals in the Weimar Republic.

Since there was no acute pressure on German Jewry at the time, very few actually emigrated to Palestine. Except for Arlosoroff, who was not typical of the German Hapoel Hatzair, the group as such was never influential in the politics of the *Yishuv*.

BRANDEIS'S VIEWS
ON THE UPBUILDING OF PALESTINE,
1914–1923

by Allon Gal

Occasionally one encounters an interpretation of the 1919–1921 Weizmann-Brandeis conflict, suggesting that Brandeis favoured a capitalist economy for Palestine whereas his opponents advocated a pivotal role for a nationalized sector and more progressive policies in general. There is however no evidence of any debate on this topic in the context of the conflict; actually, there was a consensus in the Zionist movement as to the desired sectorial structure for the immediate future. Moreover, Brandeis, a noted American progressive, emphatically suggested a central role for public economy in Palestine, together with a broad range of progressive ideas.

Brandeis was disenchanted by the contemporary Yankee, whose heritage he admired and absorbed; the success of Zionism was for him the revival of the 'good old' Puritan values. Thus, in his view, the test of the *Yishuv* entailed living up to the values of hard work, creativity, simplicity, purity and especially self-reliance.

As early as 1919, upon the occasion of his visit to Palestine, and a year later, at the annual Zionist conference in London, Brandeis criticized the manner of Palestine's reconstruction from a Puritan point of view. He further suggested that a certain pattern be established for Zionist gatherings and Zionist politics — one in which agreements would be adhered to and undue discussion avoided.

Brandeis's Zeeland Memorandum again reflected his passion for the economic independence of the *Yishuv*. This stance was adopted by the Buffalo convention of the Zionist Organization of America when it was decided to establish *two* funds instead of the one Keren Hayesod (Palestine Foundation Fund), which had been decided upon at the London Conference. One was designed to support non-profit projects, the other to channel monies for profitable enterprises. Non-separation, claimed the Brandeis group, would

provide a permanent temptation to mix the two funds and to avoid hard work.

Brandeis whole-heartedly supported the report of the Reorganization Commission, which emphasized the urgent need for a professional and non-partisan civil service. The defects uncovered by the Commission amounted to corruption in his eyes. Why this hypersensitivity? For him Zionism was not primarily the establishment of a home for persecuted people but rather a movement to implement certain social and civic values. He scrutinized the Zionist *methods* in Palestine and tended to see them as the major test.

The Brandeis constituency tried independently to pursue its course after their defeat at the ZOA conference in June 1921. At their Pittsburgh conference in July they established the Palestine Development Council, whose function was to initiate and coordinate business enterprises (which would comply with certain socially progressive guide-lines) and to encourage cooperative enterprises as well. A year later the Brandeis group founded the Palestine Endowment Funds, whose function was to mobilize gift money for Palestine. Thus the Brandeis constituency developed an alternative pluralistic system (the business complex was to be composed of numerous local development leagues), sharply separating business from philanthropy.

THE FIRST DISCUSSION ON PALESTINE IN THE PERMANENT MANDATES COMMISSION

by Yehoshua Freundlich

The first discussion of the Palestine Mandate in the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations, which took place in October 1924, was mishandled by the Zionists. Instead of placing before the Commission its grievances against the Mandatory, it submitted a long and ceremonious document of a propagandistic nature which, having been presented contrary to procedure, was disregarded by the Commission. The Arabs, who complied with

procedure, presented the Commission with a memorandum replete with accusations against the Zionists and the British. Their memorandum was preceded by an anti-Zionist political campaign in Geneva, in which Catholic circles also took part. The Zionists, for their part, failed to do any preparatory political work in Geneva.

The Commission's report, which was leaked to the Jewish press in mid-November, was factual and, on the whole, objective, but it included a passage censuring the quality of Jewish immigrants into Palestine, who were described as lacking sufficient preparation for manual labour. The Zionist Organization took strong exception to the report and started a feverish and widespread campaign to have it amended. This campaign was cut short by the British Colonial Office, which admitted that the report was unbalanced and promised to redress the Zionist case when the report was placed before the Council of the League of Nations.

The Zionist Organization learnt its lesson from this affair. In 1925 it established a permanent office in Geneva and began to conduct continuous political activities there. Its memoranda, henceforward presented according to procedure, were concise and factual documents, concerned mainly with grievances against the Mandatory.

THE HUSSEINI PARTY AND THE NON-ZIONISTS —
AN ATTEMPT AT ARAB-JEWISH COOPERATION
AGAINST THE ESTABLISHMENT
OF A JEWISH STATE IN PALESTINE, 1937

by Yoram Nimrod

The partition proposal of the Peel Commission in 1937 generated new alignments — pro and con — within the Zionist movement and the Jewish Agency for Palestine. The anti-partition front included both non-Zionists who had joined the Enlarged Jewish Agency in 1929, and Zionists who for various — and partly contradictory — reasons opposed the partition of Palestine, such as Dr. J. L. Magnes, the well-known champion of Arab-Jewish conciliation, the militant

Menahem Ussishkin, and — among bodies — the nationalist Revisionist movement and the non-Zionist Board of Deputies of British Jews.

A. M. Hyamson and Colonel Newcombe, acting on behalf of Felix Warburg and Lords Herbert Samuel and George Ambrose Lloyd, tried to obtain the agreement of non-Zionist Jews and, in the Arab Higher Committee, adherents of the Jerusalem Mufti, Haj Amin al-Husseini, for a common plan. It was designed to prevent the partition of Palestine and postpone the termination of the British Mandate, while providing for the admission of a limited number of Jewish immigrants during an agreed period. Contacts were initially established in London, and subsequently a delegation of the Husseini faction went to the United States to negotiate with representatives of the American Jewish Committee.

The Arab side was also divided, with the result that two rival Arab-Jewish 'coalitions' were formed, each supported by a section of the British establishment. The anti-partition camp enjoyed the cooperation of the veteran Iraqi statesman, Nuri al-Said, while the Zionist Executive made some progress in its efforts to make common cause with three of the neighbouring Arab countries and succeeded in obtaining the benevolent neutrality of the fourth — Egypt.

The article is based on one chapter in a more extensive research and covers the first stages in the formation of these 'coalitions' between July 1937 and January 1938. It describes the intensive negotiations conducted during this period between the two parties in the anti-partition camp, represented respectively by Felix Warburg and J.L. Magnes on behalf of the non-Zionists and Jamal al-Husseini and Azzat Tannus on behalf of the Husseinis. At the same time the supporters of partition were gaining the upper hand in the Zionist camp and the attempt to reach an understanding with the Husseinis was foiled by the determined stand taken by its opponents, under the leadership of the President of the Zionist Organization, Dr. Chaim Weizmann.

ALIYAH HADASHA AND MAPAI:
THE PROBLEM OF DUAL MEMBERSHIP

by Yael Yishai

This article deals with problems of the absorption of German immigrants into the *Yishuv*'s dominant labour party — Mapai. These immigrants encountered difficulties in integrating into the existing social and political order as a result of their high standards and unique cultural tradition. Their demand for a share in the political cake were not adequately met. As a result, they established a new quasi-party — Aliyah Hadasha. As the new group included members of Mapai, the Mapai leadership was confronted with the problem of dual membership. The attitudes within Mapai were divided: the minority, which was in favour of dual membership, regarded it as a means of securing support among German immigrants at large. They also maintained that 'dual membership' served as a bridge between Mapai and Aliyah Hadasha, thus preventing the latter's alignment with other parties. The majority, however, held that membership in the party had to be exclusive. Although it was torn by deep internal dissent and factionalism, Mapai nevertheless aimed at cohesiveness and unity. Its leadership was apprehensive lest tolerance of dual membership in this case would serve as a precedent for other factions on an 'ethnic' basis, thus increasing intra-party frictions. By its decision to ban dual membership, Mapai failed to respond to the special demands of the German immigrants and encouraged them inadvertently to form the only party in the *Yishuv* organized on 'ethnic' lines.

THE SHELIVING OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
CONSTITUTIONAL CLAUSE OF THE PALESTINE
WHITE PAPER IN 1940-1942

by Amitzur Ilan

The British policy laid down in the Palestine White Paper of May 1939 has been fixed in different ways in the historical memories of the three protagonists in the Palestine dispute. The British tend to remember it as a belated attempt to correct what seemed to them as both the exaggerated sympathy towards Zionism shown by the Lloyd George Government at the close of World War I and as disregard of the emerging Palestinian-Arab national movement. The Arabs remember it as a half-hearted attempt to grant independence to the Arabs of Palestine. The Jews, on their part, remember mainly the restrictions imposed on Jewish immigration and land acquisition, measures which aroused their determined opposition.

The explanation for such different images lies with the failure to implement the constitutional clause, which represented the White Paper's *raison d'être*. This clause was intended to lead to the establishment of an Arab-dominated Palestinian state but was virtually abandoned as early as 1941. Although the White Paper was not abrogated until the end of the British Mandate, no British government after 1941 seriously considered implementing the constitutional clause.

Documents of the Churchill war coalition government enable us to determine not only the date when the constitutional clause was shelved, but also the context in which it was done. Churchill, whose sympathy for Zionism was considered 'idiosyncratic' by his colleagues, kept a close watch on the steps of every Colonial Secretary with regard to Palestine, including those of Lord Lloyd who, towards the beginning of 1941, made a determined effort to have the constitutional clause implemented. As Lloyd's ideas were supported by many of his colleagues in the Government, Churchill was obliged to agree to a 'temporary' compromise, according to which he abandoned his support for the creation of a Jewish army in return for

the shelving of the constitutional clause.

This secret deal naturally caused bitterness among the Zionists, who were aware of only one part of it. They would have been more grateful to Churchill had they known that he had actually dealt a death-blow to the most dangerous clause in the White Paper, from their point of view. For by mid-1943 the whole attitude of the cabinet had changed and what had first been considered 'temporary' then became final.

ZE'EV JABOTINSKY:
THE STATUS OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY
AND THE CRYSTALLIZATION OF
JEWISH NATIONALITY IN PALESTINE —
ARTICLES PUBLISHED IN *HADSHOT HA'ARETZ*
AND *HA'ARETZ*, 1919-1920
by Yaacov Shavit

The nine articles reprinted here were originally published in the Hebrew newspaper *Hadshot Ha'aretz* (subsequently *Ha'aretz*), during Jabotinsky's sojourn in Palestine in 1919-1920. During this period, following the British occupation of the country, Jabotinsky was very active in the life of the *Yishuv*, and his articles touch upon various aspects of the *Yishuv's* development into a national entity.

The articles illustrate Jabotinsky's views on the status of the *Yishuv vis-à-vis* the British administration and the Zionist Organization, and his assessment of the nascent Jewish society in Palestine. During this period, the most 'Palestinian' in his life, Jabotinsky emphasized the importance of the *Yishuv* as a society having its own particular interests, and stressed the need to secure the political rights envisaged in the Balfour Declaration, both on the formal political level and in the *Yishuv's* daily affairs. Jabotinsky's articles reveal the major importance which he ascribed to the political sphere, not merely as embodied in formal undertakings but as a whole set of precedents in various fields of life. He formulated his

views concerning the nature of 'national culture' and 'practical work' — as a variety of economic, social and cultural activities which would mould the embryonic *Yishuv* into a 'national society'. His opinions during this period reflect the crystallization of his particular brand of Zionism, despite some discrepancies with his subsequent positions as leader of the Revisionist movement. The articles also cast some light on the discord between Jabotinsky and the Jewish labour parties of Palestine.

RESTRAINT OR TERROR —
THE CONFERENCE OF *YISHUV* REPRESENTATIVES
IN JULY 1938
by Anita Šapira

On 29 June 1938 Shlomo Ben-Yosef was executed by the British authorities in Palestine, having been found guilty of carrying arms and throwing a hand-grenade at an Arab bus near Rosh Pinah (though none of the passengers had been hurt). Ben-Yosef, a member of the Irgun Zevai Leumi (I.Z.L.), whose act was intended as a reprisal for Arab terrorist activities against Jews, was sentenced to death under the emergency regulations enacted by the Palestine administration in order to combat Arab terrorism during the Arab revolt of 1936–1939.

Ben-Yosef's execution led to a series of terrorist acts by the I.Z.L., culminating in a bomb attack against the Arab market in Haifa, in which seventeen people were killed and about one hundred injured. These acts contravened the policy upheld by the official leadership of the *Yishuv* since the beginning of the Arab revolt. This policy decried indiscriminate reprisals against individual Arabs and Arab institutions, while calling for a determined effort to strike at the armed Arab bands and to punish those who perpetrated crimes against the Jewish population. Most of the *Yishuv* supported this line on moral and political grounds and the leaders feared that departure from it might cancel the military and political advantages accruing to

the Jews from the Arab revolt and from their own cooperation with the British authorities and armed forces. The I.Z.L. and the Revisionist movement, on the other hand, maintained that the policy of restraint was ineffective and bound to play into the hands of the Arab nationalists and their British sympathizers. They were supported by not inconsiderable sectors of the *Yishuv* on grounds of principle or political expediency.

The document published here reveals the internal polemic which divided the *Yishuv* on this crucial question, and the complexity of the attitudes towards it. Many of those who were against countering Arab terror in kind were unwilling to support any decisive action against the I.Z.L. which, they feared, might serve to strengthen the labour movement. These circles shielded the I.Z.L. from internal attack and prevented the adoption of an operative decision against it. The debate recorded in these minutes can be seen as the first public polemic over this difficult question, which continued to agitate the *Yishuv* until the establishment of the State of Israel ten years later.