The Jewish Origins of Israeli Foreign Policy

A Study in Tradition and Survival

Shmuel Sandler

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The conventional understanding of Israeli foreign policy has been that it is a relatively new phenomenon, with some claiming that the "Jewish People" is an invention by mid-nineteenth century Jewish historians, or simply an "imagined community."

This book disputes these claims by demonstrating that the Jews have a tradition of foreign relations based on an historical political tradition that goes back thousands of years, and that this tradition has been carried over to the State of Israel. The Jewish political tradition in foreign policy has always been defensive-oriented, whether under sovereignty or in the Diaspora. Power has generally been only a means for achieving survival rather than a goal in itself, whereas Jewish national identity has always been related to historical Zion. In order to explore the question of whether it is possible to identify patterns of international behavior in the foreign policy of the Jews, the book begins with the Bible and continues through the period of the First and Second Temples, then looks at the long generations when the Jewish people were stateless, and ultimately concludes with an examination of the sovereign Jewish State of Israel. The underlying assumption is that an understanding of these characteristics will allow us to derive a better understanding of the Jewish origins of Israel's foreign policy, which should in turn help to eliminate many of the harshest criticisms of Israel's foreign policy.

By presenting a nuanced and intricate examination of longstanding Jewish foreign policy principles, this book will appeal to students and scholars of Jewish Studies, Israeli Studies, International Relations and anyone with an interest in the relationship between religion and foreign policy.

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To my wife Harriet (Channa) for all her support and encouragement throughout the process of developing and publishing this book.

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Acknowledgements

Introduction

The Jewish people have been interacting with their external environment since they first appeared on the map of history. The central question that I wish to address in this book is whether it is possible to identify a Jewish political tradition in its interaction with surrounding nations. Or, to put it more directly, is there an inherent Jewish foreign policy? The subject matter against which this tradition will be evaluated is the foreign policy of the State of Israel. The theoretical perspective and discourse of such an interaction will be drawn from international politics and foreign policy, as well as from Jewish political studies.

The conventional understanding of Israeli foreign policy has been that it is a relatively new phenomenon. The traditional Zionist school of thought saw in the establishment of the state the return of the Jewish people to the arena of world history from which it had been absent following the disastrous rebellions against Rome in CE70 and the defeat of the Bar-Kochba Revolt in CE135. The suppression of these uprisings drove the Jews out of a political history.[1] Thus the point of departure of this book will be that Jews had a foreign policy tradition long before the establishment of the State of Israel. Accordingly, even during the present day, when a Jewish state does exist, Jewish communities in the Diaspora pursue their own international policy.[2] The theoretical context for such an approach is that non-state players are active on the global scene and interact with the international environment of which they are a part.[3]

Looking for a Jewish political foreign policy relates to another debate on the origins of the Israeli political system. The traditional school of thought, especially prevalent among scholars of sociology and political science at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, saw the political regime in the State of Israel as a direct outcome of the Yishuv (the pre-state Jewish community in Palestine) period, thus ignoring Jewish political behavior throughout the ages.[4] Emanating from this view is a Palestine-centric foreign policy approach to the Jewish state. Prof. Daniel J. Elazar at Bar-Ilan University developed an alternative school of thought that is presented below. It views the political regimen in Israel as the outcome of a Jewish political tradition dating back millennia: one that existed even when there was no Jewish body-politic in the Land of Israel (Elazar 1989a, 17–36).

In concurrence with this approach, the Jewish political tradition will be applied to Israeli foreign policy. The origins of Israeli foreign policy are rooted *inter alia* in a tradition, which preceded the Jewish settlement of the Land of Israel during the first half of the twentieth century, and the establishment of its political institutions. Since foreign policy and domestic politics are inter-related (Rosenau 1967) there is even a theoretical context to this linkage.

The understanding and analysis of a historical Jewish foreign policy tradition brazenly clashes with contrasting approaches to Jewish and Israeli policies that have emerged. Both the Zionist and the Yishuv perspectives have been attacked in recent years by a revisionist approach

developed mainly in the 1980s that has been dubbed "Post-Zionism." In this approach, Israel has been subject to growing criticism and has been charged with neo-colonialism with regard to its "expansionist aspirations" (Dieckhoff 2003, 275–281). Significantly, some of the pioneers of this approach contend that the Yishuv was the breeding ground of Israeli territorial expansion and subordination of the Palestinians.[5] Other scholars have developed critiques from different disciplines, including history, sociology, and philosophy.[6] They have attempted to connect the increase in violence within Israel to the rise of religion, arguing that Jewish violence is directly associated with Jewish sovereignty.[7] One critic reached the conclusion that in order for the Jewish people to stop being violent they must return to the Diaspora (Ellis 2009). The conspiratorial stance includes allegations that Israel is one element in a global Jewish cabal that controls world politics. Another posits the accusation that, when it comes to Israeli interests, American Jewish power influences the United States so that it acts against its own national interests.[8] Most recently, attempts to delegitimize Israel have compared Israel's domestic politics with that of the apartheid regime in South Africa.

In order to refute claims of contemporary Zionist neo-colonialism or Jewish aspirations for global power, this study will attempt to present a nuanced and intricate examination of longstanding Jewish foreign policy principles. Chief amongst them and emphasized throughout Jewish tradition, is a policy based on the use of power for the sake of survival, centered on the territory of historical Zion. So as to best combat spreading and unfounded beliefs against the Zionist state and the Jewish people, I have developed an academic study showing the historical Jewish self-protective approach, territorial aspirations restricted to biblical Canaan and a disinclination to interfere in power politics.

By demonstrating that the Jews have a tradition of foreign relations based on an historical political tradition going back thousands of years, I refute the radical critique of Shlomo Sand (2009) that the "Jewish People" is an invention by mid- nineteenth century Jewish historians or simply an "imagined community," in the words of Benedict Anderson (1999). Self-identity is the essence of foreign policy. A political tradition in foreign policy that extends over millennia is the correct retort to the Sand thesis. The Jewish political tradition in foreign policy is not a modern invention and has always been defensive-oriented, whether under sovereignty or in the Diaspora. Survival of the Jewish people ultimately overcame two other core tenets in the Jewish political tradition: state and territoriality. Moreover, expansionism solely for its own sake, as will be demonstrated, is against Jewish political tradition.

The main task of this book as stated above is to answer the question of whether it is possible to identify patterns of international behavior in Jewish foreign policy throughout history and, if so, how to relate it to the foreign policy of the State of Israel. The goal to produce a general framework that contains both distinctive features and can also be applied to other contemporary entities, is not a simple one. Theory is fundamentally comparative and general. On the other hand, in order to justify the study of Jewish world policy and its influence on Israeli foreign policy, we will need to trace their unique patterns. In practice, this problem is not limited to Jewish foreign policy. Hence, while identifying unique features and characteristics, we must resist the temptation to turn the study of the foreign policy of the Jewish state, and in its wake the policy of the Jewish people *sui generis* into a class of its own.

This book is not the first to delve into the problem of Jews and power in their relationship with the wider world. It is possible to identify several historians and intellectuals who have contributed to the study of Jewish world politics. From a broad range of sources and studies it is possible to discern three main approaches that have developed in recent years. The common

denominator, besides power, is the focus on the relationship between the Jewish Diaspora and the Jewish state.

The first approach states that the Jews, neither in the Diaspora nor when experiencing statehood, never ignored the role of power. David Biale is the most accurate representative scholar of this approach (1987, 206).[9] The Jews can manage in both the Diaspora or when controlling a state, since they "possess an extraordinary ability to maneuver between the extremes of a quest for full sovereignty and a state of political passivity" (ibid., 6).

The second, and opposite approach, is the critical school, whose most impressive adherent was Hannah Arendt (1958, 8).[10] This perspective implies that by striving for the nation-state, the Jews betrayed the tradition of powerlessness, which is their ideal state of existence.[11]

The third approach is best represented by Ruth Wisse, who argues that an existence in the Diaspora might be the most suitable to the Jewish people's inner persona and would best allow them to contribute to world civilization. However, unfortunately the Jews remaining in a state of powerlessness did not fit the world in which they resided (Wisse 2007, 172). None of the above studies has approached the issue from the perspective of international politics. In this study we will attempt to do so.

Was Jewish interaction with their external setting throughout their history in accordance with rational rules and norms of international behavior? To test this assertion, we will highlight patterns of Jewish behavior that suit established approaches in the theory of international relations and behavior. We do not intend to propose an ideal foreign policy that can be derived from biblical or halakhic (Jewish law) literature, but rather to derive its central parameters from the narrative of Jewish performance. Nevertheless, at certain points we will analyze debates taken from classical Jewish texts.

It should be stressed from the outset that the departure point of this study of the Jewish experience is, in principle, limited to foreign policy. We approach the Jewish case from the theory of international relations and not from a historical one. At the same time, the unique historical situation of the Jewish people will be incorporated into the overall framework, thus providing a synthesis of both international relations and Jewish political tradition.

The departure point of the theoretical writings in Chapter 1 is a historical review of approaches to international relations. A variable in the survey of the evolution of the discipline will be the part played by religion in world politics. Since one purpose of this analysis is to indicate that there was a Jewish foreign tradition, a survey of the major contending schools of international relations is presented. Special attention will be given to the realist-idealist debate which still enjoys viability today.[12] The search for survival emanating from the anarchy typical of the international system is of essence to our overall thesis (Hertz 1950).[13] International relations theory includes an array of non-Realist approaches as well as newly developed theories in recent years. Instead of the search for power, alliance politics and the mechanisms of balance of power, these approaches perceive an international order based upon universal norms and values together with national interests and domestic politics. Another contention is its inclusion of non-state actors as influencing the international system as players in world politics.[14] As we shall see, both contentions are important to Diaspora communities such as those in which the Jews lived throughout more than two millennia.

Constructivism, a parallel theory in the explanation of international reality, should be distinguished from both Neo-Realism and Neo-Liberalism. Especially pertinent to this study is the claim that what creates and dictates interests is the identity of state and non-state international players. How are identities formed and how do they determine interests? The role of narratives in

the creation of identity is critical to this book. It is relevant, as we shall see, to the Jewish story and the way Jews and the State of Israel perceived their international interests.

Finally, Chapter 1 presents the ethnic nationalism that challenged Realism, and which places the state and its security in the center. Contrary to the expectations of students of political science, and particularly of comparative politics, the modern state did not overcome, or at the very least minimize, the attractiveness of such variables as ethnicity and nationhood. The return of religion to the center stage of international politics was also difficult for Realists to accept. Similarly, liberal theory, found it difficult to explain the renewed appearance of particularistic nationalism.[15] The primordial approach within the ethno-national school advanced the notion that both nationalism, and later on religion, are genuine forces that in themselves constitute identity.[16]

It is against this theoretical background that we shall approach the foreign policy of the Jewish people. In Chapter 2 Jewish foreign policy will be evaluated against all three dominant schools of thought, central in today's study of international relations. Since the Jewish experience encompasses both statehood and non-statist realties, an approach emphasizing universal values and norms is particularly pertinent.[17]

The nearly consistent fact in the Jewish experience is the lack of statehood throughout major periods of history. Daniel J. Elazar developed the concept of the "Jewish polity" both as the founder of the academic study of Jewish political tradition, as well as in his studies of the behavior of the world Jewish Diaspora. This concept was meant to expand the Jewish political structure beyond limitations of place (e.g., *Eretz Israel* [Land of Israel]) and of time (e.g., the twentieth century). In so doing, Elazar developed a constellation of political concepts that included state and Diaspora, as well as the modern nation-state and tribal frameworks.[18] While he did not apply his concepts to foreign policy, his field of study nevertheless provides us with the basis to proceed.

Our question of whether it is possible to identify patterns of international behavior in the foreign policy of the Jews is not limited to a particular time or place. It begins with the Bible and continues through the period of the First and Second Temples, followed by long generations when the Jewish people were stateless, and ultimately concludes with an examination of the sovereign Jewish State of Israel. The underlying assumption is that an understanding of these characteristics will allow us to derive a better understanding of the Jewish origins of Israel's foreign policy.

Having established a theoretical and conceptual-historical framework, in Chapters 3 and 4 we turn to the transformation of the Jewish Diaspora to a territorial polity using Realist and ethno-religious theories. Chapter 3 will explain the birth of state-centric Zionism in the Diaspora and test it against the preceding ethno-religious visions. We will show the continuous debate between identity and political considerations and endeavor to prove which had the upper hand. As statehood and the expression of power are so central in the Jewish case, in this chapter we will elaborate on the issue within the Zionist movement. In Chapter 4, we will look at the actual transformation of the Jewish polity from a Diaspora to a territorial entity and then to statehood, using appropriate theories and insights from comparative and international politics.

Chapters 5 to 7 deal with the actual foreign policy of the Jewish state. We start with the state perspective – Chapter 5 portrays the foreign policy of the state and its doctrines of national security which have been engulfed by national security considerations as they have evolved since the beginning of statehood up until the present day. Chapter 6 discusses the territorial and the Palestinian issues, but from an ethno-religious dimension and we will investigate how religion and politics have influenced Israeli foreign policy. As we shall see, the religious perspective does

not ignore the importance of Jewish statehood.

In Chapter 7 we reach a climax. Here we consider Israel's national security doctrine through a study of the nuclear dimension. However, this chapter will evolve from the theology of the Holocaust and its aftermath. We will observe how the Holocaust theme has taken its place at the forefront of the Israeli ethos. It will highlight the predicament of survival of the Jewish state, especially in light of the current potential nuclear Iranian threat on the State of Israel. Chapter 8 brings together the major themes of the book and will elaborate on the implications of these on the putative peace process between Israel and the Palestinians.

Finally a few remarks should be made on possible indirect contributions to this study. The concept of a Jewish political tradition relates also to the ongoing debate in Israel with regard to the very concept of a "Jewish state." It has been suggested that while it is possible to speak of a "State of the Jews," the concept of a "Jewish state" is misleading.[19] The main rationale behind this argument is that the state is an instrument and hence cannot be associated with an identity. Presuming that the same argument would apply to foreign policy, it is pertinent that, in this study, we do not distinguish between a Jewish foreign policy and the foreign policy of the Jews. However, we prefer to adhere to the former concept.

Hopefully, although that is not the foremost purpose of this book, this study will also constitute an indirect contribution to international relations. A debate has long raged over the question of the exclusivity of the nation-state in the conduct of foreign policy and its *modus operandi* in world politics.[20] By corroborating the existence of a Jewish foreign policy through eras of sovereignty and stateless dispersion in the Diaspora dating back millennia, the study of international relations will thus be shown to be applicable to both non-state actors and the general population in both historic and modern times.

Theorists of international relations have tried to incorporate the important pillars of today's society into their work, so as to improve the understanding and predictive analysis of international affairs. What is new, however, is the growing need to incorporate religion into this study. Despite many attempts in recent years, the issue of religion has still not been fully incorporated (Fox 2001, 53–73; Toft, Philpott and Shah 2011, 24–60; Snyder 2011; Haynes 2009, 1–7). Although this current study is not primarily about religion and foreign policy, it may contribute indirectly to the study of these two fields at a time when the role of religion in foreign policy is ever more relevant.

In summary, the major task of this study is to propose the existence of a Jewish foreign policy tradition that has existed for millennia, regardless of whether a Jewish state existed or not. This inquiry will be constructed on international relations theories that constitute the core of the discipline. Providing a framework of a Jewish foreign policy tradition will provide a contending perspective to current approaches to the foreign policy of the State of Israel. Deciphering the Jewish sources of Israel's foreign policy will also, as we shall see, eliminate many of the harshest criticisms of Israel's foreign policy. An indirect contribution to the international relations discipline will be via the concept of a "foreign policy tradition" by proving that it is possible to analyze the behavior of states with non-statist pasts, as well as studying the impact of such factors as ethnicity and religion.

Notes

1 See, for example, the thinking of one of the founders of the study of international relations in Israel, and Israel Prize recipient, Prof. Yehoshafat Harkabi, "Jewish Ethos and Political

Positions in Israel," *Forum* 56 (Summer 1985): 44.

2   Several essays have been written on this subject. See: Shmuel Sandler, "Is There a Jewish Foreign Policy?" *Jewish Journal of Sociology* 29 (December, 1987): 115–121; Shmuel Sandler, "Towards a Conceptual Framework of World Jewish Politics: State, Nation and Diaspora in a Jewish Foreign Policy," *Israel Affairs* 10 (Autumn–Winter, 2004): 301–312; Yitzhak Mualem, "The Jewish Dimension in Israel's Foreign Policy Between Real and General Jewish Goals" (PhD diss., Bar-Ilan University, 2004). Another book that this author plans to write will concentrate on the foreign policy of Jewish communities in the Diaspora. This book will be dedicated to the divergences between Jewish interests on the one hand, and the foreign policy of the State of Israel on the other, further underlining the concept of a Jewish foreign policy.

3   Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye Jr., *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, 1977); Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye Jr., eds., *Transnational Relations and World Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970), introduction and conclusions. For a study of a Jewish trans-national actor, see Sam Lehman-Wilzig, "The House of Rothschild: Prototype of the Trans-national Organization," *Jewish Social Studies* XL (Summer–Fall 1978): 251–270.

4   See, for instance: Dan Horowitz and Moshe Lissak, *The Origins of the Israeli Polity* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1977) [Hebrew.] See also Itzhak Galnoor and Danah Blander, *The Political System of Israel: Formative Years; Institutional Structure; Political Behavior; Unsolved Problems; Democracy in Israel,* vol. 1 (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 2013), 21–30 [Hebrew]. Current sociologists belong to a more radical school.

5   For one of the earliest attacks see, for instance, Samuel J. Roberts, *Survival or Hegemony? The Foundations of Israeli Foreign Policy* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Press, 1973). The main attack came in the 1980s; see, for instance: Baruch Kimmerling, *Zionism and Territory: the Socio-Territorial Dimensions of Zionist Politics* (Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, University of California, 1983) and Gershon Shafir, *Land, Labour and the Origins of the Israeli–Palestinian Conflict, 1882–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

6   Alain Dieckhoff, *The Invention of a Nation: Zionist Thought and the Making of Modern Israel* (London: C. Hurst, 2003): 275–281 summarizes academics that adhere to that approach including the "new historians" such as Benny Morris and Avi Shlaim, sociologists like Uri Ram and critical historians like Moshe Zimmermann and Idit Zartal.

7   Representative of this was a study that accused the combination of Jewish sovereignty and religion as promoting violence from both within and without (Gideon Aran and Ron E. Hassner, "Religious Violence in Judaism: Past and Present," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 25 (2013): 355–405). To use their own words:

> In our article we proposed that, throughout Jewish history, Jewish religious violence predominated under conditions of Jewish sovereignty, when the Jewish people enjoyed political and religious freedom in an independent territorial setting.… In contrast, eighteen centuries of diasporic Judaism were characterized by a considerable degree of cohesion and commitment with institutions of leadership and social control functioning effectively and Jewish violence, internal or external, kept to a minimum.
>
> (Ibid., 416)

8   One recent example was the debate following a provocative article by John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt in the *London Review of Books* entitled "The Israel Lobby," 28 (23 March

2006): 3–12. This article provoked many responses and the authors followed it up with a book.

9 David Biale, *Power and Powerlessness in Jewish History* (New York: Schocken Books, 1987), 206.

0 Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1958), 8.

1 Rejecting the concept that Jews are in their ideal state when assuming a position of authoritative power has also been recently advanced by theologians such as Marc Ellis. See Marc Ellis, *Judaism Does Not Equal Israel* (London: New Press, 2009), 224.

2 For a concise analysis of the state of the power politics in International Relations see John Vasquez, *The Power of Power Politics: From Classical Realism to Neo-Traditionalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Thomas Walker and Jeffrey Morton, "Re-Assessing the 'Power of Power Politics' Thesis: Is Realism Still Dominant?" *International Studies Review* 7 (June 2005): 341–356.

3 So, too, is the security dilemma, which preceded Neo-Realism and presented the argument that leaders take security measures that threaten other states. See John H. Hertz, "Idealist Internationalism and the Security Dilemma," *World Politics* 2 (1950): 157–180.

4 As stated in footnote 3, the most comprehensive study pointing to the importance of non-state actors is Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye Jr., *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, 1977). Cf. Yossi Shain and Ahron Barth, "Diaspora and International Relations Theory," *International Organization* 57 (Summer 2003): 449–479.

5 A liberal response based on Jewish prophetic sources to this dilemma was proposed by Michael Walzer, who posited the concept of "reiterative universalism" as opposed to "covering-law universalism." While the latter was searching for universal integration under one God, as adopted by Christianity, the former was looking for a way to understand and justify national boundaries within concepts of universal tolerance. This is the Jewish message according to Walzer (Michael Walzer, "Nation and Universe," The Tanner Lectures on Human Values (Brasenose College, Oxford University May 1 and 8, 1989, 509–513).

6 The leading studies in this field are Walker Connor, "Nation Building or Nation Destroying," *World Politics* 24 (April 1972): 319–355; idem., "The Politics of Ethno- Nationalism," *Journal of International Affairs* 271 (1973): 1–21; idem., "Ethno- Nationalism, Understanding Political Development"; Myron Weiner and Samuel Huntington (eds), *Understanding Political Development: An Analytic Study* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, 1987), 196–220; Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Revival* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

7 The most striking representatives of these approaches are: Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley 1979); Michael Doyle, "Liberalism and World Politics," (Realism) *American Political Science Review* 80 (1986): 1151–1170 (Liberalism); Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) (Constructivism). The two latter studies take into account values and norms. For a comprehensive discussion based upon the distinction between Neo-realism and Institutionalism, see John Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," *International Security* 19 (1995): 5–49; See also Jack Snyder, "One World, Rival Theories," *Foreign Policy* (November–December 2004): 53–62.

8 Most relevant in Diaspora studies is John Armstrong who attempted to develop the study of

Diasporas, with the Jewish model serving as a paradigm for other Diasporas. Among leading scholars who followed in his wake, are Gabriel Sheffer and Yossi Shain. Among others, they addressed the case of the Jewish Diaspora. See John Armstrong, "Mobilized and Proletarian Diasporas," *American Political Science Review* 70 (January 1976): 393–408; cf. Gabriel Sheffer, *At Home Abroad: Diaspora Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Yossi Shain and Ahron Barth, "Diaspora and International Relations Theory," *International Organization* 57 (Summer 2003): 449–479.

9   On the tension between state and Jewish state, see Yeshayahu Leibowitz, *Judaism, the Jewish People and the State of Israel* (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1975) [Hebrew]. See also Ella Belfer, "The Jewish People and the Kingdom of Heaven," in Daniel Elazar (ed.), *Kinship and Consent the Jewish Political Tradition and its Contemporary Uses*, 2nd edition (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1997), 405–439.

0   With reference to this debate see Jessica T. Mathews, "Power Shift," *Foreign Affairs* 76 (1997): 50–66, and Anne-Marie Slaughter, "The Real New World Order," *Foreign Affairs* 76 (1997): 183–197.

1　Religion, identity and foreign policy

The discipline that is most relevant for analyzing the foreign policy of entities, including states, nations, and religions, is clearly international relations. Another relevant area of focus is ethnic-nationalism, a field of study developed during the late twentieth century and especially pertinent to any analysis of the historical foreign policy of Judaism. In the present chapter we will endeavor to delineate theoretical approaches that are relevant to the analysis of a Jewish foreign policy tradition.

The evolution of international relations has been conventionally accompanied by a debate between two main schools of thought. The Idealist school that dominated the discipline at its outset has been challenged by the Realist school. In essence, the two schools have continued to contend with one another, although they have both changed their paradigmatic emphasis. Among an array of theories, Liberalism and Neo-liberalism are considered as heirs to the Idealist tradition. Realism has also evolved into a more contemporary faceted Neo-Realism.

David Baldwin, in a book dedicated to the debate between Neo-Realism and Neo-Liberalism, traced the origins between Idealism and Realism to the ancient Greeks. Thucydides' emphasis on the centrality of balance of power, reliance on self-help and similar mechanisms established Realism in contrast to the ancient stoics that saw themselves as citizens of the world. While Machiavelli, Hobbes and those who believed in the mercantilist economic system can be seen as the intellectual ancestors of Realism, Baldwin similarly identified idealists amongst early Christian philosophers who propounded ideas of economic interdependence, as well as eighteenth and nineteenth century philosophers who espoused ideas of a world civilization while rejecting the main concepts of Realism (Baldwin 1993, 11–12). In short, the Idealist–Realist contention has been extant since antiquity, arguably emerging from theological thought.

In this chapter we shall begin with a historical review of the origins of this debate. Sandal and Fox (2013, 1–4) portray a comprehensive range of approaches and theories to the role of religion in the theory of international relations (referred to as IR in this book). Instead of Fox's attempt (2015) to relate to the rise of religion solely via secularization theory and secularism, I prefer to add a historical review. Yet, since in itself Judaism went through a secularization process, I shall switch in the next chapter from religion and replace it with the concept of tradition. However, in the present chapter, I shall confine my analysis of the relationship of religion to the evolution of international politics.

Later in this chapter we shall examine how the main schools evolved as IR became a distinct discipline in the twentieth century. The ultimate purpose is to propose IR theories that are relevant to Jewish international behavior, whether in the Diaspora or in the State of Israel. The decline and ascendance of religion in world politics in general and foreign policy in particular, is pertinent for understanding a similar trend in Israeli foreign policy.

International relations: a historical perspective

Religion was the central binding force in Europe following the disintegration of the Western Roman Empire in the fifth century CE. As the universal religion of the Empire since the beginning of the fourth century, Christianity ultimately survived the collapse of Rome. Throughout the medieval period, Christianity gave Europe an identity, a fact that was carried over to the modern era. During those years some of Europe's major confrontations were with pagan tribes that had penetrated Europe, ultimately accepting monotheism, or Islam in Arabia, which also claimed divine revelation and ultimately gave rise to the Muslim Empire. The Thirty Years War (1618–1648) and the ensuing Peace Treaty of Westphalia (1648) gave legitimacy to a newly-born political structure – a state based on territory – thus terminating this continental unity. In short, religion was fundamental in providing a national identity during the prestate era.

The dawn of the era of the modern state led to the emergence of an interstate system that replaced the earlier imperial and feudal orders. Prior to the emergence of the territorial state, power had been effectively divided between two entities: the Holy Roman Empire or the Church of Rome, on the one hand, and a host of feudal lords on the other. Whereas the Emperor or Pope was the legitimate and recognized leader of a united Christian Europe, actual power was decentralized among many feudal potentates. The rulers of the territorial states, to whom legitimacy was granted following the Peace of Westphalia, had already been successful in their quest for a centralized control of power. As heirs to both the Holy Roman Empire and the feudal order, the monarchs' survival depended upon the ability of the territorial states they had created to fulfill the functions previously discharged by the previous two systems of authority.

On the normative level, the new principle that replaced the Holy Roman Empire and religion in general was the doctrine of sovereignty. Although rooted in divine beliefs, which developed as the central abstract principle of the territorial state, the doctrine of sovereignty was a combination of both external autonomy, vis-à-vis other rulers, and the ability of the state to impose order on the territory it controlled. In religious terminology, this concept is identified with the Almighty, who is the acknowleged "Sovereign of the Universe." The ruler, or "prince" for all intents and purposes, represented the highest secular authority within the territory he controlled. In such a state system, both the role of the divine and the norms of international behavior were, in effect, marginalized.

A legal code delineating the rights and duties of states in relation to each other emerged in parallel to the doctrine of sovereignty. The Treaty of Westphalia, in addition to making the state the main proponent in the new inter-state system, on the basis of Hugo Grotius' *De jure belli ac pacis* [On the Law of War and Peace] (1628) codification, also adopted rules and procedures concerning state behavior. While realizing that secular law alone could not achieve the goal of restraining and regulating war, Grotius was determined to separate international law from religion. While he introduced Christian elements into the jurisprudence of international law, he is, nevertheless, considered the father of secular, or natural, law. Developing during the subsequent centuries into a system of international law by introducing rules and procedures, as well as limitations on state behavior; international law became identified with a more cooperative approach in international relations. In contrast, the Realist school, as we shall see, stressed that the decentralized character of international law was effective only where two conditions existed: complementary interests between states and the distribution of power (Morgenthau and Thompson 1985, 296). As such, consideration of religion and regional entities were minimized.

The period between the Treaty of Westphalia and the end of the eighteenth century was a golden age in terms of the management of the balance of power within the international system.

A religious leader such as Cardinal Richelieu advanced the concept of *raison d'état* that allowed for cooperative alliances between Catholic and Protestant princes. Ideas articulated by Jean Bodin and Thomas Hobbes in their celebrated treatises provided the theoretical justification for dynastic sovereignty, as well as the contractual logic that formed the basis of the state and of the international order (Herz 1957; Puchala 1971, 27–34).

Religion was further marginalized in the post Westphalia era as the American and French revolutions destroyed the *ancién regime*, as that era came to be known. John Locke and Jean Jacques Rousseau, the two political philosophers who had the greatest influence on these revolutions are considered, together with Immanuel Kant, to be the founding fathers of political liberalism. While not articulating the national idea expressly and deliberately, they indirectly gave birth to a new legitimizing principle – that of self-determination. Principles like "inalienable rights" that are inherant in individuals, and "the general will," were the underpinnings of the doctrine of popular sovereignty. The dramatic spectacle of a people rising up against their monarch and replacing him with trappings of popular sovereignty provided not only a new form of legitimacy, but also diminished even further the small role played in the ancien regime by the divine. Following these revolutions, even the hitherto sacrosanct divine right of kings was rejected. Moreover, in France and the United States of America, both of which had turned into two different models of democracy, a new relationship between church and state evolved. One of the major losers in the French Revolution was the clergy, whereas in the United States the clergy had been separate from government from the very beginning.

The decline of monarchical legitimacy and the rise of the doctrine of popular sovereignty led to demands for self-rule by varied ethnic nationalities. The diminished role of religion further added to the strengthening of ethnic identity. Europe was replete with stateless ethnic groups, many of them with collective memories of glorious ancient pasts. As a result, during the nineteenth century, the ideas behind the American and French revolutions, generated national revolutions based on ethnic nationalism. In contrast to the preceding 150 years, when territorial states were established around principalities most of the new states represented a common ethno-national heritage. However, many of these groups were either mixed in with other disparate ethnic groups, or internally fragmented into many separate entities, as in the case of Germany and Italy. The heritage of such ethnic groups was, to a large extent, loaded with religious expression. The Balkan nations, for whom Christianity was a major agent in their identity, revolted against Ottoman–Muslim rule and tried, with a limited degree of success, to revive ethnic identities that had been dormant for centuries (Albrecht-Carrie 1972, 12). The states they established on the ruins of the Muslim Ottoman Empire had a national basis as opposed to a religious one.

Italy and Germany both serve as strong examples of this trend. They were both ethnic nations that had merged into large sovereign states, thereby altering the balance of power in Europe – and eventually resulting in two world wars. The country of Belgium was created in the wake of a common uprising by two different nations and religious sects because of the geopolitical security interests of the great powers at the time. Despite their failure in the short run, the revolutions of 1848, the "spring of nations," amply demonstrated that national movements were an all-European phenomenon. Yet, the momentum largely belonged to concentrated stateless ethnic groups, not dispersed peoples. As we shall see, in national movements occurring throughout the continent, the Jewish people were largely excluded due to their lack of a territorial base.

In the nineteenth century there were attempts to bring religious fervor back into the international European system. Tsar Alexander I of Russia contrived an alignment in September

1815 with Austria and Prussia, that came to be known as the "Holy Alliance." Britain refused to join the Holy Alliance and instead preferred the "Quadruple Alliance," considered by some scholars as the beginning of a European entity (Albrecht-Carrie 1972, 7). Another demonstration of the secular nature of the international system was the alliance between Britain and France with the Ottoman Sultan against Russia during the Crimean War (1853–1856). Ironically, the trigger to that war was a quarrel between the Russian Orthodox church and Western Christian missionaries over the holy places in Palestine. Britain saw in the Tsar's support of the Russian Orthodox Church a continuation of Russia's southward encroachment, and hence supported Muslim Turkey against Christian Russia. The international system that prevailed between the Congress of Vienna and World War I has been dubbed by some theoreticians as the Concert System, or a "managed" balance of power (Kissinger 1957; Hoffman 1968, 109–114). Indeed, the great powers of the nineteenth century tried to restore a balance of power mechanism so as to avoid an ordeal like the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars, but this time as a coordinated, rather than in a natural equilibrium. Most significantly, they did not support the Christian bond in Europe.

The international system that emerged following the Versailles Peace Conference in 1919 was considered to be revolutionary. It has been thus viewed because the main actors did not recognize the legitimacy of one another and hence disagreed on the rules of the game (Hoffman 1968, 114–122). Following the disastrous results of each of the two world wars there has been an attempt at more institution building – including the League of Nations in 1920 and its associated institutions between the two world wars – than ever before, as the heterogeneity of regimes contributed to a growing disorder. Most responsible for the disorder were the revolutionary regimes in several of the major powers.

The twentieth century was undoubtedly the most secular era in the history of international relations. The totalitarian philosophy of some of the major powers (e.g., Nazi Germany starting in 1933 and the Soviet Union throughout most of the twentieth century), their atheist ideology, as well as revolutionary global ambitions, left no place for the divine. Even the emergence of the State of Israel in 1948 was detached from a religious context and the ruling parties were from the Labor (Socialist) Camp. So were the Arab states who sought secular regimes such as the Ba'ath in Syria and Iraq, or the Socialist regime of Gamal Abdul Nasser of Egypt. But the secular nature of the system also had another source.

The new principle of legitimacy that emerged from Versailles was that of self-determination. The polity that emerged in the wake of World War I, the nation-state, was a merger of two distinguishable authority systems bound together by a common denominator – the national interest. If the essence of the state is its functional performance, than the constituting factor of an ethnic state is in its historical origin. Based on this distinction, the national interest, the most celebrated concept employed by Realism, received a new dimension in the new international system that emerged following World War I.

It was President Woodrow Wilson who advanced the ideas of international institutions coupled with the right of self-determination, an ideal which would seemingly empower peoples and disallow greater space for religion to influence foreign policy in world politics. With time, idealism ultimately became identified as the liberal approach to international relations.[1] In contrast, World War II and the Cold War empowered *realpolitik*, which was expressed via the two approaches of classical Realism and Neo-Realism, stunting any possible analysis and inclusion of religion into international relations. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, it was anticipated that with the victory of liberal-democracy, universal

ideals would come to dominate international relations (Fukuyama 1992). As we shall see below, the role of religion in foreign policy was also anticipated to continue its decline in such a liberal world. Samuel Huntington, however, did not accept Fukuyama's optimistic predictions and developed his "Clash of Civilizations" theory (1993, 1996).

A more direct reference to the growing role of religion was Mark Juergensmeyer's *The New Cold War? Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State* (1994), that also predicted a continued conflict but on a different basis. Instead of the former ideological East–West confrontation, the new emerging confrontation as he saw it, would be between religious nationalism and secular nationalism, or, as he prefered to define it, two competing "ideologies of order" (Juergensmeyer 1994, 30–39).

While there were some early signs of religion returning to the sphere of international relations, it was the September 11, 2001 attack on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington that made religion difficult to ignore. Following the attacks, many sought to uncover religion's underlying role in foreign policy (Toft, Philpott and Shah 2011).

To be sure, sociologists and theologians had started paying attention to religion because of the emergence of fundamentalist religious beliefs as a global phenomenon (Marty and Appleby 1991). However, international relations as a discipline had still found it diffcult to include religion in its frames of reference (Fox and Sandler 2004).

Contending approaches in IR theory in the twentieth century

As indicated above, the academic discipline of international relations took form during the course of the twentieth century against the backdrop of two disastrous world wars, as well as the Cold War which can well be considered another world war. While statesmen sought to come to grips with the right ways to avoid these ordeals, scholars were searching for a suitable approach in which a stable international framework could be created.

Idealism versus Realism

As we have seen, both the Idealist and the Realist schools had existed as intellectual schools at the least as far back as the Hellenist civilization. However, their relative rise and demise have been associated with contemporary events. An analysis of theoretical evolution is important as it can contribute to our understanding of the fall and rise of religion.

Following the devastating fallout of World War I, it was only natural to blame the destruction on the power politics way of thinking that had dominated nineteenth century international relations. Scholars and philosophers alike strove to devote their efforts toward eliminating war as a factor in human conduct.[2] Following a general war of the magnitude and duration of that of the 1914 war, scholars of the IR discipline were motivated to focus on the mission of avoiding at all costs the recurrence of another such war. The central idea was to find a new way of managing power in international politics through collective security, as opposed to relying on the balance of power system that had formerly prevailed in the European tradition of international politics (Inis Calude 1962).

There was also an intellectual context to the rise of idealism that contributed to the decline of religion. Optimism, and the belief that man and society were inherently capable of learning and overcoming the distrust between nations, underlined the *weltanschauung* of this school. A key precept held that rational man could be convinced that harmonious relationships between peoples

were vital, possible, and beneficial. In addition, post-World War I scholars, while rejecting the political principles of the previous era, inherited much of their general outlook from nineteenth century Enlightenment (Mollov 2002, 2).[3] With the rise of rationalism and collective security, focus on the role of religion and spirituality in foreign policy was further minimized in favor of finding international harmony.

World War II was a turning point in the study of international relations. A new group of thinkers, classified as "Realists," sought to explain why a new international conflict encompassing virtually the whole globe erupted. Scholars like Edward Hallett Carr, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Hans J. Morgenthau rejected the thinking of the pre-war intellectual approach that sought to assure a peaceful and harmonious world. It is, however, important to stress that although each thinker associated with this approach had a different specific emphasis and particular contribution, the group as a whole shared a number of common thoughts (Mollov 2002, 2). Without going into an elaborate exploration of Realism, there were several salient rudiments pertinent to our study that these thinkers shared. First, they stressed the centrality of the pursuit of power in international politics and the importance of investigating actual, rather than morally desirable, behavior. The second assumption was that the world operates as an international anarchy, where independent nation-states act with no central authority or a a divinely ordained code over them (Donnelly 2008, 150). Third, nation-states are the most determinant and important actor in international relations, and thus should be the main focus of analysis in the global arena. While the state is the central actor in international politics, the nation, in contrast, is seen as an attribute of power with regard to elements such as national morale and character (Morgenthau 1956, 97–105; 122–132). Fourthly, the attitudes of Realists towards nationalism, as well as to providence, is comparable to their approach to ideology. These attributes are seen as disturbing the normal flow of international politics and the stability of a balance of power. For instance, the tendency of the United States to pursue its foreign policy as a moralistic crusade is seen as an indication of weakness (Spanier 1967, 1–17; Morgenthau 1969, 15–18).[4]

Morgenthau criticized international morality because each nation saw its own morality as binding on all of humanity. "In this, the ethics of international politics reverts to the politics and morality of tribalism, of the Crusaders, and of the religious wars." He continues with an attack on nationalistic universalism on the same basis:

> Thus, carrying their idols before them, the nationalistic masses of our time meet in the international arena, each group convinced that it executes the mandate of history … and that it fulfills a sacred mission ordained by providence, however defined. Little do they know that they meet under an empty sky *from which the gods have departed*.
> (Morgenthau 1956, 234; author's italics for emphasis)

In short, the divine was inherently eradicated from the Idealist–Realist intellectual enterprise. The emphasis on international institutions and rational harmony by idealist and power politics in international politics further reduced the expression of a religious foreign policy.

The non-state-centric view theories

The Realist paradigm, which has guided international politics since World War II and still enjoys viability in our age, has become less hegemonic with time (Vasquez 1998; Walker and Morton 2005, 341–356). The common denominator of the challengers was the break away from what

they dubbed as the "state-centric" approach. Indirectly the new approaches were aimed at the Realists. International relations theory includes an array of non-Realist approaches, traditional as well as newly developed. Instead of the search for power, alliance politics and the mechanism of balance of power, these approaches perceived an international order based upon norms and values together with national interests and domestic politics. As such some theories can be related, at least partially, to the Idealist school.

The earliest rigorous challenge came from the integration school. Scholars like Karl Deutsch and Ernst Haas suggested new frameworks of authority that seemed to not fit in with Realist conjectures (Deutsch 1957; Haas 1962). Another assault on Realism came from a cluster of theories that came to be defined as the World Politics school. Scholars of the Transnationalist and Complex Interdependence schools saw their predecessors – whether traditionalists or behaviouralists – as overly state-centric. By pointing to the state as the central common denominator and concomitant shortcoming of their forerunners, these theoreticians aspired to produce a new paradigm of international relations. Distingushing themseves from the Realist school, they argued that the agenda of inter-state relations has not always been dominated by security and power aspirations. Moreover, military force has not always been the sole or even the main means of achieving state goals. The web of global interactions is managed by power considerations, as well as by rules and standards that have evolved to accommodate the growing cross-cutting interactions and interdependence between states and international organizations (Keohane and Nye 1977). Central to this is the theory of complex interdependence, which holds that there are different mechanisms that connect and affect relationships between countries that go beyond the conventional Westphalian system of states (Keohane and Nye 1987). These can vary from informal governmental relations to non-state actors, including multinational corporations and international organizations. This inclusion of non-state actors as influencing the international system and as players in world politics is a distinct departure from Realist doctrine and is very pertinent to the study of players like Christian world wide institutions and the Jewish people.

In short, without totally rejecting the validity of Realist doctrines, the broadening of the research to include non-state-centric views, allowed the entrance of transnational actors. As a result, legitimate actors such as the Catholic Church and World Zionist Organization would be considered as significant actors in international relations (Valier 1970, 129–152). By empowering transnational and subnational entities, the sphere of international relations was reincorporating religious entities as a subject to be analyzed and substantiated.

Neo-Realism and Neo-Liberalism

International relations theorists found it difficult to part with the exclusive centrality of the state and power politics. The reaction to the world politics school in international relations was thus the development of Neo-Realism. While highlighting power, Neo-Realists, in contrast to classical Realists, provide an explanation for international behavior, primarily at the level of international politics. As Kenneth Waltz put it when responding to John Vasquez's attack on the Realist paradigm, "Old Realists see causes as running directly from states to the outcomes … New Realists see states forming a structure by their interactions and then being strongly affected by the structure their interactions have formed," (1979, 9–13). Neo-Realists see the structure of the international system, as defined to a large extent by the distribution of power, as solely responsible for international order. Yet, despite the emphasis on anarchy and the security

dilemma, Neo-Realists still perceive the state as the core unit of international relations (Waltz 1979, 88–99). By putting the center of gravity on power and the state as the basic unit in world politics, there is no room for spirituality in international politics. In their eyes, international regimes and institutions play no role in promoting order at the international level, but non-state actors such as peoples and religious movements do play a role.

The Neo-Realist approach should not be totally discounted. By emerging in the 1980s, it thus pre-empted religion's takeoff. To a large extent Neo-Realism, which highlights anarchy, was largely based on the security dilemma concept developed by John Hertz in the 1950s. In essence, the relative insecurity of states constitutes the essential motivation underlying the constant quest for power by states that seek to survive. In the absence of a central authority that enforces order, states take security measures that threaten other states, and vice versa (Hertz 1950). To be sure, in both Realist approaches, the state is the foremost player, with balance of power as the main device to deter aggression – and thus advance stability. Alliances are the central feature of achieving and maintaining that mechanism. But the search for power in Neo-Realism is not for the sake of power, but rather for the sake of survival. As we shall, see this notion is at the core of understanding and analyzing the behavior and policy of the Jewish nation throughout history.

Similar to the resolution of the two world wars, the end of the Cold War was bound to have an impact on international relations. Critically assessing Realist theory, international relations theorists concluded that there is a need for the infusion of idealism into the discipline. With time, an approach assuming the name "neo-Liberalism" surfaced – being dubbed by some as "neo-Idealism" (Kegley 1993) or "neo-Wilsonian Idealism" (Fukayuma 1992). In contrast to Neo-Realists who see international order as solely connected to material capabilities such as the balance of power, neo-Liberals saw an independent role for culture and norms in promoting international order – or, as they defined it, international institutions.[5]

Constructivism

Another route developed by those who wished to deviate from Realism was Constructivism. Following the ascendance of culture in national security (Katzenstein 1996) the Constructivist School tried to challenge both Neo-Realism and Neo-Liberalism. Distinct from Neo-Liberalism, which was seen by some to represent the classical paradigm of international relations, Constructivism's emphasis on institutions, rather than material power, in determining international order classifies it as such. According to this approach, the view that the anarchic structure of the international system and the brute search of national interests – defined in terms of power – constitute the central factors influencing world order, was not necessarily correct. The international structure was, rather, the result of political thinking and norms that had taken root and that could be changed – and thereby change processes that had been seen hitherto, to be unassailable truths, such as the struggle for power. Alexander Wendt for instance, states clearly that structure has no role in international politics "and that if today we find ourselves in a self-help world, this is due to process, not structure.… Structure has no existence or causal powers apart from process.… Anarchy is what states make of it."[6]

Bringing contemporary Europe as an example, Wendt suggests that "four decades of cooperation may have transformed a positive interdependence of outcomes into a collective 'European identity' in terms of which states increasingly define their 'self interest.'" This is a central departure from Realism and Neo- Realism, as the international political structure here is seen in ideational and not material terms (Finnemore 1996, 5–6). Such thinking opened up the

possibility of analyzing religious and spiritual motivations for national players that may seemingly contradict the traditional approach of a built-in international struggle for power.

Wendt in his book *Social Theory of International Politics,* further explained his approach: "The identities and interests of purposive actors are constructed by these shared ideas rather than given by nature" (1999, 1). Hence, what creates and dictates interests are the identity of the states and other international players rather than the anarchic structure of the international system. Thus, a new element was added to the understanding of world politics: the importance of identity interests and norms in the shaping of international processes.

Constructivism has thus added an important dimension that was neglected by classical international relations theory: identity. What creates and dictates interests are the *identity* of the states and other international players, rather than an objective reality and materialistic capabilities. Identities determine interests and, subsequently, states will differ from one another depending on their core identities and cultural or ideational underpinnings – whether they are historically, philosophically or religiously influenced.

Identity politics and the state

Finally, it is pertinent to mention a school in politics that is not an integral part of international relations theory but is very germane to world politics. The contemporary resurgence of religion was preceded by another approach that emphasized the role of identity: the ethno-national school. While the leading schools in international relations were in dispute about the centrality of the state, they did not pay enough attention to the fact that the evolution of the state was in competition with other forms of identity in international politics, such as ethnicity and religion. Whether because of their legal status deriving from the Peace of Westphalia, or because of their control over the means of coercion, states constituted the fundamental core of the international system. However, as we have seen, the constructivists pointed out that states have identities influencing their interests, with some of them more then others actually defined by their identities.

The nation-state is today a legitimate player on the international scene. In effect, the nation and the state are two differing authority systems that came together to create the modern polity. Each structure responds to a different requisite. While the modern territorial state provides security, the nation responds to a basic need for identity. In Europe, the meeting of the two systems primarily transpired during the approximately 120 years between the French Revolution and the end of World War I, when it received international legitimacy in the wake of the spread of the doctrine of self-determination.

The appearance of the nation-state in the nineteenth century and especially the reappearance of national identity during the late twentieth century, has been interpreted by some theorists as an imaginary ideology invented by class or (industrial) state interests to provide or to take advantage of the human need for identity (Anderson 1999; Gellner 1983; Hobsbawm 1992). The appeal of such "archaic" variables such as ethnicity and nationhood towards the end of the twentieth century however, is difficult to explain, and even more surprising was the re-emergence of religion. Both Realist and Liberal theory found it difficult to account for the renewed appearance of particularistic nationalism.[7]

Another group of thinkers were the primordialists who saw nations as an ancient and natural phenomenon. Walker Connor, and especially Anthony Smith, the two most celebrated fathers of the ethno-national school, raised key questions that ultimately became pertinent to explaining

contemporary international relations.

Smith's contribution, in the wake of the writings of Walker Connor, lies in focusing attention upon the bond between ethnicity and nationalism.[8] In opposition to the approach in political science, which believed that the modern state would weaken nationalism, the primordial approach advanced the idea that nationalism is an authentic force deriving its strength from sources that are not incongruous in the modern state. In Connor's and Smith's opinion, a connection exists between ethnicity, which preceded modernity in Europe, and nationalism, which gained legitimacy in wake of the spread of the doctrine of self-determination. Accordingly, in their view, national identity existed among many peoples for centuries before it received legitimacy from the international community. The change introduced by modernity lay in the desire for an overlap between national identity and the sovereign state. Once ethnic identity acquired a territorial dimension by becoming national, it linked with the modern state. This is particularly pertinent to the study of foreign policy in Judaism, which was driven by a dispersed ethnic nation not possessing a state of their own. Naturally, all the theories that perceive ethnicity and nationalism as constructed identities stand in direct contradistinction to the concept of ethnic nationalism. For our purposes, a tradition is, by definition, a genuine phenomenon and, as such, influences identity.

The primary mandate of the state is to provide security. The concern of the nation, rooted as it is in its ethnic character, is its historic mission. Thus, whereas the state component of the polity is prone to define its core objectives in terms of physical survival, the national component requires its short and long-term goals to take into account the fulfillment of historical aspirations. Not every nation- state will be motivated equally by both attributes; different categories of nation-states could be constructed according to a priority scale. States would usually rate security as the core goal and their historical aspirations in more long-range terms. Others might integrate their historical aspirations or ideological world view into their core objectives. When polities define their interest in survival terms, rather than missionary terms such as "manifest destiny" or "chosen nation," their national interest is secular. An "elect nation" would see its core value as the spreading of its civilizing light among the infidels. Christianity and Islam in the Middle Ages, and in the modern era some of the French, Bolshevik and Nazi revolutionaries defined the foreign policies of their states in clearly missionary terms (Smith 2000, 804–805).

Neverthless, despite their secular systems of authority, some modern nation states developed religious features in their system of legitimation and mobilization processes. Smith recognized this connection when writing about "The 'Sacred' Dimension of Nationalism." Three decades earlier, Robert Bellah had suggested the concept of "civil religion" (Smith 2000, 791–814; Bellah 1967). This is not a coincidence. Bellah wrote about the United States and, as such, spoke about a state religion. while Smith, meanwhile, was more influenced by the European experience and hence referred to the religious–ethno-national linkage. Still, as far as international legitimacy is concerned, the legitimizing principle continued to be self-determination, thus implying the sovereignty of the people, not God.

As we have stated, the end of the Cold War, like the two world wars, had a cultural-political impact. One result was the rebirth of the old-new nations in Eastern Europe, which stimulated inquiry into the role of ethnic identity, religious character and international politics. As indicated above, Samuel Huntington's grasped the implication in his "Clash of Civilizations" insights. In contrast to Francis Fukuyama's *The End of History and the Last Man*, which depicted a peaceful international system, Huntington foresaw a conflict-ridden future. According to this most celebrated theory, the post-Cold War era would be characterized by conflicts between several

civilizations that, in Huntington's characterization, would be primarily defined by religion.

Conclusion

Both our historical and theoretical perspectives point to a challenging relationship between religion and international relations. We have seen the rise and fall of religion in international affairs, especially since the rise of the inter-state system following the end of the Thirty Years War in 1648. The main reason seems to be the emergence of the territorial state and the forming of an international system as they interreacted with each other. Consequently, the discipline of international affairs, until the last decade of the twentieth century, has overlooked the role of culture and identity in world politics and particularly of religion in foreign policy. I presume that the disregard for a Jewish foreign policy tradition in explaining Israeli foreign policy has been influenced by the neglect of religion and culture in IR theory. Hence an analysis of the evolution of international relations theory, against the background of religion, is pertinent to this book.

In this chapter we have referred to approaches that challenge the state-centric approach of the Realists and provide room for non-state actors and non-material capabilities in world politics. Undoubtedly the breakthrough came with Constructivsm that abandoned the determinism of the previous approaches and stressed the concept of identity and the role of narratives into the discipline. However, the role of identity had been recognized earlier by the enthno-national school but was not seen as important as the constructivist school. Inclusion of non-state actors and identity in foreign policy analysis is very relevant to this book.

Undoubtedly, the two world wars of the twentieth century had a marked impact on the discipline. The end of the Cold War allowed for the emergence of new realities to develop and thus influence international relations. Radical Islam has become the main challenger to the unipolar system of the 1990s Consequently, when the discipline could no longer ignore ethnic-nationalism and religion, concepts like culture and civilizations reappeared.

It is against this theoretical background that the foreign policy of the Jewish people will be tested. In this analysis, the hypothesis posits that Jewish external behavior can be best explained by an eclectic approach that consists of the Realist paradigm with the support of concepts from the other theories explored above. From Realism, and especially Neo-Realism, we adopt concepts such as survival in an anarchic world. This seems counterintuitive, given that the Realist approach does not give much importance to the role of non-state players such as the Jewish people that lived for millennia in the Diasporas and still to this day have thriving communities outside the State of Israel.

But, most important for this study will be the concept of Jewish political tradition that we shall present in the next chapter. It will be of relevance for a non-clerical state that has been influenced by its past and especially by its 3,000 year narrative. We suggest that this concept can also be adopted to understand contemporary foreign policies of European states that are non-clerical in nature but cannot be detached from their religious past and culture. Indeed, a comparable attempt has been made recently by two scholars that forwarded the concept of confessional culture in explaining the integration process of the European Union (Nelsen and Guth 2015).

Notes

1 Leading theorists like Inis Claude, John Hertz and Joseph Nye had made that linkage, with

Hertz identifying his position as "liberal realism." David Allen Baldwin, *Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 24

2   Scholars such as Sir Alfred Zimmern, Nicholas Murray Butler, James T. Shotwell and G. Lowes Dickinson dedicated their efforts to promoting the cause of a more peaceful world by seeking to cultivate public support for the League of Nations and the rule of law among nations. M. Benjamin Mollov, *Power and Transcendence: Hans J. Morgenthau and the Jewish Experience* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2002).

3   According to Kenneth Thompson, the Enlightenment had liberated human reason from the strict tutelage of church and state and led to the belief that evil – which stemmed from ignorance, superstition, and biblical dogma – would soon disappear. This outlook stressed a belief in progress and assumed that just as so many of the evils of the natural world had been cured or controlled by the application of reason and knowledge, so too could the evils of the social and political world be similarly controlled or eliminated. See Kenneth W. Thompson, *Ethics and International Relations* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1985), 14

4   A byproduct of the *realpolitik* approach was the emergence of the behavioral revolution and its penetration into the discipline of international relations. Claims supporting Realism promoted theories that emphasized rigorous research based on scientific methods. Consequently, while the Realist school in international relations positioned the state and power in the center of its academic research, the behavioral revolution of the 1950s and 1960s expended the agenda of political analysis in favor of other conceptual categories, such as the role of personality perceptions in decision-making and systems analysis. From our perspective, it is relevant to stress that the emphasis on the individual enabled a role for religion. The study of socialization process, personality and perceptions (images) takes into account the impact of religious upbringing, or religiosity, in foreign policy making. Yet, the problem encountered was first to verify the role of religion on the personality of the decision maker, and, second, to identify the effect of the psychological makeup on foreign policy behavior (Sullivan 1976, 23–65). Similarly, the application of systems and decision-making theories to foreign policy analysis allowed for inclusion of religious factors in foreign policy. Within this approach, religion could play a role in the political process via religious parties, pressure groups, or the political culture. Most important, the behaviorists did not undermine Realism. Rather, their aim was to fulfill the Realist claim to scientific status (Chris Brown, *Understanding International Relations.* London: Palgrave, 2002, 32). However, the focus remained on how religion affects states' foreign policy – not on the foreign policy attributes of the religions. Additionally, religion within culture hardly played any role needing to be examined. Similarly, the rational actor theories, which began to flourish in the 1960s as the role of strategic studies grew, did not provide a role for religion.

5   For the Neo-Liberal approach see Michael Doyle, "Liberalism and World Politics," *American Political Science Review* 80 (1986): 1151–1170. Mearsheimer defines institutions as "a set of rules that stipulate the ways in which states should cooperate and compete with each other. They prescribe acceptable forms of state behavior, and proscribe unacceptable kinds of behavior." See John Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," *International Security* 19 (1995): 8. Krasner referred to this as an international regime and defined it as a setting in which international actors accept "sets of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules and decision making procedures around which actors' expectations converge in a given area of international relations" (Stephen Krasner, "Structural Causes and Regime Consequences: Regimes as Intervening Variables," in *International Regimes,* ed.

Stephen D. Krasner (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983), 2). Jervis described security regimes as "principles, rules, and norms that permit nations to be restrained in their behavior in the belief that others will reciprocate" (Robert Jervis, "Security Regimes," *International Organization* 36 (1982): 357).

6   Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization* 46 (1995): 394–395; Emanuel Adler, "Seizing the Middle Ground: Constructivism in World Politics," *European Journal of International Relations* 3 (1997): 319–363; Ted Hopf, "The Promise of Constructivism in International Relations Theory," *International Security* 23 (1998): 171–200. For contrast, see John Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions" *International Security* 19 (1995): 42–44, where he asserted "that clearly realism was the hegemonic discourse or theory in world politics at least since the emergence of the Westphalian interstate system."

7   See note 17 in the Introduction. A liberal response based on Jewish prophetic sources to this dilemma was suggested by Michael Walzer who proposed the concept of "reiterative universalism" as opposed to "covering-law universalism." While the latter was searching for universal integration under one God, as adopted by Christianity, the first was looking for a way to both understand and justify national boundaries within universal tolerance. This is a Jewish message according to Walzer. Michael Walzer, "Nation and Universe," The Tanner Lectures on Human Values (Brasenose College, Oxford University, May 1 and 8 (1989): 509–513.

8   Ethnic-Nationalism studies (Walker Connor, "Nation Building or Nation Destroying," *World Politics* 24 (April 1972)); Walker Connor, "The Politics of Ethno-Nationalism," *Journal of International Affairs,* 29 (1973); Walker Connor, "A Nation Is a Nation, is a State, is an Ethnic Group, Is a …," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 1 (October 1978); Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Revival* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981)) and Diaspora studies (John Armstrong, "Mobilized and Proletarian Diasporas," *American Political Science Review* 70 (January 1976): 393–408; Yossi Shain and Ahron Barth, "Diaspora and International Relations Theory," *International Organization* 57 (Summer 2003): 449–479; Gabriel Sheffer, *At Home Abroad: Diaspora Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003)) were thus added to my eclectic approach.

2   A Jewish approach to foreign policy

As we explained in the Introduction, a key objective of this book is to identify the study of the Jewish foreign policy tradition. This endeavor is highly germane as well to the increasing importance and exploration of culture and identity as backgrounds to the study of foreign policy (Katztenstein 1996; Lapid 1996). The effort to explore and further develop Jewish foreign policy tradition is an important task which relates to understanding how Judaism as a religion and culture have viewed the political realm, including and parallel to the Realist/ Idealist divide in international relations thought. In this chapter, the central question as to whether it is possible to identify an inherently Jewish approach to foreign policy will be examined from the perspective of international relations. The ethno-national perspective will be discussed in the following chapter.

This examination will study momentous examples in the interaction between Jews and external groups, both with regard to a Jewish state and in the Diaspora. Concrete Jewish behavior and action will be more heavily weighted, though normative foreign policy, which can be identified in various sources from biblical or halakhic literature, will similarly be taken into account. Our inquiry goes beyond a narrow definition of Judaism as a religion and widens out to encompass the complete Jewish narrative. In order to justify such a broad approach, we adopted the concept of a Jewish political tradition and applied it to Judaism's foreign policy. From a theoretical perspective, the framework for analysis will be a mixture of concepts taken from the discipline of international relations, as delineated in the previous chapter, and political tradition as developed by Daniel J. Elazar.

Our departure point is the concept developed by Elazar – the Jewish political tradition. According to Elazar, "A tradition is a continuing dialogue based upon a shared set of fundamental questions. For Jews, this dialogue began with the emergence of the Jewish people as an entity" (1997). Similar to the American tradition, it

> was born out of a political persuasion that reflected a common political experience. The persuasion and experience together created an American political tradition.… Similarly, a living Jewish political tradition offers a way to maintain Jewish continuity where there is a common perspective and common experience but no central ideology.
>
> (Elazar 1997, xix)

At the basis of the Jewish political tradition, according to Elazar, lies the covenant that animates it both as an idea and reality (1997). "The record of the Jewish political tradition is to be found in the Jewish *sacred and subsidiary texts and collective behavior*" (ibid.; my emphasis added).

Its manifestation is the Jewish polity, as well as a constellation of political concepts that

include both the state and Diaspora, both in the modern nation-state and tribal frameworks. It will thus be our aim to develop from this foundation a Jewish approach to foreign policy. Toward the end of the chapter we shall observe some contemporary approaches to the issue of Jews and traditional power.

Survival in Jewish tradition

According to Jewish tradition, the Jewish narrative is preceded by a universal beginning. Following the biblical flood, humanity was united and shared a single language. The people decided to build a city and a tower, known as the Tower of Babel, which would reach the heavens. God responded to humanity's hubris by making it so that the peoples of the world would speak different languages and would be scattered across the face of the earth. For Judaism, this event marks the birth of a system of nations (Genesis 11:4–9). Here ends the universal story and starts the particularistic narrative. The fact that the Bible starts with a universal chronicle indicates that the universal dimension of Judaism cannot totally be ignored.

I have chosen three epochs from Judaism's long and rich history to illustrate the Jewish narrative when Jews encountered external powerful forces. The first is from the early biblical accounts of the Jewish forefathers' interactions with Egypt, at the time the great contemporary power. The second occurs when the Diaspora model appears against the backdrop of the Persian Empire. The third evolves with the termination of the Second Jewish Commonwealth at the hands of the Roman Empire and the resulting expansion of the Diaspora. The overriding theme that describes these major encounters of the Jewish people with their environment and reappears throughout later generations, as taken from the literature of political Realism, is demonstrably one of survival.

We start with the era of the forefathers and the mythical father of monotheism, Abraham, the founder of the belief in a single deity. In Jewish tradition Abraham is also considered the father of the Jewish nation. God commanded Abraham (at the time still named Avram) to travel to the Land of Canaan (Genesis 12:1–5). This ultimately led to his first encounter with Pharaoh, the ruler of the hegemonic empire of Egypt (Genesis 12:14–20). The entire incident is, in effect, one of survival. Abraham, after having left his birthplace for Canaan, leaves the Promised Land for Egypt in order to survive a famine. His experience in Egypt is not particularly heroic. In order to survive, Abraham asks Sarah to conceal the fact that she is his wife.[1]

Survival is also the strategy of the third forefather, Jacob. Prior to meeting with his brother Esau, from whom Jacob had escaped years earlier and fearing the possibility of war, Jacob splits his household into two camps to provide additional security. This event takes place after Jacob's escape from his father-in-law, Laban the Aramean, and divine encouragement to return to the land of his birth (Genesis 31:12; 32:7–10).

Jacob's reaction to his sons' slaughter of the people of Shechem in reaction to the rape of his daughter can also be seen as one of a person troubled by fear of revenge and his family's survival.

> Then Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, "You have brought trouble[56] on me by making me odious to the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites and the Perizzites; My numbers are few and if they gather themselves against me and attack me, I shall be destroyed, both me and my household."
>
> (Genesis 34:30)

Similarly, Jacob and his sons follow Joseph to Egypt in order to survive the famine in the Land of Canaan. Joseph himself says to his brothers that all their preceding experiences, including his sale as a slave, had been in order to ensure their physical survival.

> And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life.… And God sent me before you to preserve a remnant on earth and to keep alive for you many survivors.
>
> (Genesis 45:5–7)

One of the most heinous incidents in Jewish history, the sale of a brother purely out of jealousy, is thus justified by the rationale of survival. By examining the Jewish patriarchs' actions and motivations in the shadow of Egypt, a pattern of survival can be discerned. In accordance with the exegetical approach, which presumes that "the acts of the fathers are omens to their sons,"[2] these incidents seem to rise from the level of expressions of human weakness to that of a paradigm of survival.

The Book of Esther is the first document in the Bible that refers to the Jewish Diaspora condition. Jewish survival seems to be the main rationale of the book. God is not mentioned explicitly in the entire book, which focuses instead on the courage and perseverance of its heroic protagonists. Since the exile from Jerusalem, mentioned at the beginning of chapter 2 of the Book of Esther, the survival of the Jewish people is henceforth dependent on its own endeavors.

The Book of Esther tells the story of a Jewish girl named Hadassah who pretends to be a non-Jewish woman named Esther in order to win over Ahasuerus, the King of Persia. Esther becomes queen and ultimately thwarts a plan of mass genocide against the Jewish people. The hero behind the scenes is Esther's uncle Mordechai who tries to build up Jewish political power via Esther, whom he originally encouraged to join the king's search for a queen, and by saving the king's life from an internal assassination plot. There is no doubt that the marriage of a Jewish woman to a non-Jewish monarch, is not a normative event in the ideal Jewish family. However, within Judaism's historic penchant for expressions of essential acts of survival, Esther's actions are seen in an exemplary light.

The only post-factum justification for this event from a normative viewpoint, as expressed in its inclusion in the biblical canon and its memory preserved and celebrated in the Jewish festival of Purim, is the fact that Esther's resultant status and influence allowed the Jewish people to survive a manifestly existential threat. The elevation of Queen Esther to her lofty status in the history of the Jewish people can only be justified by the centrality of survival in the relations between the Jewish people and the threatening external environment (Hazony 1995, 28–36).

A third informative interaction with historic repercussions occurred at the end of the Second Commonwealth just prior to the destruction of the Second Temple in CE70. In the Jewish narrative the fall of Jerusalem is considered the end of Jewish territoriality and the beginning of exile. Just before the culmination of the Roman siege of the city an intriguing story that later became a corner stone in the Jewish narrative took place. According to this anecdote, Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakkai smuggled himself out of Jerusalem just before the city's destruction. Facing the inevitable conquest of the city by the Roman legions under the command of the Emperor Vespasian, Ben Zakkai arranged the escape in order to meet the Roman commander in secret. In their encounter, the rabbi foresees that the Roman is about to become Caesar. In return for his prediction, he asks Vespasian to allow Jewish spiritual continuity to exist in Yavneh, following the inevitable conquest of Jerusalem. The fact that the sage is not considered a traitor in Jewish historiography, notwithstanding the fact that his reason for cooperating with the Roman emperor

was to receive "Yavneh and its sages," may only be explained by the ultimate rationale of national survival. True, there is a certain implied criticism of Rabbi Yohanan for the fact that he did not ask Vespasian for Jerusalem. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the anecdote appears in a number of commentaries with no negative connotation (tractate Gittin 56 a–b; Avot de-Rabbi Nathan 4:5).

The opposite principle to that of survival is *Kiddush Hashem*, the Sanctification of the Divine Name.[3] This phenomenon was widespread, especially in the Middle Ages, when Jewish communities under enormous pressure to convert to Christianity were ready to sacrifice their lives in order not to submit to religious conversion. The phenomenon was common among Ashkenazi (Franco-German) Jewry during the First Crusade (1096) and while lauded by Jewish commentators was also criticized by others. From the end of the thirteenth century, Sephardi (Spanish) Jewry began to experience martyrdom. The mere fact that ultimately Spanish Jewry experienced and survived the inquisition and expulsion (1492) and Ashkenazi Jewry also survived, indicates that there were also apostates and others routes of survival for Jews in the Middle Ages (Malkiel 2009, 114–147, 234–261).

Moreover, when considering the manifestation of *Kiddush Hashem*, one must draw a distinction between the public and the individual. The principle of survival that we have discussed thus far is one justifying non-normative behavior in situations where an existential threat looms over the entire Jewish people. The Talmudic principle that "one should violate the law and not be killed" (i.e., in order to save one's life), is more complex when applied on the individual level. The mere fact that this principle is limited to passivity, rather than to an action that harms others (for example, murder or rape), in order to save one's own life, emphasizes the tension involved in individual non-normative behavior.

Similarly, this reasoning can be related to a demand by Gentiles to turn over a particular individual in order to save an entire community. Though it is forbidden by halakha to turn over a Jew if a particular individual is not specified, if a particular name is mentioned, in principle it is permitted to do so. However, it must be clear that if this is not done both the individual and the community may be extinguished. Nevertheless, even such an event appears to be considered as non-normative behavior (Shilo 1998, 57–62). In the Middle Ages, we find examples of survival alongside cases of *Kiddush Hashem* on both the individual and the community level. There were similar deliberations during the Holocaust (ibid., 56–57). The very fact that we encounter discussions in halakha regarding the surrender of a fellow Jew who has been demanded by non-Jews in order to save the community, emphasizes the importance of the survival of the Jewish collective.

Further rabbinic discussion and support for non-normative actions for the sake of survival is deliberated in the well-known halakhic predicament when two people are walking in the desert and there is enough water for only one person to survive. The judgment of the sages, as determined by Rabbi Akiva, is that when it is clear that sharing of the water would end with both individuals perishing, then the person who possesses the water is not obliged to share.[4] The conclusion that can be derived from such rabbinic rulings is that only in the most extreme and non-normative instances may an individual's life be justifiably spared – and then only if the community and the individual is certain to be eliminated if it was not done.

The conclusion we can draw from the above chronicles, without ignoring the sanctity and strength of martyrdom, is the centrality of survival in the Jewish narrative and Jewish tradition. Reasoning for this behavior is the common sentiment inherent in the Jewish psyche that the Jews' mission is to live on. In order to test this postulation, we shall examine a number of

elements that are related to power and for whom survival could serve as a disguise – such as the search for power for its own sake. We shall start with the state, and continue to other ways and means of acquiring and exercising power.

The Jews and the state

David Biale, in his book *Power and Powerlessness in Jewish History*, argues that both Jews and anti-Semites misconstrued Jewish power. Whereas the evaluation of the former minimized Jewish power, the latter tended to exaggerate it. The truth, according to Biale, lies somewhere in the middle. Most central to his analysis is to turn our attention to Jewish political sensitivity to power as part of a strategy for survival.

Contemporary Jewish aspirations for a state are directly related to the reality that, in the modern era, the nation state is essential for a nation's survival (Biale 1987, 206–207). According to Ben Ginsberg, the Jewish people's yearning for a state accompanied them throughout the Diaspora. The current embrace of a modern state in general, and to a democratic and pluralistic nation-state in particular, is a result of the Jewish appreciation of power as a means of survival (Ginsberg 1993). What is especially significant in this regard is that historically the Jewish embrace of the state is only a means and not a goal. As we shall see, the functional approach to the state epitomized Jewish political behavior during both sovereign and non-sovereign periods. Investigation of Jewish political behavior will be preceded by a short normative analysis of the Jewish approach to the state.

The first inquiry is to look at the significance of the state within Jewish political tradition. This question, debated in the literature of comparative politics, is also relevant to foreign policy.[5] The linkage in the political sense between "strong" and "weak" states to foreign policy has been displayed in our age in the political system of the United States. The global role played by the USA since World War II triggered a domestic political upheaval on its society, despite it evidently contradicting that nation's founding philosophy and political tradition. For example, the institution of the American presidency grew in power in light of the international role of the United States. The "imperial presidency" exceeded the original values and aspirations of the founding fathers and writers of the constitution (Kaufman 1974). A similar phenomenon can be detected in Jewish political tradition.

What does the biblical narrative tell us? According to the Book of Deuteronomy, the Israelites would be allowed to appoint a king, albeit constrained in power. In addition to all the limitations imposed on him he is obliged to write a Torah scroll; which will accompany him wherever he goes (Deuteronomy 18:14–20). In other words, he would reign as a constitutional monarch. Also important to note, is that two chapters later we encounter the laws of war (Deuteronomy, 20:1–20). Nomination of the king is directly related to the reality of external wars.

In the Book of Judges we encounter an unsuccessful request made by the people of Israel to Gideon (Judges 8:10) that he rule over them as king. This request comes against the background of a successful external war. The request is repeated, more emphatically once again when external threats arose directed against the Israeli tribes. The demand of Samuel that he anoint a king is made, "so that we also may be like all the nations and that our king may judge us and go out before us and fight our battles" (I Samuel 8:20).[6] In other words, the building of a state with central institutions – the Israelite version of a constitutional monarchy – is necessary in order to amass strength against the nation's external threats.

Despite disagreement among biblical commentators on the obligation of establishing a monarchy, it is agreed that the institution is directly connected to external affairs. There was a celebrated dispute between Maimonides (R. Moshe Ben Maimon), who sees the coronation of a king as an obligation, and his opponents, among them the anti-monarchist Abravanel.[7] But even Maimonides the monarchist saw the monarchy as serving an instrumental function (Blidstein 1983, 226). Indeed, there is scholarly agreement that at least part of the people's rationale in asking for a king to rule over them, is connected with the needs of warfare and foreign relations.

The fact that Maimonides entitled the section of his code relating to the king as "Laws of Kings and their Wars" is very indicative to the fact that "War has always been among the main functions, if not the main one, of the monarchy" (ibid., 214). In other words, establishing a state with strong central institutions is needed so as to better combat external threats. Moreover, the unique status of King David, the founder of the monarchy, and the one to whom eternal kingship was promised, highlights his key role as building the state and, arguably more important, defeating the many enemies who threatened the Jewish people after they entered the Land of Canaan.

In general, the biblical approach to state building is not oriented to building a state to serve the people's external needs. The original political framework that emerged following the entrance to Canaan was one of a tribal confederation. The era of the Judges, as it came to known in the biblical narrative, constituted a "weak" state. It suited the revolutionary idealist thinking that followed after rejecting the centralized model of the "Egyptian house of bondage" (Walzer 1985, 17–45). National security and foreign relations called for a powerful monarchy, and yet, with the exception of King Solomon during the First Commonwealth and that of Alexander Yannai during the Second, we do not encounter a strong state in the étatist sense. The nation's split into Judea and Samaria following the death of Solomon, occurred in the context of his son Rehoboam's attempt to preserve a powerful monarchy (Mazar 1965, 207).

For most of their existence, neither of the two resulting kingdoms could be considered as strong states, either by possessing strong institutions and bureaucracy, or by external power. Moreover, the instability of the resulting monarchies and the frequent transition of power did not indicate powerful centralized states. The Kingdom of Israel, despite its monarchy, lacked external strength and was summarily defeated and sent into exile by the Assyrian Empire (Malamat 1965, 241–260). The rulers of the Kingdom of Judah failed to institute strong ruling institutions despite their legitimacy as heirs to the Davidic dynasty. In fact, following the golden age of the kingdoms of David and Solomon, the Kingdom of Judah was largely a weak state that could not stand up against the empires on the Nile or the Euphrates. Like the Kingdom of Israel, it too was ultimately defeated – in this case by Babylonia (Malamat 1965, 296–314).

Similarly, strong state building did not occur during the Second Commonwealth. Judea, after the return to Zion from exile in 516BCE, was a province of the Persian Empire and subsequently part of the empire of Alexander the Great. The later Hasmonean ascendance to power was primarily the result of a religious rebellion that expressed itself through the exploitation of patriotic sentiments, but nevertheless, it did not lead to the building of a strong state. While some Hasmonean monarchs, particularly Alexander Yannai (103–76BCE), had ambitions for building a strong state, they ultimately gave up on their plans primarily because of rabbinical domestic constrains. Some researchers point to the fact that the rabbis refrained from citing military victory as the basis for the festival of Hanukkah, and instead emphasized the miracle of the cruse of oil.[8] In short, the rabbis did not overly value the state in order to develop external political power (Kaufman 1958, 202).

Constraining the power of the state complemented another pillar in the Jewish political tradition, a convention of separation of powers that had presumably developed since the establishment of priesthood in the desert. Moses was the leader and prophet, but was not a priest, and alongside him were the *Zekenim* (the Sages). Following the entrance to the Land of Israel the political leadership parted from the prophets. However, throughout the biblical era, both the Israelite and the Judean kings encountered prophets – such as Nathan, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Elijah – who denounced the monarchs and the nation as a whole for what they saw as iniquitous behavior. The power of the priesthood can further be seen being strongly – and divinely – as separate from the political leadership. King Uzziah, for instance, was inflicted with leprosy upon entering the Temple to perform functions exclusively in the realm of the High Priest (Chronicles II, 27:16–22).

The Hasmonean's difficulty in being perceived as legitimate rulers stemmed from the fact that although they were of the priestly sect (*Cohenim*), they nevertheless sought to combine two institutions – the monarchy and the priesthood. This merger stood counter to the historic and biblical Jewish political tradition. Another episode of struggle between institutions was the hostility between King Alexander Yannai and the Sanhedrin ("Council of Sages"). The latter claimed its authority from an assumed chain of halakhic tradition going back to Moses (Ethics of the Fathers I:1). In short, during the Second Temple we find three institutions competing against each other: priests, kings and the sages. With the destruction of the Second Temple, the priesthood swiftly lost its power and the institution of the sages, dating to the Israelites wandering in the desert, rose in its place. The separation of powers among the "Crowns of Kingdom, Priesthood, and Torah" (both the written and oral laws), promoted a diffused structure that, according to Elazar and Cohen, accompanied the Jewish polity right up to contemporary Israel.[9]

With political authority moving to the Diaspora around the third century, the overall Jewish political structure developed into what came to be known as the *Kehila*, the community. But, significantly, the Jewish polity in the Diaspora still retained its diffused structure. For the security of the Jewish people in exile, a strategy of relying upon the local rulers or the host state was developed. For example, according to Salo Baron, the Jews integrated themselves in the corporative structure of medieval Europe, thus creating for themselves a special status in the eyes of local rulers who needed their services (1928, 515–526). This special status granted a measure of Jewish autonomy endowed with the full powers of running its own public affairs (Elon 1997, 294–296).

The structure permitting autonomous Jewish communities started disintegrating with the advance of modernity, especially following the French Revolution.
The modern nation-state was unable to tolerate a separate independent Jewish entity within it. At the same time, religious opposition to Judaism was reincarnated in the form of modern anti-Semitism. As a result, it was considered that survival during the nation-state era called for statehood and not simply selfautonomy. Having been influenced by the rise of modern nationalism, the Jews developed their own national movement opting for a return to their historic and biblical birthplace in Zion. It was in this tradition that a new type of territorial-based community (*Kehila*) started developing in Palestine.

It was not a coincidence that the Yishuv, the Jewish political entity that formed in Palestine under the British Mandate during the first half of the twentieth century, developed a power-sharing model of governance or what is known as a "consociational political system" (Lijphart 1969, 207–225). In contrast to the Westminster model that one could have expected to have

developed as a result of the British governance in Palestine, the Jewish consociational model was characterized by cooperative association and power-sharing between groups. The two institutional organs of the Yishuv – the World Zionist Organization and the Jewish Agency – as well as the Yishuv-based Knesset Israel developed consociational mechanisms, including elections conducted on principles of proportional representation and coalitions that encompassed almost all the ideologically distinct parties in the Yishuv and the Jewish Diaspora (Horowitz and Lissak 1977, 317–318).

The federated political structure of the World Zionist Organization and the consociational political regime that emerged in Palestine illustrates how the democratic culture of the Jewish polity – continued after 1948 by the State of Israel – did not simply emerge in a vacuum. The Jewish political tradition ultimately had a direct influence on the emerging modern Israeli political culture (Dowty 1990, 60–61). Following independence, the state retained the Yishuv's proportional representation and broad coalition government system, remaining a consociational democracy rather than a Westminster one (Horowitz and Lissak 1990, 26–27). The secular and religious factions of the young Jewish state, despite their differences and opposing priorities, had nevertheless understood the need to cooperate in government in order to establish a strong representative consocionational democracy. As such, secular political parties have often ceded religious jurisdiction to rabbinic-led parties so as to maintain unity. In fact, in the political history of Israel, a government coalition without the inclusion of a religious party has been exceedingly rare – even when an alternative secular majority was available (Don-Yehiya 1975, 60–61). In sum, power-sharing in the contemporary State of Israel was not the result of the Yishuv era but had a long political tradition.

In short, the Israeli political system that emerged in the mid-twentieth century, although influenced by the European origins of many of the immigrants into Palestine and by the pre-state British Mandatory regime, was also heavily predisposed to the Jewish political tradition that can be traced back over two millennia to ancient Israel and then in the Diaspora. This tradition regarded strong state power with suspicion and saw in the state, not an ideal but an instrument primarily for the sake of survival.

Power enhancement

Realist doctrine holds that the primary interest of the state is self-preservation. In order to secure this, the state must seek power. Hence, self-preservation may turn into a search for power for its own sake. The question is whether, from generation to generation, the Jews developed ambitions for power in world politics beyond the needs of survival. Did the Jews, like other nations, develop imperial aspirations for the sake of power? In order to answer this question, we will consider three dimensions of power augmentation: expansion, alliances, and conduct of war.

Territorial expansion

The customary method of expansion in international politics, especially in the prepostmodern era, is territorial. In the Jewish political tradition, augmenting national power through the occupation of land is restricted. Contrary to commonly-held wisdom, the ethno-religious commitment to the Land of Israel, as understood today by the movement for "The Greater Land of Israel" (*Eretz Israel Hashelema*), actually inhibited ambitions for territorial expansion beyond the historical boundaries of Eretz Israel. An early expression of this attitude in the Jewish

narrative occurred before the Israelites entered the land. The tribes of Reuben, Gad and half the tribe of Manasseh requested permission from Moses to settle in fertile territories conquered from kingdoms that had resisted the Israelite advances in the Land of Canaan. Moses' initial objection to the tribes' request was based on the fact that these areas were beyond the Jordan River – the defined borders of the Israelite future state – and that the Israelites should settle primarily in the Promised Land (Numbers, 32). Similarly, on their way, the Israelites were warned not to encroach upon the lands of Moab, Amon, and Edom (Deuteronomy, 2:1–20). In the same way, the restriction of an "obligatory war" (*Milhemet mitzvah*) applied only to the territory of Eretz Israel and the nation's need to self-defense, and is another attestation to the biblical restraint on Jewish territorial expansion (Blidstein 1983, 221–225; Maimonides 2010, 5.1).

The application of agricultural commandments (*mitzvot* which refer to the land) to certain specific, clearly delineated areas within Eretz Israel also did not provide a religious incentive for expansion. These commandments were applicable only within the borders of the Land of Israel, which, though subject to some dispute, did not cross the Jordan River. With both war conduct and agricultural commandments applying only to the recognized borders of the state, it is clear that expansionist aspirations were hampered by divine interjection.

While territorial expansion was restricted on the normative level, it is important to examine the actual conduct of the Jewish nation. Relatively speaking, the impulse for territorial expansion per se, had been infrequent throughout the Jewish historical narrative. Nevertheless, expansion beyond the boundaries of the Land of Israel did occur during the reigns of two kings in the First Temple period, David and Jeroboam II. King David's territorial expansion brought in its wake greater contact with foreign cultures, which ultimately led to the growth of pagan worship during the reign of Solomon. Jeroboam II's territorial expansion, on the other hand, is mentioned only briefly in the Bible and is not glorified. One reason for the brief reference to Jeroboam II evidently relates to the ideological incompatibility with the biblical approach. Though his reign can be seen as successful in the basic sense of statehood, his territorial ambitions and achievements in extending the territory of the Kingdom of Israel beyond its historic north and east boundaries was contrary to Jewish political tradition.

We encounter a similar attitude from the rabbinic sages regarding the Hasmonean dynasty which they viewed with suspicion, although there were also additional factors. The Pharisees[10] were not impressed by the territorial conquests of Alexander Yannai that involved expansion of the state to the north, south, and east of the Jordan River. Though King Yannai's battles included the capture of previous Jewish territory within the borders of the Land of Israel, at that time his conquests meant incorporating large numbers of the non-Jewish population within the state's boundaries. The rabbis feared that expansion, even within the historic Land of Israel, would lead to the Hellenization of the Jewish collective, as Jews would emulate the hegemonic Greek culture and methods of administrative rule. Significantly, it was the Pharisees who ultimately survived and determined the Jewish tradition and political thought that prevailed for centuries to come.

The lack of an imperative to expand beyond recognized borders and the restrictions on settlement beyond the Land of Israel produced a striking phenomenon in comparison with other monotheistic religions, such as Islam which had been imperialistic from its inception, or Christianity, by its domination through the Holy Roman Empire.[11]

Another means of looking at power aggrandizement entails viewing it from the ethno-religious perspective. Here too we see a similar trend: the Jewish attitude towards the spread of Judaism through conversion and the age-old suspicion of proselytes, did not reflect aspirations to

gain power through expansion. The only period during which we encounter imposed conversion accompanied by territorial expansion, is at the end of the second century BCE, during the reigns of Yohanan Hyrcanus and his son Judah Aristobulus. That period, however, is an exception to the rule. Repugnance towards forced conversion took root after the harsh experience during the kingship of Herod, that its founder, Antipater the Idumaean, the father of Herod joined the Jewish people as a result of the forced conversions performed by Hyrcanus.

Throughout the Middle Ages and the beginning of the modern period, according to Jacob Katz, "the general tendency was not to encourage conversion, and one could almost say that there was a tendency to be opposed to it" within Judaism.[12] Orthodox circles in the United States and other Diaspora communities today do not display any variation in the classic approach that took shape in Europe regarding non-Jews who wished to convert. Conservative and Reform Judaism are more liberal in this regard but again did not adopt proselytizing policies (Cromer 2004; Susser and Liebman 1999). It is noteworthy that even the secular Jewish State of Israel, and certainly the religious circles within it, showed no interest in converting Israeli Arabs after 1948. Historically, one would expect an ethno-religious powerful state to try and convert a minority such as the Israeli Arabs (certainly before 1967 when Palestinian identity began to be in the ascendant).[13] However, as we have seen, Jewish law and practice as well as Israel's own actions, have exhibited no will to expand the nation's numbers by means of conversion.

Alliances

An additional way to amass power besides building a strong state or by territorial or ethnic expansion, is by entering into international alliances. In discussing the concept of contracts in international relations from a Jewish perspective, one needs to distinguish between the concept of covenant (*Brit*) and the less obligatory concept of alliance. While the former is sanctified, the latter is looked at with suspicion. With the concept of covenant implying a unique position connecting the Jewish people to God, we refer here to the more customary alliances between nations and peoples sharing a common interest.

As a rule, the normative Jewish approach towards alliances has been negative. This attitude reflects the fear of alien cultural influences, as well as by an implied lack of trust in God in needing foreign assistance. Despite international reality, there is a certain implicit antagonism between God's covenant with Israel and international alliances.[14] The prophets Isaiah, Hosea and Jeremiah warned against the dangers inherent in regional alliances with Egypt and Assyria, as well as an eventual possible reliance on them (Isaiah 30:1–7; 31:1–3, Hosea 7:11; 8:9; 13; Jeremiah 16–19).[15]

In reality, however, we do encounter such biblical alliances established, beginning with King Solomon's pact with King Hiram of Tyre, which the Bible evidently sees in a positive light (1 Kings 5:26). After the breakup of the Davidic monarchy into the Northern (Israel) and the Southern (Judah) kingdoms we encounter alliances between these new entities and their powerful neighbors, especially in the north. At certain junctures, the kingdoms of Judah and Israel even cooperated against the empires from the north (for example, during the reigns of Uzziah and Jeroboam II of Judah and Israel, respectively) and Egypt in the south-west. At other times, they joined external powers against each other (for example, the alliances between Judean and Aramean kings against Baasha the king of Israel, or Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel with Rezin king of Damascus against King Ahaz of Judah).[16] Ultimately, non-cooperation between Israel and Judah led to the demise of the two kingdoms through gradual conquest by northern

empires. Despite the number of alliances engendered by Israel and Judah, the experience remains as evidence for the need of unity and to reject reliance on outside intervention.

Nevertheless, despite these realities, the rejection of alliances on the normative level did in fact exert an influence on the operative level. For example, with the rejection of alliances and a lack of historic or biblical guidance, neither of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah knew how to manipulate the struggle for hegemony between the great powers for their own benefit. Indeed, Salo Baron argues that the establishment of the Israelite kingdoms without the patronage of the regional powers or at least an alliance with them, was only possible due to a 300 year hiatus in the inter-imperial struggle at the end of the second millennium BCE. Nor do we find an aggressive policy of alliance-making among the early kings of Israel. Even the alliances policy of King Ahab, one of the most antagonist kings to the prophets, was primarily defensive, aimed, as it was, at halting Assyria's imperial ambitions.[17] Likewise, the kings of Judah at the time of Isaiah accepted the same approach that was opposed to alliances with foreign powers (Na'aman 2008, 55–71).

Alliances are influenced by geopolitics. Indeed, in biblical times the geopolitical location of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, situated directly between the Egyptian empire to the south and the empires to the north, influenced their alliance politics. At later times, the Land of Israel became a battlefield in which power struggles between new players on the scene – such as between the Persians and the Greeks, between the Greeks and the Romans and finally between Rome and Parthia – took place. Consequently similar dilemmas to those of the First Temple period were encountered during the Second Temple period.

During the Second Temple period, the Jews did not adopt a policy of belligerent alliances. In so far as they did contract alliances, they were made for defensive purposes – that is, for survival, for example, Judah Maccabee made a defensive alliance with Rome against the Assyrian Seleucids. Subsequently, attempts were made to make defensive alliances with the Parthians against the threat of the Romans. A similar attempt at a defensive alliance was made in the mid-first century CE with the royal house of Monobaz in Adiabene, which had converted to Judaism. But, in general, alliances were forged infrequently (Dubnov 1961, 265–267). Overall, inasmuch as there was a *realpolitik* approach to forming alliances, they were defensive and not offensive. There were limited alliances for purposes of mutual expansion or purely offensive endeavors.

Alliances with external powers ultimately brought in foreign powers that then became difficult to expel. Thus, an alliance forged by the Pharisees during the Second Commonwealth with the Syrian leader Demetrius against their own King Yannai whom they detested, ended miserably. During the course of the ensuing war, the Pharisees came to regret their initiative, as the Syrian guests refused to leave (ibid., 85–86; Stern 1991, 147). Another illustrious alliance was that between Hyrkenos II with the Roman emperor Pompey in 63BCE, which, over the course of time, turned into the subjugation of Judea by its erstwhile ally (ibid., 167–169; Dubnov 1961, 39).

The above noted alliances between greater powers and Jewish kingdoms provide a second model of alliance politics that is more frequently seen in Jewish history; a contract between a vassal or protected state and a protecting state. Vassal alliances occurred at the end of the First Temple (Nahshon 2003, 89) and remained the reality through the beginning of the Second Temple period.

A third mode of survival, which would become the widespread political strategy of the Jews in the Diaspora following the destruction of the Second Temple, could be associated with alliance politics. Accordingly, leading Jews exerted their influence on the rulers of the state, thus

avoiding their own personal destruction and that of their fellow Jews and sometimes even physically overcoming their enemies. This was the model that eventually came to the aid of the Jews in the Diaspora (Biale 1987, 58). This model can be seen in both times of statelessness and under Jewish statehood and can be seen most famously in the Book of Esther. Furthermore it is the assumption that the Jewish influence in the court of King Ahasuerus assisted the Jewish polity in Judea. Another example was the Jewish center established in Alexandria during the Second Commonwealth. Through the Egyptian Jews, Alexander Yannai was able to exert influence in the court of the Egyptian queen, Cleopatra III, following Yannai's defeat by Cleopatra's son Ptolemy, the ruler of Cyprus. The queen sent an army headed by two Jewish generals to save the Hasmonean king. Later on, Cleopatra even abandoned a plan to conquer Judea as a result of Jewish influence in her court.[18]

The relations between Jews and their ruling society were transformed at times from a symmetrical power relationship to a vassal relationship. Because of the inequality in power relations between a minority and the rulers of the state, it is plausible to see the relationship as guided by a similar rationale to that of a vassal treaty. According to Baron, during certain periods the Jews managed to integrate themselves within the corporative structure of medieval Europe and create a special status in the eyes of the local rulers who needed their services (1996, 54–55, 85–89) In other words, it was based on an exchange relationship. We shall return to this structure later on when we explore relationships based on interdependence.

Another institution that emerged in this structure was the *Shtadlan* – intermediary or "Court Jew." This person was charged with the task of advancing the interests of the Jewish community to the local authority. Among his duties was to negotiate the safety and well-being of the Jewish community vis-à-vis the gentile overlords. While the function started to emerge in the Middle Ages, it gained importance in the modern state where the intermediary's duties stretched between bribing or begging a favor from a royal personage or court official. One great figure who fulfilled this function was Josel of Rosheim who acted during the sixteenth century and represented German Jewish communities before the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V.[19] Although it could be presumed that the aim of Zionism was to render a "Court Jew" as defunct, one can find such personages even in this day and age.

As we shall see in Chapters 4 to 6, a Jewish strategy of alliances was revived with the appearance of Zionism and the establishment of the State of Israel. Though the Middle Ages, with its dispersed and subservient Jewish population spread across the Diaspora, emphasized individual-based relations, the shift to nation-states emphasized the significance of alliances between them, but left some role to personal diplomacy. Political Zionism, from its inception, saw the basis for success through the establishment of an alliance with a great power. And yet as we shall see in the next chapter, Theodor Herzl, the founder of modern political Zionism, tried to work through personal channels. The importance attached by Herzl to international support for the Zionist program, primarily that of the major powers, became the cornerstone of the foreign policy of the Yishuv, and in due course, that of the State of Israel. It is significant that the international orientation of non-identification adopted by Israel upon its foundation in 1948 was not sustained for long. Israel's vote against the Soviet Union on the Korean issue at the UN in July 1950 implied an abandonment of nonidentification in order to foster closer relations with the West.[20] In time, Israel became identified with the West and especially with the United States. The principle of relying upon at least one major power has guided Israel's foreign and defense policy throughout the years, up until the present (Klieman 1990, 91–93).

At the same time, the Jewish policy of alliances was related to a certain form of separatism,

which derives from the religio-ethnic sense of uniqueness lying at the core of Jewish self-definition. The concept of "a people that dwells alone," coined by a biblical enemy, Balaam, as part of a forced blessing, has been a part of Jewish consciousness throughout the generations (Numbers 23:9). Israeli prime ministers from David Ben-Gurion, Golda Meir and Menachem Begin, have all expressed these sentiments when in office.[21]

One may summarize this element in Jewish foreign policy tradition by stating that the Jewish policy of alliances, like the overall approach to power in Judaism, was derived from the exigencies of self-limitation. Its central goal was defensive and not offensive, intended as we have seen, for purposes of survival. This policy found expression both during periods of political independence and during eras of political subjugation and even in exile.

But the nature of Jewish foreign policy tradition has not been totally survival-oriented and defensive. We have pointed out exceptions such as the expression of martyrdom and the readiness to sacrifice. It should be noted that two thinkers considered the fathers of political Realism, Thucydides and Machiavelli, each in their own way justified the need to adopt a policy of surrender and concession on occasion for the sake of survival.[22] One can also identify at times Jewish leaders who sought power for the sake of aggrandizement. However, in general, we can define the encounter of the Jewish people with their environment as survival- oriented in terms of the literature of political Realism. This principle, as we have seen, was apparent throughout the generations. International relations, as a discipline, goes beyond simply focusing on power politics. Hence we now turn to other constituents in Jewish foreign policy tradition and match them with international relations theory.

War in the Jewish political tradition

International relations as a discipline whether in its Idealist phase or Realist awakening had to contend with the phenomenon of war. A major component in the idealist approach has been the doctrine of a "just war." Despite attempts to delegitimize the use of force in international relations like the Kellogg–Briand
Agreement for the renunciation of war, signed in 1928 and followed by "The General Act for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes," adopted by the League of Nations, war did not disappear from the world arena. Expansion of war to non-state players and the appearance of guerrilla and terror contributed to the polymorphism of war. Nevertheless the occurrence of war in contemporary world politics is still seen primarily as an act of violence between states. As such, the international community did not establish limitations on the use of violence based on the doctrine of a "just war". For the greater international community, the origins of this doctrine were religious and could be traced to Christian dogma. The two main pillars of this doctrine are to define when embarking upon war is legitimate (*jus ad bellum*) and limitations on the use of force during the course of war (*jus in bello*).

Contemporary commentators frequently begin their analyses of the Jewish approach to war with a statement explaining the lack of laws in this field by the lack of sovereignty during almost two millennia.[23] However, this is not necessarily the case. For a community lacking statehood during all this time, we find an impressive number of annotations and historical experiences regarding the issue.

The starting point of almost every pundit on this subject is the taxonomy of Maimonides who distinguished between two categories of war: "obligatory" and "elective." An obligatory war is sub-divided into three categories: conquest of the Land of Israel from the Canaanites, the war

against the Amalekites (a nation that had fought the Israelites ruthlessly), and a pre-emptive war to save Israel from attack by a tormenter. Obviously, in the post-biblical era only the latter category is relevant. The common understanding of "saving Israel from a tormenter" is that of a defensive war (Inbar 1987, 4).

In the more restrictive elective war, or permissible war, Maimonides' definition is a war intended to enlarge the borders of Israel and to enhance its status, such as the wars of King David. And yet, despite the uncompromising obligations in the fight against idolatry, Maimonides explicitly rejects the legitimacy of a war for the sake of missionary or booty purposes. Thus, while a sovereign Jewish state is obligated to destroy paganism in the Land of Israel, it is not required – or necessarily even permitted – to conquer territories in order to accomplish that goal.[24]

Some interesting insights have been made by other commentators. One of them, Avraham de Boton (*Lehem Mishneh* 1545–1588) interpreted the permission of Maimonides for the king to initiate a war in order augment his external standing so as to demonstrate military superiority. As such, Maimonides permitted elective wars "aimed at enlargement of borders and status empowerment" as long as they were aimed at reinforcing deterrence – the logic being that a strong Israel will deter enemies from attacking them.[25] Such a rationale directly links permitting an elective war to the prevention of a "tormentor," or a future, obligatory war. Menachem Meiri, a Talmudist from Provence, CE1249–1315, limits permission for pre-emptive deterrence strikes, only in situations where it is clear that the other side will attack. In contemporary language the relevant category would be pre-emptive war (Inbar 1987, 3).

Despite these significant insights we cannot ignore the fact that the absence of a territorial political entity did constrain the development of a "just war" doctrine according to halakha. Even today, the Haredi (ultra-Orthodox) sector in Judaism is hesitant to support such a doctrine. With the establishment of the State of Israel, the need to translate theoretical rabbinical insights into actual practice quickly arose; political tradition thus had to respond to challenges emanating from Jewish sovereignty. It is not surprising that the main scholarly contributions were made by rabbis and academics from the national religious camp, the sector that integrated the establishment of the State of Israel directly into its core theology.

With an elective war requiring a consultative process between the king and the Sanhedrin, the supreme Jewish judicial council composed of 71 members, two institutions that no longer exist, this category became superfluous in the eyes of many rabbis. In addition, as the two targets of biblical mandatory war, the Canaanites and Amalekites, were no longer relevant, the present focus has been directed on how to define what constitutes "a war to save Israel from a tormenter" – the only war permitted in contemporary times. Most Zionist rabbis have tried to interpret Israel's wars through the prism of this context – specifically as defensive wars. The main principle in judging the legitimacy of war, according to the Religious-Zionist interpretation of halakha, was thus the idea of survival.

One exception was Rabbi Shaul Yisraeli, a religious Zionist rabbi whose rulings are the exception to the rule. In an article written in the wake of a brutal Israeli reprisal attack on the Jordanian village of Qibya in 1953, Rabbi Yisraeli started his validation of the attack not through the traditional rationale of self-defense. Comparing it to Moses' war on the Midianites (Numbers 25:16–18), he justified the indiscriminate attack on the village in which civilians and children were killed, as it was a retaliation to a previous atrocious attack on Jewish citizens. In making this comparison he broadened the concept of defensive war to include a war of revenge. One explanation for his ruling was that the concept of a defensive war did not provide motivation for

people to endanger their lives for the sake of others. Examining the Entebbe rescue mission of 1976, Rabbi Yisraeli further demonstrated that the precepts of a defensive war were not sufficient for the military needs of Israel. Again, arguing that just by the defensive war rationale there was no halakhic justification for endangering the rescuers' lives, he introduced the concept of *Kiddush Hashem* – sanctification of the divine name – as an additional military justification (Roness 2010, 184–195).

Most religious Zionist rabbis, however, limited their justification of Israel's wars to a self-defense rationale, maintaining that a simple understanding of the term "saving Israel from a tormenter" referred to a defensive war based on the commandment to save lives.[26] Rabbi C.D. HaLevi, the chief rabbi of Tel Aviv, in an article entitled "Law of Self Defense in our Communal Life," rejected the notion of applying the biblical war on the Midianites as a precedent. Instead, he saw in this an authorization to strike a preventive war against a nation that is preparing war against Israel (HaLevi 5740, 346).

An interesting debate developed between Rabbi Shlomo Goren, the first chief chaplain of the Israel Defense Forces, and later, the chief rabbi of Israel, and Rabbi Yisraeli during the 1982 siege of Beirut. While defining the 1982 Lebanon War as an obligatory war, Rabbi Goren argued that the "siege was prohibited under Jewish law which required the army to leave one side of the city open in order to allow an escape route for any combatant wishing to flee" (Edrei 2006, 289). Basing his argument on a codified law by Maimonides, he rejected explanations of the rationale behind this law as "military tactics," and saw in it an integral element in the spirit of a Jewish army that should be maintained. Rabbi Yisraeli contested this view and saw no logic in allowing a bitter enemy to escape, preferring to leave the more merciful approach to Messianic days (ibid., 293).

Rabbi Yisraeli advanced another theory on a "just war" that is pertinent to this discussion. On the basis that Jews have to obey the laws of the state in which they dwell, in accordance with the Jewish precept that "the law of the state is the law" (see elaboration by Waltzer below), Rabbi Yisraeli extrapolated that a Jewish state has to behave according to the norms of the other nations. Since the nations of the world perceive defensive war as acceptable, Jews must accept their international laws as they do vis-à-vis the law of the state. Hence, should the nations forbid war in international law, the Jews would be obliged to accept that ruling.[27]

Additional insights into a Jewish "just war" doctrine came from academics in the national-religious camp. In essence, they discerned restrictions on initiating wars. Aviezer Ravitzky has demonstrated that Jewish law in both its legal and philosophical dimensions differentiates between permitted and prohibited wars. Stuart Cohen advanced the concept of inappropriate wars. Since a permissible war needs the approval of the Sanhedrin, a war initiated by a king who bypassed the council would qualify as unlawful. Cohen argued that King David's wars in Syria would therefore fall in this category because he did not consult with the Supreme Council. The fact that King David was ultimately disqualified from building the Temple and his conquests were not included in the borders of the Land of Israel supports this assessment (Cohen 2010, 335–337). Moshe Hellinger added to the developing discourse on war the idealist utopian approach described below in our discussion of Isaiah's striving for peace. (Hellinger 2010, 73–98).

All in all it seems that Judaism developed a unique and expansive approach to war. First, it associated war with the king, by establishing that the use of violence against other nations is not an aimless art but an act of regulated statecraft. While in Deuteronomy the laws of war are in close proximity to the legal code of crowning a king, in the Book of Samuel, the rationale for a

king is unmistakable: "That we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go before us and fight our battles" (I Samuel 8:4–5). Maimonides was even clearer; he entitled his statecraft section "The Laws of Kings and their Wars," thus conceptualizing war as a political act. Second, obligatory wars (the Jewish version of "just wars") are limited strictly to defensive wars "saving Israel from a tormenter." With regard to elective, or permissible wars, the king has to consult with the supreme Jewish judicial council before taking military action. The rationale of a just elective war can be that of deterrence, which can be seen in Israel's modern day statecraft. Wars that are not managed accordingly are either "forbidden" or "unlawful." Additionally, at least according to the first IDF chief rabbi, Jewish soldiers are obligated to show mercy to their adversaries by always leaving an escape route open for fleeing enemy combatants and civilians.

This rationale of war integrates well within the survivalist theme, which dominates Jewish foreign policy tradition. Though Jewish theology, dogma and history are replete with legal commentary on war conduct, as we shall see, Judaism also produced a tradition striving for international order – the very opposite of war. How did this international order correlate to the Realistsurvivalist Jewish political tradition?

International order in a self-help world

The purpose of this chapter has been to discern a Jewish foreign policy tradition based on the contemporary schools of thought in international relations. So far we have dealt with concepts taken primarily from the schools of Realism and Neo-Realism. Yet schools such as Liberalism, Neo-Liberalism and Constructivism, all to a limited extent the heirs of Idealism, emphasize rudiments that support international order. These schools point to international norms, interstate cooperation, collective security and additional values in promoting international order. While they do not ignore anarchy in the international system they do not see power as the sole answer to survival in conditions of international anarchy.[28] Did Judaism develop a vision of cooperation in an anarchical world? Is it possible to discern a Jewish approach to international order? This question is especially noteworthy for a polity, to use Daniel Elazar's concept, which for most of its history acted as a non-sovereign entity in a violent self-help environment.

Michael Walzer, a leading thinker in the liberal school in political philosophy and the study of the Jewish political tradition, has identified concepts that can be used to describe the Jewish approach to international order. In a lecture entitled "Universalism and Jewish Values," dedicated to the memory of Hans Morgenthau, Walzer delineated four principles that he defined as examples of Jewish universalism: international law, international pluralism, striving to maintain international order and the seven Noahide laws (2001, 13–29). From our perspective, all these examples are core principles of international order. The first two originate in the Bible and were articulated by the prophets and can hence be related to the era of Jewish statehood, while the latter two are derived from rabbinic literature.

The first example provided by Walzer is a rebuke by the prophet Amos to the neighboring nations for their failure to keep international agreements with Israel (Amos 1:3). The prophet points to their responsibility for what would in contemporary discourse be classified as war crimes. Walzer argues that, in practice, the prophet is calling for the adoption of what we would define as international law.

The second example is found in the parallel prophecies of Isaiah and Micah concerning the end of days, which may be best described as reflecting a vision of world peace, based upon a

pluralistic international system (Isaiah 2:2–4; Micah 4:1–5). Both prophets foresaw an ideal of global cooperation between nations, with dialogue replacing warfare. We shall elaborate on this vision below.

The third example is the Talmudic statement quoted earlier, that "the law of the kingdom is the law" (tractate Gittin 10b). This statement refers to the relations of Jews to their host state in the Diaspora and therefore also, according to Walzer, should be considered as the equivalent in a general sense to Jewish foreign policy. He explains,

> Jews who obey the law of the country in which they find themselves are also … obeying Jewish law. The law of the country is domestic in character; the halakhic maxim is something like an *international law for the Diaspora* – and its extensions and qualifications … take on a universal meaning.
>
> (Walzer, 2001, 20; emphasis added)

In other words, because of the needs of the nation in the Diaspora and the Jewish condition, supporting domestic order in the Diaspora is the equivalent of Jews actively applying international law to back international order. While "the law of the kingdom is the law" has long been regarded as limited to the case of Jews residing in the Diaspora, it can in fact find resonance for Jews across the world – and in modern Israel – by calling for respect of international norms.

The fourth example is provided by the code of the seven Noahide laws. The acceptance by the gentile nations of a normative system that was given to the world (in the cosmic senses) even prior to the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai, facilitates co-existence between Jews and non-Jews. It provides a modus vivendi for non-Jews living in a Jewish state, as well as for Jews living in a non-Jewish state (Walzer, 2001, 26). Thus, unlike other monotheistic religions that demanded conversion for redemption, Judaism provides a code to be regarded by both Jews and non-Jews, as limiting exclusionary policy.

The common denominator of all four examples is that they display a normative Jewish approach to international order. This is usually either supported by imperial powers that wish to establish law and order within their own sphere, or by weak actors seeking to ensure their survival during times of imperial conflict. The Jews did not belong to the imperial power category, and so the second category is more appropriate. This conclusion integrates well with the survivalist theme that dominates the Jewish political tradition.

The distaste for imperial rule is rooted in Jewish political tradition. God emphasizes his presence and special relationship with the Israelites in the first of the Ten Commandments with the exodus from Egypt: "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage" (Exodus 20:2). The Egyptian empire is portrayed as the antithesis of God. Indeed, as Walzer observed in another book, *Exodus and Revolution,* the Jewish political tradition condemns not just slavery but also the oppressiveness and injustice of Egypt. Walzer illustrates how revolutionaries throughout history have applied the Exodus story to their own situations (1985).

The most celebrated notion of Jewish international values and the Jewish vision of a normative international order are the prophecies of Isaiah and Micah concerning the "end of days." This message can be defined as the Jewish vision of an idyllic world order.

> The word which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; and all the

nations shall flow to it. And many peoples shall come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law. and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. O house of Jacob, come and let us walk in the light of the Lord.

(Isaiah 2:1–5)

In the concluding chapter of a detailed book entitled *Isaiah's Vision of Peace in Biblical and Modern International Relations,* the book's editors, Raymond Cohen and Raymond Westbrook, suggest that the vision presents an ontological shift in comparison to the times when Isaiah's revelation for peace was delivered.

First, the main parties in the prophet's vision are nations and peoples. Second, peace is an absolute value while warfare is negated. Third, in contrast to the ongoing vision in the ancient Near East, that envisioned at best a hegemonic peace based on repression, Isaiah advances a new world order set up by a voluntary association of states. Moreover, given Isaiah's predominant theme of sensitivity to social justice it would be accurate to deduct that domestic fairness is an integral part of the ideal world envisioned by both Isaiah and Micah (Cohen and Westbrook 2008, 231–232).

Some other observations in this volume should be mentioned as they point to the idealist theme of Isaiah and indirectly to the Jewish foreign policy tradition. Sasson Sofer, for instance, sees in it the first profound vision of the idea of classical harmony, and goes as far as suggesting that it informed and influenced contemporary neo-Kantian approaches, including Wilsonianism and the democratic peace theory (201). Scott Thomas perceives in Isaiah's vision an alternative to the power politics approach or what he defines a "global vision of human security, a concept that is now prominent in the discourse and practice of the United Nations (170)." As such, Isaiah's vision would not only nullify a central underlying basis for Jewish foreign policy, but much of the international systems as well. Benjamin Miller, applying a terminology of offensive versus defensive liberals and realists, points to the fact that Isaiah, while foreseeing a peaceful world order, is not a pacifist and does contemplate the use of force for self- defense. Miller though, contends that Isaiah is not even a defensive realist, as he distrusts alliances and mechanisms, such as the balance of power, to maintain peace. His irenic vision, where the prophet ultimately forecasts a voluntary gathering in Jerusalem of all the nations where they will accept the precepts of universal peace and justice, convinces Miller to define Isaiah as a "defensive liberal" (Cohen and Westbrook 2008, 116–117).

A Realist response to Isaiah's vision is provided by Adrian Hyde-Price who, in essence, reasserts Reinhold Niebhur's teachings on the role of morals as the regulative principle in an imperfect world: "Isaiah's irenic vision is thus an injunction to work for peace and justice in an unredeemed world" (ibid., 226).

The Realist-Idealist tension is also the crux of a study by Moshe Hellinger on the role of war in the Jewish political tradition. Relating to the vision of Isaiah he points to the sanctity of human life, starting in the Book of Genesis and concluding in the Talmud. The idea of man created in the image of the divine and the prohibition on using iron in building an altar in the tabernacle or in the temple, because deadly weapons could be made from the metal are only some illustrations of this attitude. The prohibitions on selling weapons to pagans or Jewish robbers or carrying weapons on the Sabbath also indicate the negative attitude of the sages to killing (Hellinger

2010).

Conclusion

In our survey of the Jewish narrative in this chapter, starting with the founding father of the religion/nation and via different stations in Jewish history, the prominent theme of Jewish interaction with the surrounding world that emerges is that of survival. Predominant has been the theme that power should be – and generally has been – only a means for survival rather than a goal in itself. Judaism approached power as a necessity for survival in their interaction with the surrounding world. How does this theme compare to other studies on the subject of Jewish power?

When reviewing contemporary studies of Jewish attitudes to power in the introduction, we mentioned the book *Jews and Power* by Ruth Wisse. In this book Wisse related to the contradiction between the inherent Jewish advocacy of harmony and justice in a self-help international system. The Jewish turn to power, according to the Yiddish literature professor at Harvard, has been a necessity in the modern world. She argues that Jewish civility – or as she calls it *mentshlishkeit* [a commitment to human decency and mutual respect] – has proven not to befit the Jewish condition of political life in which the Jews found themselves since the loss of Jewish sovereignty (Wisse 2007, xi; 173–184). In contrast to critics that have an aversion to Jewish sovereign power,[29] Wisse advocates a Jewish state that partakes in international interaction. She bases her argument on the Jewish experience, especially when Jews were trying to adapt to their host countries in the Diaspora and were abandoned at times of need to anti-Jewish and later anti-Semitic elements. She finds it remarkable that the "word goes forth from Zion that … in defending themselves; Jews and their state have become the fighting front line of the democratic world" (Wisse 2007, 184).

My disagreement with Wisse is that the Jewish turn to statehood and power towards the end of the nineteenth century was not a new development. Certainly, Judaism, as pointed out in the section on international order, has had an idealistic component in its *weltanschauung.* Similarly, some Jewish adjudicators, as we have seen in the section on war, pointed to civility in their interpretation of the Jewish approach to war. Nevertheless, as we have seen, Judaism like Christianity acknowledged that war is an integral part of political life. It attempted to confine it within self-help boundaries. However, the harsh realities of the world surrounding the Jews from the outset of their encounter with the world forced them to develop a strategy of survival. Paradoxically, the Zionist enterprise that had been designed to provide an alternative to the continuous condition of the struggle for survival did not solve the Jewish condition.

To a certain extent this false hope was the thesis of some leading Jewish thinkers. Wisse, in effect, is responding to a school in Judaism that has resurfaced in the United States that perceives Jewish possession of physical power as incongruous with their mission in the world. Jews are at their best in the Diaspora when they are not sovereign. Although, there is a broad variety in this group we can define most thinkers in this tradition as belonging to the "critical school" (175). The common denominator of this school in its opposition to a sovereign Jewish state is that statehood necessitates the use of force. In part, Ellis blames the Holocaust for Jewish violence against the Arabs. He suggests that without the Nazis, Zionism might have been different (2009, 186). The essence of Judaism is the opposite of violence and hence according to "Liberation Theology" the Jews must be relieved from their state (204).[30] As stated above Wisse sees the establishment of Jewish power as a "must" in the contemporary world of power politics and

hatred of Jews.

The novelty of this chapter, however, goes beyond the Realist notion of power. Despite their long Diaspora existence, Judaism did not object to political structures and institutions in principle. Jews lived in a state prior to the Diaspora, sought political order throughout their Diaspora existence and continued to live in the Diaspora. Jewish leaders with foresight revived their aspiration for a territorial Jewish state once they realized that Jewish continuity required statehood. They understood the merits of statehood because it promised order and order is necessary for survival. This leads us to the appearance of political Zionism as we shall see it in the following chapter.

An important notion that appears in the theoretical chapter and is not dealt with in this chapter is the identity-territorial component of the nation state. Having covered the ethno-national theories in Chapter 1 the next chapter will apply them to the Jewish case.

Notes

1   Nahmanides interprets the incident of Abraham and Sarah in Egypt as a sin, because of which the Jews were punished by the enslavement in Egypt. See Ramban's Torah Commentary to Genesis 12:10. The fact that the Ramban's voice is not the dominant one strengthens the argument that Abraham's actions are indeed not non-normative. From our point of view, the significant fact is that this story is told, and that it will repeat itself in various forms both in Abraham's subsequent encounter with Avimelech, King of Gerar, and again his son Isaac's encounter with the King of Gerar.
2   On Nahmanides' approach, which sees every event in the life of the patriarchs as a sign for his children, see his commentary on Genesis 12:5.
3   The ultimate act of sanctification of God's name is when a Jew is prepared to sacrifice his life rather than transgress any of God's three cardinal laws: serving idols, that is foreign worship, committing certain sexual acts (such as incest or adultery), or committing murder.
4   In a recent article, Rabbi Shabtai Rappoport affirmed that a state when faced with the choice of directing resources to private welfare expenditures (for example, children's dental care) and economic growth when the latter involves survival, is not obliged to forgo the latter. See Rabbi Shabtai Rappoport, *Mekori*, 51–52 (2010) [Hebrew].
5   On the controversy regarding strong and weak states, see the articles in Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer and Theda Scocpol (eds), *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); and cf. Stephan Krasner, "Approaches to the State," *Comparative Politics* 16 (January, 1984): 227; cf. Gabriel Almond, "The Return of the State," *American Political Science Review* 82 (September 1988): 853–874; Eric Nordlinger, Theodor Lowi and Sergio Fabrini "The Return of the State: Critique," *American Political Science Review* 82 (September 1988): 875–901; Joel S. Migdal, *Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988).
6   Gideon is one of the judges who after military victories over neighboring enemies refused to become king, stating God was the only king. Samuel is considered both the last of the judges and the transition to the prophets.
7   This difference of opinion has implications for the normative approach to the state in the Jewish political tradition. On Maimonides' approach, and that of his opponents, see Yaakov Blidstein, *Political Principles in Maimonides' Thought* (Ramat Gan: Bar Ilan University

Press, 1983), 20–23 [Hebrew].

8   The Pharisees struggled with Alexander Yannai for religious reasons as they were not impressed by his state building efforts and aggrandizement of his rule. It would seem, though, that the school of thought that maintains that the Pharisees strove for purer religiosity, and sought to undermine the Hasmonean kingdom, was based upon anti-Jewish or the anti-theocratic animus of some scholars. The modern spokesman for this school is Gershon Weiler, *Jewish Theocracy* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1976), esp. Chapters 6–8 [Hebrew]. In contrast, Joshua Ephron, a scholar of the Hasmonean period, following Gedaliah Alon's work, proves that there is no basis for the claim that the Pharisees were opposed to independent political rule and to the spirit of nationalism represented by the Hasmoneans. Even he admits, though, that in the Babylonian Talmud, at least, the Sages were critical towards the Hasmonean rulers. Joshua Ephron, *Studies in the Hasmonean Period* (Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuhad, 1980), 27–34, 62, 172–173 [Hebrew]. In practice, all these scholars emphasize the Pharisees' support of the Hasmonean kingdom, as opposed to Wellhausen's arguments. Regarding the latter, see op. cit., p. 20, n.28–29.

9   The most comprehensive work on the political dimension of the three crowns was by Elazar and Cohen. For the most pertinent work see: Stuart Cohen, "The Concept of Three Ketarim: Their Place in Jewish Political Thought and Implications for Studying Jewish Constitutional History" in Daniel J. Elazar (ed.), *Kinship and Consent: The Jewish Political Tradition and its Contemporary Uses,* 2nd edition (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1997), 54–55. Daniel J. Elazar and Stuart Cohen, *The Jewish Polity: Jewish Political Organization from Biblical Times to the Present* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1985).

0   A political party and social movement that represented the common people and the sages that feared Hellenization.

1   For the Jewish obligation to uproot Paganism, see Blidstein, 1983: 224–227. For the Islamic case see Efraim Karsh, *Islamic Imperialism: A History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007). On the Christian case see Peter Brown, *Power and Persuasion in Late Antiquity: Towards a Christian Empire* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992).

2   Jacob Katz, *Between Jews and Gentiles: Relations of Jews to their Neighbors in the Middle Ages and in the Early Modern Period* (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1977), 146 [Hebrew].

3   For an interesting proposal in this regard of Arab conversion see Charles (Yeshayahu) Liebman, "The Inclusion of Members of other Nations in Judaism: A Socio-Political Examination," in *Between Israel and the Nations*; *Hagut 4,* 67–73, 1985 [Hebrew].

4   For a comparison between international alliances and God's Covenant see Moshe Greenberg, *On the Bible and Judaism* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1984), 187, n.11 [Hebrew].

5   Daniel J. Elazar towards the end of his life produced a quartet of volumes on the covenant tradition in politics, published between 1995 and 1998. For the Jewish approach see the first volume, *Covenant and Polity in Biblical Israel* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1995).

6   For a comprehensive analysis of alliance politics during this period see: Nadav Na'aman "Let Other Kingdom's Struggle with the Great Powers – You, Judah, Pay Tribute and Hope for the Best: The Foreign Policy of the Kings of Judah in the 9–8 Centuries BCE," in Raymond Cohen and Raymond Westbrook (eds), *Isaiah's Vision of Peace in Biblical and Modern International Relations, Swords into Plowshares* (New York: Palgrave, 2008), 55–71.

7   Abraham Malamat, "The Wars of Israel and Assyria," in his *Military History of Palestine in Biblical Times,* 241–260 [Hebrew]; see esp. n.29 and the chapter by Benjamin Mazar, "Israel's Wars with Aram," 209–210.

8 Beyond that, they also preserved the independence of Judaea when they were warned against a Jewish rebellion in Egypt. See Dubnov, *A History of the Eternal People*, 83, 115. See also Menahem Stern, *Studies in Jewish History, the Second Temple Period* (Jerusalem: Schoken, 1991), 142–143.

9 Other famous intermediaries would include Menasseh ben Israel and Sir Moses Montefiore.

0 This issue of non-alignment will be further elaborated in Chapter 5 below. For the importance of the Korean UN vote see Michael Brecher, *Decisions in Israel's Foreign Policy* (London: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 111.

1 See for example, David Ben-Gurion, "Uniqueness and Destiny," in *Vision and Path*, vol. 2 (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1962), 13 [Hebrew]. Regarding the others, see Yehuda Avner, "The Case for Dwelling Alone," *The Jerusalem Post: Up Front Section*, October 13, 2006, 4, 29. The issue of a nation that dwells alone will be further elaborated in Chapter 5.

2 Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War* (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1959), 279–281. Niccolo Machiavelli, *Political Writings* (New York: Schocken, 1985), 162–163.

3 Michael Walzer claimed that Judaism did not produce a doctrine of peace and war. Others like Hellinger and Ravitsky made an effort to prove the opposite.

4 The most authoritative commentator on Maimonides is Gerald J. Blidstein, *Political Concepts in Maimodean Halakha* (Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1983), 218–222.

5 Lehem Mishneh [Avraham de Boton] Maimonides, vol. 6, ch. 5:1). For such an interpretation see also Efraim Inbar, "War in Jewish Tradition," *Medina, Memshal, Vihasim Benleumiyyim* 26 (spring, 1987): 4 [Hebrew]. Yehuda Amital goes further and argues that the whole "permissible war" notion according to Maimonides has a limited practice and can be used only in deterrence or against nations that do not accept the Noahide Code. See Yehuda Amital, "War According to the Rambam," *Techumim*, vol. 8 (Alon Shvut: Zomet, 5747), 454–561 [Hebrew].

6 R. Nahum Rabinovitch explained that the categorization of defensive wars (*Ezrat Yisrael Miyad Tzar*) is based on the general obligation of saving lives, and claims that Maimonides ruled in accordance with the opinion in the Jerusalem Talmud which obligates one to endanger himself to save someone else. See Nachum Rabinovitch, *"Melumedei Milhamah,"* (Ma'aleh Adumim, Ma'aliyot, 1993): 3–7 [Hebrew]. Quoted in Ronnes 2010, 191, fn 25. Also see in the above article other religious authorities with similar opinions.

7 Shaviv, op. cit., 225–227

8 The dividing line between Realist and the non-Realist schools, according to Mearsheimer, is the saliency of international anarchy and their belief in the promise of international institutions to provided international order. John Mearsheimer, "The False Promise of International Institutions," *International Security* 19 (1995): 5–49. See also Jack Snyder, "One World, Rival Theories," *Foreign Policy* (November–December, 2004): 53–62.

9 For an excellent critique of the main writings and sources of those schools, see Elhanan Yakira, *Post-Zionism, Post-Holocaust, Three Essays on Denial, Repression and the Delegitimization of Israel* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 2006) [Hebrew].

0 Philosophers like Martin Buber and Hannah Arendt, as well as the intellectual journal *Tikkun* are identified with this Jewish ambivalence of power and statehood. Ellis goes beyond their ambivalence. See Marc Ellis, *Judaism Does not Equal Israel* (London: New Press, 2009), 224.

3   Jews and territory

The subject matter of the previous chapter was "Jews and power" and the main thrust was from an international relations theoretical perspective, with substantial emphasis on the Realist paradigm. In this chapter we will turn to identitybased perspectives of the polity and apply them to the Zionist enterprise. As we pointed out in Chapter 1, the nation-state is the construct that encompasses both power and identity theories. The common denominator between the state and the nation is that of territory.

One answer to the rise of nationalism was given by social constructivists who argued that nationalism was an imaginary ideology invented by a class or the modern state to advance their interests (Anderson 1999; Gellner 1983; Hobsbawm 1992). In contrast, the ethno-national school propounded the notion that both nationalism and, later on religion, are genuine forces that constitute identity.[1] Accordingly, modernity led to an overlap between national identity and the sovereign state. Once ethnic identity acquired a territorial dimension, namely becoming national, it became linked with the modern state. While ethnicity primarily consists of a cultural dimension; nationalism and a state require territory (Connor 1972, 1–21, 1973, 196–220; Smith 1981a). Significantly, in attempting to give weight to the idea of ethno-nationalism, Smith cites the Jews and the Zionist renaissance movement (1981b, 187).

The idea of a Jewish territorial renaissance was the most challenging. As a Diaspora community it lacked both a national and a statist framework. Diaspora as a concept implies lack of any territorial entity. Wherever they lived, the Jews by definition constituted an ethnic group.[2] In this chapter we shall look at the origins of Jewish identity and ideational transformation of the Jewish identity from a Diaspora-based people to a territorial national polity. The question we pose is whether the territorial ascendance in the Jewish identity was just an ethno-national response to the national arousal in Europe, or did the Zionist awakening reflect a response to a more profound need rooted in the Jewish political tradition?

Again, it is pertinent to emphasize that the following analysis is foreign policy oriented. Hence, the ultimate question and hence the methodology applied is: when the needs of national identity and state security collide, which system of authority will have the upper hand?

The historical context

The narrative of the Jewish nation begins with the migration of the Patriarch Abraham to the land which he would inherit and wherein he would create a nation. He follows the commandment of God who says to him, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation" (Genesis 12:1). His son Isaac never leaves the land. Jacob leaves, comes back and then goes into exile but ultimately, at his last

request is buried in the Promised Land.

Another source for understanding the centrality of the Land of Israel is a commentary given by Rashi (R. Shlomo Yitzhaki, France, 1040–1105) the most authoritative Jewish commentator on the Hebrew Bible. Concerning the biblical story of creation, Rashi says:

> The Torah, which is the Book of Laws of Israel, should have commenced with the verse (Exodus 12:1) "This month shall be for you the beginning of months," which is the first commandment given to Israel. What is the reason, then, that it commences with the account of the creation? …. God gave an account of the work of creation in order that he might give them the heritage of the nations. For should the peoples of the world say to Israel, "You are robbers, because you took by force the lands of the seven nations of Canaan," Israel may reply to them, "All the earth belongs to the Holy One, blessed be He; He created it and gave it to whom he pleased."[3]

Creation is thus linked in the Jewish narrative with the right to dwell in the Land of Israel. As we shall see, the context in which Rashi wrote his commentary is also of significance. To a great extent, the biblical story revolves around the struggle for the Land of Israel. The liberation from Egypt is directly linked to the return to Canaan. From the conquest by Joshua to the exile of the last kings of Judea, the Israelite–Jewish story revolves around the Children of Israel dwelling in the Promised Land. The Second Book of Chronicles concludes with the declaration of Cyrus and the return to Zion:

> Thus says Cyrus King of Persia, "the Lord the God of heaven has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever is among you of all his people, may the Lord his God be with him. Let him go up."
>
> (II Chronicles 36:23)

The very use of the concept of "exile" to describe existence on foreign soil, determined the place of the Land of Israel in Jewish identity as the natural and only homeland of the Jewish people.

In the Land of Israel, the wars of the Jews were bound up with territory. In exile, territory did not have any operative significance,[4] and yet it was seen as an integral part of Jewish destiny. Following the two major defeats of the Jewish rebellions against the Roman Empire, and the ensuing traumatic ordeals, the Great Revolt in CE70, ending in the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem, and the Bar Kokhba revolt in CE133–135, with thousands of dead, a popular myth emerged. It was presented as a religious decree and it carried the name "The Three Oaths." The basis for the name was a *midrash* (exegesis) taken from the Talmud tractate *Ketubot* (111a) which relates that God imposed three oaths upon the world. Two of the oaths pertain to the Jewish people, and the third to the other nations of the world. The Jews for their part were sworn not to return from exile to the Land of Israel and not to rebel against the other nations. Third, the other nations were abjured not to suppress the Jews. The Jews for their part were directed to Jewish submission and their foregoing a violent struggle over territory.[5] The passive identity derived from the belief that remaining in exile was in accordance with divine will. Only the Almighty could decide when the time had indeed come for the end of the rule of other nations. Many haredim (ultra-Orthodox Jews) adhere to this belief to this day. Territorial identity during the period of exile was related to both religious rituals and was an integral part of the national

memory.

Eretz Israel – the Land of Israel – occupied a central place in the religious ritual of the Jews in the Diaspora, both in explaining the past and in articulating hopes for future redemption. The association of exile and the return of the Jews to their homeland was an integral part of both daily and festival prayers. As a result, the land was also endowed with divine attributes, especially if it be reunited with its people. The Land of Israel was the only place in the world where prophecy could be maintained. Exile was shared by both the Jewish people and the *Shechina* (the Almighty or divine presence). The Shechina would return to the land only when the people would also return.[6]

The Jews' possession of a sense of common origin, a unique history, and other properties, defined them as an ethnic nation in exile. Hence, the Jews qualified as a nation even prior to the advent of Zionism. Their perception of themselves as different and unique and their commitment to a specific and historical territory, correspond to the assertion that "a nation is a self-aware ethnic group," having an allegiance to a specific homeland.[7]

The concept of "Diaspora" added another perspective to the concept of "Exile." Carrying with them the memory of their ancient homeland, common origins, founding ancestors and other ethnic characteristics, the Jews were, according to their own definition, a nation in exile dispersed among the nations of the world. Both *gola* (Exile) and *tefutza* (Diaspora) could only come to an end through divine will. The daily prayers included: "Bring us in peacefulness from the four corners of the earth and lead us with steadfastness to our land."[8] During the major festivals, the following sentence is recited: "Draw our scattered ones near, from among the nations, and bring in our dispersions from the ends of earth. Bring us to Zion, your city, in glad song, and to Jerusalem home of your sanctuary in eternal joy."[9] The process of redemption was directly linked to the ancestral homeland of Eretz Israel. It was only in the Land of Israel that the Jewish condition – the Jews' dependency on the whim of the gentiles and frequent persecution – would change and the Jews would end their period of exile. These notions were about to change with the new ideas and identities that started to become prevalent in Europe.

The traditional Jewish identity was a passive one; the Almighty had exiled the Jews from their land and subordinated them to gentile rulers and only he could redeem them. The Jews' role was to await their redemption with patience. Change came with the emergence of nineteenth century ideologies of nationalism accompanied by modernization that facilitated the climate for activating Jewish self-consciousness. The societal transformations of the nineteenth century and the ideologies which arose, profoundly affected the Jews, who were facing new and increased pressures imposed by the changing world that surrounded them.

Ethno-religious Zionism

The ultimate test of Jewish collective identity came at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Emancipation was undoubtedly the most revolutionary development that affected European Jewry. Napoleon Bonaparte on February 9, 1807 convened a meeting of the "Sanhedrin," in which he demanded that the Jews should accept the responsibilities of citizenship and abandon any claim to a separate national identity.[10] This was the basis of emancipation, as it accompanied a French General Assembly decision that had granted the Jews equality. Spreading to other Western European countries and later to the United States, it presented Jewry with a choice: full and equal civic rights in exchange for the renunciation of any separate national identity or aspirations.

In practice the choice was not simple at all. For those who wished to continue practicing Orthodox Judaism, forsaking the belief in redemption through a return to Zion posed an insurmountable religious problem. For others, it was not clear that abandoning national aspirations would warrant inclusion in the general community. While gentile society was obliged in accordance with the Enlightenment to accept the Jews as equal citizens, anti-Jewishness was reincarnated in the form of modern anti-Semitism, which found non-religious reasons to loath Jews. Moreover, while emancipation was confined to Western Europe; repression and deprivation of Jews continued in Eastern Europe, especially in the Russian Empire where the majority of world Jewry resided, and continued unabated during the mid-nineteenth century (Halperin 1961, 11). For most Jews emancipation did not imply equality and civil rights.

Paradoxically, emancipation when carried over to the ideational level could lead to the opposite of the original intent. The ideas behind emancipation which were most often expressed on an individual level also lent themselves to a collective interpretation. According to Walker Connor, the doctrine of individual rights gave birth to the doctrine of self-determination and popular sovereignty (1972, 5–11). Similarly, the idea of Jewish individuals deserving civic rights gave rise to the idea of a Jewish right to assert their national identity. The emancipation logic thus entailed an inherent contradiction: the Jewish individual rights depended on the negation of expression of Jewish collective identity. In practice, those Jews who opted to resolve their status through individual emancipation supported abandoning national characteristics and defining themselves merely as another "church." Others, predominantly in Eastern Europe, where the ideas of emancipation were nevertheless spreading, turned in favor of a collective solution. In Eastern Europe, ethno-national motifs such as the return to Zion and the national language of Hebrew were stronger than in the West.

Another source that had an impact on European Jewry was the nineteenth century climate of national liberation. Most profound was the idea of an anticipated nation-state political entity within stable territorial boundaries that would eventually replace the monarchies of the "Ancien Régime." The East was also beginning to embark on the age of national revolutions. National movements encouraged the people in Central and Eastern Europe, and in the Balkans, to rise up against the European and the Ottoman empires – which suppressed their identity. This atmosphere of ethno-national struggles encouraged the Jews to reinforce the links with their historical land which had been confined, until then, to their prayers.

It was in this ideational milieu that the Sephardic rabbi Judah Alkalai from Semlin near Belgrade and the Ashkenazi rabbi Zvi Hirsch Kalischer from Poland, in the 1830s and 1840s, manifested ideas about the Jewish return to the Land of Israel.[11] Seeing the emancipation of the Jews in the West as a divine message, both rabbis argued that it was the duty of the Jews to hasten redemption by the ingathering of the Jews in their ancient homeland. Kalischer explicitly urged the Jews to learn from the people of Central and Eastern Europe in the struggle for national independence, were ready to sacrifice their lives. The Jewish people despite their origin from holiest of lands are spiritless and silent (Hertzberg 1960, 114).[12]

The rabbis were joined by a different kind of forerunner of Jewish national awakening. Moses Hess (1812–1875) was also influenced by the ideational context of emancipation and ethno-nationalism. Notwithstanding his intensive collaboration with the two founders of socialism – Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels – Hess produced one of the most profound Jewish national documents.[13] Hess acknowledged the conception of liberal nationalism as a humanistic universal force, propounded by Giuseppi Mazzini, that would bring harmony to the world. In his works, especially in *Rome and Jerusalem*, Hess advocated that Jewish nationalism incorporate

social justice and would thus serve as an example that the whole universe should emulate. He believed that, "the Jewish people was the only people in the world whose religion was at once national and universal" (Hertzberg 1970, 129). Hess stated that only on its own land would the Jewish nation be able to fulfill its historic destiny. In addition, Hess harnessed to his argument Jewish history, the Hebrew language, and Jewish rituals – in particular rituals associated with the destruction of the Temple, and the Land of Israel (1954, 38–42). His statements may represent the most articulate national proclamation in early political Zionism, especially as they came from a Socialist ideologue.[14]

Ultimately, an ideology needs not only awakening, it needs an active organ. Jewish self-consciousness needed to be transformed from a passive idea into an active movement. The awakening of Jewish identity by itself, during in the midst of the nineteenth century, had not produced a massive national movement. Emancipation and the emergence of national movements around them aroused Jewish collective identity but without a world-wide active movement. It was modernization that captured the concealed forces of ethnic identity and used the impact of emancipation on the Jews to produce a dynamic national movement.[15]

Samuel Huntington in his study of changing societies, posits that modernization could destroy some sources of identity while reinvigorating others (1968, 38). In traditional society, the individual accepts his place in the natural and social environment as a given. "Above all," Huntington proposes, "modernization involves belief in the capacity of man by reasoned action to change his physical and social environment" (ibid., 99). In order to reinvigorate those ethno-national elements that existed but were latent for millennia the Jewish awakening needed an impulse that would encourage Jews to take their fate into their own hands. The question remaining to be resolved was whether, after two millennia of exile, the Jews had it in themselves a compulsion to act and look for a territory remote from their current place of dwelling. Zionism in the mid-nineteenth century was a movement that was reinvigorating an old identity while also expressing a territorial identity. As we shall see, this needed an additional source of inspiration.

Political Zionism

The major impulse appeared toward the end of the nineteenth century. Proto-Zionism, as identified with the movement known as *Hibbat Zion* [Love of Zion], reinvigorated Jewish identity around a central territorial icon that existed in the collective memory of the Jewish people. A new drive in the Zionist movement made its entrance during the last two decades of the nineteenth century. Political Zionism specified the main goal for the Jewish people as the establishment of a Jewish state. The rationale behind this demand was that such a state was needed in order to provide an instrument to end the persecution of the Jews who were suffering – as well as their potential physical and spiritual annihilation. In short: the survival of the Jewish people.

Leo Pinsker (1821–1891) and Theodor Herzl (1860–1904), who are considered the two main ideational forebears of political Zionism, although coming from two different experiences, articulated the rationale behind political Zionism in similar terms. Hypothetically, the Jewish problem could have been resolved through the Enlightenment and emancipation, or even assimilation, but in practice that did not happen. Consequently, the only remedies foreseen were self-emancipation and a Jewish state. The Jewish condition of the nineteenth century dictated that the Jews should take their destiny into their own hands and create a sovereign Jewish territorial entity. In considering the need for territory, the impulse for a state was more a matter

of saving the life of the nation, than merely a matter of identity. However, identity defined where this state should ideally be situated.

In 1882 Pinsker published his booklet entitled *Auto-Emancipation: An Appeal to his People by a Russian Jew*, to be followed in 1896 by Herzl's *Der Judenstaat* [The Jewish State]. Herzl was not aware of Pinsker's ideas. The two men, however, shared several features. Coming from a secular background, both were driven to despair over the failure of emancipation and, more so, the Enlightenment to resolve the plight of the Jews. Each one was prompted by the outbreak of anti-Semitic events – Pinsker by the pogroms of 1881 and Herzl by the Dreyfus trial – and hence called for establishing a refuge from anti-Semitism. Both Pinsker and Herzl articulated their goal in statist terms – that is, the establishment of an independent Jewish state.

Pinsker analyzed the Jewish situation (i.e., the fact of the Jews being despised and the reality of the pogroms) along coherent and pragmatic lines. Anti-Semitism was not some metaphysical phenomenon, he proposed, but the outcome of sociopolitical reality. His suggested territorial solution was totally detached from mythical-traditional beliefs (Hertzberg 1960, 194). Instead, he emphasized the importance of the material conditions of the land: the territory had to be accessible to Jews, provide security, and to be productive. Pinsker also stressed the urgency of the situation in light of the prevailing historic realities (ibid., 198)

Significantly political Zionism is identified with Herzl and not with Pinsker. The main reason is that Herzl went beyond the pamphlet that he produced a decade and a half after Pinsker. Following his 1896 book *The Jewish State.* Herzl convened the First World Zionist Congress in Basel in 1897 and chaired five successive congresses. Most impressive from our perspective, was his extensive global diplomatic activity up until his premature death in 1904. The translation of an idea to organizational and diplomatic activity was unprecedented. Even more significant was the impulse; they all consisted of a common denominator: how to find a substantial solution to the physical threat.

The central theme of both Pinsker's *Auto-Emancipation* and *The Jewish State* is very similar: a territorial Jewish state is the only answer to the physical threat to world Jewry. Herzl, however, says it loudly: "The misery of the Jews" is the propelling force behind the Jewish State (1946, 70). Subsequently he explores the causes of modern anti-Semitism and the rationale of the solution, that is, the establishment of the Jewish state. But most important, is his detailed analysis of the procedures by which the Jews would be able to put the plan into effect.

Significantly, Herzl's book is charged with a sense of a response to the forthcoming existential threat to the Jews. We find statements like "Distress binds us together, and thus united, we suddenly discover our strength" (ibid., 92). Anti-Semitism, according to Herzl, would not enable the Jews to follow the assimilation course of action. Paradoxically, the establishment of the Jewish state would eliminate anti-Semitism, thus allowing assimilating Jews to assimilate in peace. The existential rationale of political Zionism reveals itself even clearer when some classic ethno-religious elements are minimized. Hebrew would not necessarily be the official language of the Jewish state; any widely-spoken language could be accepted, the state could even be multilingual like "Switzerland" (ibid., 145–146) religion and state would be clearly separated (ibid., 146). Most striking is Herzl's answer to the question: "Palestine or Argentina?" – "We shall take what is given us and what is selected by Jewish public opinion" (ibid., 95). Palestine would be preferable to Argentina, nevertheless, because of the Jewish emotional attachment, and he did quote phrases such as "Next Year in Jerusalem" (ibid., 82). In short, the very *raison d'étre* of the Jewish state would be to preserve and protect Jewish lives and rights.

Herzl was concerned about how the state would come into being. In appealing to the great

powers to provide a territory for a Jewish state he justified the idea in terms of the gains they would derive from resolving the age-old "Jewish Question." A major theme of Herzl's book was, therefore, an emphasis on the congruency between Jewish interests and that of the world community. At the outset of the book, Herzl asserted "The Jewish state is essential to the world; it will therefore be created" (ibid., 32). This focus on theme of usefulness of a Jewish state endures throughout the work. In his statement, Herzl goes as far as stating: "In the world as it is now and for an indefinite period will probably remain, might precedes right" (ibid., 76). Hence, the Zionist program "cannot even be carried out without the friendly cooperation of interested governments, who would derive considerable benefits from it" (ibid., 83). At the same time he declares "the world will be freed by our liberty, enriched by our wealth, magnified by our greatness" (ibid., 57). In short, Herzl was a pragmatic mixture of Realism and liberalism.[16]

Cultural versus religious Zionism

Herzl's emphasis on a territorial state as the only solution to existential threats was not shared by all segments of the Zionist movement. Along with political Zionism, other movements emerged. One was that of spiritual Zionism whose leader was Asher Zvi Ginsberg (1856–1927), better known by his pen name "Ahad Ha'Am" (literally "One of the People"). He was one of the early and most outspoken critics of political Zionism. Ahad Ha'Am argued that the movement's emphasis on the physical concerns of the Jews was mistaken. The main existential threat was to the collective spirit of the Jewish nation. Hence, the main task of Zionism was to revive that spirit. Instead of aiming at resolving the affliction of the Jews (*tzarat ha-yehudim*) he recommended that the Hibbat Zion [Love of Zion] movement concentrate on the afflictions of Judaism (*tzarat ha-yahadut*). Accordingly, the putative settlement in Palestine should see its main task and mission to emerge as a spiritual center to the Jewish people enabling Jewish national spiritual life in the Diaspora.

What were the threats that the leader of spiritual Zionism foresaw? In the first place, Ahad Ha'Am was skeptical with regard to the implementation of the goals of political Zionism. The idea that emerged at the First Zionist Congress of ingathering of the exiles within the near future seemed illusionary to him and hence dangerous.

In contrast to political Zionism most important was the transcendent threat. Instead of emulating the national spirit that was engulfing Europe, Ahad Ha'Am foresaw that the Jewish people could not continue to maintain their organic culture in a nationalist milieu in which nationhood replaced religion. With secularism encroaching, the Jews could no longer rely on their traditional culture to preserve national identity. They needed their historic land where they could integrate their cultural heritage with the general *zeitgeist* without being overwhelmed by it. Political Zionism, according to his understanding, could at best result in a small territorial state of the Jews that would be "a plaything in the hands of great neighbors."[17] The Jewish people with their rich history deserved more than that his solution was, therefore, to concentrate on creating a spiritual center that would become "not merely a state of the Jews but truly a Jewish state" (ibid., 28).

Ahad Ha'Am was not an idealist. He deviated from political Zionism with regard to the future of the Diaspora. He did not believe that the Diaspora would, or even should, dissolve following the foundation of a Jewish state. The role of a spiritual center in Palestine was to save Diaspora Jewry.[18] While opposing the pure statist direction in which political Zionism was heading he was also aware of the problems inherent in a purely cultural perspective. Ahad

Ha'Am tried to conceive of a framework that would solve the territorial existential problems of the Jews who would migrate to Palestine and at the same time find a solution for those Jews who would prefer to remain in the Diaspora.

In essence, despite their differences, spiritual and political Zionism shared one sentiment – the impulse to survive. Both were motivated by apprehension regarding the continuance of Jewish existence in Europe in the twentieth century. While Pinsker, Herzl and others primarily saw the physical threat, Ahad Ha'Am foresaw the assimilationist threat. According to Ahad Ha'Am, Judaism based on religion could not provide an answer in the secular world. Hence, he considered it necessary that the Zionist movement also be engaged in cultural activity. This desire opened a new front within the Zionist movement.

Ahad Ha'Am's cultural approach conflicted with another important faction in the Zionist movement. This was that of the Orthodox members within the movement, who became an official faction – Mizrahi – in 1902. Ahad Ha'Am's notions that Judaism based on religion could not survive were perceived by Mizrahi as a grave threat. Spiritual Zionism sought to rework the traditional way of thinking of Judaism. Religious Zionism provided an additional perspective on the subject of identity and survival and hence it is important to our discourse.

Spiritual Zionists and Orthodoxy disputed each other over the very essence of Judaism. What constituted Jewish peoplehood – divine mission or cultural tradition, religious or cultural loyalty?[19] Indeed, for ultra-Orthodoxy all forms of Zionism (including religious Zionism) were inherently heretical. Rabbi Jacob Reines, the founder of Mizrahi, narrowed down the dispute to spiritual-cultural Zionism allowing his to cooperate with political Zionism. As we shall see, during the Uganda controversy, Rabbi Reines cooperated with Herzl against Ahad Ha'Am, stressing the perceived physical over the cultural threat.

Rabbi Reines' approach to Zionism, in certain respects[20] was closer to Herzl and Pinsker than to Rabbis Alkalai and Kalischer. They interpreted emancipation and the national era engulfing other nations as the beginning of redemption, while Rabbi Reines foresaw the existential threats to European Jewry and hence sought an immediate political remedy. And yet as an Orthodox rabbi he could not ignore the fact that the main stream in Zionism was suggesting a secular and national substitute for the ancient religious belief that redemption would only come as part of a divine plan. Nevertheless, the need to save the Jews from the current physical threat to their existence came before the ultimate messianic redemption. Religious Zionism should thus cooperate with other Zionists dedicated to resolving the existential problems of the Jews, not their spiritual ones. Traditional Judaism, in his view could continue to take care of spiritual threats as it had for millennia. A pure political movement, lacking cultural ambitions would not constitute a substitute for divine redemption.

Physical survival posited the foundation for cooperation between religious Jews and secular Zionists. Accordingly, Herzl supported the religious Zionists in their demand to exclude cultural issues from the Zionist agenda. In return, Reines cooperated with Herzl in his struggle against the spiritual Zionists headed by Ahad Ha'Am and the "democratic faction." Another consideration in accepting the view of the religious Zionists was Herzl's, and the other political Zionists', desire to preserve a broad base of support as possible. Undoubtedly, he also resented Ahad Ha'Am for his criticism of the statist element. This internal strife added to his courting of the religious Zionists. With time as, we shall see, cultural matters were included in the agenda of Zionism but only in exchange of two streams in education (see Chapter 6 below).

In short, Zionism with roots extending over two millennia, was a movement whose territorial demands rested on historical rights. The Jews of Europe, generated by emancipation and

influenced by the new nineteenth century social and intellectual ideas, although the forerunners of Zionism were rabbis, adopted these secular notions as part of their collective rights for self-determination. And yet, the movement gathered momentum only when it adopted a clear, rational approach to the resolving of existential problems prompted by modern anti-Semitism prevailing in the surrounding European society. At the same time, the demand for a spiritual revival in the historic land threatened the more fundamentalist branches of Orthodoxy who maintained that it was only through halakha – Jewish law – that the Jews could be considered a nation. The modern elements in Orthodoxy were more alarmed by the impending physical threat to the Jewish people. This was the basis for an alliance with political Zionism, which perceived a Jewish state as the solution to an impending catastrophe and the material misery of the Jews. Some Orthodox rabbis, in essence, shared their views on the looming threat. With the turn of the century the various streams in Zionism faced their first test.

The first territorial debate

If we were to be asked for proof of the strain between the varied political approaches in Zionism, we need look no further than what came to be known as the "Uganda Controversy." This debate, in which all the factions and major figures in the Zionist movement participated, almost caused a split in the newly-born Zionist movement. The fact that the Zionist movement emerged reunited reflected the strength of the existential both physical and spiritual threat that was shared by all factions. The focus of the debate, as we shall see, was the role of the Land of Israel in securing the national existence of the Jewish people. At the same time, the basic dilemma between national territorial identity and political realities was not resolved and would continue to plague the movement from then on.

In 1903, Herzl seemed finally to have achieved some results with Joseph Chamberlain, the British colonial secretary. Two calculations prompted Chamberlain to propose the establishment of a Jewish settlement in East Africa. The first reckoning was to solve a growing immigration problem of Jewish émigrés from anti-Semitic Eastern Europe into Britain. The second was to modernize and strengthen imperial holdings in Africa. Instead of a previous British-sponsored charter for Jewish settlement close to Palestine in El-Arish or Cyprus, Chamberlain suggested the British East Africa protectorate as a possible destination for Jewish settlement. At the outset Herzl rejected the idea when it was first proposed in April 1903. Frustrated by negative responses from other imperial courts he returned to it upon the advice of his chief English aide, Leopold Greenberg, who convinced him that in light of the deterioration of the Eastern European Jews, Zionism could not pass up looking into this British offer. The proposal was mooted during the Sixth Zionist Congress in Basel in August 23–28, 1903. It was at this forum that the question of Jewish settlement in East Africa, one of the most controversial ideas in Zionist history began to develop.

Herzl's behavior, as recorded in the Sixth Congress proceedings, does not verify whether he considered East Africa as a viable substitute for Palestine. Formally, he presented it as a practical step on the way to Eretz Israel. He indicated that it was a necessary step in light of the worsening Jewish situation in Eastern Europe, for example the notorious Kishinev pogrom in April, 1903, and the immense migration that resulted in the closure of gates by Western countries. Herzl asked the Congress to establish a small committee to look into the British East African proposal while continuing to build the national home in Palestine. Conversely, following the Sixth Congress, Herzl, was more explicit. Aware of the uproar that his policy had created, he disclosed

to his closest friends that he planned to resign because of the gap between his ideas of how to solve the Jewish problem and those of the Zionist movement. While he defined himself as a *Judenstattler* (a Jewish statist) and only then, a lover of Zion [*Hibbat Zion*] at this point he felt that he had advanced Zionism in the right direction but the movement was not willing to adopt his vision. Hence he would be unable to lead it further (ibid., 307–308). In short, he disclosed that for him existential solutions overrode national aspirations.

Herzl's opposition, or, as they were called, *Tzionei-Zion* [Zionists for Zion] or *Nayn-Sagers* [Nay-Sayers], clearly indicated how they perceived the Zionist leader's ultimate goals or the possible results of his policy. The opposition, a formidable group led by the Russian delegation, objected to any consideration of the Uganda proposal. Even the appointment of a committee to look into the matter was considered a deviation. Their dedication to Zion equaled or went beyond physical survival. To quote a few: Victor Jacobson: "Zionism denoted not only physical redemption but also the (spiritual) regeneration which was inspired by love for the 'land of our fathers.'" Shmaryahu Levin asked rhetorically: "Might not the Jewish people fall asleep in the 'African night'? What they needed was not a *Nachtasyl* (a 'night refuge') but a place to enjoy the broad daylight."[21]

A formal reading of the vote on the proposal indicated the deep division in the movement. On the surface, the results suggest a sweeping triumph for Herzl and those in favor of exploring the East Africa proposal. Of the 468 delegates who voted, 292 (62.4 percent) voted "yes" and 176 (37.6 percent) objected to Hezl's proposal. However, there were 143 abstentions or delegates that did not vote. A more searching probe of those who had abstained, taking into account the implication of voting against Herzl and the dynamics involved, reveals that the Zionist leader in effect failed. At best it follows that the sentiments were torn apart between loyalty to Zion or just a statist solution.[22] At the same time, Herzl's understanding of the impending existential threat was accepted by the Zionist Congress.

The split worsened following the return of Menahem Ussishkin from Palestine. In Palestine he convened an assembly representing the "Jewish People in Eretz Israel" thus indicating where he stood in the debate.[23] In an open letter to the Zionist Congress delegates on October 20, 1903, he declared that he would not comply with the decision of the Sixth Congress, explaining: "And just as no majority in the world can cause me to apostatize from the faith of Israel or the Law of Israel, so no numerical majority totaling 295 will detach me from the Land of Israel" (Hyman, 140). Indeed, following the strong attacks coming especially from Russian Zionists, Herzl even penned a letter of resignation to the Jewish people which he never submitted (dated November 11, 1903).[24] Ussishkin, on his part tried to anchor his approach in *realpolitik*, admitting that his battle on Uganda was ideological (ibid., 163). Following the Kharkov Conference on November 11–14, the relationship between the two camps deteriorated even further. It dawned on Herzl that the Zionist movement was on the verge of splitting asunder. At the same time he also learned that the British government was slowly withdrawing from the East Africa project. At this point he must have realized the depth of emotions attached to Eretz Israel. The Seventh Congress that convened following Herzl's death in 1904 finally rejected the East Africa idea.

The Uganda Controversy affirmed the existence of the two ideas that inspired the Zionist movement. The first, the establishment of a Jewish state as the answer to the existential threats, and the second, the return to the Land of Israel thus answering the need for a national identity. These two ideas sometimes complemented and sometimes challenged each other. In the First Zionist Congress, the ethno-national tradition and the statists had united behind one common goal – the building of a Jewish nation-state. As long as the movement did not have to face any

operational alternatives, the conflict between the two approaches was inactive. The Uganda proposal brought the schism out into the open. Those that believed that the first priority must be given to removing the physical threat hanging over the Jewish people were ready to go even to Africa. All those for whom their main concern was the national revival of the Jewish people refused to consider Uganda even as an interim solution. The British proposal to establish a Jewish colony in Africa appeared as a remedy for the threat of physical annihilation, but not to the menace of spiritual decay (Vital 1982, 357–358). To some in the statist school, under the leadership of Israel Zangwill, the situation was seen to be so grave that they seceded from the Zionist movement following the Seventh Zionist Congress and established the Jewish Territorial Organization (JTO).[25]

Despite the differences between the two opposing schools of thought, it seems that both schools were motivated in effect by a common desire that has accompanied the Jewish political tradition since its inception: how to save Jewish existence without destroying its unique identity.[26] Indeed, both approaches were concerned with the two main themes that have guided Jewish conduct of foreign affairs: physical survival on the one hand and revival of Jewish identity on the other. In the post-Uganda era, the Zionist movement, as a result of the debate and its consequences, crystallized itself around Eretz Israel. At the same time it continued to retain its survivalist instincts. The mere fact that similar dilemmas reappeared thereafter indicates that the inherent tension between the statist strategy of survival and national identity (historic land orientation) was not a one-time event. Comparable dilemmas were to recur on several future occasions as strong as ever. It reoccurred at the next turning point in the Zionist struggle when the movement was faced with the dilemma of whether to accept or reject the partition of Palestine.

The second debate

Three decades after the Uganda debate the Zionist movement could look backward with satisfaction. Its status had changed drastically in many respects. In the wake of World War I, the League of Nations had adopted, in principle, the November 1917 Balfour Declaration that favored the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine. The Declaration became an integral part of the British Mandate over Palestine awarded in 1920. In essence, both the political and the spiritual streams in Zionism could claim that their agenda was at least partially fulfilled. The League of Nations' statements came close to the international charter that political Zionism had been seeking since its inception. Especially significant was the fact that the statements referred to the establishment of a national home in Palestine. There were also serious accomplishments on the ground. The Yishuv had grown from about 50,000 Jews in Palestine at the turn of the century to over 380,000 by the end of 1936. Land ownership had also increased significantly; Jewish-owned land had expanded from around 220,000 dunams (55,000 square acres) at the turn of the century to 1.6 million dunams (400,000 square acres) by the end of 1935.[27] To be sure, the Revisionists, under the leadership of Ze'ev Jabotinsky, had broken away from the Zionist institutions although a splinter stayed with the organized Yishuv framework. Overall the Jewish community in Palestine stayed united.

The international Zionist political map also changed by comparison to how it looked at the beginning of the century. Changes in the Jewish Diaspora that occurred in the intervening years influenced the Zionist movement. Palestine, the United States and Great Britain had replaced Vienna and Odessa as the centers of Jewish and Zionist political activity.

At the same time, the Zionist movement started facing realties that had escaped attention during the days of the Uganda debate. The accomplishments brought with them counter-reactions. The growing Jewish presence in Palestine triggered a deep inter-communal conflict between Jews and Arabs, leading to the appointment of the 1936 Royal Commission. The Jews were by no means alone in claiming national ownership or sovereignty in Palestine. The Royal Commission headed by Lord Peel advanced a partition proposal which contained three main recommendations: termination of the British Mandate, sovereignty for each of the two national communities in Palestine, and a detailed map of how the territory should be divided up. In light of testimony heard from all the parties involved, the commission reached the conclusion that the ethnic and religious divergences between Arabs and Jews were irreconcilable. The Peel Commission partition proposal deviated significantly from the original concept in the Balfour Declaration of a national home for the Jewish people. In effect, Palestine was divided twice; in 1922 the Emirate of Transjordan received the eastern side of the Jordan River and, in 1936, the Peel Commission recommended the division of western Palestine into Arab and Jewish areas. To be sure, in comparison to the past the Jews were to receive land that lay within the boundaries of historical Eretz Israel. Nevertheless the Zionist movement was faced with a very difficult decision: whether or not to give up the heartland of the ancient biblical area. On the other hand, unlike in the Uganda plan, the Peel Commission proposed formal sovereignty and not just a protectorate to the Jewish people. Similarly, instead of a "national home," as proclaimed by Balfour and the ensuing Mandate, the Royal Commission explicitly advocated the establishment of a Jewish state.[28]

In exchange for sovereignty, the Yishuv would have to concede 80 percent of the Land of Israel. The proposed Jewish state would essentially consist of the Galilee and the coastal plain, thus encompassing only 20 percent of western Palestine. This concession would be in addition to the territories that were included in Transjordan in 1922 that had previously been included in the British Mandate and had never been formally conceded by the Yishuv leadership. Most important, from the Jewish perspective, was that the territory that the Jews were expected to concede included some the most sacred Jewish historic sites. These were in areas that had been settled in biblical times by the dynasties that ruled the Kingdoms of Judea and Israel and were home to their respective capitals and the heartland of the Second Jewish Commonwealth (536BCE–CE70). Above all, the concessions included the city of Jerusalem that was to become a British enclave. In short, while the Royal Commission recommended to their government the provision of territory in Eretz Israel for a Jewish state, the core of the ancient Jewish historical homeland as delineated in the Bible would be granted to the future Arab state.

But, nevertheless, the Peel proposals included elements that were attractive to the Jewish rationale. First, Jewish sovereignty with a territorial base implied free future Jewish immigration. At a time of increasing persecution of the Jews in Europe, free immigration meant a great deal. Second, the Peel partition plan offered much of the most fertile portions of Palestine to the Jewish state, thus providing agricultural land so important in the Zionist ideology of Jewish revival. Inclusion of the Mediterranean coastline was also attractive for economic, trade and immigration purposes. The drawing of the map corresponded with the demographic distribution of population and the Zionist settlement pattern at the time; the Jews were concentrated in the Galilee and the coastal plain, while the central mountain range of Samaria was heavily settled by Arabs and the Jewish population there was relatively sparse.

Third, the Peel commission was aware of the void between the two entities in terms of political development. The Yishuv had constructed a network of organizations which essentially

controlled the national institutions of the worldwide Zionist movement. The Zionist movement had a territorial institutional center and a leadership eager and able to transform a pre-state infrastructure into formal statehood. Hence, it perceived the Yishuv as capable of constructing a viable independent political entity.[29]

In contrast, the Arab entity was still not ready for statehood. A realization that the Arab community in Palestine was not developed enough for such a task was reflected in the proposal that the Arab state border should the Emirate of Transjordan with which it was designed to be united. Concerned by the deep ethno-religious hostility between the Arab and Jewish communities, the Royal Commission recommended population transfers between the two states. These transfers were designed to bring about ethnic homogeneity and to reduce communal tension and intercommunal conflict. Presuming that ethnic hostility was the main cause of the conflict also led the Commission to neglect the geo- strategic flaws in the plan that gave the Arab state control of the higher areas. Separation between the two communities was assumed to be sufficient to promote stability.[30]

The partition plan was defined in a way that the commission believed was the best possible political solution to the conflict in Palestine and the desire to establish a functioning Jewish state. From our perspective the most interesting event was the debate that followed the British proposals. Again, the Zionist movement was engulfed in a passionate debate in reaction to a proposal that fell short of the national aspirations of the Zionist movement. Despite the fact that, as in the case of Uganda, the British government ultimately backed away from the proposals initiated by its own officials, the proposals nevertheless sparked a major controversy within the Zionist movement.

Most striking in the 1937 debate over the Peel Commission's proposals was that both supporters and opponents of the partition plan accepted that the ultimate goal was the establishment of a Jewish state. Although historical and religious arguments were raised, they were not the decisive factors. The debate lacked a clear-cut dichotomy between statists and ethno-nationalists; a division between right and left would similarly be inaccurate as opposition and support crossed ideological boundaries. To support its position, each camp advanced statist arguments coupled with realistic considerations.

The Revisionists, headed by Ze'ev Jabotinsky, demanded large-scale political action to establish a state that would also contain Transjordan, and demarcated themselves as the heirs of political Zionism. They were joined by the leftist Hashomer Hatzair party in their opposition to partition. Similarly, elements from the political center, like Brit Shalom[31] that supported a bi-national state rather than two separate nation-states, also objected the Partition Plan. At the outset in Mapai (Israeli Worker's Party), led by David Ben-Gurion, the majority objected to partition, supporting their arguments with historical and political reasoning. In the political center the two General Zionist parties were split on the issue, one in favor and the other opposing partition. The majority of religious Zionist Mizrahi – which, as we saw, had supported Herzl during the Uganda controversy – now objected to partition. Even the non-Zionist ultra-Orthodox Agudat Israel party was divided on the issue.

What seems to be the dividing line between supporters and opponents was the sense of urgency and pragmatic considerations. The presumption that the British Mandate had reached a dead end in terms of state-building and that the Zionists could now only expect a turn for the worse convinced realists like Ben-Gurion to change their mind and support partition. Some supporters reached the conclusion that even a shrunken sovereign Jewish state could continue the process of state-building that had started under the Mandate and would be able to absorb millions

of persecuted Jews. To some it was important to demonstrate the establishment of a Jewish state after almost two millennia was not a utopian idea. The recommendation of the Peel Commission that Arabs would be transferred out of the Jewish state convinced others that it would provide legitimacy to the concept of population exchange. Many supporters asserted that partition presented the Zionist movement with a historic opportunity that must not be missed because it might never again be offered. Undoubtedly, to some supporters partition was only a first step and did not preclude the recapturing of Israel's historical areas. Ultimately, nobody could ignore the fact that the partition plan essentially reflected the settlement pattern of the Yishuv and, in essence, even provided the Yishuv with territories beyond its control at that time.[32]

The opponents, too, advanced pragmatic arguments, pointing mainly to the inability of the partitioned state to defend itself and to absorb immigrants. They opposed the pessimism as well as the yielding attitude of the supporters. But they also advanced ideological arguments such as that the Yishuv had no right to concede significant parts of the ancient homeland and historical and holy sites. Nationalists on the Right argued that Eretz Israel was an indivisible, integral unit stretching on both sides of the Jordan and could not be partitioned. Moralists, especially from Brit Shalom who argued in favor of Jewish Arab cooperation, argued that partition ran contrary to the ideals of Judaism. Shmuel Dothan, who has extensively analyzed the partition debate and compared the opposing views, summarized the opposition attitude as follows:

> The "hard core" [of the opposing view] was the assumption that Eretz Israel is the land of the Jews alone, and that the Arabs who had not created anything in it, and to whom it meant nothing … have only the right to reside in it, but not the right to rule it. This view was expressed by many opponents … who were convinced that their right to Eretz Israel was based on attachment, recognition of the nations of the world and on the huge labor that so many Jews had invested in it. They were supported by religious and other Jews with attachment to tradition and history who perceived Eretz Israel as the land of their ancestors, and who's rights can never be nullified.
>
> (Ibid., 315)

It is significant that the opposition to partition despite its wide-ranging support from almost every party in the Yishuv and the Diaspora,[33] did not succeed in their effort to reject the plan.

Ultimately, this most impressive coalition could not counterbalance the weight of the central leadership of the World Zionist Organization and the Jewish Agency. A coalition between Chaim Weizmann, who retained the presidency of the WZO and directed the diplomatic activity of the movement, and David Ben-Gurion, as chairman of the Zionist Executive, turned the tide in favor of partition. Understanding the importance of statehood, Weizmann and Ben-Gurion were ready to overcome their customary rivalry and join forces in accepting the partition principle. Despite initial opposition among many Mapai members to partition, Ben-Gurion succeeded in turning their vote. The combination of Ben-Gurion, now leader of the Yishuv and Weizmann who mobilized the support of the Diaspora representatives was sufficient to bring about a clear majority – 299 voted in favor of accepting the Partition Plan and 160 were opposed; 6 abstained and 19 were absent.

The victory of the pro-partition camp was further enhanced when the new WZO-Jewish Agency Executive elected by the 20th Zionist Congress was composed of a majority of partition supporters. In August 1937, the Congress endorsed the principle of partition as detailed in the Royal Commission's proposal and empowered the Jewish Agency executive to negotiate with the British government on the terms for establishing the new Jewish state. A counter coalition

between the Revisionists and Agudat Israel, both not members of the WZO, failed. So did Ussishkin's attempt to organize a united opposition following the Congress. His campaign was a far cry from his 1903–1904 Uganda success. The strength of the leadership that aspired to accomplish a state immediately, even at the cost of losing parts of the historic land, was clear-cut. The rationale of accomplishing a sovereign state with all its accompanying implications overcame any other reckoning.

The sincerity of the Yishuv was further confirmed when the Jewish Agency proposed a Zionist partition plan of its own in 1938. In this proposal the Agency visualized the proposed Arab state in areas that later became the West Bank (Judea and Samaria) and the Gaza-Beersheba region. Regions which the Royal Commission had suggested should belong to the Arab state – like the Negev, the Judean Mountains, as well as certain parts of Jerusalem – were to remain under the British Mandate. Meaningfully, international acceptance, security, economic viability, transportation, demography and full sovereignty were the ideas that guided the Jewish Agency's 1937 "Borders Committee." The Jewish Agency's proposal was submitted in 1938 to the newly established Woodhead Commission. It included a map that summed up the Jewish demands for changes in the Royal Commission's partition plan borders. But it nevertheless accepted the idea of partition in exchange for full sovereignty.[34]

The Palestine Arabs rejected the Peel Royal Commission plan outright and rejected the idea of partition and the establishment of a Jewish state. Nor, of course, did they accept the 1938 Jewish Agency partition plan. But the Jewish Agency plan was also rejected by the British. The idea of partition, however, did not vanish. It resurfaced in the wake of World War II, in the United Nations plan of 1947. What was important from the Israeli perspective was that the rationale that had guided the Jewish Agency in 1937–1938 provided the groundwork for the emerging Jewish state a decade later. If the Yishuv's leaders appreciated the significance of a Jewish state even within curtailed borders, in 1937 the implications of a Jewish political shelter in the wake of the rapidly growing Nazi threat were stronger than ever. It was incontestable that had there been a Jewish state prior to the war, the scope of the Holocaust would have been far different from what actually transpired. The instincts for physical survival that had influenced the forerunners of political Zionism, and later on the Yishuv, were proven to be correct to an extent that no one could possibly have imagined.

Both the Uganda controversy and the 1937–1938 partition debates are fundamental cases in point as they represented two of the basic dilemmas of Zionism and the conflicting outlooks of the Yishuv as rooted in the Jewish foreign policy tradition. The fact that they did not produce any immediate political consequences makes it even more potent. The Zionists were so convinced that the vision of a Jewish state was the only response to any future physical threats that even a glimpse of a possible state was sufficient to arouse profound debates like the ones we have analyzed in this chapter. The fact that the Zionists reacted so strongly to a relatively underdeveloped idea indicated how basic was the dilemma of choosing between the establishment of a Jewish state and surrendering sacred historic territory. In both cases a semi-official proposal, as yet not even considered by the British government, was enough of a spark to ignite a controversy that involved all factions of the movement. At the same time, the debates had concrete outcomes. While the Uganda debate eliminated the option of a state not situated in Palestine, it would not be inaccurate to state that the partition idea developed and debated in 1937 served as the preliminary to future debates that have been part of Israeli foreign and domestic politics ever since. In retrospect, both debates could be regarded as helping to crystallize attitudes and policies that determined the political behavior of the Zionist movement

in the ensuing years. Most remarkable was the determination to accomplish a Jewish state which was perceived as the main element for ensuring Jewish survival.

Conclusion

The emergence of Zionism during the nineteenth century consisted of two main streams: the national and the statist. In part, they responded to two separate challenges: the mid-nineteenth century European national awakening and the rapid growth of anti-Semitism. While the first was identity-oriented, the second was security related. Both were rooted in the Jewish foreign policy tradition. Each of them aimed at a territorial solution to the Jewish condition. Each of them wanted to transform the Jewish Diaspora into a territorial entity, namely one place where the Jews would no longer be in a minority. We will discuss this strategy in the following chapter.

In this chapter we applied a comparative analysis methodology. We looked at two case studies in Zionist history where the national identity and the physical security requirements of the Jewish people clashed. It is agreed that in the Uganda debate the nationalists won in the final analysis despite the formal majority for Herzl in the vote. In the 1937 debate the statists had the upper hand and the Zionist movement accepted partition even if it involved giving up parts of the historic Land of Israel for the sake of an immediate sovereign state. In both debates, each faction was apprehensive about which route would better ensure Jewish survival: a Jewish state in any place or of any size, or else insistence on all of the historic Eretz Israel.

Moreover, it is pertinent to recall that there were voices in the Jewish camps – like Ahad Ha'Am on the secular side and the Orthodox rabbis in the religious camp on the other – that perceived the cultural threat of modernity as even more menacing than the physical one. In other words, even the non-statists that objected to political Zionism from both sides of the ideological spectrum were motivated by the survivalist instinct.

Notes

1 Anthony D. Smith, as we pointed out in Chapter 2 is considered the most authoritative scholar of the so-called primordial school. This school argued that nationalism is an authentic force deriving its strength from sources that are not connected to the modern state. See Walker Connor, "Nation Building or Nation Destroying," *World Politics* 24 (April 1972): 319–355; "The Politics of Ethno-Nationalism," *Journal of International Affairs,* 29 (1973): 1–21; idem., "Ethno-nationalism," 196–220. Cf. Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Revival* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).
2 See a definition of Diasporas provided by John A. Armstrong, "Mobilized and Proletarian Diasporas," *American Political Science Review* 70 (June 1976): 393
3 English translation from M. Rosenbaum and A.M. Silberman, *The Pentateuch with Targum Onkelos, Haphtaroth and Prayers for Sabbath and Rashi's Commentary,* Translated into English and Annotated (London: Shapiro, Valentine and Co. 1946), vol. 1, 2–3.
4 For a comprehensive analysis of this subject, see Arnold M. Eisen, *Galut: Modern Jewish Reflection on Homelessness and Homecoming* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1986), Chapter 3.
5 The original text can be found in *b. Ketubot* 111a . For analysis, see David Biale, *Power and Powerlessness in Jewish History* (New York: Schocken Books, 1987), 39; for a broader analysis of the three oaths see Aviezer Ravitzky, *Messianism, Zionism and Jewish Religious*

Radicalism (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1994), 277–305 [Hebrew].

6   For the religious content of the land, see, for instance, David Vital, *The Origins of Zionism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 5.

7   Concepts like "a nation is a self-aware ethnic group" and the allegiance of the nation to a specific territory were introduced by Connor and Smith. See Walker Connor, "The Politics of Ethno-Nationalism," *Journal of International Affairs* 29 (1973): 3. See also Walker Connor, "A Nation Is a Nation, Is a State, Is an Ethnic Group, Is a …," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 1 (October 1978): 380; A. D. Smith, "States and Homelands: The Social and Geopolitical Implications of National Territory," *Journal of International Studies* 10 (Autumn 1981):188.

8   *The Complete Art Scroll Siddur* (New York: Mesorah, 1984), 90–92.

9   *The Art Scroll Machzor for Rosh Hashanah* (New York: Mesorah, 1986), 449.

0   Sanhedrin is a judicial institution taken from the Jewish tradition that functioned during the second temple. It means a Jewish high court. For an account of Napoleon's demands, see Howard M. Sacher, *A History of Israel, From the Rise of Zionism to Our Time* (Jerusalem: Steimatzky, 1976), 3.

1   On the forerunners of Zionism, see Jacob Katz, "For a Clarification of the Concept of the Forerunners of Zionism" in Jacob Katz, *Jewish Nationalism* (Jerusalem: Jewish Agency, 1983), 263–284.

2   For further analysis of Rabbi Kalischer's contribution, see Jacob Katz, "The Historic Portrait of Rabbi Zvi Hirsh," ibid., 285–307.

3   On Moses Hess, see Jacob Katz, "For a Clarification of the Concept of the Forerunners of Zionism," ibid., 276–279.

4   For an analysis of the three forerunners of Zionism and the impact of nationalism on their doctrines, see Katz, "The Jewish National Movement: A Sociological Analysis," ibid., 15–35.

5   Ben Halperin explained the appearance of Zionism as a synthesis of the original thesis of traditionalism and the antithesis of modernism. The Zionists, according to Halperin, accepted the Western modernists' idea that there was a Jewish problem that had to be solved rationally, but they rejected their solution – emancipation. Like the traditionalists, the Zionists believed that the Jewish ethnic heritage and culture and the historic myth of Jewish independence and the eventual return of the Jews to their homeland were worth preserving. However, they rejected the traditional notion that since "exile" was a divine punishment, the solution to the Jewish problem was not in human hands and that the only available action was to pray for the relief and restoration to Zion. Halperin, *The Idea of the Jewish State* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1961), 76.

6   For an analysis that combines both Realism and Liberalism, see M. Benjamin Mollov, *Power and Transcendence Hans J. Morgenthau and the Jewish Experience* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2002), 213–215.

7   Quoted in Vital, *Zionism: The Formative Years* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 26.

8   See, for instance, Ahad Ha-Am, "The Negation of the Diaspora," in Hertzberg, *The Zionist Idea*, 270–277.

9   For an in-depth analysis of the contradictions between nationalism and Orthodoxy, see David Vital, *Zionism: The Formative Years* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 225

0   For a comprehensive study of Rabbi Reines' ideology and politics, see Eliezer Don-Yehiya, "Ideology and Policy Formation in Religious Zionism: The Ideology of Rabbi Reines and Mizrahi Policy under his Leadership," *Hatziyonut* 8 (1993): 105–146 [Hebrew].

1   The best source for the Uganda Debate is Michael Heyman, *The Minutes of the Zionist*

General Council, the Uganda Controversy, vol. II (Jerusalem: Zionist Library, 1977), For Shmaryahu Levin's quote see ibid., 12.

2   See Vital's analysis in his *Zionism: the Formative Years*, 303. Heyman's calculations are slightly different but also show a very balanced split vote. See Heyman, *The Minutes of the Zionist General Council*, vol. II, 18.

3   Following his return a series of open letters were exchanged in the press between Ussishkin and Herzl. Ussishkin ended his first letter with a direct attack on the Herzl camp: the "Viennese demonstrated that they could only destroy Eretz Israel but not build it" (Heyman, *The Minutes of the Zionist General Council*, vol. II, 140).

4   In this letter Herzl spoke about how he had started as a Jewish statist and had become a lover of Zion, but was now torn between his heart, which remained with the Zionists, and his mind, which agreed with the "Africans" (ibid., 161).

5   According to Vital, both the Herzlians (especially Zangwill) thought that any territory on which a Jewish state could be established would save the Jew's body and the Jew's soul. The original Odessa Lovers of Zion, the Ahad Ha-Am moralists, the Ussishkinite settlement-first men all looked forward to a reform of the Jewish condition, but at the same time backward for the elements out of which to reconstruct it. And "since the Land of Israel specifically was of course central to past Jewish history and belief, they ended by seeing Eretz Israel as the pivot on which all would turn. To do without it was to lose an indispensable source of strength, a force for renewal as powerful as it was indispensable" (Vital 1986, 87).

6   A decade after writing his comprehensive work on Zionism, David Vital summed up the Uganda debate in a slightly different perspective: "Two linked questions had always been at issue … what was the true and desirable relationship between the Jewish people and other nations; and what was the true and desirable relationship between the Jews and their own historic past?" David Vital, "The Afflictions of the Jews and the Afflictions of Zionism (The Meaning and Consequences of the Uganda Controversy)," in Stuart A. Cohen and Eliezer Don-Yehiya (eds), *Conflict and Consensus in Jewish Political Life* (Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1986), 87.

7   For the statistical information see Roberto Bachi, *The Population of Israel* (Jerusalem: Institute of Contemporary Jewry, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and The Demographic Center, Prime Minister's Office, 1974), 39–41, 399, Table A13. For the land acquisitions, see Baruch Kimmerling, *Zionism and Territory: The Socio-Territorial Dimensions of Zionist Politics* (Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, University of California, 1983), 43, Table 2.1.

8   For the Peel Commissions documents see John Norton Moore (ed.), *The Arab–Israeli Conflict, vol. III: Documents* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1974), 151–183.

9   For an analysis of the political infrastructure in Palestine during the Yishuv period, see Dan Horowitz and Moshe Lissak, *The Origins of the Israeli Polity* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1988). See also Shmuel Sandler, "The Socio-Political Origins of the Israel-Diaspora Relationship" in Eliezer Don-Yehiya (ed.), *Israel and Diaspora Jewry* (Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1990), 143–159.

0   For further analysis of the partition plan, see Meir Avizohar and Isaiah Friedman (eds), *Studies in the Palestine Partition Plans 1937–1947* (Sde Boker: Ben-Gurion Research Center, 1984).

1   Brit Shalom was a group of Jewish intellectuals, founded in 1925 that sought Jewish– Arab coexistence. Its influence was not by the size of its members but rather their quality.

2 The best source for the debate on the Partition Plan is Shmuel Dothan, *Partition of Eretz-Israel in the Mandatory Period, The Jewish Controversy* (Jerusalem: Yad Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, 1979), for the proponent's argument see 55–58 [In Hebrew].

3 A look at the Action Committee formed in Zurich on the eve of the 20th Zionist Congress reveals how widespread was the opposition. It included veteran leaders from the Uganda controversy: Menachem Ussishkin, Berl Katznelson, the ideologue of the Mapai party, Haim Bograshov (General Zionists), Rabbi Meir Berlin (Mizrahi), as well as the leftist Hashomer Hatzair and the State Party (the Revisionist splinter that did not secede from the World Zionist Organization), and American Zionists such as Abba Hillel Silver and Henrietta Szold.

4 For a full analysis of the 1938 Jewish Agency proposal, see Yossi Kats, "The Formation of the Jewish Agency's Partition Proposal of Borders, 1937–1938," *Zion* 56 (1992): 401–439.

4   From community to state

In Chapter 2, we encountered an interesting incongruity. On the one hand we discerned that when the Jews were living in their own land, there was alienation from a strong state. On the other hand, when in the Diaspora, the Jews craved protection of the state and were identified with the ruling political regime. For the Jewish community as a minority, anarchy and revolution were dreadful and moreover, by definition, the Jews as a Diaspora people constituted a minority in every host society in which they dwelled. How did this reality express itself in the transformation from an archetypal Diaspora people to a statist one?

   In the previous chapter we analyzed the ideational appearance of Zionism as both a national awakening in the mid-nineteenth century, and a response to physical and spiritual threats to Jewish existence. Territory played a central role in both national and statist drives. In this chapter we turn to actual implementation and explore the application of those dynamics into state building. In our analysis we shall observe the territorial variable in two contexts: state formation and the construction of state borders. Territoriality in Zionism had several connotations: sanctity, physical, national and statist. All played a part in the transformation from a Diaspora to a territorial community – the Yishuv, and henceforth to territorial statehood.

Theoretical background to state formation

In Chapter 1 we emphasized the centrality of the state in international politics and especially in Realist theories. Without going into the elaborate theoretical literature on state formation I would propose the following insights.[1] Matthew Crenson, in a 1983 book entitled *Neighborhood Politics*, made this observation on the relationship between territoriality and polity:

> There is nothing about territory itself – or about territoriality – that necessarily transforms human groups into political organizations. The political character of a territorial group seems to grow instead out of the kinds of relationships that become possible in organizations that use mere geographic boundaries to define their memberships. Many anthropologists, for example, have regarded the emergence of territorial groups as an essential step toward the development of the state, and what seems to be most essential to political development in this species of organization is the fact that the "territorial link" offers a substitute for kinship and personal relationships in defining and maintaining a group.
>
> (Crenson 1983, 15)

Charles Tilly, who based his work on European state-making, drew a distinction between two

paths to statehood: one, the result of an expansive process by autonomous political units, and the other, the product of the deliberate creation of new states by existing states. In a later work he associated European stateformation with war and the presence of armed forces. Common to both methods is the dominance of statist factors in the construction of the modern polity (Tilly 1975, 636–638, 1990). All three features exist in the formation of a Jewish state in Palestine. The State of Israel was the outcome of the Yishuv that had expanded to become an autonomous unit and the War of Independence in the wake of the 1947 UN partition resolution. Dan Horowitz and Moshe Lissak see the Jewish society and community in Mandatory Palestine as the main force in the shaping of the Israeli state and its political system, defining Israel "as the product of an ideological movement that created a community that was transformed into a state" (1990, 9). Daniel Elazar advanced the notion of the Jewish political tradition. While not discounting the work of Horowitz and Lissak, the present book is closer to the Elazar theory.

As we have observed throughout this book, the Jewish community in Mandatory Palestine is referred to as the Yishuv. The Hebrew root of the word means "settlement." The term derived from the Jewish settlement that had existed in Palestine since the mid-eighteenth century when immigrants from Eastern Europe increased the numbers of the traditional Jewish community living within it. Over time a distinction between the traditional inhabitants and the more recent Jewish immigrants led to the terms "Old" and "New Yishuv." Those who began building homes outside the walls of the Old City of Jerusalem in the 1860s, or in new settlements like Petah Tikva and that were joined by the first wave of new Jewish immigrants from 1882, were the "New Yishuv." This new community developed its own political institutions and, with time, simply became known generically as the Yishuv.

The Yishuv functioned as a polity prior to its recognition as such by the international community. While evolving within the British Mandate framework granted by the League of Nations in 1920, the Yishuv was an indigenous national Jewish creation. The failure of the Arab community in Palestine to develop a similar polity is confirmation that state-building of the Jewish community came from within. The fact that a hitherto Diaspora-based community succeeded in establishing a state proves that the Yishuv was the result of a genuine national movement that had attached a historically special meaning to the territorial element. In addition, the strength of the impulse that motivated the Yishuv can also be explained by the implicit fear that Jewish existence could only be assured by its transformation into a territorial entity.

The conversion of the Yishuv from a territorial community into a polity implied a process of institution building. In order for a population to qualify as a political society or a "center," in Edward Shils' terminology, it must embody values attached to the locus of its institutional authority (1975, 4). Values reinforce authority and legitimatize a central institutional system. In the modern state the center is all-embracing; it integrates all value systems into a central focal point, and there is widespread acceptance of these values, stimulating widespread participation in the center (1975, 46). What distinguished the Yishuv from the Diaspora as it became a political society, and later a state, was the ultimate transformation of the institutional network to a territory. Especially significant was the readiness of the Diaspora-based Zionist movement to accept the leadership of the much smaller territorial entity.

From diaspora to territoriality – the Yishuv

The initial situation of the Jews was not promising by comparison to the objectives. Unlike most contemporary national movements, Zionism had declared its national aspirations while dwelling

outside the desired homeland. The Zionist program called for the transfer of the Jews in the Diaspora to the land which they declared to be their ancient homeland. Zionist aspirations were unique because they were directed at a territory where an unorganized Jewish community was only a small minority. Moreover, even when the organization gathered momentum, its institutions were created in the Diaspora, as was its leadership. However, within less than four decades after its formal establishment in 1897, territorial-based Zionism came to dominate the world-wide movement and, with its establishment, the State of Israel was widely recognized as the world center of the Jewish people. How did this come about and what did it imply?

Legitimacy

At the end of World War I, the Jewish community in Palestine was war-ravaged and almost completely dependent on contributions from Jews abroad or from the Mandate government. Virtually all the Zionist institutions and its leaders were in the Diaspora, either permanently or as a result of expulsion by the Ottoman rulers during the war. However, by 1937 the ratio of Jews to Arabs had changed from 1:10 to 1:3; and in absolute numbers from about 50,000 Jews at the turn of the century to approximately 384,000 at the end of 1936 (Bachi 1974, 39–41; 399, Table AI3). From about 220,000 dunams (56,000 acres) of Jewish-owned land at the turn of the century, land ownership had grown to 1.6 million dunams (400,000 acres) at the end of 1935 (Kimmerling 1983, 43, Table 2.1). Moreover, the economy of the Yishuv was strong enough to withstand the Arab boycott which broke out during the Arab revolt of 1936.

But the most important change had occurred at the institutional level. The changes which took place can be defined as the relocation of a Diaspora-based movement to territorialization. In the Jewish case it denoted the transfer of the Zionist organizational framework from the Diaspora to the territorial entity. It implied not only a change in the distribution of power between the Jewish communities within Palestine, but also a gradual shift in the balance of power between the territorial and the Diaspora elements of the Zionist movement itself. As one could expect, the process of shifting authority was not carried out smoothly. At certain times, the process encountered opposition, for example, when the movement had to decide where the leadership would come from. However, the transfer of institutions and leadership had been formalized by a series of debates in which the issue was when and how to transfer control of the Zionist movement to Palestine. The fact that the debates were even held is evidence that the transfer could not have been taken for granted: the relocation of authority implied a radical new structure of relations between the Diaspora and the territorial center in Palestine (Horowitz and Lissak 1977, Chapter 1).

For an example of this debate one need go no further than to look at the notorious clash that took place in the wake of the Balfour Declaration between the American Zionists headed by Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis and the European Zionists under Chaim Weizmann. Brandeis and his colleagues, while supporting the relocation of the Zionist Executive to Jerusalem, demanded that colonization be accomplished through commercial investment, namely through private enterprise. The Europeans argued that investment in Palestine should be implemented through a central national effort, and should not be measured by criteria of efficiency and business management. At the same time they saw the continuation of diplomatic activity in London as important. This debate indicated that the Europeans were not yet ready to surrender all the resources available in the Diaspora to Palestine (Laqueur 1972, 458–461).

During the late 1920s at a meeting of the Zionist Executive, another debate took place, this

time between Harry Sacher, a prominent British Zionist and a protégé of Weizmann, and leaders of the Histadrut (Federation of Trade Unions in the Yishuv). Brandeis' demand for economic efficiency and free enterprise was now supported by the "Experts' Report" of 1928, promulgated by Jewish non-Zionists who were about to join the Zionists in the Jewish Agency. The Histadrut leaders opposed the call of the Zionist Executive for an economic approach to the settlement in Palestine, and were joined by middle-class Jews in Palestine who viewed the attack on the Histadrut as directed against all the Jewish settlers in Palestine. In an official paper in 1928, the Word Zionist Organization accepted the demands of the territorial leadership. The victory of the Palestine-based Histadrut over the Diaspora-based liberal leadership indicated that the Zionist movement accepted the moral supremacy of the Yishuv and hence had the prerogative to disperse resources as they saw fit (Shapiro 1976, 235–238). This acceptance indicated the commitment to state building that prevailed in the Zionist movement.

The institutional aspect of territoriality

Institutions play an indispensable role in the emergence of a political society on its road to statehood. A comprehensive institution building process took place in the period following World War I in Mandatory Palestine. This was a profound exercise in relocation from the Diaspora to the designated Jewish homeland.

Territorial institution-building was first attempted as early as 1908 when the World Zionist Organization established an office in Palestine. In the wake of the war and anxious to exploit to the full the Balfour Declaration that had recognized Palestine as the national Jewish home, Chaim Weizmann convened a meeting of a Zionist Commission in Palestine, composed of delegates from various countries, in order to reconstruct the Jewish community and to begin attempting to implement Britain's undertaking. In 1921, a high level Zionist Executive, whose Jerusalem office comprised members of the WZO who had moved to Palestine, replaced the Commission. The new body was still subservient to the London office headed by Weizmann. Members of the Executive, however, took upon themselves the task of developing and managing functional bodies. The next step was the relocation of the headquarters of the two main fundraising arms of the WZO – Keren Kayemet LeIsrael (the KKL or Jewish National Fund – JNF) and Keren HaYesod (Foundation Fund) – even though the financial resources were emanating from the Diaspora. In 1922, Menachem Ussishkin, the great opponent of Herzl in the Uganda controversy, was nominated as head of the Jewish National Fund and the head office was moved to Jerusalem. Keren HaYesod, established in 1920 as a fund raising organ for both Zionists and non-Zionists, opened its head office in Jerusalem in 1926 (Eliaved 1976, 136–142).

Development in Palestine required new sources of funding. In 1929 a new organization comprising Zionists and non-Zionists was created to serve the Jewish community of Palestine – the Jewish Agency. This was structured on the principle of parity between Zionists and non-Zionists, but the Jewish Agency and the WZO executives acted as one body and the president of the WZO was also Chairman of the Jewish Agency, thus allowing the Zionist component to predominate.

Despite significant inroads in relocation, the Jewish Agency was still divided between Jerusalem and London. Moreover, the high expectations of mobilizing the non-Zionists into a partnership for building the Jewish homeland in Palestine were not realized. The non-Zionists held back from mobilizing the needed resources and abstained from full participation. While the Zionists saw the institution's main goal as political, the non-Zionists regarded it as philanthropic

(Stock 1987, 59–67).

The Zionist institutional framework that emerged in Palestine was composed of two branches, the World Zionist Organization and Knesset Israel. While the first was Diaspora-based, the second was situated in Palestine. With time, the two institutions came to be known collectively as the "National Institutions." Knesset Israel that came into being immediately following World War I did not receive formal recognition from the Mandatory government until 1926. The emerging structure comprised of representative bodies – the National Assembly [*Asefat haNivharim*] and the National Council [*Va'ad haLeumi*] – and an executive organ, the National Council Executive [*Va'ad haPoel*]. Despite its territorial advantage, Knesset Israel did not emerge as a central institution in the Yishuv. The limited resources available from the Jewish community in Palestine and the refusal of the Mandatory government to extend legitimacy beyond that of a religious community, curtailed its status in comparison to the Jewish Agency. The latter controlled fund raising in the Diaspora.

Zionist institution building in Palestine extended beyond the national institutions. The Histadtrut, the powerful workers trade union, expanded its professional role by setting up economic enterprises together with socia1 services in health, education, labor and immigration. From its inception, it perceived itself as a territory-wide organization, involved in settlement and even in defense. By 1928, membership in the Histadrut encompassed 70 percent of the Jewish work force in Palestine. The expanded role of the Histadrut provided the leadership with a mechanism for mobilizing manpower and resources. In association with other territory-wide organizations such as the kibbutzim, youth movements and party organizations, the Histadrut provided cadres of political activists who were not at the disposal of the Diaspora 1eadership.

Leadership

The transfer of the institutions from the Diaspora to Palestine was accompanied by a concomitant shift in power from a Diaspora-based leadership to one based in Palestine. This relocation of authority implied a political process.

Territoriality necessarily led to the emergence of territory-based political parties in Palestine. Party pluralism theoretically reflected the prominence of ideology in the world-wide Jewish community. In retrospect, power-sharing arrangements among parties contributed to the territory-wide mobilization of an ideologically divided society. The adaptation of power-sharing arrangements indicated a determination on the part of the leadership to territorialize a Diaspora-based community. The need to mobilize the masses in the absence of formal instruments of government, both in the Diaspora and Palestine, promoted a system of proportional representation. In time the parties also functioned as providers of day-to-day services (Horowitz and Lissak 1977, 104–107). The provision of basic services such as education, health care and employment reduced ideological fervor and enabled the parties to function. So did the proportional electoral system.

The WZO determination to territorialize, even if it was not a painless process, ultimately benefitted the institutions based in Palestine. Each of the major Zionist parties had offices in both Palestine and the Diaspora, usually in London or New York or both. Labor leadership was based in Palestine while the leaders of its sister-parties in the Diaspora were merely emissaries from Palestine. In contrast, most of the leadership of the General Zionists party executive, a party advocating free trade, was located outside of Palestine. Similarly, Ze'ev Jabotinsky, the leader of the nationalist Revisionist Party, which perceived itself from its inception as the alternative to the

established Zionist leadership, was exiled by the Mandate government in 1929. In the religious Zionist camp, the leadership was divided between the two locations: HaPoel HaMizrahi leaders (the branch closer to Labor) were mainly in Palestine, while Mizrahi's leaders were mostly in New York as was the Ultra-Orthodox Agudat Israel.

Consequently, Palestinian-based parties in the Labor camp and its leadership ultimately took over the Zionist institutions. In 1921, before the process of territoriality had started, the Labor camp won only 8 percent of delegates to the twelve Zionist Congresses. Over the years and in intervals of two years the Labor camp was constantly in the ascendant and by 1939 accounted for 46.8 percent of the delegates. The double vote given to voters in Palestine clearly proved that Zionism accepted the special status of the pioneers in Eretz Israel. The socialist parties always enjoyed the advantage of organization over the free enterprise General Zionists. But this was not sufficient to explain the leap from 8 to almost 50 percent.[2]

Labor's acquisition of hegemony was the result of a decision by its Palestine-based leaders and especially its main ideologist, Berl Katzenelson, to make a bid for control of the WZO. Having grown gradually but not sufficiently to control the Jewish Agency, in 1933 Mapai, the Labor party under David Ben-Gurion, launched a campaign in Eastern Europe where the majority of the Jewish people still resided. It achieved equality between the Labor camp and the center-right (44 percent for each camp), but it took another electoral campaign to achieve plurality over the contending parties.

Labor's ascendency was challenged by the Revisionist party which, in 1925, began acting as an independent political faction, both in the Diaspora and in Palestine. Gathering strength in Poland, home to the world's largest Jewish community and augmenting its support in Palestine, the Revisionists increased their share of the electorate in both the National Assembly and the Zionist Congress. Ze'ev Jabotinsky, a charismatic leader with extraordinary oratorical abilities and an innovative ideologist, became a potential heir to Weizmann, who, at the 1931 Congress failed in his bid for re-election for presidency of the WZO. But, the Revisionists did not participate in the infrastructure-building pursued by Labor. This put them in an inferior position vis-à-vis Mapai which, despite its socialist ideology, surfaced as the party most dedicated to the settlement of the land. Jabotinsky's natural allies on social and economic issues, the middle-class General Zionists, rallied around Ben-Gurion thus allowing him to assemble a governing coalition in 1931 which reflected the victory of territoriality.

Indeed, the composition of the Zionist Executive reflected the territoriality factor. Up to 1933, at least half of the Executive's members lived abroad; in 1935 six of its seven members resided in Palestine. Dr. Chaim Arlosorov, the rising star of the Labor movement, replaced Colonel Frederick Kisch, Weizmann's representative in Jerusalem, as head of the political department of the Zionist Executive. Following the 1933 elections, Labor gained three members in the Executive: Moshe Shertok (later Sharett), political department, Eliezer Kaplan, treasury, and Ben-Gurion himself who, although he continued to serve as general secretary of the Histadrut, became chairman of the Zionist Executive and the Jewish Agency – a position that had been formally vacant since 1923. Yitzchak Ben-Zvi, one of Ben-Gurion's closest associates, was elected chairman of the National Council Executive in 1931. Ben-Gurion, the leader of the strongest political party, now controlled all the national institutions (Bar-Zohar 1980, 114–123).

The rise of Ben-Gurion reflected the transfer of power from Chaim Weizmann, the Diaspora leader, to the territorial-based leadership. Weizmann, who had emerged as the uncontested world Zionist leader following the Balfour Declaration, persisted in seeing the locus of Zionist activity as in London, the center of the Mandatory authority. His loss in 1931 of the WZO presidency

echoed the shift in power from the Diaspora to Palestine. Although an accomplice to Weizmann's defeat, upon his attaining the chairmanship of the Zionist Executive, Ben-Gurion insisted that Weizmann should return to the presidency of the WZO. Ben-Gurion needed Weizmann as the titular leader of the Jewish people in the Diaspora and for advancing Zionist interests in London, in which Weizmann was most adept. As chairman of the Zionist Executive, Ben-Gurion controlled the financial resources of the movement and their allocation.

Ben-Gurion's assumption of the Zionist Executive chairmanship in 1935, and his emergence as the leader of the world-wide Zionist movement, emanated from his prominence in the territorial power-base. The suggestion that it was socialist ideals that delivered the Zionist movement to Labor is unsatisfactory, as the majority of Zionists were actually middle class. Moreover, even in 1935, the non-socialist parties in the WZO still had a majority and could control the movement. Once Labor leaders and ideologues acknowledged the fact that Diaspora Jews were not about to become proletarian, they concentrated on getting their votes. Labor's success cannot be attributed to Ben-Gurion's personal charisma; contemporary evidence tells us that both Weizmann and Jabotinsky were more charismatic than the socialist firebrand from Palestine. Ben-Gurion was neither a great orator nor an impressive writer or intellectual. He was the product of the party apparatus, and yet he defeated Weizmann, the distinguished diplomat and scientist and Jabotinsky, the eloquent orator and publicist.

Labor's triumph in 1935 was a victory for territoriality. Their location of the Labor camp in the Land of Israel inspired the Zionist voters in the Diaspora. Labor's ability to give tangible expression on the ground to Zionist territorial maxims enthralled Zionists in the Diaspora. It was territoriality that sanctified Labor as the center radiating authority, to use Edward Shil's concepts, and legitimized its leadership over the Diaspora-based part of the movement. Again, in order to appreciate this transformation we must stress the importance that the Zionist movement gave to the relocation of the Jewish people from a Diaspora-based entity to a territorial one.

From the Yishuv to statehood

The turning of the Yishuv into a territorial-political institution was accompanied by a geo-political strategy eventually designed to transform the territorial community into an actual state. The evolution of the Jewish polity from a Diaspora-based organization to a territorial community – to be followed by a Jewish state established on only a portion of the historic-biblical land – is another demonstration of the urge in Zionist strategy for Jewish survival in the face of external realities during the first half of the twentieth century.

Although we have no precise theological-geographic map of the boundaries of the biblical Land of Israel, the core of the region is clear. Drawing upon the biblical narrative a possible map is that of the 12 tribes that conquered and lived on the land during the pre-monarchical era. A more expanded biblical based map would be that of the kingdoms of David or Solomon, followed by the southern and northern kingdoms of Judea and Israel. A historically-based map could also be drawn of the early Second Temple period, followed by the Hasmonean era, and the Kingdom of Herod.[3]

And yet, although territorial variations occurred during different periods in Jewish history, the regions of Judea and Samaria constituted the heartland of all the ancient Jewish kingdoms. Judea, first with its regional capital Hebron (the burial place of the patriarchs and matriarchs of the nation), and then Jerusalem became the center of the united kingdoms of David and Solomon. Shechem (Nablus) was the burial place of Joseph, the forefather of the Tribe of

Ephraim and the surrounding mountains witnessed the entrance of the Israelites into the Land of Israel. The Tabernacle was located at Shilo in Samaria which was the capital of the Kingdom of Israel which emerged following the division of David's kingdom after his death. Judea and Samaria were also the center of the Second Commonwealth and the Hasmonean Kingdom. How then can we explain the fact that the heart of the historic Land of Israel was not included within the borders of the newly established State of Israel? The answer lies in the settlement patterns and the strategy of the 1948–1949 War as well as the struggle over Jerusalem in those years.

Settlement patterns in the pre-state era

Following the War of Independence, the area in question became known as the "West Bank" (of the Jordan River). Part of the answer to the question posed above can be found in the pattern of Jewish settlement that emerged prior to the actual achievement of sovereignty in 1948. The most significant feature of the settlement pattern was its geo-strategic dimension. Crucial to this was the concept that the creation of space should be an institutional undertaking to be coordinated by a public body even if subsequently the land would be transferred to private ownership.[4] In 1908, the Palestine Land Development Company (PLDC) had already been established and was followed by the Jewish National Fund (JNF) that played the central role in land purchasing.[5] Significantly, it was presumed from its inception that land had to be purchased, thus continuing a Jewish tradition hallowed in the narrative of the nation's forefathers.[6]

The second principle, adopted by Dr. Arthur Ruppin, the head of the Palestine Bureau of the World Zionist Organization, was strategic planning of settlements. It implied concentrating on certain regions and building settlements near to each other, thus creating a localized Jewish majority and a contiguous strategic bloc; the four holy cities of the Old Yishuv – Jerusalem, Hebron, Tiberias, and Safed – and the core of additional Jewish settlements.

A third element connected with Ruppin's settlement strategy was the creation of territorial continuity between the two agricultural blocs in the northeast and southwest. The intention was to create a corridor that would eventually link the two blocs by way of the shore and between the Jaffa region bloc and Jerusalem, in which the Jews had comprised the largest ethnic group since 1840 and a majority since 1880 (Bachi 1974, 33–34).

A fourth consideration was the avoidance of settlements in densely inhabited Arab regions, which were concentrated particularly in the Mountains of Judea and Samaria. In retrospect, the pre-1914 map of Palestine was an embryo of the 1937 partition plan which in itself was the rudiment for the eventual Jewish state of 1948.

The strategic aspect of settlement policy became decisive as the Yishuv progressed. Insights such as the cultivability of the land, the number of owners with whom they had to negotiate, the number of *fellaheen* (Arab peasants) on the land, were replaced by personal and settlement security considerations. The creation of a territorial continuum became a dominant consideration in the policy of land purchase. Arab hostility and the growing intercommunal conflict also influenced the land purchases away from the densely populated Arab areas. Security and political considerations were linked. The valleys of Jezreel and Zebulun were purchased, in order to strengthen the link between the coastal plain and the Jewish settlements around the Sea of Galilee. Subsequently, land purchases were concentrated in the coastal area, the two major cities along the coast (Haifa and Tel Aviv) and Jerusalem. The strategic logic of the settlement policy proved itself during the 1936–1939 Arab Revolt. The strategic thinking on which the settlement pattern had been based strengthened the ability of the Yishuv to withstand the Arab riots and

boycotts, both physically and economically.

The Royal Commission's conclusions concerning the viability of the Yishuv and its recommendations that the Jewish state should essentially be established around the concentrations of Jewish settlements and landownership, also justified the rationale of the settlement strategy. Consequently the Yishuv advanced a new wave of land purchases, especially on the outlying margins of the proposed partition plan, designed to create a fait accompli, and thus broaden the geo-strategic borders of the partition plan. Between 1936 and 1939, 55 new Jewish settlements were created (Kimmerling 1983, 87).

Land purchases and settlement policies were given a new urgency by the issuing of a government White Paper in 1939. This British document, designed to pacify the Arab demands, often accompanied by violence, prohibited the free purchase of land in almost all parts of Palestine except along the narrow coastal strip. For the Yishuv, the purchase of land and the establishment of settlements became a central device in the struggle against the White Paper. In a famous statement, Ben-Gurion said, "We will fight the White Paper as if there was no war, and the war as if there was no White Paper." During the 1940s the national institutions gave priority to political and strategic consideration over the availability or cultivability of land. As a result of the expanded Jewish presence, changes in the 1947 partition plan favored the Yishuv more than had been the case in the 1937 plan.[7] Moreover, the territory of the Jewish state expanded even further during the 1948–1949 war in comparison to the 1947 partition plan. Ultimately it was the establishment of the state that brought significant control of land. Ben-Gurion stressed this point in May 1949:

> During the 70 years of our [Zionist] activities, since the establishment of Petach Tikva until the establishment of the state we redeemed around a million and eight hundred thousand dunams (450,000 acres) of land, an average of around 25 thousand dunams per year. Now we control above 20 million dunams. Had we kept to the pre-state pace, we would have needed 800 years to reach this size of space.[8]

This pronouncement confirms our understanding of leaders of the stature of Ben-Gurion. Without downplaying the importance of the settlement policy it was statecraft that ultimately brought about the change. As a result of Israel's victories in the War of Independence, Israel's territory was 20 percent more than what the UN partition plan had designated for the Jewish state. In short, settlement in Palestine was the product of strategic planning, executed by a statist organization designed to establish a state. The determination to establish a state was, as we have shown above, based on the belief that a sovereign state was the only way to save the Jewish people from annihilation.

The geo-strategy of the 1948 war

The pattern of settlement had an impact on the spatial scope of the nation; the actual borders of the State of Israel emerged out of the War of Independence. The war that broke out followed Israel's Declaration of Independence on May 14, 1948, and came to a conclusion with the Armistice Agreements signed with the Arab states between February and July 1949. It is still the longest war in the history of the Arab–Israeli conflict.

For the Arab states the primary goal of the war was, as could be expected, to prevent the emergence of a Jewish political entity. The Zionist goal was to dismantle the Arab states' objective. At the same time, since the Arab states had their own territorial aspirations, the war

was also over borders. Four regions were at stake: western Galilee, the central mountain and plains region, the coastal strip, and the Negev. According to the United Nations' partition plan of 1947, the first two regions were to be part of the Arab state, the third – the coastal plain – was Jewish, while the Negev was to be divided between the State of Israel and the forthcoming Arab state. As a result of the war, part of the regions allotted to the Palestinian state were either taken over by Israel or divided: Western Galilee went to Israel, the central mountain and plains region was divided between Israel and Jordan and in the south, the Gaza Strip ended up under Egyptian control, while Israel annexed some territory in the area of Ashdod and Ashkelon. A close examination of the war indicates that the geopolitical structure that emerged was not coincidental. The security of the state-to-be and its economic sustainability enjoyed the highest priority in Israel's war strategy and determined the map that ultimately emerged. In order to understand the strategy of war from the perspective of this book, we shall divide it into several stages.

The first stage of the war ended on June 11, 1948, with the first cease-fire. At this point the Palestinian Liberation Army, which had entered from Lebanon, controlled the central part of the Upper Galilee. The Negev, which had been included by the 1947 partition plan within the Jewish state, was detached from Israel by the attacking Egyptian forces which crossed the international border on the day following Israel's Declaration of Independence. By the end of May 1948, Egyptian forces controlled the Majdal and Hebron areas and threatened both Tel Aviv and Jerusalem from the south. In the central mountain region most of the area was controlled by the Arab Legion (the army of Transjordan) and by Iraqi forces. On June 27, Count Folke Bernadotte, the United Nations mediator for Palestine, advanced a proposal which, *inter alia*, suggested that the Negev should be included within the emerging Arab state in exchange for western Galilee, which should be included in the Jewish territory. Thus, in rough terms, the Jewish state would be composed of the entire Galilee and the coastal strip, while the Arab state would be formed from the central mountain region and the Negev, an outline resembling the 1937 partition plan.

An analysis of the war strategy in the next two stages would reveal that the emerging Israel Defense Forces (IDF) under the political direction of Ben- Gurion, devoted most of its effort against the Egyptian Army in order to gain control of the Negev and against the invading forces in the North. In contrast, with the exception of the battle over the road to besieged Jerusalem, the IDF tried to minimize its confrontation with the Arab Legion. This was not coincidental. The Negev had vast but arid land, and as such provided strategic depth between the forthcoming Jewish state and Egypt, the largest Arab nation. The Galilee was rich in fertile land and vital water assets. The coastal strip connected the two regions and constituted the maritime connection with the world, a crucial element for a country intent on bringing in immigrants. The ultimate status of the central mountain region overlooking central Israel was also important strategically. As we have emphasized, these regions were of historical importance as they constituted the base of the two ancient kingdoms of Judea and Israel.

Israel's compromise must be seen in the context of the relationship between the Zionists and the Hashemite Kingdom. Contact between the Hashemites and the Zionist movement dated back to 1922 when Mandatory Palestine was partitioned in order to fulfill some of the promises that the British had made to Sharif Hussein ibn Ali, the founder of the Hashemite Dynasty during World War I. Abdullah, who aspired to establish the Arab Empire promised to his father saw in the Emirate of Transjordan, a base from which to broaden his ambitions. He saw in the Zionists a potential ally with whom he could cooperate in order to advance his imperial plans. In 1937, Abdullah had already indicated his desire to annex the Arab state as proposed by the Royal

Commission.[9] When the idea of a second partition of Palestine was slowly taking root, following World War II, negotiations between the two sides resumed. Following the independence of Transjordan in March 1946, as the only solution to the impasse seemed partition of Western Palestine. Abdullah aspired to annex the Arab part of western Palestine to his kingdom. Following the adoption by the United Nations of the partition plan, Abdullah attempted to receive a mandate from the Arab League for the conquest of Palestine.

To be sure, Golda Meir, who had come in secret to Amman to attempt to reach an agreement, was told by Emir Abdullah on the eve the anticipated Israeli Declaration of Independence, that he would have to enter Palestine and attack the newly-established Jewish state. Despite Golda Meir's threat that under such conditions borders would be decided by force, both sides tried to maintain tacit understanding (Schueftan 1986, 47–58).[10] The Israel–Transjordan front, with the possible exception of the battle over Jerusalem, did not deteriorate to a general war. Both sides tried to improve their strategic positions but did not erase the understandings that had been arrived at during the pre-war encounters. The IDF concentrated on opening a safe road to Jerusalem and conquering the Lod–Ramle area thus providing strategic depth for both Tel Aviv and Jerusalem and control of the international airport. Correspondingly, the Arab Legion's military activity was limited to the Jewish settlements of the Etzion bloc, an area designated by the UN partition plan to be within the Arab state.

Tacit cooperation with Emir Abdullah persisted during the third stage of the war that resumed in October 1948 when the IDF confronted the Egyptian army without major interference from the Arab Legion in the East. In exchange, Ben-Gurion ordered the IDF Harel Brigade to withdraw from the vicinity of Hebron area, following the expulsion of the Egyptian forces thus allowing the Arab Legion to enter the area. In the following months the IDF stood by and allowed the Arab Legion to take over the area that became known later as the West Bank. Henceforth the IDF repelled the Egyptian Army without any interference, and conquered the Negev, all the way to Eilat (Umm al-Rashrash) on the Red Sea (ibid., 83–86).

Separating the Gaza Strip and expelling the Egyptian forces from the Hebron area had an additional advantage for Israel. It severed the link between Gaza, where on October 1 the Palestinian National Council headed by the Mufti Haj Amin al-Husseini, declared the independence of Palestine, from the west bank of the Jordan. It allowed the Hashemite rule to establish itself among the local leaderships. The way to political annexation of the area by Transjordan was now paved. The mayor of Hebron, Muhamad Ali al-Jabary, the president of the Jericho Conference, and the local overlords nominated Abdullah as king of the West Bank. On April 24, 1950, the new Jordanian parliament decided on the unification of the two banks of the Jordan into one state (ibid., 214).

Relinquishing both the Hebron mountain area and Samaria to the Hashemite Kingdom was not an easy step for the Israeli decision-makers in general and for Ben-Gurion in particular. His dilemmas on the issue represent the complexity of the issue that has not been resolved until today.

On September 26, 1948, Ben-Gurion suggested that the Cabinet exploit a minor incident by the Arab Legion to break the cease-fire and attack the Latrun area. Had the attack taken place, it could have led to the conquest of Jerusalem and the Hebron region east to the Jordan River. The proposal was turned down by a vote of seven to five. Fourteen years later this cabinet decision was dubbed by Ben-Gurion as a "woe for generations" [*behiya l'dorot*]. Ben-Gurion explained that he was aware of the problem of 100,000 Arabs living in the Hebron–Bethlehem region, but he presumed that they would flee just as the Arabs had fled from other towns that Israel had

conquered (Bar-Zohar 1980, 319).

Another indication of his desire to conquer the land up to the Jordan was expressed subsequent to a visit to Ein Kerem, a village south of Jerusalem, where he could see the Mediterranean to the west and the Mountains of Moab to the east. On December 22, 1948, he wrote in his diary, "All the strongholds south of Jerusalem are spread out before us.… It is difficult not to acquire them. After all, the natural border is the Jordan." Following the conquest of Eilat, Ben- Gurion wrote, "Is it now the turn of the Northern Triangle?" (Nablus, Jenin, Tul Karem). Several months later, on a trip to Eilat with officers of the IDF General Staff, Ben-Gurion stopped on the road. Awestruck by the sight of the Moab Mountains in Transjordan, he turned to one of his young generals and asked: "How would you conquer those mountains?" The general, having started his explanation, stopped and asked in great surprise: "Ben-Gurion, why do you ask? Do you wish to conquer these mountains?" The prime minister answered, "Not I, but you will" (ibid., 331).

Ben-Gurion was not religious but was by no means indifferent to the historical importance of the areas that the Hashemite King had now acquired. He saw the State of Israel as built on the biblical or post-biblical legacies and principally in the spirit of the prophets. He equated the creation of the IDF to the reigns of Kings Saul, David and Solomon and the idea of combining labor with military defense to the practice exercised in the building of the Second Temple during the days of Ezra and Nehemiah.[11] In a speech in January 1949, he stated:

> Just as we are rooted in the soil of our homeland, we are also rooted in the soil of our past. We shall not be what we should be without constant nourishment from the ancient sources of our existence and without adhering to the roots of our past.
>
> (Ben-Gurion, vol. 1, 1962, 32)

In this speech, he went on and emphasized the importance of the study of the Bible and archeology in order to discover the past. Ben-Gurion stated that although Israel was the youngest state in the world, it had been established by one of the most ancient nations, one that had survived for over 3,000 years (ibid., 44).

But above all, Ben-Gurion was pragmatic. At this moment in Jewish history, just a year after the establishment of the Jewish state and after 2,000 years of exile, he ended his address by drawing attention to the plentiful land that was now "empty" (*sic*) and available to the Jewish masses. Referring to the south, he focused on the most recent accomplishment of the War of Independence – the conquest of Eilat. After stressing the importance of the sea to Israel's commerce and suggesting that Eilat could be seen as continuation of King Solomon's attempt 3,000 years earlier to build a navy, he turns attention in a pragmatic direction:

> The Negev was given to us by the law of nations, and the IDF implemented this judgment. But only massive settlement will establish the Negev in the judgment of history, and it is only the pioneering youth who will know both how to build and defend, that will implement the work of history which will last forever.
>
> (Ibid., 119)

In retrospect, bearing in mind Ben-Gurion's pragmatic approach to politics, it would seem that the prime minister did not consider the September 26, 1948 rejection of his proposal to conquer the Hebron area and reach the Jordan River, as critical.[12] Strategic decisions, those he really wanted to pass, had not been brought to the Cabinet. The fact that he did not try to insure a

majority, neither before the Cabinet meeting nor after it, to reverse the Cabinet's decision and conquer the West Bank confirms that he was not interested in passing the decision. When he wanted to pass the decision to attack the Egyptians in the South, Ben-Gurion had got the party's approval and only then put it to a Cabinet vote. Unlike the proposal to conquer the Arab Legion and conquer what came later to known as the West Bank the proposal to break the cease-fire in the South was put before the Cabinet as the first and primary item on the agenda (Ben-Gurion 1969, 294). Significantly, the decision not to attack the Arab Legion was made at the same session when a delegation appeared and helped Ben-Gurion to convince his cabinet that a partitioned Jerusalem would be preferable to a united but international Jerusalem.[13]

Dividing Jerusalem

There is no case study that can better prove the preference given to the birth of the state over all other considerations than the case of Jerusalem.

No area has greater religious and historical significance in Judaism and for the Jewish people than Jerusalem. The city has always combined religious, historical and political elements. In the Jewish narrative as well as the Christian one Jerusalem, Zion, was where the Temple had twice been built and twice destroyed. The city is mentioned over and over again – nearly 700 times – in the Hebrew Bible. The Temple Mount is identified as the site where Abraham had nearly sacrificed his son Isaac when tested by God and hence was chosen by King Solomon as the place where to build the Temple. It was here where the altar was placed and the sacrificial service was conducted. Within the sanctuary called the "Holy of Holies," the Ark of the Covenant was placed and the High Priest would enter once a year on *Yom Kippur,* the Day of Atonement. It would be here, according to traditional Judaism, that the Messiah will come at the end of the days. Religious Jews recite three times a day, the most sacred prayer in Judaism, known as the *Amidah* (from the root "standing;" the prayer is recited standing up):

> And to Jerusalem, thy city, return in mercy, and dwell therein as thou hast spoken; rebuild it soon in our days as an everlasting building, and speedily set up therein the throne of David. Blessed art thou, O Lord, who rebuildest Jerusalem.

In an ensuing section, followed by a prayer for the coming of the offspring of King David, the following sentence is repeated also three times a day: "And let our eyes behold thy return in mercy to Zion. Blessed art thou, O Lord, who restores thy divine presence unto Zion." Zion is used habitually as a synonym for Jerusalem.[14]

Jerusalem, the capital of the United Kingdom under David and Solomon and the seat of subsequent kings of Judea, is identified with the glorious past of the Jews as well as with the future redemption and restoration of Jewish sovereignty. It is the only place in the country where a Jewish presence has never ceased to exist. Moreover, ever since the mid-nineteenth century the Jews have constituted the largest ethnic community in the city. The pre-state city was the seat of the Zionist Executive (later the Executive of the Jewish Agency), Keren Hayesod, the Jewish National Fund, the Va'ad Leumi, the Chief Rabbinate and the Hebrew University. In 1948, 100,000 Jews, a sixth of the population of the Yishuv, resided in Jerusalem. Nevertheless, the Yishuv accepted the United Nations partition plan which excluded Jerusalem from Israel sovereign, conferring on it the status of a *corpus separatum* – an international city.

And yet despite all the historical weight, the strategy adopted by the emerging Jewish state vis-à-vis Jerusalem was that it was prepared to give up control of the city for the sake of Jewish

statehood.[15] But Ben-Gurion, as we shall see, discerned an intermediate option.

The decision that it was more important to establish a Jewish state than a Jewish Jerusalem had been accepted already in 1937 when the Jews accepted the partition plan that had designated Jerusalem as a British enclave. It was during those years that some Yishuv leaders contemplated a divided Jerusalem that would leave the western part of the city within the forthcoming Jewish state.[16] While ready to sacrifice Jerusalem for the sake of a Jewish state, in early 1948, Ben-Gurion apparently considered that by dividing Jerusalem between Israel and an Arab entity, he would be able to do away with the idea of a *corpus separatum* as proposed in UN Resolution 181 of 1947. He thus reached the far-reaching conclusion, in reverse of King Solomon's famous judgment and contrary to the majority of his cabinet, that half of Jerusalem was preferable to a united city under international control. The political behavior and the emanating military strategy would confirm this proposition.

On June 16, 1948 the issue of an international united Jerusalem came up before the Cabinet. Ben-Gurion opened the meeting with a declaration that the UN partition decision of November 29 was null and void (Ben-Gurion 1969, 165). He spoke about Jerusalem in strategic terms and made the following remark:

> The most important question that I see from a military perspective is that of Jerusalem. From a military perspective the war over Jerusalem is a war over Eretz Israel. Jerusalem is important not only because of its history but also because of its strategic location.
>
> (Ibid., 167)

Ben-Gurion's rhetoric with regard to Jerusalem was designed to influence the Cabinet that was prepared to accept an international Jerusalem, to accept his Realist rationale concerning the city.

The Cabinet reached the decision on Jerusalem formally on September 26, 1948, prior to rejecting Ben-Gurion's initiative to break the truce and attack the Arab Legion. Ben-Gurion wrote in his diary that the Jerusalem delegation that appeared before the Cabinet helped to reverse "the stupid decision that had been accepted previously with a 5 to 4 majority – to prefer an international Jerusalem to a Jewish Jerusalem, if the price was to share it with the Arabs" (Ben-Gurion, vol. 3, 1982, 722).

Did the military situation correspond with the political strategy? In the period between May 13 – the day the British evacuated Jerusalem – and June 10, a series of heavy battles took place. During that month, the Haganah (forerunner of the IDF) failed in three attempts to conquer Latrun, an Arab Legion stronghold that controlled the road to Jerusalem. The Arab Legion conquered Gush Etzion, a Jewish area of settlements south of the city and the Jewish Quarter of the Old City. But, at the same time, the Haganah consolidated its hold over West Jerusalem and succeeded in breaking the siege of Jerusalem and securing a corridor from the city to the coast. Abdullah, for his part, conveyed a message to Israel indicating self-imposed limitations that the Arab Legion took on itself. Although the Arab Legion, after conquering the Old City, launched several local offensives, overall it did not make a concerted effort to conquer the whole city. In May 1948 the Arab Legion tried to reach a direct agreement with the Haganah on how to avoid a battle over Jerusalem (Schueftan 1986, 133–134; Ben-Gurion, vol. 1, 1982, 383). This combination of military and political factors convinced Ben-Gurion that a tacit partition of Jerusalem was possible. Ben-Gurion kept the de-facto partition even when the IDF had the upper hand and the conquest of all of Jerusalem possible if additional forces had been diverted to that front.

What was the rationale behind Israel's strategy? As we have indicated, Ben-Gurion realized

that the conquest of the whole city could endanger Israel's hold over half of it. A conquest by Israel of the Old City with its Christian and Muslim holy sites would have induced the outside world to force Israel to abandon the whole city in favor of its internationalization. The publication of the Bernadotte

Plan on September 26, in which the internationalization of Jerusalem was recommended, indicated that that only a partition of the city between Jews and Arabs would ensure Israeli control over the Jewish section. An agreement between Israel and an Arab ruler like Abdullah could release the pressure and ensure Jewish control of West Jerusalem. Time was of the essence. Ben-Gurion, who also suspected that the second cease-fire in the summer of 1948 would turn into a permanent one, gave priority to ensuring Israel's control over West Jerusalem. One hundred thousand Jews lived in West Jerusalem, which was also strategically important because of its location. The West Bank deal with the Hashemites meant relinquishing the Old City for West Jerusalem. It should be remembered that it was at the Cabinet meeting on September 26 that Ben-Gurion's wish to break the ceasefire and conquer the rest of the land west of the Jordan was rejected. This is additional evidence that Ben-Gurion did not seriously aim at expelling the Arab Legion from Western Palestine.[17] It was geographically impossible to share Jerusalem with the Hashemite Kingdom without partitioning Palestine.

During the third and final phase of the War of Independence the preference for a de facto partition of Jerusalem by both Israel and Transjordan became evident. The IDF that held the upper hand on all the battle fronts refrained from attempting to liberate the Old City. An Israeli military action, the only major battle in Jerusalem during this period, took place on October 19–22, 1948. The Harel Brigade, which had expelled the Egyptian forces from the Hebron Mountains, abstained from any military encounters with the Arab Legion. Following the collapse of the Egyptian forces in the Hebron area, the road to Jerusalem was open and yet, under orders from the government, the IDF disengaged from any military encounters with the Arab Legion in the vicinity of Jerusalem. Correspondingly, Ben-Gurion following the defeat of the Egyptians in the south, when Israel had an army of nearly 100,000 troops, did not turn the IDF against the Arab Legion (ibid., 148). Disrupting the link between Jordan and Egypt by consolidating the Israeli hold over the Negev and conquering Eilat was more pertinent than conquering East Jerusalem, Ben-Gurion used his military advantage to pressure the Jordanians to give up the west–east road leading from the coastal plain to the Galilee known as Wadi 'Ara but not the Old City.

At the same time, Ben-Gurion was resolute over control of West Jerusalem. Now the brawl over the city moved to the diplomatic arena. Pressure to accept internationalization was exerted on Israel from two directions: the UN and the Vatican. Ben-Gurion repeatedly stated his defiance of the UN decisions and the determination of the Jewish state to keep west Jerusalem as an inseparable part of the State of Israel. On December 5, 1949, in an attempt to deflect an imminent UN resolution reaffirming the internationalization of the city, Ben-Gurion convened a Knesset session in which he declared the November 29, 1947 UN Resolution on Jerusalem to be null and void. On December 9, 1949, two days after the UN General Assembly reaffirmed the *corpus separatum* status of Jerusalem, the government of Israel pronounced Jerusalem as its official capital. The actual result of this declaration was fast movement of the Knesset and almost all the government ministries to Jerusalem.[18]

Openly defying the United Nations two years after that body had confirmed the partition resolution which served as the international act of legitimacy, and a prelude to the Declaration of Independence, indicated the centrality of Jerusalem in Jewish discourse. Ben-Gurion's speech at

the Knesset on December 4, 1949, was aimed at this direction. Identifying Jerusalem with the birth of the Israeli nation during the Kingdom of David, he then declared that

> Jewish Jerusalem is an organic and integral part of the State of Israel – just as it is an integral part of Israel's history, Israel's religion and the soul of our people. Jerusalem is the heart of the State of Israel.

He added:

> And we declare that Israel will not give up Jerusalem voluntarily, just as it did not give up for millennia its religion, its national uniqueness and its hope to return to Jerusalem and Zion – despite persecutions that could not be compared to anything else in history. A nation that retained for 2,500 years the awe that the first exiles took by the rivers of Babylon – not to forget thee O Jerusalem – this nation will never accept the separation of Jerusalem. And Jewish Jerusalem will never accept foreign rule – after its sons and daughters liberated for the third time their historic homeland and redeemed Jerusalem from annihilation and destruction.
>
> (Ben-Gurion, vol. 2, 1962, 92)

On December 13, 1949, Ben-Gurion declared Israel's rejection of the December 9, General Assembly resolution on internationalization of Jerusalem and announced the intention to move the government to the city. He suggested to the Knesset that it also move within the framework of confirming Jerusalem as the national capital. And, despite protests, Israel speedily proceeded to turn Jerusalem into the seat of government. In retrospect, it seems that Ben-Gurion's calculations proved themselves. The fact that the city remained divided between Israel and the Kingdom of Jordan weakened international pressure to implement the internationalization formula, and West Jerusalem remained in the hands of Israel. The price was that the Old City remained occupied by Jordan.

Conclusion

In this chapter we demonstrated the determination of the Zionist Movement to transform a Diaspora-based movement into a territorial polity. Territory has always played a significant role in the Jewish political tradition, whether in its positive or its adverse connotations. The term "Exile" implied the opposite of territory – the absence of a territorial Jewish polity. Terminating the Diaspora implied building a territorial center which would eventually become a state. State formation implied building a territorial center that would radiate authority over the Jewish people. This was to be accomplished first by erecting a political center in Palestine. The construction of a territorial entity was to be accomplished by transferring resources, institutions and leadership from the Diaspora to the Land of Israel. The ultimate willingness of the Diaspora leadership to this process of transformation indicated their acquiescence to the historic revolution that the Jewish people was to undergo.

But security in the nation-state international system could be accomplished only by creating a sovereign state. The second stage, therefore, was state formation. During the territoriality stage a network of settlements was built along the areas that were destined to become the state. This pattern already reflected a statist rationale. Now at the latter stage further preference was given to geographical areas that would ensure economic viability of the state and strategic continuity over

historic land. The battles of 1948–1949 demonstrate that this was the war strategy of the Yishuv. Most indicative of this strategy was the battle for Jerusalem. Despite the sanctity of Jerusalem in Jewish tradition, Ben-Gurion preferred to preserve at least half of the city over an internationalized *corpus separatum* sanctioned by the UN. The price was that the Hashemite Kingdom retained control of the Old City. Realism dictated that the land was to be partitioned and the Yishuv leadership acquiesced despite the heavy price. If proof was needed to the necessity of a state for Jewish survival, the Holocaust provided it in abundance.

The essence of political Zionism implied ending exile through exchanging the Diaspora for territory. In the original design, the Jews were destined to immigrate to the Land of Israel where they would become a clear majority and achieve sovereignty; the Jews remaining in the Diaspora would eventually assimilate and disappear. The Diaspora, however, did not disappear even after the Holocaust. This factor, as we shall see in the next chapter, influenced *inter alia* the foreign policy of the newly-established Jewish state.

Notes

1 For a comprehensive summary on state formation see Frances Fukuyama, *The Origins of Political Order: From Prehuman Times to the French Revolution* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2011), Chapter 5.

2 For a comprehensive analysis of the vote, see Dan Horowitz and Moshe Lissak *Trouble in Utopia, the Overburdened Polity of Israel* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1990), 117 and 142.

3 For a collection of views, see articles in Adam Doron (ed.), *The State of Israel and the Land of Israel* (Kfar Saba: Beit Berl, 1988) [in Hebrew].

4 For the origins Ruppin's land strategy see Shalom Reichman and Shlomo Hasson, "A Cross-Cultural Diffusion of Colonization: From Posen to Palestine," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 74 (1984): 57–70.

5 The three main organs purchasing land in the period between 1910 and 1914 were the PLDC that purchased land and sold most of it to private enterprises, the JNF which kept its purchases in public hands, and Baron de Rothschild's philanthropic organizations .

6 See for instance the purchasing by Abraham of a cave for the burial of his wife Sarah from Ephron the Hittite. Although he was offered the land free of charge, he preferred to pay for it (Genesis 23:1–20). This site came to be known as the Patriarch's Cave – the "Cave of Machpelah" by Jews and "Sanctuary of Abraham" by the Moslems.

7 Eighty-four settlements were established in the period between 1939 and the end of the British Mandate. Between 1936 and 1947, the years of the Arab Revolt and the White Paper, 139 settlements were established; 53 were in area A where no Jewish land purchases were allowed, and 65 in area B where transfers of land to Jewish ownership were allowed only through special permission from the High Commissioner. In the free zones where land was also very fertile, only 21 settlements were established. Arieh L. Avneri, *The Claim of Dispossession: Jewish Land-Settlement and the Arabs 1878–1948* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1984), 257.

8 This quotation appears in a speech entitled "The Historic Revolution is only Beginning." See David Ben-Gurion, *The War of Independence: Ben Gurion's Diary* vol. I, Gershon Rivlin and Elchanan Oren (eds.) (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1982), 149 [Hebrew].

9 For documented details see Itamar Rabinovich, *The Road Not Taken: Early Arab Israeli Negotiations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 41. The Zionist–Hashemite relationship has been discussed by many analysts. One of the most comprehensive books is Dan Schueftan, *A Jordanian Option, the Yishuv and the State of Israel* vis-à-vis *the*

Hashemite Regime and the Palestine National Movement (Tel Aviv: Yad Tabenkin, 1986), especially Chapter 3.

0   For another reliable empirical work on the Israeli–Hashemite interaction see Yosef Nevo, *Abdullah and the Palestinian Arabs* (Tel Aviv: Papyrus, 1975), Chapters 1–2. [Hebrew].

1   Included in Ben-Gurion's famous address to the IDF High Command, entitled "Uniqueness and Destiny" which was almost entirely dedicated to the search for roots. According to the biblical account, the builders of the Second Temple during the return to Zion had to construct the sanctuary with one arm while protecting themselves with the other. See Ben-Gurion, *The War of Independence*, vol. II, 7–47 [Hebrew].

2   The rejection appears in his diary only in a very short reference: "Fortunately for us, most of the offensives we launched during the year were not put to the vote of this group." Ben-Gurion, *The War of Independence*, vol. III, 722.

3   See how he referred to these decisions (ibid.).

4   For elaboration see Dore Gold, *The Fight for Jerusalem* (Washington, DC: Regency 2007), 35–61.

5   Michael Brecher interviewed many of the individuals involved in the decision-making process of that period, and almost all of them – political figures, civil servants, UN aides, scholars – in essence responded with the same rationale as that of Ben-Gurion regarding Israel's acceptance of the internationalization of Jerusalem: "It was the price to be paid for statehood." All the people interviewed also concurred with Golda Meir's conclusion; "Had the Arabs gone along with the UN Resolution, Jerusalem would not have been the capital." See Michael Brecher, *Decisions in Israel's Foreign Policy* (London: Oxford University Press, 1974), 14–15.

6   For the importance of 1937 in the decision making process with regard to Jerusalem, see Yosi Katz, "The Political Status of Jerusalem in a Historical Context: Zionist Plans for the Partition of Jerusalem in the Years 1937–1938," *Shofar – An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies*, 11 (1993): 41–53; Motti Golani, "The Leadership of the Yishuv and the Question of Jerusalem during the War of Independence," *Cathedra* 54 (December 1989): 156–157 [Hebrew]; and Elhanan Oren, "Jerusalem in Jewish Military Policy Prior to Israel's Declaration of Independence," *Cathedra* 54 (December 1989): 173–175 [Hebrew].

7   Dan Schueftan makes six points in his attempt to prove that the liberation of the Old City of Jerusalem received a low priority. See Schueftan, *A Jordanian Option*, 141–147.

8   On how the Israeli decision-making elite reached the decision on Jerusalem, see Michael Brecher, *Decisions in Israel's Foreign Policy*, Chapter 2.

5 The foreign and national security policies of Israel

Jewish survival as we have seen in Chapter 2 was linked to the state in its various manifestations as a provider of security. Zionism saw in the creation of a Jewish state the most efficacious way to ensure Jewish survival. State building in the Land of Israel, as we saw in Chapter 3 was the first step in assuring the spiritual and physical survival of the Jewish people. In Chapter 4 we examined the territorial-political strategies adopted by the Zionist movement in transforming a Diaspora- based community into a territorial community and thereafter, into a state. In this chapter we turn to other dimensions of the Jewish foreign policy tradition.

Since the question of international orientation was the first major decision that confronted the leadership of the newly established Jewish state, I shall start with Israel's alliance politics. The strategic depth dimension and the part played by violence, namely wars, will follow. In the background of the following analysis, a paramount question will be that of survival or aggrandizement through power. As we shall see, Israeli foreign policy was survival dominant rather than power or ethno-national dominant.

I Alliance politics

When we considered the Jewish approach to alliances I suggested that it tended to be negative. Nevertheless, at the same time alliances were established throughout Jewish history out of existential needs. The case analyzed in the following pages was the most important decision the Jewish state arrived at since the proclamation of statehood. This came to be known as the international orientation decision.

Political Zionism from its inception tried to gain international support for the Zionist enterprise on the principle of assuring the self-interest of the great powers. Evidence of this is Herzl's shuttle diplomacy between the German Kaiser, the Russian Minister of the Interior, the Ottoman Sublime Porte and the British Colonial Office. Weizmann and Ben-Gurion persisted in the principle of seeking the support of the great powers. Ben-Gurion moved his orientation according to shifts in global power, from the Ottoman Empire to Great Britain, during World War I, and to the United States following World War II. On the local level the Jewish Agency executive and, later, the provisional government, both headed by Ben-Gurion, even initiated a bilateral understanding with the Hashemite Kingdom of Transjordan, which resulted in the division of Palestine between the two newly-established states.

Israel's official foreign policy came to be branded as non-alignment. By adopting this international orientation, the newly-born state preceded the non-aligned camp that emerged in the

mid-1950s. Considering that non-alignment was the first and most important decision of the new state, we should ask what was the context for adoption of this policy? How did it converge with the principle of assuring big power support? Moreover, if nonalignment was perceived as best serving Israel's foreign policy interests, why did Israel abandon this orientation in the midst of the Cold War when many new nations were embracing it?

To fully understand Israeli foreign policy during the initial stages of its entrance on the global arena, one must consider the attitude of Israel's founding father. Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion had dominated Israeli foreign policy prior to the declaration of the state in May 1948 and for a long while afterwards, even after his retirement. In the words of Michael Brecher, "in a very real sense BG was the pivot of the decision-making process" (1972, 248). Brecher defined this impact as "the 'BG Complex'" (ibid.).

An analysis of Ben-Gurion's *weltanschauung* would reveal that he had developed a comprehensive and consistent negative belief system towards the Soviet Union. This view of the USSR had preceded his assumption of the role of prime minister. But most important, it was supported by an integrated complex value system. The combination of these two elements according to social psychology entails resistance to change.[1]

Ben-Gurion's negative image of the Soviet Union ranged from the regime per se to a specific comparison of the USSR to its main rival, the United States. Ben-Gurion loathed the Soviet Communist regime stating for instance:

> this regime which destroyed, shattered and uprooted all of human dignity, all of worker's rights, all of human freedom, and is sustained by terror and a secret police, calls itself the government of the workers … or a Socialist republic.[2]

No less was his revulsion for the leader of the Soviet Union. Stalin was for Ben- Gurion, the symbol of negation and pollution, to the extent that he compared him to Mussolini and Hitler (Yariv 1953, 112–118). Most threatening to him was international communism which he perceived as Russian aspiration for world hegemony. Similarly, he considered the Israel Communist party – like all Communist parties in their own countries – as Moscow's agents in the accomplishment of this goal. He claimed,

> Since the foundation of the Catholic Church in Rome and the establishment of the universal rule of the popes – there has not arisen a force in the world that demanded for itself global and absolute authority like that which the leaders of the Bolshevik party demand.
>
> (Ben-Gurion, vol. 2, 1962, 23)

Israel's first prime minister saw the Soviet Union not only as an imperial power but also as an enemy of the Jewish people.[3] He viewed the arbitrary restrictions inflicted on Soviet Jewry as a national disaster, going so far as comparing the situation to a second Holocaust (Ben-Gurion 1957, vol. 3, 197). Detecting Communist Zionist rivalry as early as 1923 he continued to stress the inherent enmity between the two. Even after the Soviets voted in favor of partition at the United Nations, he was convinced that the animosity would not disappear because "the Stalinist regime in its essence and its historical aspirations of imperialism and Russian chauvinism *par excellence,* cannot be reconciled with the existence of a Jewish people having the right of self-determination" (Yariv, 62). He also emphasized that it was naïve to differentiate between anti-Judaism and anti-Zionism, as the leftist but Zionist Hashomer Hatzair party had tried to explain

away Soviet behavior in what came to be known as the "tragic contradiction" (Yariv 1953, 61).

Ben-Gurion did not hesitate to compare the USSR to the United States. Although he did criticize the latter occasionally, he respected the American people infinitely more than the Russians. In August 1950, he compared the two peoples by citing Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America,* in which the author draws a comparison between them. Ben-Gurion wrote:

> The American fights against hazards while the Russian fights against people. The American fights the desert and relies on free enterprise while the Russian fights against civilization and his government is centralistic.… Freedom is the main tool of the American and of the Russian it is subordination.
>
> (Ben-Gurion, vol. 2, 1962, 246–247)

There was an additional Jewish dimension in the international orientation question. This was related to the ability of Israel to influence the regime via public opinion in authoritarian versus democratic regimes. Ben-Gurion had already made this comparison in the 1930s when he tried to explain his Anglo centric orientation. But now he was the leader of a sovereign Jewish state and the Jewish factor had to be taken into consideration. Being aware that the two largest Jewish communities in the world dwelled in America and in Russia, he moved from a position of caution to the open assertion that the only Jewish community that could act on behalf of Israel was the American Jewish community. The reason for this was not that American Jews were somehow better than Russian Jews. "Take away from the American people its freedom and American Jewry will also be paralyzed. Jewish freedom is possible only in a free environment" (Ben-Gurion 1957, 3, 250).

Although Israel's foreign policy leaders may not have developed such a comprehensive image of the Soviet Union as that of Ben-Gurion, their views were not dissimilar to those expressed by him. They despised the Communist regime and its leadership and regarded it as basically hostile to Zionism. Moshe Sharett, Israel's first foreign minister, expressed a Western *weltanschauung.* Golda Meir, Israel's first ambassador to the USSR, expressed clear anti-Soviet opinions and warned against trusting the Soviets, even following Gromyko's celebrated pro-Zionist address at the United Nations in November, 1947. Despite their Socialist ideology, the Mapai ruling elite displayed a pro-Western and particularly pro- American position. Notwithstanding the negative experiences of the British Mandate in Palestine during World War II and its aftermath, the United States, the natural successor to Great Britain, was preferred over the Soviet Union. The Middle Eastern foreign policy of the USSR was seen as the continuation of the imperial policies of Czarist Russia. Ultimately, the Mapai ruling party saw Israel as belonging to the Western bloc even though the United States denied Israel's military requests (Brecher 1972, 251–315).

At the same time it is important to note that, nevertheless, a substantial portion of the Israeli elite were in favor of a pro-Moscow orientation, or at least neutralism, in the global conflict. Besides the Israel Communist party – Maki – the United Workers party – Mapam, a leftist Zionist party – was opposed to the Western orientation espoused by Ben-Gurion. The Zionist Left emerged from the 1949 elections as the second largest party in the Knesset. As we shall see, this reality might have influenced Ben-Gurion to prefer non-alignment. However, his unbridled attacks on the foreign policy demands of the pro-Moscow parties indicated how far he was from their ideology. Indeed, despite heading a Socialist party, he refused to include Mapam in his government coalition.

Nevertheless, how do we explain Israel's non-alignment policy when considering the basic anti-Soviet attitude of the ruling elite, and especially of its prime minister? The trend by Israel away from non-alignment appeared only in the early 1950s, just as newly established states were emerging on the international stage, and we must exclude Israel's nonalignment from the general trend of the Third World countries. A second possibility accords a role to domestic politics in shaping the policy of non-alignment. In the long run, however, Ben-Gurion's harsh reaction to the international orientation of the Israeli left implies that it was a temporary compromise.[4]

The rationale behind non-alignment at the outset was *realpolitik*.[5] The tradition of search for a great power ally automatically implied alignment. Israel's search for new allies among the Great Powers continued. The diplomatic and military needs of the newly-established Jewish state made this an imperative. London's continuing pro-Arab policies excluded Great Britain as a potential ally. Also the decline of Britain as the major power in the Middle East created a vacuum that was filled by the US.

However, Washington refused to supply arms to the new state during Israel's War of Independence. It was the Communist bloc that had supported the establishment of a Jewish state at the United Nations and had sent weapons to the emergent Israel army. Moreover, the migration of Jews from post-Holocaust Eastern Europe to Israel transpired because the Soviet Union had allowed it to come about and Ben-Gurion was fully aware of this. In order not to disrupt the flow of immigration, Ben-Gurion was very careful not to put the issue of Soviet–Jewish migration in the public domain (Barzilai 1982, 131–136, 224–232). In light of these realities, Israel's nonalignment orientation was the right policy to ensure the survival of the new state. The ruling elite was pragmatic enough to disregard its natural tendencies against the Soviet Union and to go along with what was dictated by reality.

The turnabout came several years after the establishment of the state. The beginning of the end unfolded when the government of Israel decided, on July 2, 1950, to support United Nations resolutions and actions in response to North Korean aggression against South Korea. Israel's vote on Korea and failure to establish relations with China at a time when China was still interested in doing so, implied siding with the West against the Communist bloc (Brecher 1974, 112, 160–161). From a historical perspective this was when Israel made a strategic decision that came to fruition several years later.

What was the rationale behind this strategic decision? Both two major researchers, Brecher and Bialer, while disagreeing on the exact date and coming from two different theoretical perspectives, are in agreement that the paramount calculation was one of survival: an Israel–American alliance would induce the Arab countries to abandon their dream of destroying Israel and lead them to accept the reality of a Jewish state. This aspiration did not materialize for a long time (until Egypt and Jordan signed peace treaties with Israel) but nevertheless it was eagerly sought ever since the creation of the state. As we shall see in Chapter 7, it paralleled another search for survival that also materialized many years later – that of the nuclear option.

The immediate threat was the arms race. Israel's global foreign policy during the 1950s was heavily influenced by its constant search for sources of weapons in order to stabilize the balance of forces. While the United States refused to counterbalance the steady weapons supply from the Soviet Union to the Arab countries, France and West Germany and to a limited extent, Great Britain, hesitantly supplied arms to Israel. Two other strategic decisions taken in the 1950 German reparations agreement and the Sinai Campaign of 1956 were influenced by this rationale of balance of forces (Brecher 1974, Chapters 3 and 6; Bialer 1990, 228ff.). Ben-Gurion's strategic decision was based on the assessment, as we have seen, that in contrast to Soviet Jewry

the American Jewish community would be able to have an influence on US foreign policy. His decision was for the long haul. Although he did not succeed in achieving a formal invitation to Washington, while in office, his successor as prime minister, Levi Eshkol, during the Lyndon Johnson presidency advanced US–Israel relations with the United States with an official visit to the White House. Moreover, ultimately American arms supplies to Israel were upgraded to include offensive weaponry.

Nevertheless, Ben-Gurion, in retirement but loyal to his approach, warned Israel during the crisis in May–June 1967, not to attack the encroaching Arab armies. Despite the severe military implications of inaction, Ben-Gurion saw a greater threat in the government's inability to ensure the support of at least one great power. The Eshkol government, despite heavy pressures from the military to react to the Egyptian provocation that had begun on May 14, 1967, held back until June 5. Reassuring Washington that Jerusalem had had no other choice paid dividends in the ensuing years.

Both non-alignment and its abandonment in favor of a Western orientation were outcomes of ingrained political Zionist maxims. Ben-Gurion's doctrine of mobilization of Great Power support for the Jewish national enterprise had, in essence, been developed by Herzl and sustained by Weizmann. The rationale was survival above all and as we saw in Chapter 2, the roots are found in the Jewish foreign policy tradition.

II Strategic depth 1949–1967

The second pillar of Israel's foreign and national security policy during the first period of independence was an outgrowth of its strategic depth problem. Had the Arab states accepted the armistice lines signed in 1949 and had they become recognized borders, Israel would have acquiesced with the territorial outcome of the War of Independence. But in the wake of the failure to achieve a formal peace agreement, these borders turned into a geo-strategic threat. The armistice lines that seemed a great achievement following the War of Independence soon turned into a security issue. The declared goal by the Arab states of destruction of the State of Israel, accompanied by an Arab quantitative advantage in almost all the tangible elements of power, was clearly detrimental to Israel's survival and constituted a constant geo-strategic security threat to the new state.

Yigal Alon, one of Israel's most prominent military strategists, an IDF general and commander of the Palmach, a leader of the leftist Ahdut HaAvoda party analyzed the threats from a geo-strategic perspective. Israel's national security doctrine was in essence a response to these geo-strategic threats:

> Israel's geostrategic position was now, of course, much better than in the pre-statehood period … on her western shore Israel was in effect an island –without the strategic advantage of being surrounded by sea. On her land borders, she was completely surrounded by hostile countries … the center of the country, the coastal strip on the Mediterranean, and the Jerusalem Corridor were conspicuously lacking in strategic depth. The coastal plain, where most of Israel's population and industry were concentrated lacked hilly barriers; Jerusalem the capital was partitioned; and two hostile armies were stationed in the Gaza Strip and on the west bank of the River Jordan, both of which could be used as bridgeheads for raids and invasions in an overall plan of war. Eilat and its harbor, Israel's only access to the Red Sea and to the Indian and Pacific Oceans, was

perilously exposed. It was squeezed … between Jordan and Egypt, and threatened with blockade from the Tiran Straits.… The plain fact was that most of Israel's territory was within the reach of the enemy's … artillery, air force bombardment.… Alongside the Syrian border in the north-east – the source of Israel's main supply of water – the Syrians enjoyed a marked topographic advantage by controlling the hills overlooking Israeli valleys and the Sea of Galilee.… This geo-strategic situation might invite Arab strategists … to think as they did in 1948, in terms of a simultaneous invasion from different directions designed to make the Israelis split their forces and lose the initiative.

(Alon 1970, 58–59)

Thus Yigal Alon presented Israel's geo-strategic map of the threats that had existed between 1948 and 1967. The first challenge during this period consisted of acts of insurgency against the Jewish state from across all its borders, except that with Lebanon. In response, the Jewish state adopted a strategy of retaliation and a national security doctrine that ultimately resulted in two wars. At least one of them could be considered as a war for survival.

Retaliation policy

Most of the acts of insurgency that took place during these years were not initiated by the hosting governments, but were carried out by local insurgents aiming at theft from Jewish settlements close to the borders. Israel's reactions were designed to force the Egyptian and Jordanian governments to take action against infiltration from their territory (Milstein 1972, 139–166). Yet while a pattern of action and reaction developed, the retaliation policy also had a strategic goal: that of reducing the pressure for another war (Aronson and Horowitz 1971, 77–99).

This strategy was not shared by all Israeli policy makers. Two schools developed in decision-making circles. Ben-Gurion and the IDF Chief of Staff, Moshe Dayan, headed the "activist" school as it came to be known, argued that only effective retribution would convince the Arabs to stop acts of insurgency against Israel. Failure to act would convince the Arabs that the state was weak and could be swallowed up and that Israel could be wiped off the map. The other school was headed by Moshe Sharett, Israel's first foreign minister, who contended that Israel's policy of retaliation should always take into consideration whether an act of violence would advance the cause of peace. Ultimately, he maintained, peace is the only guarantee for Israel's survival (Morris 2003, 265).

In the analysis articulated by Sharett, he did not accuse the other school of militarism. He presented the debate as a legitimate one between two approaches disagreeing on what would best safeguard of the state – violent retaliation or diplomatic action.[6] And yet, during Sharett's term as prime minister when Ben- Gurion resigned and moved to the Negev, and while advancing diplomatic campaigns in response to terror acts from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, the IDF executed also several violent responses. Ultimately, neither the diplomatic approach nor the violent retaliations achieved deterrence. The situation in the region deteriorated to a war – the Suez Campaign, also known as "Operation Kadesh," in 1956.

The second soft spot as presented in Yigal Alon's analysis of Israel's geo- strategic doctrine was the threat from Syria in the northeast of the country. In addition to the topographic advantage of the Golan Heights, Syria also controlled the easterly water sources of the Sea of Galilee. The Syrian threat was exacerbated with Israel's activation of the National Water Carrier in June 1964 that transported water from the Sea of Galilee, south to the rest of the country.

Supported formally by the Arab League, Damascus began diverting the Syrian sources of the Jordan River thus reducing the volume of water flowing into the Sea of Galilee. In a series of military incidents during March–April 1965, Israel destroyed the Syrian equipment. In July 1966, Israel even activated its air force which destroyed equipment positioned at some distance from the sea (Wallach and Lissak 1978, 25). Nevertheless, Syria continued to control the Golan Heights from which it could make life in northern Israel extremely difficult. The combination of the two threats – water and topographic supremacy – gave Syria an important strategic leverage over Israel.

Deterrence

In addition to its retaliation policy Israel developed a geo-strategic offensive doctrine of national security that consisted of deterrence to be followed by a decisive victory in war should deterrence fail. This doctrine was in effect until 1967, and spin-offs have continued to constitute the hard core of Israel's national security doctrine ever since then.

With no pretense to irredentism and thus pursuing a status quo policy, Israel adopted a deterrence strategy toward its neighbors. The geo-strategic situation, however, dictated that the defensive strategic posture must be translated into an offensive posture on the operational level. Lacking strategic depth and relying on its army of reserves, at a time of total confrontation the IDF could not adopt a defensive containment strategy but had to adopt a preventive one. The combination of those two factors, lack of strategic depth and reliance on the reserves to counter Arab armies demanded mobilization of reserves for long periods. Any Arab concentration of forces along Israel's borders would involve a measure of economic paralysis until the troops could be demobilized. Most threatening was a coordinated three front move – in Sinai, the West Bank and the Golan Heights. In order to deter a potential aggressor, Israel had to convince the enemy of the likelihood of total defeat. An outbreak of hostilities ending in stalemate and without stopping the aggressive acts would, in actuality, constitute an Israeli defeat.

Red lines

The deterrence and absolute defeat strategy was reinforced by a *casus belli* set of commitments. Israeli leaders have drawn red lines and conveyed to potential enemies that should those lines be crossed, it would be regarded as a cause for war. Such *casus belli* included the following: entrance of large numbers of Egyptian troops into the Sinai desert; crossing of large non-Jordanian Arab armies into the West Bank; closure of the Straits of Tiran; Syrian diversion of the sources of the Jordan River, shelling from the Golan Heights on the Israeli settlements beneath. Another event that would justify Israeli military action would be the "intensification of Arab guerrilla warfare to a level which undermines 'normal' civilian life in Israel" (Brecher 1972, 67).

Almost all such events preceded the 1956 Sinai Campaign and all occurred during the period preceding the Six-Day War in 1967. The geo-strategic outcome of the latter was that Israel removed at least four of the threats. Israel occupied the Sinai Peninsula, opened up the Straits of Tiran, and conquered the West Bank and the Golan Heights. In short, the geo-strategic posture in which Israel found itself between 1949 and 1967 dictated its national security doctrine and hence also its retaliation and deterrence policy that ultimately was translated into wars.

III Israel's wars 1949–1967

While the 1948–1949 War of Independence or War of Liberation, as it is alternatively known in the Israeli narrative, was clearly a war of self-defense, the 1956 Sinai campaign and the 1967 Six-Day War need some explanation to justify the definition of them as defensive wars. In both wars it was Israel who fired the first shot and as such from a definition based purely on international law, was the aggressor.

And yet Michael Waltzer in his classic book, *Just and Unjust Wars,* dedicates a whole chapter on actions that in effect vindicate preventive war. He brings the Six-Day War as a case study of a pre-emptive action within the category of preventive war. He accepts the notion advanced by classical Realists (Morgenthau and Thompson 1985, 229–230) that preventive wars are linked to the balance of power mechanism that restrains international struggles for power (Walzer 1992, 76–80).

The Sinai Campaign, 1956

In Israeli perception, the 1956 war is considered a preventive war and part of its balance of power strategy (Horowitz 1984, 134–135). In September 1955, a Czech–Egyptian arms deal was announced. The magnitude of the arms shipments indicated a clear shift in the balance of power to the Arab states, especially since the arms were intended for Egypt, the strongest Arab state. The change was not only in the quantity of weapons but also in their quality. In addition, the departure of British military forces from their bases along the Suez Canal, in accordance with the demands of Egypt's charismatic leader, Gamal Abdul Nasser, left Israel with no buffer zone on its southern border. Nasser's Pan-Arab ambitions confronted Israel with a potential coalition of hostile states that could once again, attack on all fronts. The strengthening of Egypt's blockade of the Gulf of Aqaba in September, 1955, followed by an Egyptian–Syrian military pact signed on October 20, 1955, and Transjordan joining a tripartite military command a year later, further added to Israel's perceived security threat. Survival of the Jewish state seemed once again to be threatened.

In order to preserve the balance of power, Israel had to take action by finding sources to match the evolving Egyptian potential of military might. In October, 1955, President Eisenhower declined Israel's requests for reassurances via an alliance. The French, in contrast, offset the Soviet–Czech arms deal with a large- scale arms sale, and also offered to collaborate against Nasser. On October 16, 1956, the United Kingdom joined the anti-Egyptian alignment, and on October 24, the UK, France and Israel signed the Protocol of Sèvres. On October 29, the Sinai Campaign started.

From Israel's perspective, the Sinai Campaign was a preventive war. An existential threat is composed of two elements: intention and capability. In addition to the new weaponry that was about to pour into Egypt the new Egyptian regime was committed to modernization, and had a new leader with a pan-Arab ideology determined to mobilize Arab masses in other Arab societies – a situation that was traditionally a nightmare for Israel. It also had the backing of a superpower (USSR), which Ben-Gurion and many of the Israeli ruling elite never trusted. Moreover, there was intention. The extreme anti-Israel oratory emanating from Cairo, the rejection of the US sponsored Anderson peace initiative, and the continuous *Fedayeen* (irregular forces) incursions into Israel territory, despite retaliatory actions, indicated to most of the Israel leadership that Egypt was acquiring both the will and the capability to destroy the Jewish state.

A preventive war doctrine supports the balance of power even though it can be abused for aggressive and imperialistic purposes. The temptation of preventive war was described by Jack

Levy as

> to fight a war under relatively favorable circumstances now, in order to block or retard the further rise of an adversary and to avoid both the worsening of the status quo over time and the risk of war under less favorable circumstances later…. Preventive war is more concerned with minimizing one's losses from future decline than with maximizing one's gains by fighting now.
>
> (1987, 87–88)

In the case of the Sinai Campaign, it was clearly a balance of power war. Had Israel been moved by irredentism and or seeking territorial aggrandizement, the direction would have been eastward, namely to the West Bank of the Jordan. Ben-Gurion's survivalist instincts can be seen in his caution in his preparations for the war. First, he assured the support of two great powers whose interests at this juncture coincided with those of Israel. Alignment with the UK neutralized the British-led Arab Legion in Jordan, thus preventing a war on two fronts. Britain had placed its troops in Cyprus and Malta on alert, and the French assured the safety of the Israeli rear by stationing on those islands, 60 Mystère IV and F-84 fighter planes and pilots. While benefitting from the element of surprise and initiative, Israel also succeeded in isolating Egypt and cutting it off from its Arab neighbors. The only calculated risk that Ben-Gurion took was the possible harsh reaction of the Eisenhower administration. He did not foresee Eisenhower's decision to exert American pressure on the two European allies and Israel. It was in the same spirit that when he realized that his coalition partners were not ready to stand up against the US, and faced with direct threats from the Soviet Union, several hours after his victory speech Ben-Gurion announced the decision to withdraw the Israeli forces from Sinai.

The first war after independence can be classified as one initiated so as to evade or reduce the risk of war under worse circumstances. The goal was to restore Israel's deterrent capability and hence to reduce the Arab will and capability to attack the Jewish state. In addition, Israel sought to put an end to *fedayeen* incursions from the Gaza Strip; to attain guarantees assuring Israel's freedom of navigation in the Straits of Tiran; and to establish a United Nations buffer zone in Sinai. When the Israeli leadership felt that these goals had been accomplished and international realities prevented Israel from imposing a peace treaty or demanding the removal of Nasser, the IDF was ordered to withdraw.

The Six-Day War, 1967

The beginning of the June 1967 war has been defined as a pre-emptive strike. Unlike the trends in the distribution of power that had generated the Suez Campaign, the balance of power in the mid-1960s appeared to be stable. The undermining of the geo-strategic status quo along the borders that had been declared as *casus belli* produced threats that led to the May–June crisis of 1967. While such provocations had existed during the 1950s and 1960s, their concentration in one month prompted a crisis atmosphere that seemed directly to threaten the existence of Israel.

On May 14, 1967, Egyptian forces crossed the Suez Canal and abruptly began concentrating in the Sinai Peninsula along the Israel borders and demanded the removal of United Nations peacekeeping forces stationed there since 1957. On May 22, Egypt's President Gamal Abdul Nasser closed the Straits of Tiran to Israeli navigation and to all ships carrying strategic material to Israel. At this point, King Hussein crossed another red line. On May 30, he signed a treaty of common defense with Egypt, placing the Jordanian Army under Egyptian command in the event

of war. In addition he agreed to the entrance of Iraqi troops into Jordan. At the same time, insurgency actions into Israel, especially from its northeast border, were resumed and were accompanied by shelling from the Golan Heights (Yaniv 1987, 102).

No reaction to the crossing of all the red lines laid down by Israel constituted a direct challenge to the doctrine of deterrence. Even Nasser understood that Israel had no choice but to embark on war. While he might have miscalculated the exact timing as well as the military strength of the IDF, he and his close adviser Mohamed Hassanein Heikal, expected that Israel had no other choice but to attack (Safran 1969, 299–302; Brecher 1974, 393). Moreover, even if Israel had been willing to abandon its national security doctrine, Egypt by now was in no position to refrain from opening hostilities. Nasser had positioned Egypt in a situation from which it was unable to withdraw without causing a major blow to his status in the Arab world. Hence, for Israel, the question of a pre-emptive strike was critical. Moreover, without strategic depth and an economy constrained by the mobilization of its labor force to the military reserves, the status quo was untenable.

And yet the government of Levi Eshkol waited out the crisis to the point where Israel generated an image of weakness both internally and to the outside world. Eshkol, lacking Ben-Gurion's reputation and being accused by him of neglecting security, came across as a man in a state of panic. But the truth is that Eshkol was following devotedly Ben-Gurion's strategic rule that Israel must assure the support of a great power before embarking on war. Accordingly, Foreign Minister Abba Eban was dispatched on May 24 to Paris, London and Washington in order to seek a guarantee for Israel's security, or alternatively support for military action from the three Western powers. The legal basis for these requests were the guarantees provided in 1957 by the US, Great Britain, France, and some other Western countries, to Israel's right to free navigation in the Straits of Tiran. The reactions were not encouraging. President De Gaulle threatened reprisals against an Israeli pre-emptive attack while the British Prime Minister Harold Wilson and US President Lyndon Johnson abstained from promising support, although they indicated less hostility to a unilateral Israeli act than did the French president (Oren 2004, 131–156).

Israel's decision to pre-empt, as Michael Oren's authoritative study describes it, was taken in an atmosphere of no choice. With the US and its maritime allies' reluctance to open the Tiran Straits, Israel was left alone to restore its deterrence doctrine. The balance of power, especially the geo-strategic one, had been tilted in favor of the Arab states. In addition, a pre-emptive Egyptian move would lead to enormous Israeli casualties. Hence, in order to ensure Israel's very existence, the paramount goal was to destroy the Egyptian army. According to all evidence, the West Bank with its historic-religious sites of the kingdoms of ancient Israel and Judea, was not given priority. Survival dictated a set of priorities, one of which was not fighting on several fronts at the same time. On June 5, Israel sent messages to Jordan's King Hussein through three separate channels advising him to stay out of the war and that if he did, Jordan would not be attacked (ibid., 228). Hussein, influenced by false reports from Egypt, and with his military headquarters now under the command of Egyptian General Abed Riad, was pulled into the war. The Syrian front that had started the whole crisis was left to the end of the war.

The order of dealing with the fronts was initiated by Jerusalem and indicated that the June 1967 war was executed according to priorities dictated by Israel's national security doctrine and not by historical aspirations or revenge motives. The Egyptian army was the immediate existential threat and hence priority was given to the southern front. Had King Hussein stayed out of the war, the West Bank would have remained a part of Jordan. Even sporadic shooting on

Israel territory would have not drawn Israel into invading the West Bank. What instigated the war was the presence of Arab armies near Israel's industrial and population center. Moreover, Israel was also reluctant to attack Syria despite the shelling from the Golan Heights that had been responsible at least partially for the outbreak of the crisis in May 1967 (Oren 2004, 333–362).

The motif of survival was so prominent during the May 1967 crisis that even the astonishing military results could not minimize it with time. Israel society had experienced three weeks of almost unbearable tension, in which the country found itself faced by an onslaught from almost all its neighbors, stating that they were preparing to launch a devastating blow that would bring to an end what the Jews referred to as the "Third Commonwealth." Abandoned by the Western powers, especially by the United States and France, Israel was left to face the threat to its survival by herself.

Beginning with an air strike on Egypt's airfields, by the end of the six days of fighting, Israel appeared to have accomplished more than it had ever anticipated. The overwhelming defeat of all the Arab armies with no external help gave rise to the hope that the Arab nations would finally accept Israel as a reality. Moreover, the Arab states were expected to make peace with the Jewish state if they wanted to regain any of their conquered territories. Unlike 1956, the United States, did not pressure Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories in the absence of an agreement on secure borders and a formal peace. The Jewish state finally seemed secure.

But the Six-Day War reopened a new motif in the Jewish foreign policy tradition – the historic areas of Judea and Samaria in which a large Arab population now lived. We will deal with this topic in the next chapter.

IV War and peace in the post 1967 era

The hoped-for formula of "peace in exchange for territories" did not come into fruition in the aftermath of the Six-Day War. A year after its armed forces had been decimated by Israel in June 1967, Egypt initiated what came to be known as the "War of Attrition." This two-year conflict, from 1968 to 1970, caused daily casualties among Israeli soldiers but did not pose an existential threat to the country. While the daily bloodshed caused a pessimistic climate not conducive to any hope for an ensuing peace, what worried Israeli decision makers was the growing involvement of the Soviet Union. On July 30, 1970, Israeli fighter planes shot down four MiG fighter planes flown by Soviet pilots (Yaniv 1987, 176). While this confrontation was kept secret by both sides at the time, the threat of an Israeli–Soviet confrontation ignited new fears of a potential existential threat (Brecher 1974, 466–468).

The potential threat of Soviet involvement was portrayed by Minister of Defense Moshe Dayan as "Soviet phobia" (ibid., 467). Closer relations with Washington balanced the fear of the Soviet threat but, at the same time, made Israel more dependent on Washington. In the wake of the French embargo following the 1967 war, the United States became the main supplier of arms to the Israel Defense Forces. Moreover, at the United Nations, Washington objected to a proposed resolution ordering Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories without a peace treaty and even organized a blocking group of states against anti-Israel resolutions. This new relationship with the USA turned into a strategic alliance during the September 1970 crisis and Jordan's ensuing crackdown against the Palestine Liberation Organization – the PLO ("Black September"). Following an American request, Israel agreed to intervene to prevent a Syrian imminent intervention on behalf of the PLO, on condition that the United States would commit itself to guard the Israeli rear from an Egyptian or Soviet assault. The coordinated US–Israel

action ultimately convinced Syria to back down thus allowing King Hussein, the Jordanian monarch, to uproot the PLO infrastructure in his country.

This alliance did not prevent the arrival three years later, of a new existential threat. Egypt's new President Anwar al-Sadat was determined to recover the territories Egypt had lost in 1967. Realizing the strength of the US–Israel alliance, he signaled readiness to shift his orientation from a pro-Moscow one to a Western one. While forwarding some peace proposals to Israel, three years after the cease-fire agreement orchestrated by US Secretary of State William Rogers, Sadat followed up his initiative by war. Lulled into complacency by the results of the previous wars, Israel had not foreseen the severe threat to her survival when she was suddenly attacked on October 6, 1973, the Day of Atonement – *Yom Kippur* – the holiest day of the Jewish year.

Mislead by what came to be known as the "conception," Prime Minister Golda Meir ignored warnings from King Hussein who felt obliged to recompense Israel for its support in Jordan's time of need. Jerusalem did not mobilize its reserve forces in time, abandoned its pre-emptive attack doctrine and did not prevent Egypt and Syria from attacking first. The ensuing war fast became existential to the extent that on the second day of the fighting, Defense Minister Dayan expressed fears that Israel was on the eve of the fall of the Third Jewish Commonwealth (*Israel Hayom*, September 9, 2013, 2–3). Ultimately, Israel won the war but with a high cost in soldiers' lives (2,569 deaths and almost 8,000 wounded) and at a huge economic cost (the equivalent of a year's GNP). But most unsettling was the fact that despite the military victory, Israel was the loser in political terms.

The political results following the Yom Kippur War resurrected questions of Israel's existence that for a while seemed to be in the past. Despite the heavy price it had paid, Israel was condemned and isolated on the international scene. Less than a year after the war ended, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 3237 which granted the PLO "observer status" following Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat's "olive branch" speech to the General Assembly. The new Arab economic strength brought about by the establishment of the OPEC oil cartel, as well as the power of petrodollars presented another setback for Israel. On November 10, 1975, the General Assembly adopted by a vote of 72 to 35 (with 32 abstentions) resolution 3379, that determined that "Zionism is a form of racism and racial discrimination."

Israel's dependence on the US after the Yom Kippur War increased even more; now not only in the military but also in the diplomatic realm. In March 1977, the newly-elected American President Jimmy Carter declared that the Palestinians should be granted a homeland. In Jerusalem this was seen as a Palestinian equivalent of the 1917 Balfour Declaration. In late 1977, the US and the Soviet Union reached an agreement to reconvene the Geneva International Conference co-chaired by the two superpowers. In the forthcoming conference the Arab States and Israel were expected to reach a comprehensive settlement. Included in the outstanding issues of the Arab–Israel conflict, were "the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people." Most worrying to the newly elected Likud Government in Jerusalem was the fact that UN Resolutions 242 and 338 previously engineered by more friendly US administrations and, specifically speaking about Israel's right to secure and recognized borders, were not mentioned. With Moscow as co-chair and the new policies of the newly-elected Washington administration, Jerusalem was concerned that the Palestinian claim would receive full support and Israel would be isolated. The ascendance of the Palestine Liberation Organization in international forums only strengthened the fears from the agenda of a forthcoming Geneva conference. The defeat of the Labor government that had ruled Israel since independence in the general election of May, 1977 also implied a new Israeli approach to the West Bank.

The peace with Egypt

In the mid-1970s, a peace process between Jerusalem and Amman was seen to be the natural way to make progress toward a settlement. King Hussein, who had stayed out of the Yom Kippur War, anticipated that the West Bank would be returned to Jordan. This was also the official policy of the Labor government which had cooperated with Jordan for decades and was also fearful of the demographic consequences of the large Arab population in the West Bank. Following the 1974 Rabat Conference where the PLO was recognized as sole representative of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, King Hussein was faced with the ascendancy of the PLO in both the Arab world and on the international stage. In order to undo the harm, in his presentation before the Rabat Conference, the king stated Israeli willingness to return territories to Jordan but not to the PLO. Israel and Jordan thus had a common interest to pre-empt the Palestinians with a territorial compromise.

But against all expectations, the first strategic goal chosen for a settlement was Egypt. It was the government of Yitzhak Rabin that decided that peace with Egypt was the most important and immediate goal for Israel. Indeed the first indication of that had already appeared in the aftermath of the Yom Kippur War interim agreements (the 1974 Disengagement Agreement, and the September 1975 Sinai II Agreement) advanced by US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger.

Despite his hawkish image, the newly-elected Prime Minister Menachem Begin continued the Egyptian peace orientation. On September 4, 1977, Begin's newly-appointed foreign minister, Moshe Dayan, secretly visited Morocco and on September 16 he met with Dr. Hassan Tohami, the Egyptian vice-premier. Sadat was informed that in exchange for peace, Israel was ready to make major territorial concessions in Sinai (Yanai 1988, 34).

Prime Minister Begin's strategy was certainly influenced by his ideology. A deal with King Hussein would have involved surrendering territory which Begin saw as the historic homeland of the Jewish people. We shall look at this perspective again in the next chapter when we consider the religious and ethno- national dimensions of Israeli foreign policy. But it would be inaccurate to ignore the security dimension. Egypt constituted the largest Arab country and the center of pan-Arabism. Peace with Egypt would imply a potential momentous change in both the balance of power and the removal of the most powerful threat to Israel's existence.

In accordance with the Jewish foreign policy tradition, the Likud dominated government was ready to pay a high price to achieve this goal. And the price was indeed high: peace with Egypt would comprise of withdrawal from a territory more than two and half times the size of Israel, relinquishment of three modern air fields capable of threatening the heart of Egypt, abdication of oil fields especially at a time when world oil prices were skyrocketing. Withdrawal from the Straits of Tiran over which Israel had twice gone to war was also a high price as they control Israel's southern connection to Africa and the Far East. In addition, peace with Egypt also included the abandonment of a chain of thriving Israeli settlements in northern Sinai and the Rafah salient, south of the Gaza Strip. On September 17, 1978, Prime Minister Menachem Begin and President Anwar al-Sadat signed the Camp David Accords, witnessed by President Jimmy Carter. Six months later, on March 26, 1979, the Egypt–Israel Peace Treaty was signed in Washington DC.

The peace with Egypt did not resolve the Palestinian dispute, which we will discuss in the next chapter. We now turn to the First Lebanon War that was undertaken by the same Israel prime minister who had signed the first formal peace with an Arab state.

The First Lebanon War

Following the "Black September" operation in 1970–1971, when King Hussein expelled the PLO from Jordan, the PLO had relocated its headquarters to Beirut and Southern Lebanon. This became its military base from which it was able to fire rockets on Northern Israel. The PLO rejected the autonomy plan for the West Bank and Gaza Strip that had been agreed upon at Camp David in 1978 and as a result the autonomy talks were doomed to failure. It was against this background that the military focus moved to Southern Lebanon,

Two major military encounters between the IDF and the PLO took place, prior to the outbreak of what was in Israel called "Peace for Galilee." The first was the Litani Operation in 1978 in retaliation for a terrorist attack on a civilian bus on the Haifa–Tel Aviv highway. The second transpired in July 1981, when two weeks of constant and heavy artillery exchanges on the northern border ended only after an American mediation between Israel and indirectly the PLO produced a de facto cease-fire agreement.

The continued attacks from Lebanon justified a retaliation action in accordance with Israeli policy, but not a war. As we have noted before, according to the Israeli security doctrine, initiation of war was legitimate only for defensive purposes and not as a means of achieving political goals. Only an existential threat to Israel justified going to war prior to being attacked by the other side. In this case the action deteriorated to almost a full scale war in Lebanon. How can we explain this development within the context of Israel's security doctrine?

In the early 1980s Israel's strategic viability was quite secure. In the South Egypt was pulled out of the military equation. In the East, Iraq was bogged down in a war against Iran. With both the southern and eastern fronts non-existent, the balance of power was stable. Globally, strategic conditions were also in favor of Israel. The Soviets were deeply involved in a protracted campaign in Afghanistan and the Reagan administration supported a strong Israel as a strategic asset in the struggle against the evil empire. Syria by herself did not posit a strategic threat to Israel especially as the Syrian Army, was bogged down in maintaining order in the war-torn Lebanon. Indeed there were no violations of the 1974 cease-fire agreements between Israel and Syria in the Golan Heights. Nor did the PLO posit a strategic threat.

But the newly-appointed Israeli Minister of Defense, Ariel Sharon, viewed warfare differently from the Israeli tradition. He saw war from a Clausewitz perspective – namely as an extension of politics (Inbar 1989, 22–37). Sharon saw intervention in Lebanon as a way of accomplishing three objectives: to confront the Syrians, which would bring about their withdrawal from Lebanon; to establish a strong pro-Israeli government in the country; and to eradicate the PLO presence (Schiff and Yaari 1984, 37). On December 20, 1981, Sharon presented the operation termed "Big Pines" to the Cabinet. Begin, whether because he sensed strong opposition from his ministers or because he himself was not convinced with its rationale, did not ask the Cabinet to vote on the plan. Instead, the cabinet ordered the General Staff to submit a more limited plan, restricted to removal of the PLO threat to the Galilee from Southern Lebanon.[7]

The First Lebanon War began on June 6, 1982, when the IDF invaded Southern Lebanon. The immediate pretext to the Peace for Galilee Operation was a PLO assassination attempt in London against Shlomo Argov, Israel's ambassador to the United Kingdom. Prime Minister Begin used this incident as justification for the operation.

The political nature of the war was indicated by the aim of establishing a pro-Israeli government in an Arab state. Setting goals that went beyond survival was unprecedented in Israel's national security doctrine. Israel's ally, Bachir Gemayel, was leader of the Maronite

Phalange forces in Lebanon and president-elect. Gemayel did not stand up to his commitment that the Maronites would conquer West Beirut, following the IDF's arrival in Beirut on June 13, a week after the outbreak of the war. Another precedent was established when the IDF, that had always abstained from conquering a major Arab city, was ordered to conduct a siege on Beirut. The Lebanese presidential elections took place under the guns of Israeli forces on August 23, two days after the PLO had agreed to evacuate its forces from Beirut. Gemayel, who met secretly with the Israeli Prime Minister on September 1, discarded
Begin's request to sign a peace treaty. The President-elect made clear to Begin that a Lebanese–Israeli peace treaty would arouse the Muslim majority in Lebanon against the newly elected government and estrange the Arab world of which Lebanon was an integral part (Schiff and Yaari 1984, 289–281; Tamir 1988, 182).

On September 13, President-elect Bashir Gemayel was assassinated. Under the pretext of the assassination, Minister of Defense Ariel Sharon ordered the invasion of Beirut and destruction of PLO holdings still positioned in the capital. Sensing the new opportunity and in retaliation for the assassination of their leader, a militia associated with the Christian Phalange party executed the notorious massacre in the Sabra and Shatila Palestinian refugee camps. Sharon's resolve to enter Beirut at this stage following the assassination of Gemayel and expulsion of the PLO indicates that the war had gone beyond tactical military objectives. It was designed to force another Arab country to sign a peace treaty with Israel. For the first time in Arab–Israel wars, the IDF conquered an Arab capital. The accepted wisdom has been that the Israel cannot enforce a peace treaty with an Arab state by conquering it. Indeed, the May 1983 peace treaty between Israel and Lebanon was canceled in March 1984. President Amine Pierre Gemayel, brother and successor to the assassinated president gave in to pressure from the Arab states.

The exposure of the real goals of the war ignited Israeli public opinion against the war. There were mass demonstrations following the massacre in Sabra and Shatila and the Likud government lost public support. Ultimately, on September 15, Prime Minister Begin formally resigned and was replaced by Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir. While the conduct of the Lebanon War most probably influenced Begin's decision, the unprecedented nature of the war could have been detected a year earlier.

In August 1982, in the midst of the war in Lebanon, the Prime Minster addressed Israel's National Security Academy on what became known as "War by Choice" doctrine. While classifying all of Israel's wars as "just wars," Begin distinguished between two types of war: "Wars of no Choice" and "War by Choice." The War of Independence, the War of Attrition and the Yom Kippur War in which Israel responded to an attack belonged to the "wars of no choice" category. In contrast, the Sinai Campaign, the Six-Day War and the Lebanon War in which Israel was the first to attack belonged to the "wars by choice" group. The common denominator in the second class of wars was that Israel had to be the first to start aggressive action in order to remove clear existential threats in the long run. Israel started the war in Lebanon in the summer of 1982, because it was faced with long term threat and hence had the obligation and right to engage in a war designed to remove those threats (Inbar 1989, 22–37). Bringing support to his position from France's abstention from a military action against Germany in 1936, when Hitler entered the Rhineland an action that could have been prevented World War II, Begin asserted that wars by choice are even more just than waiting for immediate danger which would then dictate a no choice war. Hence his conclusion was:

> [That] there is no commandment to wage war only out of no choice. There is no moral obligation that a nation must or may fight only when its back is turned to the sea or the

wall…. On the contrary, a free sovereign nation, which hates wars, loves peace, and cares for its security, must create conditions in which war, if needed, should not occur under conditions of no choice.

<div align="right">(Ma'ariv August 20, 1982)</div>

Without going into evaluating Begin's new "just war" doctrine, what is most significant is the fact that the Prime Minister felt obliged to explain the rationale of the Lebanon War in defensive terms. It indicates what was considered a just war in Israeli public opinion. Indeed, unlike previous wars the goals of the 1982 war were to bring about a new political order in Lebanon. Those goals did not impinge on Israel's immediate security or existence.

The most distinctive feature of the 1982 Lebanon War was the declining domestic support for its rationale. While none of the Arab states intervened against Israel, it was the lack of popular enthusiasm that determined the conduct of the war. The Lebanon War was the only war in Israel's history in which its goals went beyond those of state survival and security. The PLO was in no way able to threaten Israel's existence even after the disclosure of its weaponry in Southern Lebanon. The attempt to inflict a mortal blow on the PLO was motivated by aspirations related to Judea and Samaria (the West Bank). The war undermined one of Israel's most important sources of nontangible elements of power. Its population's motivation to fight recurrent wars was based on the conviction that there was no alternative (ein breira in Hebrew). This was an extreme measure from the standpoint of the traditional Israeli ethos which asserted that only a tangible threat to the nation's very existence warranted the spilling of Israeli blood. In the wake of Lebanon, this belief was shattered.

From a tactical military perspective, the war in Lebanon was a military success. And yet, Minister of Defense Ariel Sharon, following the recommendations of the Kahn Commission that investigated the Sabra and Shatila massacre committed by the Lebanese Christian militia, had to resign. His resignation was followed by that of Prime Minister Begin who shared no blame for the massacre. These unprecedented political acts reflected the exceptional nature of the 1982 war. Against this background, a national unity government under a power- sharing agreement between Shimon Peres and Yitzhak Shamir that came to power in 1984 decided to withdraw from all of Lebanon except for the establishment of a security zone in Southern Lebanon that was deemed sufficient to secure Israel's security interests.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have analyzed Israeli foreign policy along three main mechanisms: alliances, its geo-strategic doctrine and its application in four major wars before 1967 and post 1967. The context against which all these mechanisms were explored was the question of national aggrandizement or survival.

The international orientation question which determined Israel's alliance with the US was decided ultimately by existential considerations. In the beginning, when the Soviet Union helped the newly-established state, Ben-Gurion was ready to plump for non-alignment despite his opposition to international Communism. However, the realization that only in the United States, did Israel have an important ally – namely the Jewish community – that could bring influence to bear on Washington, convinced him to abandon a policy of non-alignment. Despite early disappointments this orientation justified itself and the alliance with America became a cornerstone of Israel's national security.

Israel's geo-strategic national security doctrine also reflected a survivalist, rather than an expansionist, theme. In reaction to penetrations from its neighbors, a retaliation policy was adopted. While the national security doctrine was defensive, namely that of deterrence, the continued hostility of its neighbors forced the Jewish state to adopt red lines, that gave substance to the doctrine of strategic depth. The wars that took place since 1949 reflected this defensive doctrine. The 1956 war was a preventive war, while the 1967 war was pre-emptive. In 1973, Israel did not pre-empt and paid a heavy price for not attacking first. The Lebanon War that turned from a retaliation operation into a war of conquest, lost domestic support and turned into a fiasco.

Our conclusion is that in all of those respects (except the Lebanon War) the main incentive was survival. Significantly, the only war that was not fought for the sake of survival, but was rather managed according to the Clausewitz mode of thinking, very soon became an illegitimate war. Israeli public opinion was not ready to support a war aimed for a political goal that was not justified by considerations of survival. While Israel, by any yardstick, cannot be defined as a religious state, the nature of Jewish political tradition influenced the foreign policy of the state. In the next chapter we shall consider the religious dimensions of foreign policy.

Notes

1 For the forerunner on the role of images in international politics see Kenneth Boulding, "National Images and International Systems," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 3 (1959): 120–131. For a case study that portrays the role of images of enemies international behavior see Ole R. Holsti, "The Belief System and National Images: A Case Study," in James Rosenau (ed.), *International Politics and Foreign Policy: A Reader in Research and Theory* (New York: Free Press, 1969), 545.
2 S. S. Yariv, *On the Communism and Zionism of Hashomer Hatzair* (Tel Aviv: Davar, 1953), 102 [Hebrew]. S. S. Yariv was a pen name used by Ben-Gurion when attacking the Soviet Union.
3 On these categories according to image theory, see Veronique Eicher, Felicia Pratto and Peter Wilhelm, "Value Differentiation between Enemies and Allies: Value Projection in National Images," *Political Psychology* 34 (February, 2013): 128.
4 The best work on the debate on Israel's foreign policy orientation is Uri Bialer, *Between East and West, Israel's Foreign Policy Orientation, 1948–1956* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990). See also an unpublished master's thesis written under this author's direction; Gad Barzilai, "Israeli Foreign Policy, 1947–1950" (M.A. thesis, Bar-Ilan University, 1982).
5 Uri Bialer suggested that Israeli foreign policy at the time was being guided by the principle expressed by its foreign minister, "knocking on any door" (Bialer 1990, 14).
6 Several scholars of Israeli foreign policy have regarded both schools as two main approaches in Israeli national security (Brecher 1972, 251–290; Yaacov Bar-Siman Tov "Ben-Gurion and Sharett: Conflict Management and Great-power Constraints in Israeli Foreign Policy" *Middle Eastern Studies* 24 (1988): 330–356).
7 General Avraham Tamir, head of national security planning in the Ministry of Defense, testified that it was clear that the new operation was planned in such a way that it would not be difficult for it to expand into the larger campaign when the opportunity arose. See Avraham Tamir, *A Soldier in Search of Peace: An Inside Look at Israel's Strategy* (London:

Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1988), 158.

6 Palestinian and religious politics ascendant

Issues of religion and foreign affairs conventionally belong to the area of domestic politics and foreign policy. In general, international relations theorists have worked to try and incorporate the important pillars of today's society into their work so as to improve the understanding and predictive analysis of international life. What is novel, however, is the growing need to incorporate religion into the study of international affairs. Despite some attempts in recent years, religion has still not been fully incorporated into the study of international relations (Fox 2001, 53–73; Toft, Philpott and Shah 2011, 24–60; Snyder 2011). This chapter relates to religion and foreign policy from both the perspective of domestic politics and religion. In the case of Israel the dimensions of domestic politics and religion are even more pertinent to foreign policy because of the issue of what are known as the "Occupied Territories," versus the resolution of the question of a Palestinian state. To many, the future of the territories is interwoven with the continued existence of Israel as both a Jewish and democratic state which combines both domestic and existential issues.

To be able to understand fully the role of religion in the foreign policy of contemporary Israel, one needs to begin at the early stages of the Zionist Movement. The Zionist story has been told so far in terms of territory and Jewish survival. Until now we have avoided the secular/religious divide within the movement itself. Now we shall consider the unique domestic political arrangements briefly mentioned in Chapter 2 that developed in the domain of both religion and state. The question that will surface is whether over time, an autonomous religious theme has become manifest in Israeli politics and foreign policy.

The pre-state era

Jewish society at the end of the nineteenth century was undergoing a process of modernization and as such was increasingly encountering secularization. Indeed, Theodor Herzl, the founder of political Zionism, in *The Jewish State*, published in 1896, made it clear that he perceived a future Jewish state that would embrace a Western liberal model of religion and state. Herzl dedicated a whole chapter of the book to the possibility of the Jewish state becoming a theocracy. He wrote:

> Shall we end by having a theocracy? No, indeed. Faith unites us, knowledge gives us freedom. We shall therefore prevent any theocratic tendencies from coming to the fore on the part of our priesthood. We shall keep our priests within the confines of their temples in the same way as we shall keep our professional army within the confines of their barracks.
>
> (Herzl 1946, 146)

Unsurprisingly, Orthodox Jewry was suspicious of the Zionist Movement. Above and beyond the perceived threat implicit in Herzl's attitude to religion, opposition to the Zionist idea was two-fold. In the first place, the active role of Jews in a return to Zion was contrary to the tradition that the end of the Jewish exile would only occur via divine action. Second, the secular character of the Zionist leadership and the ideology of transforming the traditional Jew into a modern secular individual alarmed the Orthodox rabbinical establishment and led them to oppose involvement in Jewish nationalism. Thus although the forerunners of Zionism, Alkalai and Kalisher, were Orthodox rabbis (Katz 1983b: 263–356), political and spiritual Zionism consisted primarily of secular nationalists.

Nevertheless, as we have seen in Chapter 3, there was a religious bloc within the Zionist movement. Some Orthodox rabbis, while opposing cultural activity, supported participation in the political activities of the movement. But a decade later, when cultural activity became an integral part of the Zionist agenda, the ultra-Orthodox seceded from the Zionist movement and established the non-Zionist *Agudat Israel* faction. Those who stayed within the movement founded a religious Zionist faction, *Mizrahi*. What allowed the religious Zionists to stay within the movement was a compromise in the field of cultural activity. The concession was that henceforth there would be a two-tiered system of education: religious and secular (Vital 1975, 167). With time this arrangement came to provide autonomy in education to the religious sector. The ultra-Orthodox reached its own agreement with the secular leadership and established its own educational framework known as the "independent" stream.

Dedication to Jewish physical survival induced the Mizrahi leader Rabbi Yitzhak Yaakov Reines, to cooperate with Herzl on a purely foreign policy decision during the Uganda controversy. Following the ascendance to power of the Labor anti-clerical party, collaboration between the secular and the religious camps continued. Significantly, the Labor parties preferred cooperation with Mizrahi and its labor offshoot Hapoel Hamizrahi, rather than the Revisionists that competed over leadership of the Zionist movement.[1]

Following the survivalist theme, religious Zionism also developed a theologicalmessianic theme. Religious Zionism based its cooperation with secular Zionism on the premise that the Zionist movement (and later the State of Israel), was a first and necessary step toward divine redemption. Agudat Israel rejected the premise that secular Jews could achieve redemption and therefore chose to remain outside the Yishuv's national institutions and, later, the government. But since it was God, not man, who would decide on the implementation of the Jewish messianic vision, ultra-Orthodoxy was politically more quiescent than the National Religious Party (NRP), previously the Mizrahi/Hapoel Hamizrahi parties, on foreign policy issues. And yet both religious parties objected to the partition of the Land of Israel drawn up by the Peel Commission in 1937. In 1947, religious leaders objected less strenuously to the United Nations proposal and the decision to internationalize Jerusalem. Significantly, the religious camp, unlike the Revisionists, despite their opposing view, ultimately cooperated on both occasions with Ben-Gurion, who was able to impose his will on the Zionist movement for the sake of achieving sovereignty over at least a portion of the Land of Israel.

Religion and politics in a Jewish state

The special relationship between Mapai (the ruling Israel Labor Party) and the National Religious Party – was termed by both parties as the "Historic Alliance." Political scientists described it as a form of consociational politics (Don-Yehiya 1975, 260–264; Horowitz and

Lissak 1977, Chapter 7; Ljiphart 1977, 129–134). According to this alliance, the NRP preserved its autonomy over religious education, kosher food in public institutions, the "Law of Times of Work and Rest" (establishing the Sabbath – Saturday – as the official day of rest), and the jurisdiction of the religious courts over matters of personal status (conversion, marriage and divorce). The ultra-Orthodox Agudat Israel in effect accepted the overall authority of the state and its institutions, but until 1977 did not join the government. In exchange, it received a de-facto concession permitting Yeshiva seminary students to opt out of serving in the IDF. The NRP power-sharing arrangement with Labor (later dubbed "accommodation politics") excluded foreign policy. Most important, until 1967 security and foreign affairs remained the exclusive domain of Labor (Akzin 1979, 93–94).

Up to June 1967, the Labor elite that continued to believe in the partition of Israel, governed the country. Nevertheless, the Eshkol government could not stay indifferent to the liberation of the Old City of Jerusalem where the last remnant of the Temple – the Western Wall, the holiest site in Judaism – was standing. The outpouring of emotion elicited by the conquest of East Jerusalem inspired a secular-dominated Eshkol government to act quickly and decisively. The fact that under Jordanian rule access to the Western Wall was forbidden to Jews added to the determination of the Israeli leaders to act unilaterally. Within less than three weeks after its conquest, the eastern parts of Jerusalem were formally annexed by Israel. At the same time, the Eshkol government restrained its annexation policy with regard to other parts of the historic Land of Israel. Cities like Hebron, Bethlehem and Shechem (Nablus) were designated to be exchanged for peace. Similarly was the policy toward sites such as Shiloh, where the Ark of the Lord had rested or other places such as Jericho, Beit Horon, Bet El and Gibeon, where according to the Jewish narrative, miracles took place at the time of Joshua and the kingdoms of Judea and Israel. The ruling Labor elite saw the Kingdom of Jordan as a partner to a putative political settlement, especially with regard to the West Bank, and hence unilateral action was minimal.

Since the election of 1977, a coalition of mostly nationalist and religious parties has ruled Israel. For Labor the territories served two purposes: a bargaining card to be exchanged for peace with the Arab states, and as strategic depth that would provide greater security. The Likud and NRP were dedicated to extensive settlement in Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza region. Likud leaders and the Young Guard of the NRP no longer regarded the West Bank and the Gaza Strip as collateral to be exchanged for peace but as the "Greater Land of Israel," to be settled and developed by the Jewish people in accordance with their historic and religious heritage. For Menachem Begin, Judea and Samaria, the biblical terms that replaced the "West Bank," were no longer the means of attaining objectives but were an end in themselves. The historic core of the Land of Israel as related in the Bible could not be relinquished to any foreign entity.

Given the traditional stance of the Likud regarding the Land of Israel, its territorial attitude to the West Bank and Gaza were entirely predictable. This attitude dated back to the pre-state Yishuv era. The formal policy of the Revisionist party (the forerunner of Herut and then Likud), was that the Jewish state was entitled to inhabit the whole of its historic homeland on both sides of the Jordan River. The dramatic change that took place in the religious Zionist sector was more novel and calls for a deeper explanation. Moreover, it will further illuminate our thesis on Jewish foreign policy tradition. It is pertinent to include both the 1967 and the 1973 wars as turning points but as we shall see the latter had a more profound impact.

The traumas of the 1967 and 1973 wars

In order to comprehend in full the transformation of the religious sector we must start with a description of Israeli society at large. The country underwent a traumatic experience during May 1967. Arab unilateral military actions in May–June 1967 preceding the Six-Day War, accompanied by Arab leaders declaring their intentions to destroy the Jewish state, were not met by a collective response from the West. The Eastern bloc led by Moscow was explicitly hostile. Commitments from the United States and its allies to come to Israel's assistance were not honored. Israel had to act alone and yet it defeated the combined Arab armies in six days. The astonishing victory was well received among the states that had been expected to come to Israel's assistance. The Soviet Union, in contrast, intensified its involvement in the Middle East to the extent that Israeli and Russian pilots even clashed in 1970. The trauma of being abandoned during the pre-June period despite international assurances did not disappear.

In October 1973, fearful of a direct collision with the Red Army, the Israeli government sought to prove to the nations of the world that it had refrained from a pre-emptive strike when it was clear that an Egyptian–Syrian attack was imminent. Consequently Israel was in mortal danger and only won the Yom Kippur War after suffering extremely heavy casualties. To add insult to injury, the US stopped Israel from achieving a clear-cut victory following the turnabout of the war for which it had paid very dearly. Moreover, condemnations from almost all directions in addition to the ensuing breaking-off of diplomatic relations with almost all the African countries did not add to the trust of the world. A popular song in Israel at the time was "the whole world is against us."

The tremors that came out of the Yom Kippur War were a divergence from past wars and especially the Six-Day War. Israeli society had emerged from the 1967 war self-assured and with a sense of euphoria. It seemed to the population at large that peace was at hand. Although reality began to creep in with the outbreak of the War of Attrition in 1968 in the Sinai and guerrilla warfare in the rest of the country, it nevertheless seemed that time was on Israel's side. This hypothesis was based on the fact that since 1948, Israel had appeared to be winning each war more decisively than the previous one. The Yom Kippur War seemed to indicate a reversal of this trend. Despite the ultimate victory the linear curve seemed to be breaking down.

A third threat that emerged after 1973 was the growing international status of the Palestinians. Although it had existed in the background for some time, the Palestinian national movement started gaining strength in the mid-1970s. The appearance of a second movement claiming national ownership over the Land of Israel and being afforded increasing international recognition, aroused apprehensions over a counter-claim to Israel's legitimacy. Israel, which once enjoyed broad international support, was now losing ground to the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). Particularly insulting was Chairman of the PLO, Yasser Arafat's "gun and olive branch" speech to the United Nations on November 13, 1974. This was followed a year later by United Nations General Assembly Resolution 3379, adopted on November 10, 1975 by a vote of 72 to 35 (with 32 abstentions) equating Zionism with racism. Such UN distortions of the truth and the permission to allow a terrorist like Arafat to speak before the General Assembly while wearing a military uniform and carrying a gun further inflamed the Israeli mood and served to reawaken old fears of extinction. Although the Palestinians did not present a physical threat to the Jewish state their claim to replace the Jewish state reflected a threat on the ideational level.

Ironically, it was the Israeli June 1967 victory in the Six-Day War that united the dispersed Palestinian people. Following 1948, the Palestinians that did not flee Mandate Palestine were divided among three entities: the Gaza Strip under Egypt, the West Bank under Jordan and the

rest within Israel itself. At the end of June 1967, all three elements were now within one political jurisdiction. Inadvertently, the State of Israel united the three main territorial segments of the Palestine Arabs and thus contributed to their national identity. Moreover, under the rule of Arab states the Palestinian distinctiveness was subsumed in Pan-Arab identity. Facing Israeli ethno-nationalism gave impetus to an Arab sense of national identity. Finally, the international accomplishments of the PLO transformed the identification of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip populations from their previous traditional leadership to an over-ruling PLO identity.

One indication of the conversion of the Palestinian population was the 1976 municipal elections in the West Bank. In sharp contrast to the 1972 polls in which the traditional loyalty to the Hashemite dynasty secured its position, four years later the National Bloc comprising PLO followers won a landslide victory. Similarly, the press and the universities changed from a Jordanian to a PLO orientation (Sandler and Frisch 1984, 61–65).

The accumulation of threats and condemnations following the 1973 war activated feelings of distaste by the international community toward the Zionist enterprise. It reawakened traditional suspicions of the Jews by gentiles. For a better understanding of this we must look further into the value system of the Israeli collective.

One of the central tenets of political Zionism was that a Jewish state would transform the Jews into "a nation like all the nations."[2] Implicit in this belief was the assumption that anti-Semitism would disappear once the Jews established their own nation-state which would become a normal member of the international community. Normalization would once and for all resolve the inherent animosity toward the Jews. Transforming Israel into a nation like all nations would imply the right of Jews, like all other nations to use arms for defending themselves, a reversal of the traditional Diaspora Jewish condition of relying on the might and power of others.

Another norm that appeared with the birth of the State of Israel and had been accompanying Zionism from its inception, was the concept of *Or Lagoyim* [A light unto the nations] as in the Book of Isaiah; "I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth" (49:6).[3] This universal mission, according to Charles Liebman, was the opposite of the customary Jewish approach that hypothesized a basic hatred of the Jews by gentiles. Gentile animosity to the Jews was considered to be inherent since the days of the Bible. No matter how he behaved or tried to be nice "Esau would hate Jacob." Hence, with the return of Israel to its own land and the establishment of a Jewish state, the hatred between Jews and gentile would presumably disappear and be replaced by "A light unto the nations." The condemnations of the Jewish state for its retaliatory actions in response to aggression led to the abandoning of "a light unto the nations" and the return to the notion that gentiles did not judge Israel's behavior equitably so that the inherent animosity to Jews surfaced once again (Liebman 1974, 88–93).

In the 1970s, a new catchphrase appeared in Israeli discourse: "A nation that dwells alone," derived from the Bible (Numbers 23:9). Although this concept was more widespread among the more religious elements in the population, the song "The whole world is against us" reflected a similar state of mind. Even though it was Balaam, a gentile prophet, who foresaw that Israel is destined to be "a nation that dwells alone," this notion was accepted in the 1970s as describing the essence of Jewish existence in the world. Yaakov Herzog, a former ambassador to Canada who had engaged in a celebrated public debate with the historian Arnold Toynbee, with a PhD in international law and was directorgeneral of the prime minister's office under both Levy Eshkol and Golda Meir, wrote a book of this name in 1975. According to Yehuda Avner, advisor to Prime Minister Menachem Begin, during a meeting of the Bible study circle at Begin's home, and in trying to summarize the opinions of the distinguished participants around him, the prime

minister quoted a paragraph from Herzog's book, concluding "Cease dwelling alone and we cease to exist" (Avner 2010).

From the perspective of the broad Zionist idea, the "nation that dwells alone" concept of the relations between Israel and the nations, implied the abandonment of the two original norms, "a nation like all nations" and "a light unto the nations." Even having established a state did not resolve the ancient concern that the Jews were fated to continue being excluded from other nations. Only a gentile prophet hired by the King of Moab to curse the Israelites could foresee the manifest destiny of the Jews. Among the more religious circles, the second half of the Balaam prophecy, "and shall not be reckoned among the nations," also became loaded and insightful. In Hebrew the phrase can be explained as saying that the Jews do not have to consider what the gentiles want them to do. For a secular Zionist like Amnon Rubinstein, the Israeli response to the international community implied a tragedy but even he could not totally condemn it following the traumas of the eve of the 1967 war and especially in the wake of the Yom Kippur War (Rubinstein 1980, Chapter 7).

The natural response was the resurgence of a notion that anti-Zionism was in effect a camouflage for anti-Semitism. At the same time it was not easy for Israelis to accept this notion since it stood contrary to all the presumptions of Zionism, that once a Jewish state would be established, anti-Semitism would cease to exist. But then again, living for almost 2,000 years as victimized minorities among the gentiles, the appearance of Jewish hatred in the secular world of the nineteenth century, culminating in the Holocaust, overcame the assurances of Zionism. The condemnation of Israel at repeated international forums produced such a reading of the gentile attitude to the State of Israel. The perceived unfair behavior and double standard of the international community toward Israel served as a proof of a Jewish special destiny. Again, even after Israel had achieved sovereignty the gentile nations could not be trusted. This mistrust exceeded the traditional Realist notion that in international politics no nation can fully trust another nation, or the international community as a whole. A large portion of the Israeli public felt that once again, special rules are applied to the Jews even under statehood. As we shall see, the experience of the 1967 and 1973 wars had a singular effect on the national religious sector of Israeli society.

The transformation of religious nationalism

The transformation of the national religious sector from a constant ally of the leftist Labor camp to the rightist Likud camp was a pivotal event in the political map of Israel. Its abandonment of Labor was a clear indication of the shift that occurred in Israel and which had led to a major change in the settlement policy of the new government that came to power in 1977, and marked the way for a center-right government. But, as we shall see, it highlighted the impact of the last two wars on Israel's foreign policy.

According to the Guttman Report of 1991, some 14 percent of the Israeli Jewish population defined themselves as "strictly observant" and another 24 percent as "observant to a great extent."[4] In the mid-1970s the state religious stream in the elementary school system accounted for about one fifth of the pupils in the Jewish educational system (Horowitz and Lissak 1990, 93). Another source of power was in the symbolic arena. The religious sector represented a link with the historic past that many thought should be preserved in a Jewish state. In addition, being able to form an alliance with one of the competing camps – Labor or Likud – for power, especially in the 1970s as the gap between the two camps was narrowing, gave the religious

sector the role of power broker.

As we have seen, Labor and the National Religious Party had formed a partnership based on a power-sharing arrangement that had started prior to the foundation of the state and had lasted through the first two decades of independence. In the mid-1950s, Mizrahi and its socialist offshoot Hapoel Hamizrahi merged and formed the National Religious Party (NRP or *Mafdal* in Hebrew) thus moving closer to Labor. A crucial aspect of this partnership was the restriction of the influence of the NRP to the religious domestic sphere. Foreign affairs were the domain of Labor and especially its leader, Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion. If NRP leaders were involved at all, the reason was survival. Moshe Chaim Shapiro, the leader of the NRP at the time, together with his colleagues, led the antiwar faction in the government on the eve of the crisis preceding the Six-Day War in May 1967. Shapiro's anxiety over Israel's survival was such that he demanded the return of Ben-Gurion to the cabinet as minister of defense (Oren 2004, 130). Up until his death in 1970, Shapiro remained firm in his dovish attitudes, hoping that at best, Israel would be able to preserve Jerusalem under its control. Under his leadership the NRP abstained from becoming part of the movement for "Greater Israel" that came into being following the 1967 war. On July 31, 1970, the Israeli government decided to accept the Rogers B plan which indicated Israel's readiness to withdraw from territories occupied in June 1967 (UN Resolution 242). The NRP did not follow the Gahal party (the forerunner of Likud) that had left the national unity government following this decision (Brecher 1974, 455). To a certain extent the position of the NRP did not change until 1973. In order to understand the change in the NRP a more in-depth analysis is called for. We shall start with the theological context.

The theology of religious Zionism

The basic tenet of religious Zionism is a synthesis between modernity and religion. A central feature of modernity is the belief that an individual or a collective can influence their own fate. The split in the Orthodox Jewish movements at the inception of Zionism was that while the ultra-Orthodox believed that Jews are not allowed to hasten the coming of the Messiah and hence must remain passive, the Mizrahi movement believed in an active role in the ending of exile.

Another aspect of divergence was in the understanding of Jewish history. Following the disastrous revolts against the Romans (the Great Revolt CE66–70 and the Bar-Kokhba Revolt CE132–135) the rabbis systematically wished to repress Jewish nationalism. Traditional Orthodox education was based on the study of the Talmud and there was an objection to the study of Jewish history following the ascendance of Zionism. Interpretation of the Bible was to be from a strictly Talmudic perspective. The Talmudic interpretation of Jewish history was to a large extent anti-nationalist and in support of a passive approach to the Jewish renaissance (Ravitzky 1993, 39–43).

The forerunners of religious Zionism, Rabbis Kalisher and Alkalai were motivated by a mixture of ethno-nationalistic and religious impulses. Their writings in favor of the redemption of the Land of Israel distinguished them from the traditional passive approach of the Orthodox rabbis. The common denominator between them and Rabbi Reines was the demand for an active role for the Jewish people in determining its fate. Rabbi Reines, however, was instrumental in his approach. The basis for cooperation with secular Zionism was, in his view, the deteriorating condition of the Jewish people in exile. Settlement in the Land of Israel was to safeguard the Jews from the threatening physical and spiritual threats they faced towards the end of the end of the nineteenth century.[5] In other words, the motivation of the founder of Mizrahi, the political

organ of religious Zionism, was survival not redemption (Ravitzky 1996, 34–36). It was this imperative that served as the basis for cooperation between religious Zionism and secular political Zionism, and in this context, Reines had supported Herzl in his support of the Uganda option. Labor Zionism, led by Ben-Gurion, extended the collaboration between religious and secular Zionists.

Rabbi Avraham Yitzhak Kook, the first Chief Rabbi of the Jewish community in Palestine further extended this religious-secular partnership by adding another theological pillar. Although Rabbi Kook died in 1935, his teachings influenced religious Zionism through his son, Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook and the influential Talmudic seminary, *Yeshivat Mercaz HaRav*, that he had founded.

A central theme in Rabbi Kook's religious philosophy was the sanctity of the Jewish people. In accordance with the tradition of the *Kabbala*, the body of mystical Jewish teachings, sparks of holiness were scattered all over the universe. These sparks are concentrated disproportionally in the Jewish people. Hence even Jews who are not observant are unknowingly motivated by an inner divine spark. The non-observant farmer who is cultivating the Land of Israel and redeeming its soil is doing holy work and is imbued with the divine spark. Moreover, loyal to his unitary approach to the universe, Rabbi Kook advanced the notion that the profane and the holy complement each other. Hence, those secular Jewish pioneers who left the Diaspora to cultivate the soil of Eretz Yisrael embody the union between the material and the spiritual worlds (Yaron 1974, 107–109, 121–123).

Rabbi Kook added a new dimension to that of Rabbi Reines in cooperation with secular Zionism in contrast to the opposition of ultra-Orthodoxy. Rabbi Reines did not ignore the problematic aspects of cooperation but saw in them a requisite step in light of the hazards facing the Jewish people. Rabbi Kook went one step further. Instead of despising the secular Jew who was providing a new model of Judaism, he idealized the pioneer who was sacrificing comfort for the sake of redeeming the Holy Land.

A crucial facet in the Kook theology was the concept of Jewish redemption. Defining the settlements in the Land of Israel as a Zionist awakening heralding the beginning of redemption, he went further and interpreted the Balfour Declaration as another divine signal. He saw the flourishing agriculture as a sign that Jewish redemption was at hand (Yaron 1974, 272–273, 277–280). Hence, together with a unitary doctrine of Jewish sacredness that embraced the Jewish people, the Land of Israel and the Jewish state to be, Rabbi Kook also enunciated a universal religious vision of redemption.

Religious Zionism, while adopting the theology of Rabbi Kook on the normative level, was selective in pursuing it on the operational level. In prayers the renewal of Jewish sovereignty was cited as the beginning of redemption. The Chief Rabbinate was regarded as a state institution to determine personal but not political issues. As we have seen, on the eve of the Six-Day War, the dovish leadership of the NRP was very far from embracing a Messianic world view in its political attitude.

When did Religious Zionism change? The conventional understanding is that it was the Six-Day War that transformed the NRP from a dovish passive party to a hawkish activist movement. The liberation of the Land of Israel where the biblical kingdoms of Judea and Israel had flourished was clearly bound to have an impact on members of the national religious community. The revolutionary change from a community threatened by destruction to overwhelming victory was interpreted in religious circles as a miraculous event. For the disciples of Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook, who emerged as the main interpreter of his father's writings and the head of the Merkaz

Harav Yeshiva, the era of redemption was progressing in accordance with the prophecies of Rabbi Kook, the elder.

A more profound interpretation suggests that changes in religious Zionism must be associated with the Yom Kippur War. In the wake of the Six-Day War, a new movement known as "The Movement for the Greater [Whole] Land of Israel" was established. Significantly, almost all the founders of the movement were secular intellectuals and activists from Labor Zionism and the Revisionists.[6] This movement never took off, either as a political or as a settler movement. It was *Gush Emunim* [Bloc of the Faithful], a religious settler group that emerged in the vanguard of the Greater Israel movement. But Gush Emunim was formally only founded in February 1974, following the Yom Kippur War. Even if it had been brewing before the war, the fact remains that it was the atmosphere of doubt that engulfed Israeli society that ultimately pushed the national religious youth to form an active movement.

The goal of Gush Emunim, as proclaimed in its founding document, was "to bring about a major spiritual reawakening in the Jewish people for the sake of the full realization of the Zionist vision in deed and in spirit." This statement was not accidental. It emphasized the context of the emergence of the movement. Even more indicative was the warm welcome it received from Israeli society at large. It went beyond the organizational or ideological strength as some researchers attributed to the Gush in explaining its success.[7] At a time that Israeli society found itself in distress and in self-doubt, Gush Emunim seemed to provide a measure of hope and self-confidence. It was the promise of survival that the Gush provided, in contrast to the downtrend that in the mid-1970s engulfed Israeli society, which explains its success. The vacuum created by the decline of Socialist Zionism, that had always been identified with state building and military victories, also prepared the way for a pioneering national movement that proclaimed from its outset that it came to replenish those ideologies and continue the mission of the traditional elite. This was recognized and reluctantly admitted by the Zionist left.[8]

The successful emergence and growth of Gush Emunim confirms the tremendous impact of the Yom Kippur War on Israeli society. The widespread support that it received from non-religious circles in Israeli society exceeded the influence of the NRP. The strength of the NRP in the Knesset declined from its traditional 12 to 6 in 1981 polls, and received only four mandates in the 1984 election. The national religious public, especially the disciples of both Rabbis Kook, felt even more threatened than the Jewish public at large because the setbacks following the Yom Kippur War contradicted their beliefs about the redemption process that their spiritual leaders had foreseen. Over time this defensive approach developed a radical trend that turned against the positive relationship with both the Jewish society at large and with the Jewish state itself.

The radicalization of religious Zionism

In the late 1970s, when religious Zionism and especially its settler component, reached a highpoint in its impact on the Israel body politic, a rupture with the state occurred. While the government was headed by a prime minister who was very supportive of their cause and the NRP had control of major government ministries, including the coveted Ministry of Education, a so-called Jewish underground associated with Gush Emunim appeared on the scene. The extralegal activities of this group have continued to exist, while changing names and personalities, and the response of mainstream religious Zionism is of significance to our thesis.

This Jewish underground might have been in the making for some time. It seems that the Camp David Agreements of 1978 triggered its activities. At Camp David, Prime Minister Begin

had agreed to remove all the Jewish settlements in the Sinai in exchange for a peace agreement. In addition, and even more disturbing to the extreme right, was Israel's recognition of the "legitimate rights" of the Palestinians, pledging to give autonomy to the Palestinian population in the West Bank – Judea and Samaria – and to the Gaza Strip. Most disturbing for them was the apparent transformation of Begin from the hard line opposition leader to an evidently more moderate prime minister. With Begin in power but not performing as he had promised when in opposition, many on the radical right were in despair. Hence, the more extreme wing of Gush Emunim established the militant, but legal "Movement to Stop the Withdrawal from Sinai," while taking advantage of Judea and Samaria opening up for settlement construction.

For some on the extreme margins of Gush Emunim, demonstrations and objections to withdrawal were not sufficient. They felt that, to stop the peace process, radical action was needed and they established a terror group. Acts of terror were committed against Palestinians in the West Bank including mayors of Arab towns. The most extreme plan was to destroy the Dome of the Rock on the Temple Mount. The rationale was that such an action would cause tumult throughout the Moslem and Arab worlds and thus bring the peace process to a halt.[9]

Not all the extreme right was ready to go as far as destroying the Moslem holy site. One branch, headed by Yehuda Etzion, targeted the Dome of the Rock. The second, led by Menachem Livni, sought to avenge attacks on Jews and deter acts of terror against Jewish settlers in the territories. Etzion had a messianic vision that he could force the Messiah to arrive. Livni, who had originally been brought in as part of the plan to destroy the Dome of the Rock, now objected to it, instead directing actions against the Arabs in the territories. The murder of six yeshiva students in Hebron in May 1980, however, evoked the memory of the infamous massacre of Jews by Arabs in Hebron in 1929.

The establishment of the (Arab) National Guidance Committee (identified with the PLO) following the Camp David Accords and Prime Minister Begin's proposal for Palestinian autonomy were also perceived by many as a prelude to the establishment of a Palestinian state in Judea and Samaria. The response of Livni's group was the maiming of Arab mayors, terror attacks against members of the National Guidance Committee, an attack on the Islamic College in July 1983, and an unsuccessful attempt to blow up an Arab bus in April 1984. This last action was foiled by the Israeli General Security Services (*Shabak* in the Hebrew acronym), which subsequently apprehended members of the Jewish underground (Shragai 1995, 96–122).

Both the Jewish undergrounds, and especially that of Yehuda Etzion, are cases that can illuminate our understanding of religious Zionism. A study of crucial exception to this rule is illuminating. The theology of Rabbi Meir Kahane, an American-born religious ultra-nationalist, serves as an extreme example of an outsider to religious Zionism. Besides receiving his education and socializing in Haredi (ultra-Orthodox) circles, he would be disqualified as a religious Zionist because he vehemently attacked the legitimacy of the democraticsecular state which was a basic tenet in the theology of Rabbi Kook. The political party he established, *Kach* [Thus], was disqualified from participating in the 1988 elections because of its anti-democratic ideology, and its extreme and violent program advocating the transfer of Israeli Arabs to outside the country's borders.[10]

The dividing line between Gush Emunim and Mercaz Harav on the one hand, and the Jewish underground on the other, was also evident in the attitude regarding the role of the state in the redemption process. Just as Ehud Sprinzak has distinguished between the Kook and the Kahane theologies in their approach to the state, the same distinction can be employed to disengage the underground from religious Zionism. Yehuda Etzion and his followers differed from religious

Zionism on the theme of the sanctity of the state. According to Etzion, a Jewish state that did not work toward the rebuilding of the Temple, the renewal of the Kingdom of Israel and the restoration of the Sanhedrin, did not embody any sanctity. For Etzion, the fact that the Jewish state allowed the Dome of the Rock to remain standing was proof that it had not embarked on the road to redemption. For both Kahane and Etzion, the State of Israel has no inherent sanctity unless it adheres in full to the role destined to it by their conception of the divine command.[11]

Rabbis Yehoshua Zukerman and Zvi Tau, at that time the two most prominent rabbis at Mercaz Harav who were both Etzion's teachers and leaders of Gush Emunim, publically condemned him for his anti-state activities. Rabbi Shlomo Aviner, considered a direct disciple of Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook, objected to the whole concept that the restoration of the Temple was a precondition to redemption, stating that it was actually the reverse. The wave of criticism, uproar and condemnation of the Jewish underground that swept the whole settler movement, also suggests that it was not a direct outgrowth of religious Zionism (Shragai 1995, 127–131; Don Yehiya 1993, 279–284).

Nevertheless, despite the gulf between the two, Gush Emunim did not totally succeed in disassociating itself from the Jewish underground. Yisrael Harel, a Gush Emunim leader and the founding editor of *Nekuda*, the journal of the movement, in a post-mortem analysis, asserted that the disclosure of the underground was the event most responsible for the collapse of Gush Emunim.[12] In the ensuing years, the settlement movement, led by the Council of Judea, Samaria and Gaza, directed its settlement drive in cooperation with the government.

The decline of Gush Emunim did not change the overall trend of preoccupation with the future of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip among the national-religious public. In domestic politics it moved from Labor to Likud which valued religious Zionism. The NRP, despite the steady decline in its number of Knesset seats, was a major partner in Likud governments and had received several important ministries. In return, the NRP became reluctant to join governments led by the Labor Party, its erstwhile ally. This completed the political-ideological shift that had begun in the 1970s. Not only did the historical alliance evaporate, but religious Zionism actually found itself in the forefront of opposition to the Labor Party.[13] Hence, the defeat of the Yitzhak Shamir government in the elections of 1992 and the return of Labor to power marked another major crisis for the NRP in its relation with the state.

The NRP's preoccupation with foreign policy issues and especially Gush Emunim's view of itself as the vanguard was not appreciated by Labor, which had always perceived itself as predominant in that sphere. Nor did Labor appreciate the consistent support given by the NRP to Likud governments. Yitzhak Rabin, the big winner of the 1992 election, did not forget the role played by the NRP in the fall of his government in 1977. With each side seeing the other as diametrically opposed to its core values, Labor made no real effort to recruit the NRP, instead preferring a coalition with the ultra-Orthodox Sephardi Shas Party (an analysis of Shas follows below).

In general, Rabin preferred to continue the traditional practice of consensus politics in religious affairs. He followed the pattern of previous Labor governments: accommodation in domestic matters, such as religion and state, but not in foreign policy. However, the Labor Party and Israel in general had both changed significantly since the last Labor-led government. Labor's foreign policy positions were significantly to the left of those held by the party in 1977, while Israeli society was even more widely split along the religious-secular divide. Nevertheless, Shas under Arieh Deri, its young and charismatic leader, and controlled by the most respected spiritual Sephardi rabbinical authority, Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, was ready to step into the traditional role of

the NRP, and to share power with Labor. Even though such a move compromised the Sephardi community's generally hawkish foreign policy outlook, a decree issued by Rabbi Ovadia Yosef that a genuine peace that would save Jewish lives was more important than the historical territories, did not escape the attention of the Labor leadership.

Therefore Rabin did not go out of his way to bring the NRP into his government. Partnership with Shas was a distinct advantage inasmuch as it also represented the Sephardi sector. Consequently, Rabin for a while ignored accusations of corruption that had been levied against the Shas Party leader, Arieh Deri. And yet, despite the fact that most Shas' leaders favored territorial compromise, they were unable to ignore their voters' objection to the Oslo process and after two years Shas left the coalition.

Ultimately, the lack of a religious party in the coalition government at the time when the Oslo agreements were signed destabilized the political system and intensified public discourse. The first major expression of violence occurred on February 25, 1994, when Dr. Baruch Goldstein, an American and a supporter of Rabbi Kahane, gunned down 29 Palestinian worshippers in the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron. Demonstrations intensified against the Oslo peace process at which Israel had committed itself to relinquish parts of the West Bank and Gaza to the newly-established Palestinian Authority headed by Yasser Arafat. In these demonstrations the presence of religious Zionists was prominent. The government's decision to advance to what came to be known as Oslo II, an interim agreement approved by the Knesset with the support of merely 61 Knesset votes and signed in Washington on September 28, 1995, exacerbated the situation even more. In response, some rabbis from the national religious camp ordered religious soldiers to disobey orders to evacuate settlements.

Rumors spread that rabbis from this camp charged Prime Minister Rabin with being a *rodef* (a Talmudic term for a person whose actions endanger the lives of others), an accusation that could sanctify his assassination. On November 4, Yigal Amir shot and killed Yitzhak Rabin after a public demonstration in Tel Aviv. Since Amir was a student at the Bar-Ilan University Law School (the university is primarily religious in character and was once associated with the NRP) the Israeli left blamed the national religious camp as a whole for instigating the assassination.

Yigal Amir was not a typical product of the national religious environment. Having been brought up in Haredi ultra-Orthodox institutions in his youth and sharing his military service with studies at the Kerem B'Yavne Hesder Yeshiva, a yeshiva to some extent associated with the Haredi camp, Amir did not experience the regular socialization process of national religious youth, although Amir himself testified that he was the product of both national religious and Haredi education (*Ha'aretz* January 1996, 2A).

A profound process of self-searching within the NRP camp nevertheless took place following the assassination. For a theology that had promoted the belief in the sanctity of the Jewish state, the murder of the state's elected leader by one in their ranks posed a religious crisis. Assassination, or even the maiming of a head of state, was contrary to Jewish law and against the holiness of the state theme developed by Rabbi Kook. At the same time, members of the national religious camp felt that they were being discriminated against unfairly and were being blamed collectively for the deeds of an extremist who was outside their "tribe." The disclosure that a Shabak secret service agent was the main propagandist for extreme acts against the prime minister, added to the claim of them being targeted by the state. Most disturbing to the religious community was the feeling that while they did their share of self-examination, the secular community refrained from doing so.

Shimon Peres, Rabin's successor as prime minister, understood that Israeli society could not

disbar one of its key components and hence the importance of political accommodation. He invited Rabbi Yehuda Amital, the leader of *Meimad*, a center-left modern Orthodox religious Zionist movement, to join his cabinet. This party, which had emerged in response to the radicalization of the NRP, failed to cross the 1 percent threshold of the 1988 elections and did not run in 1992. Moreover, Peres, in contrast to Rabin, refrained from verbally attacking the settlers. Ehud Sprinzak, a leading expert on the Israeli extreme right, noted that Rabin's personal style contributed to the hostility of the national religious circles toward him.[14]

One reaction to the collective assault on the national religious sector was the mobilization of its voters to support the NRP in the 1996 polls and the party climbed from six to nine members in the Knesset. The continued Palestinian terror acts that were not condemned by the Palestinian Authority led to the victory of the Likud-religious alignment in the May 1996 elections, despite the attempted delegitimization of the right in the wake of the Rabin assassination. Consequently, the new government that emerged in 1996 formally reinstated the secular-religious constellation but the NRP was no longer the sole religious partner.

The Haredi religious parties

As we have seen, Agudat Israel was the political arm representing ultra-Orthodox Jewry that was unready to cooperate with the secular Zionist movement. It had formally split from the Zionist Movement at the beginning of the twentieth century once the movement began to introduce a "cultural" program. Unlike Mizrahi, Aguda affiliated Jewry lacked a theology that justified cooperation with secular Jews in a national project aspiring to establish a Jewish state in the Land of Israel. Moreover, the whole Zionist project opposed the passive role the sages had delineated following the disastrous Bar Kokhba revolt (CE132–135). But the main enemy was modernization that threatened to reshape the traditional structure of Judaism under which the Jews had survived in exile for almost two millennia. At the same time, Aguda should be distinguished from the extreme anti-Zionist ultra-Orthodox adherents that fought vehemently against the establishment of a Jewish state like the Satmer Hassidic court and the Jerusalem "Old Yishuv" that became the sect known as *Neturei Karta* [Guardians of the City].

The Aguda ambivalence to the State of Israel declined for a time following the Holocaust and the birth of the state. Disinclined to formulate a foreign policy agenda of its own during the pre-state Yishuv years, Aguda could not totally stay aloof with regard to the events taking place between 1945 and 1948. Aguda youth mobilized during the 1948 War of Independence and the party participated in a United Religious List which included all the religious factions, both Zionist and non-Zionist, in the elections to the first Knesset. However, disappointed by the secular government headed by Ben-Gurion, they abstained from joining coalitions and thus did not accept ministerial portfolios. They left to Mizrahi the onus of safeguarding the status quo arrangements which had been arranged with Ben-Gurion.[15] Thus, while the NRP became identified with the status quo and the political implications of the "politics of accommodation," Aguda acceded to it without taking responsibility in governmental affairs.

As mentioned, four areas were implicit in the "politics of accommodation": autonomy in education for religious schools, observation of kashrut in the public sector, issues of personal status,, observance of the Sabbath and Jewish festivals as official days of rest. In essence, all elements of the status quo that had existed before the state were maintained after its establishment. With the birth of the state there were two new main issues that emerged in the relationship between the religious sector and the state: the definition of "Who is a Jew," within

the Law of Return, and the military conscription of yeshiva students. In all of the above issues, Orthodox Jewry achieved an advantage over the other religious Jewish denominations. Following the agreement in 1948 of Ben-Gurion to postpone military service for several hundred yeshiva students, the status quo agreement was further extended to include a special arrangement for the Haredi sector. In principal, the arrangement allowed young men enrolled in a yeshiva to complete their studies before their conscription in the IDF. The rationale for this was that Torah learning (known as *Torato Umanuto)* was, for such a person, his main occupation. With time, this in effect became a route to avoid military service.

This situation changed following the defeat of Labor in 1977 and the rise of the Likud. Aguda joined the Begin government and some major changes took place. One of the main ones was that the claim of *Torato Umanuto* was expanded to include every young man who claimed that Torah learning was his main occupation. In addition, allocations to the Haredi institutions grew. The combination of the two led to the number of yeshiva students leaping from a few hundred to several thousand each year. Moreover, increased allocations via stipends while learning accompanied by social security benefits began to inflame the secular majority. The religious rationale advanced for this discrimination was that by learning Torah the yeshiva students were ensuring the survival of the Jewish people no less than the soldiers who risked their lives in the IDF.[16]

The ambivalence of Aguda towards full partnership in the work of government explains its abstention from issues of foreign policy. Although being a part of the government coalition, no Aguda representative had ever participated as a government minister until 2015. Previously, they headed ministries but only in the role of deputy minister, thus not participating in cabinet votes. Hence they could stay aloof from taking part in major decisions that concerned issues of life and death. By following this precept they stayed loyal to the belief that it was the Torah sages that insured both Jewish spiritual and physical survival.

The internal split with the Haredi party is pertinent to foreign policy. While many sects comprise the Aguda, the clearest division is between the Lithuanian School, namely the historic heads of the yeshivot at the end of the eighteenth century, and the Hassidic movement. The political split between the two took place in the 1988 elections when *Degel HaTorah* (the Lithuanians) under the leadership of Rabbi Eliezer Shach ran separately from Aguda and gained two seats in the Knesset. They reunited in the 1992 elections under the name "United Torah Judaism" (UTJ). While abstaining from formally stating foreign policy positions, Degel HaTorah revealed a very dovish attitude. The rationale was similar to the one in the Diaspora, namely that Jews are not allowed to rebel against the nations (the gentiles). Since the nations of the world did not sanction the conquest of the post-1967 territories, the Jewish state must comply with their edicts. The Hassidic segment was more diversified, ranging from a very hawkish position (Habad) to a more dovish one (Belz). Nonetheless, except for Habad, for the other Aguda streams, foreign policy was not a condition whether to join a government coalition.

Following the 1992 election, having run for the first time representing both ultra-Orthodox parties, the UTJ chose not to join the Rabin government although Rabin reserved both the Labor and Welfare Ministries for it for some time. Rabin wanted both Haredi parties, Shas and UTJ inside the government while the hawkish NRP was out. By staying out they avoided the divisive decision of supporting the Oslo agreements. Without the UTJ, Shas also left the government before Oslo II came into effect. Rabin's decision to force Minister of Education, Shulamit Aloni (a leading human rights activist and prominent in the fight against the religious establishment), to resign and replace her with Prof. Amnon Rubinstein, did not succeed in bringing the UTJ into the

government.

Once Likud returned to power in the 1996 elections, the UTJ once again joined the coalition. It received the position of head of the important Knesset's Finance Committee, as well as the post of deputy minister of ministries such as housing (crucially important for large Haredi families), but with the status of minister. In the Labor government headed by Ehud Barak in 1999, UTJ was again in the coalition, but with no official positions. At about the time when the 2000 Camp David summit took place and it became known that the division of Jerusalem was being discussed, UTJ quit the coalition as did all the religious parties. The danger that the Old City of Jerusalem could be divided, and that it would become more difficult for Jews to reach the Western Wall, and that the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron might be handed over to the Muslims, moved even a non-Zionist religious party like UTJ to assume a role on foreign policy issues.

Following the defeat of Barak in 2001, the UTJ joined the government led by Ariel Sharon and again received the chairmanship of the Finance Committee. In ensuing governments they were sporadically in and out of the coalition, mainly aiming at chairmanship of the Knesset Finance Committee. This post has always been important to ultra-Orthodox Jewry, because through it allotments of finance for its educational institutions could be secured, thus circumventing the Ministry of Education. Another area of interest has been subsidies to large families. In 2003–2005, following the second *Intifada*, Israel underwent a period of recession and the ultra-Orthodox camp suffered a setback in financial support to large families and rabbinical students. With these concerns at the top of their agenda, the ultra-Orthodox were less preoccupied with foreign policy issues, and hence more suitable as governmental partners than the NRP.

Indeed, the ultra-Orthodox were comfortable partners during the second government of Benyamin Netanyahu in 2009–2012 which was one of the most stable eras in Israel's political history. Accordingly, Netanyahu wanted them as partners again during his third administration starting in 2013 but was thwarted by an ad hoc pact between "The Jewish Home" (a new name for the NRP) and a new centrist party called "Yesh Atid" [There is a Future] headed by an ex-journalist and television personality, Yair Lapid. One of the main issues of Lapid during the 2013 campaign was "sharing the burden," implying mobilization of the Haredim to the IDF or at least another form of national service. Via this ad hoc alliance the NRP came back to government and replaced the Haredi parties. Netanyahu was stuck now with a religious party with a right wing foreign policy agenda and centrist parties that were committed to an opposite foreign policy agenda.

To summarize, the political strategy of UTJ or Agudat Israel in its previous incarnation, can be defined as oriented to ensure survival of Haredi Jewry. During the 1948 War of Independence when the Jewish community in Palestine was under existential threat, Haredi Jews joined in defense. Subsequently, when the Jewish state was militantly secular it hesitated to get involved in sharing the political responsibility including foreign policy issues. In their eyes saving the world of rabbinical colleges in a secular State of Israel was the real defense of the Jews in Eretz Israel. For some in Aguda (especially the Lithuanian section), since redemption would not be advanced by secular Jews, even a Jewish state was not certified to go against the will of the nations (the gentiles). But UTJ represented only the Ashkenazi wing of Haredi Jewry. We turn now to the Sephardi Haredi Wing.

Shas, the Haredi Sephardi party

A new Haredi party appeared on the Israeli political scene in the early 1980s named Shas. In the 1984 elections, Shas pronounced a combination of ethnic and religious messages which had previously been largely concealed in Israeli politics, especially in the religious sphere (Arian 1985, 153).[17] Over the years Israelis from Sephardi origin came to comprise over 50 percent of the Jewish population of Israel. Their ascendancy, though unrelated directly to international affairs, ultimately had an impact on foreign policy.

Remarkably, the distinction between the Sephardi and the Ashkenazi communities had a religious facet; it originated in the Middle Ages when each community accepted different rabbinic traditions concerning certain rituals and interpretations of the religious code. The Sephardim were Jews who had lived in Palestine throughout the ages or migrated to countries around the Mediterranean, mostly to the Iberian Peninsula. Following the expulsion from Spain in 1492 they scattered again around the Mediterranean. Some went further east to territories of the Ottoman Empire, settling among long-established Arabic-speaking Jewish communities in cities like Baghdad, Damascus and Alexandria. A few followed the spice trade routes in Asia as far as India where they settled among the established local communities. Others went west to the Netherlands and Britain. The common denominator was the acceptance of the last great codification of Jewish law composed by Rabbi Joseph Caro in Safed in 1555. Ashkenazi Jewry followed the same code but with amendments made by Rabbi Moshe Isserles, a sixteenth century codifier who lived in Krakow, Poland. They also followed a somewhat different liturgy. It was in Palestine where the two communities met and consequently the British High Commissioner established the Orthodox Rabbinate, comprising the Sephardi *Rishon LeZion* [First in Zion], a position inherited from the Ottoman rule in Palestine, to which was added an Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi. With the birth of the Jewish state the two rabbinical positions were kept as part of the status quo agreement.

The vast majority of the Sephardim were Jews who came to Israel from Arab Islamic countries, with small groups coming from Mediterranean European countries such as Greece, Yugoslavia and Turkey. With time they were joined by immigrants from Islamic Iran and some central Asian countries. Consequently, a geographically based very rough distinction emerged: those whose origin was in North Africa and Western Asia – Sephardim; and Jews immigrating from Europe – Ashkenazim (Elazar 1989b, Chapter 1).

Despite the fact that the Sephardim constituted the elite in the Old Yishuv in Palestine, the Ashkenazi secularized east and central Europe immigrants emerged as the ruling elite in Israel. The traditionalism and orientalism of the Asia-African immigrants did not help to change the situation. The veteran ruling elite felt closer culturally to the European immigrants. Secularization of both types of immigrants was the order of the day. Secularization was identified with modernization. The fact that the two main religious parties, the NRP and Agudat Israel, were basically Ashkenazi in their tradition did not assist the Sephardim in keeping their religious customs and way of life. Unable to rebuild their religious institutions they were caught in a system where to advance their interests and share in power they needed their own political party. But in the integration – or in its Hebrew version of "Ingathering of the Exiles" [*Kibbutz Galuyot*] mood that dominated the newly-born state, ethnic parties were perceived as divisive. Religious-secular or class divisions or even partisanship along international orientation were accepted within the legitimate consensus. Jewish ethnic parties did not pass the electoral threshold despite several attempts (Horowitz and Lissak 1988, 101–103, 107).

Lacking public legitimacy for ethnic Jewish parties, the Sephardi vote turned away from the ruling Labor parties to the Likud. In 1977, the move was enough to tilt the balance to a Likud

victory. Based on public opinion surveys, the tendency to abandon the ruling Labor party in favor of Herut and then Likud, was stronger among second generation Sephardim then among their elders, who were still loyal to the founding party of the state. It seems that second generation Sephardim were not afraid to vote against the party that they perceived as having deprived them of their heritage, in an attempt to push them in to a "melting pot" against their will. The decline of Labor's public status in the wake of the Yom Kippur War induced a more massive desertion of Sephardim to the party that for years had been deprived of power. Only feelings of relative deprivation can explain the dichotomy between Jews coming from Afro-Asian countries and the mostly Ashkenazi (Polish–Russian to be more accurate) Herut party leadership in Israel.

In addition, research on the Sephardi Likud vote indicates a clear linkage to anti-Arab attitudes prevailing among emigrants from Arab and Muslim countries. Memories of discrimination in Arab countries by the host majority translated to hawkish attitudes on withdrawing from territories acquired in 1967 and advanced by the Herut faction in Likud (Shamir and Arian 1981, 106; Peres and Shemer 1984, 316–331). In the early 1980s, the Sephardi "revolution" took a new turn: an ethnic-religious vote. The first sign was the success of a Sephardic party, *Tami* (Hebrew acronym for the "Tradition of Israel Movement") which gained three seats in the Knesset following a break away from the NRP. The party's success was its appeal based on religious traditionalism; its slogan was "walking tall" (Leon 2009, 175).

Following success in the Jerusalem municipal elections, Rabbi Ovadia Yosef founded *Shas* (acronym for *Shomrei Tora Sfarad* [Torah Guardians of Sepharad]) as a nation-wide ethnic movement that gained four Knesset seats in the 1984 elections. The slogan of the party was "Restoration of the Crown to its Former Glory."

Restoring past glory provided the necessary distinction of the Sephardi community from both the hegemony of the Ashkenazi secular culture in Israel and the Ashkenazi religious establishments that dominated the yeshivot. The principle of "restoration of the crown" expressed the feelings of deprivation that existed among immigrants from Arabic-speaking countries on both the economic and cultural spheres. Rabbi Ovadia sensed that he was saving Sephardi culture from extinction. His emphasis on the halakhic supremacy of the rulings of Rabbi Joseph Caro contributed to restoring the Sephardi identity vis-à-vis his Haredi Ashkenazi counterparts. Since many of the leading Sephardi scholars had themselves been educated in Ashkenazi yeshivot where they felt treated as secondclass students, such a message provided an additional boost to self-identity and pride.

Another leading principle in Rabbi Ovadia's religious teachings was that "the permissible opinion comes first" [*Koach DeHetera Adif*]. This means that when there is a halakhic option to permit rather than prohibit, the rabbis should rule according the first option. In other words, a preference toward leniency (Lau 2005, 255–268). This principle was also a way of differentiation from the Ashkenazi Haredi attitude of prohibition as a rationale for the erection of walls against secularization. In doing so Rabbi Ovadia felt that he was reviving the Sephardi moderate tradition in religiosity.

But Rabbi Ovadia was very aware of the importance of politics in a country where religion and politics were not separated. The Shas party raised two flags: the religious and the socio-economic ones. In accordance with his more moderate approach to ultra-Orthodoxy he positioned Shas in the space between Agudat Israel and the Zionist NRP. Shas joined the 1984 and 1988 unity governments headed by Likud and Labor. In addition, Rabbi Ovadia adopted an independent foreign policy on the question of territorial compromise. As Sephardi Chief Rabbi in

1979, he had already ruled that the Israel government was allowed to withdraw from the Sinai Peninsula. He reiterated this position again in 1989 in his role as the spiritual leader of Shas. The main justification for territorial compromise was the halakhic principle of *Pikuach Nefesh* – the saving of life. As we have seen above, saving life supersedes all the Jewish commandments (excluding adultery, idolatry and murder). Shas' leadership, both spiritual and political, comprehended that portraying a flexible line in foreign policy would give it an advantage over the NRP which was ideologically committed to the Land of Israel. Despite the gap between Shas' very hawkish voting base and its leadership, the pivotal position of Rabbi Ovadia Yosef and his overwhelming influence allowed the leadership to make use of this flexibility but only to a certain degree.

From the outset Shas took advantage of the NRP's turn to the right on foreign policy issues and tried to replace its classic role. In 1992, Shas was the only religious party to join Rabin's government. However, ultimately Shas left the government because of the Oslo Accords and the consequent constant pressure from its adherents. Despite corruption charges against its leaders, Shas significantly increased its electoral strength and won ten Knesset seats in the 1996 elections, becoming for the first time the largest religious party in the Knesset. In the first Netanyahu government it held the Ministry of Interior, and the Ministry of Labor and Welfare. Internal affairs had always been the ministry which the NRP had demanded. Through this ministry, in addition to the ability to control distribution of funds to local authorities, the religious parties could implement conditions for the registration of immigrants to Israel as Jews.[18]

The power of Shas increased even further in the 1999 elections following a campaign in which Arieh Deri, the party's political leader, responded to allegations of corruption by claiming to be the victim of an antagonistic Ashkenazi secular elite. When Shas reached a new high of 17 seats in the 1999 Knesset, Prime Minister Ehud Barak brought the party into his government despite pressure from Labor supporters because of the corruption charges against Deri. Learning from the Rabin experience, religious parties were pivotal in any peace process.

Nevertheless, following Barak's trip in the summer of 2000 to the Camp David Summit, and his announcement of Israel's willingness to make far-reaching concessions to Yasser Arafat, all the religious parties left his government, including Shas which was forced to succumb to grass root pressures. However, in the 2001 elections for prime minister, Shas received the Ministry of the Interior portfolio in the Sharon government while the NRP was left out. Consequently, the NRP retaliated and joined the 2003 Sharon government while Shas was omitted at the insistence of the secular Shinui [Change] party. But the disengagement from the Gaza Strip forced the NRP to quit the coalition again. Following the 2006 elections, Shas joined Ehud Olmert's dovish government while the NRP and Aguda stayed out. All the religious parties participated in the 2009 Netanyahu government with Shas receiving major portfolios including Interior. In 2013, the NRP formed a tactical alliance with Yair Lapid and joined the third Netanyahu government as the sole religious party.

In essence, foreign policy issues influenced the domestic politics of the Jewish state and vice versa. The movement of the national-religious public to a commitment to the Land of Israel coincided with the emergence of an ethnic-religious party committed to the renaissance of the Sephardi religious and cultural tradition, as well as power-sharing with the Ashkenazi ruling elite. The rise of Shas was at the expense of both the NRP and Likud. Rabbi Ovadia's more moderate positions on religious questions, by comparison to Aguda, and on foreign affairs by comparison to the NRP, led Shas to be more flexible in joining various governments.

Participation in the government also meant distribution of funds for Sephardi religious institutions. Nevertheless, there were limitations to Shas' flexibility; when centrist-left dominated governments implemented drastic steps like Oslo II and Camp David, Shas was again obliged by its constituencies to leave the government.

Religion and state in Israeli political life

The role of the religious parties was essential in determining religion and state relations both before the establishment of the state and in Israel and, over time, also its foreign policy. The power-sharing arrangement between the religious and the secular parties that evolved during the pre-state era continued with the establishment of the state. Despite the fact that the secular parties, whether from the left, right or center of the political map, have always been able to form a secular ruling coalition, almost every government has included at least one religious party. The ruling parties chose to claim that the rationale of coalition politics forced them to include a religious party in the government, but political realities prove a different logic. The religious-secular partnership has been a basic feature throughout the socio-political fabric of the Jewish state.

The rationale that justified a power-sharing arrangement was that of physical survival. Consociational arrangements are usually justified by an existential threat to the state. Constant threats to the state's security threaten the state's social cohesiveness and thus justify the price of concessions to religious demands. For a state that has faced existential foreign and security threats from its very inception, disagreements in other areas were perceived as secondary. Courting of the religious parties by the big parties is hence justifiable. We can also include the argument that the divisions between the competing camps were so deep that concessions on religious matters seemed easier to swallow.

With religious Zionism developing an active role in foreign policy, a new power-sharing arrangement emerged. Instead of the NRP that had, to all intents and purposes, joined the right wing camp, the Haredi parties that refrained from expressing an extreme line on the question of the territories, maintained the power-sharing arrangement even when the NRP was in opposition. Certainly the Haredi parties adopted more aggressive and uncompromising stands on religious matters, and yet all the ruling parties have made sure to include a religious party in their governments, at least at the outset.

Significantly, ruling parties like Labor, Likud and even centrist ones like Kadima, have devoted considerable thought to issues of religion and state and to relations between the religious and secular groups. Historically, all proclaimed their support for a Jewish state and for open dialogue between religious and secular people. During the 2013 elections every major Zionist party included religious candidates on their lists of Knesset candidates. Even the newly-formed centrist party, *Yesh Atid*, made "equal sharing of the burden" a major issue in its platform and emerged as the second largest party in the Knesset with three Orthodox members in its ranks. Following the 2015 campaign, in which Yesh Atid did not do well but still remained a major force in Israeli politics, it softened its statements on religion. Thus even the secular parties continued to treat the religious sector as an integral part of Israeli society.

Conclusion

At the beginning of this chapter we explored the question of relations between religion and

foreign policy, from both the perspectives of domestic politics and religion. In one respect, we continued the traditional perspective developed by Horowitz and Lissak: that the consociational arrangement that developed during the Yishuv pre-state era also embraced the religious-secular divide and, as such, was transferred to the state. This arrangement during the present era is commonly referred to as "Accommodation Politics." From the perspective of this book however, as we saw in Chapter 2, power-sharing is rooted in the Jewish political tradition. In this chapter, our analysis started with the birth of Zionism.

Religion has been a major issue in the Zionist political agenda from its very outset. Despite a conscious attempt by Herzl to circumvent religion he agreed to parallel streams in cultural activity and formed an alliance with the Mizrahi movement in one of the early Zionist foreign policy challenges over the Uganda controversy. While religious Zionism participated in all the major foreign affairs debates it ultimately accepted the political strategy of the secular Zionist leadership. Hesitant to be a full partner in the Zionist enterprise, the Haredi ultra-Orthodox parties played a more marginal role in foreign policy. Change came only in the early 1970s following the Six-Day War. The appearance of Gush Emunim led to a major change in the attitude of the religious public and the NRP which until the 1970s, was concerned mainly with matters of religion and state, but thereafter, became more and more involved with its opposition to territorial compromise in Judea, Samaria and Gaza.

The main religious stream, however did not revolt against the state. The redemption theology of the elder Rabbi Kook sanctified the Jewish state and thus delegitimized radical activities opposing it. A test of this principle was the 2005 unilateral disengagement from Gaza, when the Sharon government demolished 21 Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip and four settlements in the West Bank, leading to the uprooting of 8,600 settlers. Despite the forceful opposition headed by the national religious camp, a certain degree of resistance and physical confrontation against the IDF and the police was not accompanied by casualties.

A historical observation of the changes that activated the national religious segment suggests that the trigger was a combination of the historical areas that were acquired in 1967 and the existential threat to the Jewish state during the Yom Kippur War.

Significantly, the turn to the religious nationalistic right was restricted to the Zionist stream in Orthodoxy. The more fundamentalist Haredim stayed out of the hawkish–dovish divide that has engulfed Israeli society since 1967. For the Haredim, at least on the normative level, the survival of the Jewish people depended upon the strengthening of Jewish tradition through Torah study. Even following their quasi-joining government coalitions in the Knesset, the ultra-Orthodox parties directed their main efforts to securing financial resources for their communities, in addition to the fight for the preservation of the state's Jewish character. Because of the large size of ultra-Orthodox families, United Torah Judaism turned the issue of child support into its paramount concern. While the Hassidic groups were identified as more hawkish on territorial questions and the Lithuanians were more dovish, the official political line of both was abstention.

Shas has mainly attempted to be identified with social and economic issues. On questions of foreign policy it can be placed somewhere in the middle between Ashkenazi Haredi Jewry and the religious Zionists. While some Shas leaders have been more hawkish and others less, the main concern of the party was and continues to be, the restoration of the status of historic Sephardi Jewry. Its constituency on the other hand, is definitely right-wing and hence for extensive periods Shas was unable to join a left-wing coalition.

In conclusion, despite far-reaching changes in the Israeli political map and deep differences between the various religious parties, and continuous tension on questions of religion and state, a

consensual paradigm is still the overarching framework of conflict regulation in Israeli society. An arrangement that had begun well before the immediate pre-state era, survived major changes in Israeli society, the large waves of immigration from all parts of the world, and internal changes within the religious parties. The ruling parties, despite occasional lip service when in power are in no rush today as before, to relinquish partnership with at least one of the religious parties or to endanger the status quo.

However, one additional pattern has persisted. Despite attempts by the NRP, the power-sharing arrangement was not extended to foreign affairs. The NRP was left out of the Rabin and the first Sharon governments, precisely because of that reason. Even Netanyahu, in 2013, preferred the Haredi parties over the NRP, but was forced to form a coalition by an alliance between Naftali Bennett and Yair Lapid, respectively the two young leaders of "The Jewish Home" party and Yesh Atid. Following the 2015 elections, Netanyahu brought in to his government all three religious parties, thus defusing the NRP's exclusive hold on religion and foreign policy.

Notes

1   The labor offshoot named Hapoel Hamizrahi emulated models that originated in the socialist camp. It gave birth to religious kibbutzim, moshavim (both cooperative and non-cooperative) and a youth movement (*B'nei Akiva*) that educated its graduates to self-fulfillment in kibbutzim.
2   Amnon Rubinstein, *From Herzl to Gush Emunim and Back* (Tel Aviv: Schocken, 1980)
3   See also "I am the Lord, I have called you in righteousness, I have taken you by the hand, and kept you; I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations" (Isaiah, 42:6); "And nations shall come to your light and kings to the brightness of your rising" (Isaiah, 60:3).
4   The religiously observant population was estimated to be around 23 percent, the secular 40 percent, and the rest traditional; see Yehuda Ben-Meir and Peri Kedem, "An Index of Religiosity for the Jewish Population in Israel," *Megamo* (February 1979): 353–362. [Hebrew]
5   For an elaboration on the contrast between Rabbi Reines and the forerunners of Zionism or as he called them, the "harbingers," see Aviezer Ravitzky, *Messianism, Zionism and Jewish Religious Radicalism* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 26–36.
6   Among the leading figures were Moshe Shamir, Eliezer Livneh, Natan Alterman, Chaim Guri and Zvi Shiloach – all of them from the secular Labor camp – and the Revisionists Uri Zvi Greenberg and Israel Eldad. See *Davar* September 15, 1967. From among the 50 leading figures the more renowned religious figures included Nobel laureate S. Y. Agnon, Rabbi M. Z. Neriyah and Prof. Harel Fish.
7   For the organizational explanation see Ehud Sprinzak, "Gush Emunim: The Tip of the Iceberg," *Jerusalem Quarterly* 21 (Fall 1981): 28–47. For an ideological explanation, see Eliezer Don-Yehiya, "Jewish Messianism, Religious Zionism and Israeli Politics: The Impact and Origins of Gush Emunim," *Middle East Studies* (April 1987): 225–227.
8   "The wide tolerance and even encouragement which the movement … received from the Israeli population, [is explained by the fact that] Gush Emunim represent[ed] a recrystallization of attitudes, a resolute stance around certain ideas, and a reconstruction of social solidarity in face of anomie experienced after the Yom Kippur War." Janet O'Dea,

“Gush Emunim: Roots and Ambiguities; The Perspective of the Sociology of Religion,” *Forum* 2/25 ((1976): 45. O’Dea was soon to become a leader of “Peace Now.”

9 For a full account by one of the members of the Jewish Underground, see Haggai Segal, “Dear Brothers: The West Bank and the Jewish Underground” (Jerusalem: Keter, 1987) See also Phillip Rawking, “Terror from the Heart of Zion: The Political Challenge of the Jewish Underground in the West Bank,” *Middle East Focus* 7 (January 1985): 9–13, 22–23.

0 Kach received its limited electoral support from both national-religious extremists and low income elements motivated by economic hardship. Following the Kach electoral success in 1984, a theory was advanced that the Sephardim hated the Arabs because they were competing with them for employment. See G. Shafir and Y. Peled, “Thorns in Your Eyes: The Socio-Economic Characteristics of the Sources of Electoral Support of Rabbi Kahane,” *State, Government and International Relations* 25 (Spring 1986): 115–130 [Hebrew]. For a more balanced view of the origins of the extreme right see Ehud Sprinzak, *The Ascendance of Israel’s Radical Right* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991). See also Michal Shamir, “Kach and the Limits to Political Tolerance in Israel,” in Daniel J. Elazar and Shmuel Sandler (eds), *Israel’s Odd Couple: The 1984 Knesset Elections and the National Unity Government* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1990), 159–168; and Etta Bick, “Fragmentation and Realignment: Israel’s Nationalist Parties’,” in Elazar and Sandler 1990 (note 20), 67–102.

1 Etzion was primarily inspired by the writings of and his conversation with Shabtai Ben-Dov. Ben-Dov, who died in 1979, had been active in the Lehi underground movement and his radical doctrines had been influenced by the nationalist poetry of Uri Zvi Greenberg (1894–1981). Another of his influences can be traced back to kabbalistic rabbis. This tradition also influenced other leaders in the underground such as Yehoshua Ben-Shushan, an army officer swayed by mystical sources, and Dan Be’eri, a Christian convert to Judaism. On some occasions, Etzion and his colleagues criticized both Mercaz Harav and Gush Emunim for their lack of activism and their unwillingness to act toward redemption. See D. Be’eri, “The Routes Have Parted,” *Nekuda* 193 (March, 1996): 38–42 [Hebrew].

2 Yisrael Harel stated this thesis at a Bar-Ilan University Department of Political Science seminar on March 20, 1990.

3 Daniel J. Elazar and Shmuel Sandler, “The Two-Bloc System – A New Development in Israeli Politics,” in Elazar and Sandler 1990, 11–24.

4 Ehud Sprinzak, in a conference at Tel Aviv University, January 18, 1996.

5 In a letter addressed to the leaders of Aguda and in order to ensure their support of a Jewish state before the UN commission visiting Palestine, Ben-Gurion committed the forthcoming government to maintain the status quo in religious affairs.

6 On this dilemma see Nurit Stadler and Eyal Ben-Ari, “Other-Worldly Soldiers? Ultra-Orthodox Views of Military Service in Contemporary Israel,” *Israel Affairs* 9 (2003): 11–31. See also Stuart Cohen, I*., The Scroll or the Sword?: Dilemmas of Religion and Military Service in Israel* (Amsterdam: Harwood,1997), xi–xvi.

7 Asher Arian, Politics and Government in Israel (Tel Aviv: Zmora, Bitan, 1985), 153 [Hebrew].

8 For additional explanations of the Shas constituency, see Yoav Peled, “Shas’s Continuous Electoral Success: Analysis According to the Model of Cultural Division of Labor,” in *The Elections in Israel – 1999* (Jerusalem: Israel Democracy Institute, 2000), 137–169; Riki Tessler, *In the Name of God: Shas and the Religious Revolution* (Jerusalem: Keter, 2003).

7   The Holocaust and the nuclear option

In addition to the founding of the State of Israel in the middle of the twentieth century there were two additional and unparalleled occurrences with impacts that may have even surpassed the restoration of Jewish sovereignty after almost two millennia: the Holocaust and the development of nuclear weapons. Both of these colossal world events are linked by the Jewish component. In this chapter we shall investigate the universal connection between the Holocaust and nuclear weapons and proceed to the Israeli nuclear option. The Jewish dimension will be emphasized in both events.

Holocaust theology

The Holocaust, or the *Shoah* [Catastrophe], was undoubtedly one of the most traumatic events in Jewish history. Indeed, the philosopher Emil Fackenheim has defined the Holocaust as an "epoch-making event" – one that leaves an imprint on the history and development of society (1987, 289). In the introduction to his magnum opus, *To Mend the World*, he compares the two greatest catastrophes that befell the Jewish people: the destruction of Judea by the Emperor Hadrian following the Bar-Kochba Revolt in CE135 and the Holocaust 1,800 years later. Hadrian, following the destruction of the Jewish state in 135, passed an edict that made the practice of Judaism punishable by death. Rabbi Akiva, who continued to teach Judaism, was tortured to death and as a consequence became a martyr. Hitler did not even allow the Jews the choice of dying as martyrs since they were destroyed with no choice; "Hitler murdered not only Jews but also Jewish martyrdom" (Fackenheim 1982, xlii). Fackenheim, a Reform rabbi and professor of Jewish philosophy became a Zionist only in 1967 at a time that he also began to study the Holocaust. His conclusion was that post-Holocaust Judaism should be added to the traditional 613 commandments in Jewish law, a new one. The 614th commandment that he postulated was, "Thou shalt not hand Hitler posthumous victories." To despair of the God of Israel was tantamount to continuing Hitler's work. The commandment proposes that people of Jewish heritage have a moral obligation to observe their faith and thus frustrate Hitler's goal of eliminating Judaism from the earth. In his book he explains what he meant by this commandment:

> We are, first, commanded to survive as Jews, lest the Jewish people perish. We are commanded, secondly, to remember in our very guts and bones the martyrs of the Holocaust, lest their memory perish. We are forbidden, thirdly, to deny or despair of God, however much we may have to contend with him or with belief in him, lest Judaism perish. We are forbidden, finally, to despair of the world as the place which is to become

the kingdom of God, lest we help make it a meaningless place in which God is dead or irrelevant and everything is permitted. To abandon any of these imperatives, in response to Hitler's victory at Auschwitz, would be to hand him yet other, posthumous victories.

(Ibid., 213)

Fackenheim came to this conclusion slowly. Over the years other theologians tried to face the enormity of the Holocaust from a theological perspective. Among them was Richard Rubinstein who, in his book, *After Auschwitz*, published in the mid-1960s, argued that Jews could no longer espouse the concept of an omnipotent God or believe in the election of Israel as the chosen people.[1] Other theologies ranged from Haredi notions blaming the calamity as a punishment for Jewish secularization, to Reform or Conservative Rabbis who went as far as adopting Rubinstein's theology that God was not omnipotent. Among Modern Orthodox thinkers it is possible to find views such as those of Rabbi Irving Greenberg who went as far as suggesting that in the Holocaust, God had unilaterally broken his covenant with the Jewish people. The most accepted view, however, amongst Orthodox thinkers is the notion that the Holocaust is so far above and beyond measure that it could not possibly be related to as a punishment for sins. The destruction of six million Jews surpassed all previous experiences. Nevertheless, even without being able to comprehend the inaction of God during the occurrence of such barbarity, the obligation of the Jews is to rebuild Jewishness and thus not let Hitler win.[2]

Naturally, the genesis of the State of Israel, three years after the end of World War II, was associated with the Holocaust. The most extreme wings of ultra-Orthodoxy (Satmer and its leader, Rabbi Yoel Teitelebaum) blamed the calamity on the "heretics" (the Zionists) who violated Holy Writ and attempted by force to seize sovereignty and freedom before the appointed time. On the other side, extreme religious Zionists blamed the ordeal on the lack of enthusiasm of the Jews to move to Eretz Israel when there were augurs of redemption. However, as we have noted, the main streams in Judaism understood that such a catastrophe could not be attributed to any deed of the Jewish people. Moreover, by blaming the Jews, many of them felt that in so doing, they were exonerating Christianity from the painful history between the two religions that had ultimately led to racial hatred of Jews. This history included persecution, forcible conversion, hate crimes and displacement of Jews that had occurred for many centuries and was responsible to a large extent for the emergence of anti-Semitism that, in turn, evolved into Nazism and eventually the Holocaust.

The Holocaust and the State of Israel

The Holocaust–State of Israel nexus had additional aspects. The first was the argument over the Yishuv leadership's actions or failure to act during the destruction of European Jewry. The debate among historians regarding the policies of the Yishuv during the war years is still not over. On the one side are those who argue that the Yishuv leaders were primarily concerned with the survival of the Jewish community in Palestine and hence, like other Jewish communities outside Europe, did not put enough pressure on their governments to allocate resources to check the massacre of European Jewry. On the other side are those who argue that given the conditions and threats facing Palestine Jewry, it still did more than the rest of the Jewish leadership around the world (notably American Jewry). At the time the Palestine–Jewish community had primarily to ensure its survival. Both sides agree on two points: in retrospect more could have been done to save European Jewry, and that the main concern of Jews within Palestine and in the Diaspora

outside of Europe was not to close their eyes to their brothers' horrifying fate in Europe but at the same time to ensure the survival of their own communities.[3]

The second nexus was the post-Holocaust attitude of Israeli leaders and their involvement in its institutional commemoration. According to some students, during the early years of Israeli independence the government was ambivalent with regard to the issue as to how to commemorate the greatest tragedy that had befallen the Jewish people. It seemed to take some time for the leadership of the newly established state to find an appropriate way to commemorate the Holocaust. Against all expectations it was the religious sector that pursued the subject more than did the secular leadership. While the destruction of European Jewry was more in accordance with the Zionist ideological stance, Orthodoxy faced a theological challenge. How can religion explain the absence of God during those dreadful years? And yet when, in 1949, the Chief Rabbinate announced a memorial day for the Holocaust to be observed on the tenth day of the Hebrew month of Tevet, the traditional fast day marking the beginning of the siege that led to the destruction of the First Temple, it took the Knesset another two years to establish Holocaust Remembrance Day for 27th Nissan – a date that was linked to the Warsaw Ghetto uprising.

How can we account for this delay in setting a date to commemorate the Holocaust? Explanations run from psychological reasons to statist ones and even post-modern ones. From a psychological perspective it is necessary to consider the depth of the trauma that engulfed the Jewish people when facing the magnitude of the catastrophe. Just as individual survivors had kept silent so did the collective. Looking at it from another socio-psychological perspective, an analogy can be drawn between individuals who were consumed by guilt feelings for surviving and the Yishuv which had also preferred survival over risking the only hope for Jewish resurrection after the war. Feelings of impotence or shame for being cowardly persisted among individual survivors and in the Yishuv itself, even if there was nothing that could have been done. The result was the same, both the individual and the state preferred to keep silent.

Eliezer Don-Yehiya is one of the first academics to have raised the issue of the disregard of Holocaust remembrance during the first decade of Israel's independence within government and official circles. He provides an explanation on the state level which is related to the political culture prevailing in Israel at that time. As we have noted, when the government eventually decided to take action and commemorate the Holocaust, it did so by linking it with the Warsaw Ghetto uprising. The date chosen was midway between the eve of Passover when the uprising started and Israel's Day of Independence. That date points at the message that the national institutions aspired to convey. Holocaust and Heroism Remembrance Day [*Yom HaZikaron laShoah ve-laGvura*] as it was named, indicates that Israel's leaders wanted to frame the Holocaust not only as a torment where Jews yielded to their fate and went to the gas chambers without resistance ("as sheep to the slaughter") but also emphasized the heroic aspect of the calamity. By relating to the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, the Jewish state underscored the fact that there were also Jews who fought against all odds in resisting the Nazis. As one writer put it in a book published in 1957: "the heroic stand of the Jews of the ghetto somewhat compensated for the shameful behavior of those who were led to the death camps. The human dignity of those tortured and killed was restored" (quoted by Don-Yehiya 1993b, 144).

Don-Yehiya links the ambivalence of how to commemorate the Holocaust with Ben-Gurion's overall state-building theme known as *Mamlachtiyut* [Statism]. The ideology of statism implied two motifs: one, that the interests of the Jewish state should be given absolute priority over those of the Diaspora and two, the rejection of the Diaspora status per se. Promotion of the Holocaust as a central value endangered the new image of the Jew that Ben-Gurion wanted to

instill (ibid., 144–145):

> According to the doctrine of *mamlachtiyut*, the Holocaust was concrete proof of the abnormal condition of the Jewish people in the Diaspora – an inevitable outcome, in fact, of that condition – while the State of Israel represented the Jewish people's escape from the suffering and loneliness of the Diaspora and its renewed position in the community of free nations.
>
> (Ibid., 157)

Moreover, statism was intended to become the new civil religion which would thus replace traditional Judaism identified with the Diaspora's lack of self reliance (Liebman and Don-Yehiya 1983, 84).

Nevertheless, this ambivalence did not endure. As early as the mid-1950s, Knesset members on all sides of the political spectrum advanced a demand for making the Holocaust a central constituent in Israel's value system. Holocaust Remembrance Day became an official commemoration equivalent to the Memorial Day for the Fallen Soldiers of Israel and Victims of Terrorism that ensues a week later on the eve of Independence Day. This sequence is not coincidental. The public message is that the establishment of the State of Israel is the best guarantee that a Holocaust will not occur again and that the sacrifice of the soldiers that fell in the defense of the state was not in vain.

Over time the Holocaust has become a central pillar of Israeli identity. One major landmark was the trial of Adolf Eichmann in 1961. One intention was to emphasize the difference between Jewish statehood and the Diaspora where Jews were unable to take revenge on their tormentors and to bring about the identification of Israelis with their slaughtered coreligionists. The 1967 crisis before the Six-Day War when Israel was threatened by another total destruction, further heightened the trauma of the Holocaust. But perhaps the most significant lesson for Israelis was when, after that war, Israel was accused by many in the international community as being an occupying power. The situation of the country during the days preceding the war were ignored or rapidly forgotten. These feelings of isolation became even stronger following the Yom Kippur War. It was during those years that the Holocaust image became even more central to Israel's identity. A visit to Yad Vashem, the national institution commemorating the Holocaust, became an essential requisite for foreign dignitaries and statesmen. The president and prime minister speak at every Holocaust Commemoration Day ceremony. Inevitably each speech will draw a reference to the connection between the existence of Israel and the lessons to be learned from the Holocaust as embodied in the always repeated phrase, "Never Again."

The notion that the State of Israel is the ultimate response to the Holocaust thus replaced the earlier understanding of statism. After 2,000 years of exile the state received a new augury: a perception that a strong state is the only insurance for survival in a world that left the Jewish people to its fate during those horrifying years. A world that stood aside while Jews were led to the gas chambers cannot be trusted. The Jews cannot rely on any nation's professed goodwill. The trauma of being helpless was felt again following the 1973 war and the ensuing coordinated attack on Zionism.[4]

To a certain extent the centrality of the state in Jewish life is not new in Jewish history, as we saw in Chapter 2. However, in the case of the Holocaust, we are referring to the greatest tragedy that had engulfed the Jewish people since antiquity. Hence, statism which implies loyalty to the state was first of all a response to 2,000 years of exile. At the same time, the gathering around the state as a shield was not extraordinary in Jewish political tradition. Finally, in the period after

Ben-Gurion's statist era, a new cause emerged: the Holocaust that was now firmly entrenched in the conscience of the Jewish public became the main driving force in justifying the need for a Jewish state. The question that still had to be resolved was how to defend a state that had been surrounded by a hostile environment even prior to its inception. One route that transpired was to develop an ultimate weapon that would deter the enemies of the Jewish state from ever accomplishing their goals. Nonetheless, as we shall see, even that weapon had a Jewish dimension that became apparent in the mid-1960s, but the genesis of which goes back to World War II.

Jewish émigré scientists and the bomb

Jewish engagement with nuclear fission had preceded World War II. In general, historical Jewish proficiency in physics is well documented. The deep Jewish involvement in the development of the nuclear bomb must be related to the rise of Nazism. German Jewish scientists, especially physicists including Hungarian Jews who had received their academic education in Germany, and had been expelled, contributed significantly to the knowledge that ultimately led to the development of the atomic bomb by the United States. Leo Szilard, Eugene Wigner and Edward Teller, all three of them Jewish Hungarian refugees, realized the potential of the development of a nuclear bomb in the struggle between Nazi Germany and the free world. Frightened by the possibility that Hitler's Germany was preceding the West in nuclear research, they sought channels to convince Washington to take action.[5] Szilard and Teller turned to Albert Einstein urging him to write a letter to President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Accordingly, in a letter to Roosevelt of August 2, 1939, Einstein explained the potential of a nuclear bomb and urged the president to start moving ahead along the nuclear road. Einstein went as far as recommending to Roosevelt that the US should acquire stockpiles of uranium ore and accelerate the research of the Italian physicist, Enrico Fermi, into nuclear chain reaction. Fermi was married to a Jewish woman and hence was unable to return to Italy (Ne'eman 2007, 33). The three Jewish physicists were included as members of the Advisory Committee on Uranium that Roosevelt nominated in the wake of the Einstein letter (Hewlett and Anderson 1962, 16–20).

At the same time, two other Jewish émigré physicists in Britain, Otto Frisch and Rudolf Peierls, were motivated by the same impulse as their colleagues in the US – the fear of Germany being able to manufacture a nuclear bomb before the West. They turned to the British government with a plea to advance the nuclear atomic project. Their scientific work on uranium had been done at the University of Birmingham and pointed to the possibility of building a uranium device of a size that could be carried by the bombers of that time (Ne'eman 2007, 42). Churchill's resolution to advance the nuclear project also influenced the American decision-making process that had until then been reluctant to move ahead (Ne'eman 2007, 34).

Jewish participation in the American Manhattan Project was significant. The Jewish scientists in the project were American and their main motivation was how to provide the allies with the nuclear advantage. While the perceived target was Nazi Germany, ultimately Berlin surrendered before the first successful nuclear test in June 1945. Nevertheless, the primary target of the scientists was Germany as an article in the *New York Times* indicated:

> When Einstein wrote to Roosevelt in 1939 it was to warn that Hitler might build the bomb first. And when teams of bright scientists, including Jewish refugees of Nazism, secreted themselves atop a mountain in New Mexico early in 1943 to start designing the

bomb, it was to make sure the United States had it before Germany.

<div align="right">(Broad, New York Times April 18, 1995)</div>

After realizing the effects of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, many of the Jewish scientists sought limitations on use of the horrendous weapon. A number of the Manhattan Project physicists founded the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* which began as an emergency action undertaken by the scientists who saw an urgent need for an immediate educational program regarding the use of atomic weapons. The Bulletin became a tool for informing the public about nuclear policy deliberations, while advocating for international control of nuclear weapons. Robert Oppenheimer, the head of the Manhattan Project, expressed misgivings over the bombing of Nagasaki. Thereafter, he tried to convince Washington to put limitations on the weapon and expressed his desire to see nuclear weapons banned. At a certain juncture, he was investigated on these views as seemingly being an outgrowth of an association with the Communist party in his youth. Edward Teller who fled Germany as a young scientist in the mid-1930s and was an anti-Communist ideologue, supported harsh measures against the Soviet Union and is considered as the father of the hydrogen bomb. So two Jews, Oppenheimer and Teller, expressed diametrically opposing views on the continued use of the new weapon. Through a connection with the Israeli physicist Yuval Ne'eman, Teller also advised the Israeli cabinet and scientific community on the development of the nuclear option.

Ben-Gurion and the nuclear option

With the formation of the State of Israel, Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion started thinking about, and even took the first steps toward, a nuclear option. A combination of anxiety regarding the ability of Israel to survive when surrounded by hostile Arab states on the one hand, and faith in Jewish ingenuity on the other, brought him to a search for a weapon that would balance the numerical asymmetry between Jews and Arabs in the Middle East. But, most important, it was the Holocaust that gave him the resolution, three years after the end of the war, to declare the establishment of the State of Israel. It was the same horror of the Holocaust that also led him to try advancing Israel in the direction of a nuclear capability.

Almost all commentators on Israel's nuclear program highlight Ben-Gurion's comprehension of the lessons of the Holocaust. Thus while refusing to place the Holocaust at the center of Israel's value system, he engaged with it in a very substantial way. The main task of the Jewish state, as he saw it, was to prevent the recurrence of another Jewish annihilation. Facing a vast hostile Arab world supported by an even bigger Moslem hinterland, the Jewish state needed a robust deterrence. In the absence of a great power which would provide Israel with assurances, he believed that a nuclear potential would accomplish that goal.

A nuclear program called for two determinants: material and knowledge. With regard to knowledge, Ben-Gurion's beliefs in Jewish science were based on reality. During the 1948 War of Independence, he had already started searching for Jewish scientists abroad and immediately following the Declaration of Independence, encouraged outstanding Israeli students to study physics in leading Western universities (Cohen 1998, 26). In addition to Jewish scientists, Ben-Gurion saw the Negev Desert as an answer to his material ambitions. Special efforts by the Israel Defense Forces in 1948 were devoted to conquering the Negev even at the expense of liberating the Old City of Jerusalem.[6] Although the first results were not encouraging, ultimately research at the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot developed the capability to extract uranium

from the phosphates mines in the Negev as well as a new technique to produce heavy water (Cohen 1998, 54–55).

The Israeli discoveries, accompanied by advancement in scientific knowledge, were complemented by contacts with the French scientific community. In 1952, the Israeli Atomic Energy Commission (IAEC), the equivalent of the French *Commission a l'Energie Atomique* (CEA), was established. The CEA bought the new technology for 60 million francs. The first steps to an Israeli–French scientific cooperation were thus initiated. But this was not sufficient – a political set-up was needed to take the project a step further.

As we have seen, from the outset, Ben-Gurion was in search of a strategic alliance with a great power. Starting in 1954, he concentrated on achieving American security guarantees for Israel's existence (Bialer 1987, 154–171). But while he did not drop his preference for an American guarantee, he also did not close the door for an equivalent alliance in Europe. The French connection seemed to fulfill both purposes – connection with a great power and nuclear cooperation. France, with its ambitions to become a nuclear power, was a potential partner not only in regional matters but also in the development of a nuclear option.

The support by the new charismatic Egyptian leader, Gamal Abdul Nasser for the Arab side in the protracted Algerian uprising, strengthened French–Israeli cooperation. During the 1956 Suez confrontation, this cooperation was expanded to the scientific arena (Cohen 1998, 52–55). The nuclear threat against London and Paris by Moscow during the Suez Campaign, when Washington was reluctant to back its allies, convinced the French of the need for their own deterrence. In addition, following its successful launch of the Sputnik in 1957, Moscow demonstrated the potential capability to strike the US with inter continental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), a development that undermined Washington's credibility to deter the Soviets from conquering Western Europe. Under such circumstances, the readiness to sacrifice New York for Paris lost credibility (Heiman 2010, 107) and French independent deterrence was seen as a necessity. In their pursuit of a technological breakthrough, the French weighed up another consideration; they assumed that cooperation with Israel would help them with contacts with Jewish scientists in the United States.[7]

Who was responsible for the breakthrough in thinking on both sides? Ben- Gurion had two advisers: Professor Ernst David Bergman and Shimon Peres. While the first was his scientific advisor, the latter was his administrative and international counselor. Bergman had prepared the scientific infrastructure for the Dimona nuclear project. But the real breakthrough came in May 1957, when Peres took advantage of political changes in France and signed an agreement of nuclear cooperation with the French government headed by Maurice Bourgès-Maunoury. The so-called "Dimona Agreement" was signed on October 3, 1957 (Cohen 1998, 58–59).

Despite Israel's success in inflicting a preventive strike in 1956 on Nasser, Ben- Gurion continued to fear a potential surprise attack by an Arab coalition. The only factor that could deter such an attack would be a nuclear bomb (ibid., 65). But the aspiration was in due course, thwarted by the outgoing Eisenhower administration and even more so by the incoming Kennedy presidency. American pressure was exerted in two directions: demands for allowing inspections in Dimona where the new nuclear reactor had been constructed with French assistance, and direct pressure on France to stop its cooperation with Israel. Having decided to withdraw from Algeria, the French President De Gaulle responded favorably to the US demand. Ben-Gurion, in contrast, tried to change both the French decision and the demands of the American administration (Heiman 2010, 114–120). In both issues, while promising to abstain from producing a nuclear bomb, he exploited the potential threat to Israel's existence as the rationale for Israel to continue

to develop its nuclear capabilities.

But the most direct use of the survival argument was a seven-page letter to President Kennedy in April 1963. The letter was written in the wake of the declaration of a Pan-Arab federation, including Egypt, Syria, and Iraq designed for the "Liberation of Palestine." In this letter, Ben-Gurion compared the proclamation to liberate Palestine to the Holocaust:

> I recall Hitler's declaration to the world about 40 years ago that one of his goals was the destruction of the entire Jewish people. The civilized world in Europe and America treated his declaration with indifference and equanimity. A Holocaust unequaled in human history was the result. Six million Jews … men and women, old and young, infants and babies, were burnt, strangled, buried alive.
>
> (Cohen 1998, 120)

In the same letter Ben-Gurion differentiated between the Holocaust and the current situation as "the people of Israel are not in the hapless situation of the six million Jews who were wiped out by Nazi Germany" (ibid.). A month later, he wrote a nine-page letter, again drawing on the memory of the Holocaust (ibid., 122).

President Kennedy invested greater efforts than his predecessor in the effort to stop nuclear proliferation and increased the pressure on Israel by demanding biannual inspection visits to Dimona. As information on Israel's advancement to a bomb became greater, the reactions from Washington became more intense. At the same time, Ben-Gurion also faced opposition from within Israel. The main critique came from national security leaders like Yigal Alon. Their main argument was that Israel would be able to maintain the balance of power with conventional forces. On the other hand, Israel's nuclear option would force some Arab states like Egypt to enter the nuclear race and attempt to acquire a nuclear capability of their own. In contrast to the East–West balance of power where mutual deterrence worked, in the Middle East the nature of the regimes did not promise strategic stability. The geo-asymmetry in a nuclear Middle East was more threatening than in a conventional one. To some extent the argument against the development of a nuclear option was based on the same rationale of survival. Because of its small size, both in territory and in population, the introduction of nuclear weapons into the Middle East would endanger the survival of the Jewish state.[8]

The unyielding pressures from Washington accompanied by the debate from home ultimately wore out even a tough leader like Ben-Gurion. On June 15, 1963, he resigned. The resignation took place in the midst of the debate with President Kennedy when Ben-Gurion refused to sanction biannual inspections of Dimona. Since the period was difficult for him also politically at home, it is not clear whether his decision was just related to the pressure from Washington. Several of the ministers surrounding him believed that his decision was connected to the crisis with Washington. Since in the long run, in Ben-Gurion's view, both the US and the Israeli nuclear enterprise constituted the two main pillars of the nation's survival, it seems that the clash between these two major elements in his strategic thinking prompted the 78-year-old leader to resign – a move that he had contemplated for some time. Nevertheless, when his successor, Prime Minister Levi Eshkol aligned himself with the conventional weapons supporters, Alon and Israel Galili, rather than with the Peres–Dayan group that supported the nuclear project, Ben-Gurion vociferously insinuated that his successor was abandoning a fundamentally vital security device.

US–Israel relations improved during the Eshkol era. Despite the disagreements on the nuclear issue, it was during these years that the US started supplying Israel with conventional

weapons. Levi Eshkol was invited by President Lyndon B. Johnson to visit the White House and was the first Israel prime minister to receive such an invitation. Moreover, he was the prime minister that completed the attainment of the nuclear option. He was also the prime minister that made the commitment that Israel would not be the first to introduce nuclear weapons into the Middle East (Cohen 1998, 240). In retrospect, it seems that the US adopted a dualistic approach to Israel's nuclear policy. While officially pronouncing unequivocal opposition to Israel's attainment of a nuclear capability, Washington did not apply all the means at its disposal to stop Israel from proceeding along that road. It seems clear that the US did not underestimate the existential threats to Israel. Washington also recognized that should the Jewish state face annihilation, bearing in mind the lessons of the Holocaust, America would have to come to its assistance and thus face a hostile Arab world backed by the Soviet Union. A strong Israeli deterrent might absolve the US from that dilemma (Shalom 2004, 20–22). This dilemma unfolded during the May 1967 crisis.

The nuclear dimension of pre-emptive and preventive war

We have already analyzed the Six-Day War and especially the international crisis of May 1967 that led up to it, according to the traditional narrative that dominated the Israeli discourse of the time. In this portrayal, the nuclear factor was not considered. Also the Arab narrative did not mention the nuclear aspect, this despite warning of pre-emptive threats emanating from Egypt during the early 1960s. In more recent literature, the nuclear role during that crisis and its aftermath has been acknowledged. However, it is recognized that as long as the documents are not fully revealed, it will be difficult to establish the extent that the nuclear issue played leading to the 1967 crisis.[9]

Two facts are agreed upon by researchers: Nasser had been issuing warnings for some time about Israel acquiring nuclear weapons and was threatening a preventive strike. Israel had already acquired some nuclear capability by the time that the May 1967 crisis broke out. Moreover, on May 17, two Egyptian MiG 21 fighters had flown over Dimona, thus indicating that Israel's nuclear facility could be a target in a war (Cohen 1998, 269). As the crisis unfolded it became clear that Israel was isolated against an amassing Arab coalition that threatened to destroy the Jewish state. Nevertheless, Israel preferred not to demonstrate its new capabilities in order to deter the Arab armies from attacking it.[10]

Apparently, assurances from the IDF command, backed by similar evaluations from Washington that the balance of power was on the side of Israel and hence it could win the war on conventional terms as long as the Soviet Union did not intervene, ultimately convinced the Eshkol government to abstain from unleashing its strategic capabilities. Moreover, an Israeli demonstration of nuclear capability would have triggered immediate Soviet assurances to Egypt and Syria and possibly lead to a nuclear arms race. As it transpired, Israel succeeded, through a pre-emptive strike, to remove the threat to its existence without having to turn to its newly acquired nuclear capabilities.

The situation was different during the Yom Kippur War. According to several sources, the failure of the IDF, including the air force, during the first days of the Egyptian–Syrian attack induced Minister of Defense Moshe Dayan to push for a nuclear reaction. According to non-Israeli sources Dayan ordered the loading of Israeli fighter planes with Jericho missiles armed with nuclear bombs (Karpin 2005, 324). Prime Minister Golda Meir and her ministers did not panic and the activation of Israel's nuclear option was halted. But again the calculation behind

the inaction was assurances from the IDF that it could prevail over the invading armies with conventional weapons. Nevertheless, the US military airlift of weapons and ammunition was prompted by the Israeli consideration of nuclear readiness (ibid.).[11]

In planning the war of 1973, the Arab leaders must have taken the nuclear factor into account. Prior to the war, Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat stated that he was ready to sacrifice a million casualties – a statement that could be interpreted as a reference to Israel's nuclear capability.[12] During the 1973 war, Israel did not openly declare a nuclear option, but conveyed a clear message to both the Soviets and to Egypt by the deployment of nuclear armed Jericho missiles that were visible to Soviet satellites. In the aftermath of the war, other proofs emerged to expose Israel's capability to the extent that the Arab states could no longer ignore the nuclear issue. On September 4, 1974, the CIA published a report asserting that Israel possessed nuclear weapons. Three months later, President Ephraim Katzir stated that Israel had a nuclear option.

Although the next day his spokesman denied the statement, it could not be disregarded when coming from Katzir, himself a Weizmann Institute scientist who had been involved in developing Israel's nuclear capabilities (*Ma'ariv*, December 2, 1974). President Katzir's slip of the tongue, in retrospect, was not coincidental. It reflected a strategic internal debate that developed in the wake of the Yom Kippur War.

A crucial casualty of the 1973 war was Israel's deterrence doctrine. The assumption that a high cost would convince the Arabs to abandon its policy of aggression which was a central feature in Israel's national security doctrine was now impaired. After its military capability was virtually destroyed by Israel in June 1967, Egypt initiated the War of Attrition a year later. During its course (1968–1970) towns along the Suez Canal were destroyed and Egypt's inner cities were bombarded. Nevertheless, President Sadat was not deterred from initiating a war three years later. Moreover, the political gains of the Arabs following the Yom Kippur War did not dissuade the Arabs from resuming attacks. In short, the 1973 Yom Kippur War indicated that while the pre-1967 borders invited aggression, the post-war period also did not deter resumption of violence.

It was against this background that the debate around Israel's nuclear opacity strategy erupted. As we have seen, the formula that Israel had adopted while developing the nuclear option was "Israel would not be the first state to introduce nuclear weapons to the Middle East." Once the nuclear capability was in place and the conventional balance of power was in Israel's favor, the concept that developed was the "bomb in the basement." The combination of external and domestic factors led to the adoption of a regime of ambiguity and opaqueness regarding Israel's nuclear stance (Cohen 1998, 291). Pressures on Israel to join the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) nevertheless continued. However, during the Nixon–Kissinger era, a tacit agreement seems to have been reached: Israel would not reveal its nuclear capability, neither by conducting a test nor by declaration. In strategic terms, Jerusalem and Washington agreed to move "from the era of nuclear ambiguity to the era of nuclear opacity" (ibid., 337).

The erosion of Israel's deterrence in the wake of the Yom Kippur War again ignited a domestic debate regarding the rationality of the opaque policy. A new consideration was the economic strength that stemmed from petrodollars. Many in the Israeli national security elite feared that the enhanced Arab economic power assured them the upper hand in any arms race with Israel. It was feared that Israel would not be able to sustain its superiority in such a race and thus would be unable to restore the deterrence that was shaken in 1973. Hence the only solution to ensure the survival of the Jewish state was to introduce the ultimate deterrence. Taking into account the tacit agreement with the US of opacity, some suggested offering a trade-off: in

exchange for legitimation of a declared nuclear capacity, Israel would withdraw from the occupied territories.[13] Despite the intensive domestic debate that ensued, Israel decided to stick to its policy of opacity. Most important, Israel conveyed the message that the nuclear option was intended only for survival and not for the exercise of power. Egypt, the most vocal country against Israel's nuclear capability, ultimately tacitly accepted that rationale, signed a peace treaty with Israel in 1979 and appeared ready to forgo a nuclear race.

Nevertheless, more radical states like Iraq, led by President Saddam Hussein, challenged this structure and tried to develop its own nuclear option. In 1981, Prime Minister Menachem Begin instituted a policy that came to be known as the Begin Doctrine. It was never announced publically but it can be summarized as stating: "On no account shall Israel permit an enemy to develop weapons of mass destruction (WMD) that can endanger the existence of the State of Israel."[14] The context of this statement was Operation Opera, executed by Israel's air force on June 7, 1981, which destroyed the Osirak nuclear reactor in Iraq. Begin claimed that the reactor was less than a month away from becoming operational. The prime minister reached the decision despite strong opposition from the heads of the Mossad and army intelligence and from opposition leader Shimon Peres. The United Nations Security Council and the General Assembly condemned the Israeli action.

According to all evidence, it was the Holocaust that influenced Begin's foreign policy. He himself had escaped from Poland to the Soviet Union where he joined the Free Polish Army under General Wladislav Anders and arrived in Palestine in 1942 having lost all his family in the Holocaust. He objected to the Reparation Agreement in 1952 between Israel and West Germany. He constantly referred to the Holocaust in his speeches whether as leader of the opposition or as prime minister after 1977. His decision to destroy Osirak was deeply influenced by this historic Jewish ordeal. During a cabinet debate, Begin evidently put both hands on the table and leaned towards his cabinet ministers and announced, "There will not be another Holocaust in this century! Never. Never. Never again!" The ministers remained silent. No one dared oppose him, at least not to his face.[15]

The war against the PLO in the shadow of a nuclear option

Israel's possession of the nuclear option, accompanied by the elimination of Osirak, reduced the potential of destroying the Jewish state. Egypt, the most powerful and vocal on the issue among the Arab states, was, as we have seen, also the first to make peace. The removal of Egypt from the Arab coalition further tilted the balance of power in favor of Israel and made a general war inconceivable. These realities transformed the Arab–Israeli conflict from the interstate level to a sub-conventional level (Ben-Yehuda and Sandler 2002, 167–179). With non-conventional warfare fading as a real option the conflict was reduced to the sub-state level or what came to be known as "Low Intensity Conflicts" (LIC).

But another type of violence was that of missiles. The possibility of a classical conventional general war diminished and yet the existential threat did not totally disappear from the Israeli national security conception. The PLO who had bases in Southern Lebanon, in what came to be known as "Fatah Land," continued shelling the Galilee in northern Israel. Here Begin faced a dilemma. As we have seen, according to the Israeli security doctrine, initiation of war was legitimate only within a defensive framework, and not as a means of achieving political goals. Only a threat to Israel's existence justified going to war before being attacked.

Since the PLO did not constitute an existential military threat, there was no justification in

the security doctrine for initiating war in Lebanon. But in the Middle East opportunities for initiating war are not rare. The shooting of Israeli Ambassador Shlomo Argov in London on June 3, 1982 had been the justification for a limited military operation in Lebanon. Indeed, the original plan was dubbed *Shlom Hagalil* (Operation "Peace for Galilee"). But it developed into a full-scale operation against the PLO bases in Lebanon, resulting in their expulsion to Tunis.[16] What is significant is the fact that the prime minister chose to justify the war in terms of survival.[17] As we learned in Chapter 5, on August 8, 1982, Prime Minister Begin delivered an address to Israel's National Security Academy outlining the rationale of the military operation that had deteriorated into a war. The expansion of Peace for Galilee from an operation that was to be limited to 40 kilometers, to a situation where the IDF besieged Beirut, the Lebanese capital, forced Begin to provide an explanation to a nation that was accustomed to Israel only fighting defensive wars. Whether he was deceived by Minister of Defense Ariel Sharon, as some argue, or not, the rationale for the speech reveals a significant aspect of Israel's political tradition of embarking upon warfare.

The Prime Minister was looking at the aspirations of the PLO's National Charter that called for the replacement of the Jewish state by a Palestinian state. Significantly, he opened his speech by comparing the steps that the Allies should have taken on March 7, 1936, when Hitler announced that he was abrogating the Treaty of Versailles and subsequently sent two battalions into the Rhineland. Had the Allies done so, World War II and the Holocaust might have been prevented. The crux of Begin's address was a distinction between "Wars of No Choice" and "Wars by Choice." The War of Independence (1948), the War of Attrition (1968–1970), and the 1973 Yom Kippur War, belonged to the first category, while the 1956, 1967, and the Lebanon War were wars by choice. The common denominator in the latter was that Israel was the first to initiate violence in order to prevent an existential threat. "War by Choice," according to Begin was more just than allowing the enemy to attack you. His conclusion was that:

> There is no commandment to wage war only … out of no choice. There is no moral obligation that a nation must or may fight only when its back is turned to the sea or the wall…. On the contrary, a free sovereign nation, that loves peace and cares for its security, must create conditions in which war, if needed, should not occur under conditions of no choice.[18]

Without going into the actual goals of the war, the mere fact that the prime minister had to portray it as a defensive war and compare it to other wars that were also fought for maintaining the balance of power but were seen as legitimate, indicates that in the tradition of Israeli national security only defensive wars were considered to be legitimate.

The war in Lebanon signaled the new style of warfare that would develop henceforth in the Arab–Israeli conflict in the wake of Israel's acknowledged possession of a nuclear option. The era of inter-state wars was coming to an end. Instead inter-communal or ethno-national clashes were becoming more common. During the First Lebanon War the main adversaries facing the IDF were either Palestinians or Lebanese Shiites. The war against the Syrian forces was conducted only on Lebanese soil. It was accompanied by a short battle in which the Israel air force shot down some 80 Syrian planes and destroyed 30 Syrian anti aircraft missile batteries, with no air-to-air losses. Nevertheless, both Israel and Syria refrained from a military confrontation along the cease-fire lines on the Golan Heights.

As argued in Chapter 5, domestic opposition to the continued Israeli occupation of Lebanon, especially with a growing list of casualties, forced the Israeli government to abandon its political

goals after Beirut had been conquered. The political discourse in Israel very soon turned against continued warfare as it was not prepared to sustain a war that was not existential by nature. In January 1985, Israel started withdrawing most of its troops, leaving a small residual Israeli force and an Israeli-backed local Christian militia, known as the South Lebanon Army (SLA) in a security zone, which Israel considered a necessary buffer zone against attacks on the north of the country. In 2000, Israel completed a full military withdrawal from Lebanon.

Another form of low intensity conflict was the *Intifada* (literally "tremor" or "uprising" in Arabic) that broke out on December 9, 1987. It began in the Gaza Strip but spread very rapidly to the West Bank. Unlike inter-state wars, the weapons employed were those classic in a civilian insurrection – with rocks, knives and Molotov cocktails from the Arab side being met with rubber bullets, water cannons and tear gas from the Israeli riot control forces. At the same time, demonstrations and strikes were countered by administrative detention and curfews were imposed. But in short order the Arabs started using firearms – weapons and explosives. Initially, Yitzhak Rabin, the Minister of Defense in the national unity governments led by Likud and Labor, responded with harsh measures. Once Rabin realized that the uprising was likely to be a sustained struggle, he started preparing the country for a long-haul confrontation instead of a clear military victory.[19] The lack of an existential threat to the country, as well as international restraints, limited the Israeli reaction.

Most indicative of the new balance of power, namely the realization that conventional warfare would not lead to the destruction of Israel, Yasser Arafat was induced to come forward with a new political initiative. On November 15, 1988, the Palestine National Council in Algiers adopted a resolution that declared Palestinian independence and called for the convening of an international conference "on the basis of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and the guaranteeing of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people." The fact that these resolutions included recognition of all states in the Middle East did not satisfy the Americans. In order for the US to negotiate directly with the PLO, Arafat was forced to convene a press conference in which he responded to Washington's demands. In his clarifications, he formally accepted Resolutions 242 and 338 as a basis for negotiations with Israel and the right of all parties to the Middle East conflict, including Israel, to exist. Subsequently, Secretary of State George Shultz responded that, "as a result the United States is prepared for a substantive dialogue with PLO representatives" (Shalev 1990, 258–261).

The US–PLO dialogue was halted by the Iraq–Kuwait crisis of 1990. Arafat's support for the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait on August 2, took the pressure off Israel from America as far as the West Bank was concerned. Saddam Hussein's announcement in April 1990 that he could burn-up half of Israel with his chemical weapons and his army that was considered the fourth largest in the world, again rekindled past fears. Nevertheless, Israel's possession of the nuclear option enabled the Shamir government to adopt a course of action that could be seen as a "low profile" policy. Shamir's government abstained from any military provocative action during most of the Kuwait crisis. Israel's policy allowed the United States to assemble an international coalition that included Arab states, allowing Israel's security interests to be met by an American-led coalition assault on Iraq. Without a doubt the American invasion of Iraq was possible because of the neutralizing of the nuclear reactor by Israel in June, 1981.

Israel's low-profile strategy was not a simple matter, especially in light of the fact that, following the outbreak of the war, Israeli cities were bombarded by Scud missiles fired from western Iraq. Prime Minister Shamir, who had been convinced by the United States' request that Israel abstain from any action that might endanger Arab participation in the coalition, rejected

demands from both within and outside the government to retaliate against the Iraqi missile attacks. Israel's hesitation after being attacked and despite public commitments to retaliate was in contradiction to the Israeli rationale of the deterrence doctrine developed since the 1950s (Inbar and Sandler 1993/1994, 330–358). Nevertheless, Shamir prevented the national security establishment, including his own Minister of Defense Moshe Arens, from an Israeli involvement (Arens 1995, 200–235).

There are no doubts that Saddam Hussein had possessed chemical and other weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Chemical weapons were used extensively by Iraq during the 1980–1988 Iran–Iraq War. During that period mustard gas and nerve agents was also used against the Kurdish civilian population. And yet despite the lack of Israeli retaliation Saddam Hussein abstained from using WMD. While lacking direct proof, it would seem that the Israeli nuclear option deterred him from crossing the WMD threshold. In retrospect he might well have been correct in his calculation, which brings us back to the nuclear–Holocaust linkage. Undoubtedly the use of gas against the Israeli civilian population, less than 50 years after the Holocaust, would have provoked a massive retaliation.

The Iraq war and the Iranian nuclear threat

On March 20, 2003, President George W. Bush ordered the invasion of Iraq. The main pretext for the war was to disarm Iraq of its WMD. In this confrontation, despite his warnings of a repetition of attacking Israel, the Iraqi dictator did not dare to fire even one Scud missile. In short, as far as Iraq was concerned, Israel had succeeded in restoring its deterrence. While no significant weaponry was found, the invasion led to an extended war and the capture of the Iraqi dictator who was tried in an Iraqi court of law, sentenced to death and later executed.

The military defeat of Iraq eliminated the eastern front with Israel but at the same time a new existential threat to the Jewish state became evident: a nuclear Iran. Both Iraq and Iran were mentioned in the famous January 29, 2002 "axis of evil" speech by President Bush. In this speech he had warned that the proliferation of long-range missiles in both countries constituted terrorism and threatened the United States. Consequently, following the overwhelming coalition military victory in Iraq, Teheran halted its nuclear project for some time. Once the American involvement started faltering, Iran resumed its nuclear efforts. Israel was the principal recipient of Iran's threats.

The principal Iranian leader, Ayatollah Sayyed Ali Khamenei, in December 2000, referred to Israel as a "cancerous tumor" that should be removed from the region. With the election of Mahmud Ahmadinejad as president in 2005, the threat became harsher. Ahmadinejad openly stated that Israel should be "wiped off the face of the earth." But most significant was the fact that together with the threats, Teheran launched a global-wide campaign of Holocaust denial. In keeping with Ahmadinajad's Holocaust denial, which started immediately after his election in 2005, on December 11, 2006, an Iranian state-sponsored international conference designed to "Review the Global Vision of the Holocaust" opened. The linkage between the conference's Holocaust theme and Ahmadinejad's statements was clear (Fathi, *New York Times* December 11, 2006). During the conference the president of Iran was quoted as saying: "The Zionist regime will be wiped out soon the same way as was the Soviet Union" (*Jerusalem Post* December 12, 2006).

The combination of Holocaust denial together with an active Iranian nuclear weapons

program aroused existential worries in Israel.[20] The Jewish state felt further threatened when in addition to its nuclear program, Iran started arming the Hezbollah in Southern Lebanon with hundreds of short and middle range missiles which would be able to reach almost the whole territory of Israel. Another new Iranian ally was Hamas that took over control of the Gaza Strip in June 2007, following Israel's disengagement starting in August 2005 and expelled the Palestinian Authority from Gaza. Henceforth, Iran started supplying missiles. Israel thus found itself surrounded by two territorial terror organizations with thousands of missiles. For a state that enjoys enormous gas and oil reserves, the building of ballistic missiles and the design of nuclear warheads indicated that their nuclear program was not exactly entirely energy oriented. All signs indicated that Israel could be a potential target for their efforts.

The preoccupation of Netanyahu with the Iranian threat started even before his 2009 electoral victory. Since becoming prime minister, he had been pressing the international community to take a stronger stance on Iran and particularly its nuclear program, warning that a policy of inaction might compel Israel to act unilaterally. In an interview in *Atlantic Magazine* he warned that should the American president not stop Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons, an imperiled Israel might be forced to attack Iran's nuclear facilities by itself. He expounded his rationale:

> You don't want a messianic apocalyptic cult controlling atomic bombs. When the wide-eyed believer gets hold of the reins of power and the weapons of mass death, then the entire world should start worrying, and that is what is happening in Iran.

But most importantly he went on to state:

> History teaches Jews that threats against their collective existence should be taken seriously, and, if possible, preempted. In recent years, the Iranian president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, has regularly called for Israel to be "wiped off the map" and the supreme Iranian leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, this month called Israel a "cancerous tumor."[21]

The mutual rhetoric was not confined to the verbal level. The relations between Israel and Iran, especially since the beginning of the Ahmadinejad presidency, could be defined as a war by proxy accompanied by covert operations against each other. In 2010, a wave of assassinations targeting Iranian nuclear scientists had begun. In June 2010, an advanced computer worm *Stuxnet* was discovered. As the Iranian nuclear project continued, Netanyahu switched his public campaign to the United Nations. In a speech before the General Assembly on September 27, 2012, he brandished a cartoon-like diagram of a bomb and drew a red line through it indicating that Israel will react if nobody else does if the red line is breached (*New York Times* September 27, 1). On November 5, 2012 in an interview, the prime minister reiterated his willingness to attack the Iranian nuclear facilities if necessary, even without support from Washington or the world (Jodi Rudoren, *New York Times* November 5, 2012). Apparently this was during the time that the Israel cabinet was deliberating a preventive attack.[22] The Israeli threat was not ignored but resulted in a strict regime of international economic sanctions against Teheran.

The economic sanctions accompanied by continued preventive strike threats by Israel, ultimately resulted in an interim agreement between Iran and six major powers (the five permanent UN Security Council members and Germany). On November 24, 2013, they reached an agreement that froze key parts of Iran's nuclear program in exchange for temporary relief on some of the sanctions. Although the agreement required Iran to halt or scale back parts of its nuclear infrastructure, newly-elected Iranian President Hassan Rouhani claimed that the deal recognized the Iran right to continue its enrichment program.

Secretary of State John Kerry, in contrast, stated that Iran could enrich only by mutual agreement, and "nothing is agreed on until everything is agreed on" (Anne Gearan and Joby Warrick, "World Powers Reach Nuclear Deal with Iran to Freeze its Nuclear Program," *Washington Post* November 24, 2013): "What was achieved last night in Geneva is not a historic agreement, but a historic mistake," was the response of PM Netanyahu. "Today the world has become a much more dangerous place because the most dangerous regime in the world has taken a significant step toward attaining the most dangerous weapon in the world" (William Booth, "Israel's Netanyahu Calls Iran Deal a 'Historic Mistake'").

Five months later it was reported that

> Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Moshe Ya'alon have ordered the army to continue preparing for a possible military strike on Iran's nuclear facilities at a cost of at least ten billion shekels ($2.89 billion) this year, despite the talks between Iran and the West.
>
> (Barak Ravid, *Ha'aretz* March 19, 2014)

A month later at a ceremony at the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial in Jerusalem, Netanyahu made a connection between Nazi genocide and Iran's drive to acquire nuclear bombs. The repeated references to the destruction of Israel and its denial of the Holocaust by Iran's leaders, prove that link, adding that "just as before the Second World War, there were those in the world who refused to face uncomfortable truths" (*Ynet* April 27, 2014).[23]

When the deadline of a final agreement with Iran was coming closer, Netanyahu tried to stop it at the United States Congress. In a speech before a joint session of Congress on March 3, 2015, and in so doing, circumventing the White House, he stated:

> For those who believe that Iran threatens the Jewish state, but not the Jewish people, listen to Hassan Nasrallah, the leader of Hezbollah, Iran's chief terrorist proxy. He said: "If all the Jews gather in Israel, it will save us the trouble of chasing them down around the world." But Iran's regime is not merely a Jewish problem, any more than the Nazi regime was merely a Jewish problem. The six million Jews murdered by the Nazis were but a fraction of the 60 million people killed in World War II. So, too, Iran's regime poses a grave threat, not only to Israel, but also the peace of the entire world.

Towards the end of his speech, Netanyahu returned to the theme when he faced Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel who was seated in the audience:

> Elie, your life and work inspires to give meaning to the words, "Never Again." And I wish I could promise you, Elie, that the lessons of history have been learned. I can only urge the leaders of the world not to repeat the mistakes of the past. Not to sacrifice the future for the present; not to ignore aggression in the hopes of gaining an illusory peace. But I can guarantee you this, the days when the Jewish people remained passive in the face of genocidal enemies, are over. We are no longer scattered among the nations, powerless to defend ourselves. We restored our sovereignty in our ancient home. And the soldiers who defend our home have boundless courage. For the first time in 100 generations, we, the Jewish people, can defend ourselves.[24]

On April 2, 2015 the six powers (United States, United Kingdom, France, China, Russia and

Germany) and Iran, nevertheless announced in Lausanne the framework for a "Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action" (JCPOA). The deal was based on the foundation of the "Joint Plan of Action" (JPOA), achieved in November, 2013 that set out the basic requirements for the agreement. The White House position was that the deal was to achieve a long-term comprehensive nuclear arrangement that would prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon and ensure that Iran's nuclear program would be exclusively peaceful and could be verified.[25]

But Prime Minister Netanyahu's attempts to halt the Iran Deal, as it became known, ultimately failed. Even being warned that going against the White House and allying with the Republican majority in Congress would alienate both the President and the Democratic Party and hence was dangerous to US–Israel relations did not stop Netanyahu. Significantly, majorities in both Houses of the US Congress agreed that the Iran deal was bad. The question was whether it was wise to overtly oppose the Administration. As expected, the White House had the upper hand but only after Obama stated that he would exercise his right of veto and proved that the Republicans could not receive the two thirds majority needed to override the veto. At this point Netanyahu had no choice but to accept the deal and was relieved when he was invited to Washington to a meeting with the president on November 9, 2015, where Obama demonstrated prudence in victory. In their opening statements, both leaders pointed to the main concerns of the other side. Thus President Obama stated at the outset the importance of Israel's security, "As I've said repeatedly, the security of Israel is one of my top foreign policy priorities, and that has expressed itself not only in words, but in deeds." Netanyahu responded:

> I want to thank you for this opportunity to strengthen our friendship, which is strong, strengthen our alliance, which is strong. I think it is rooted in shared values. It is buttressed by shared interests. It is driven forward by a sense of a shared destiny.
>
> (Statements by Obama and Netanyahu at the White House,
> Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Information Department,
> *skira@mfa.gov.il* November 9, 2015)

Israel–Iran relations, besides their strategic dimensions, also contain a survival-Holocaust facet. To be sure, a nuclear Iran would transform the regional balance of power and would quite likely trigger nuclear proliferation by some Arab Sunni states who would feel threatened by a Shiite drive for hegemony. Without ignoring the potential existential threat to Israel which might generate an Israeli pre-emptive strike, the fear was of nuclear weapons in the hands of a state whose leaders denied the Holocaust and threatened to wipe out the Jewish state from the face of the earth.

The equating of the Holocaust with nuclear weapons has the potential of triggering a war between Israel and Iran – two nations that had been allies until 1979 and have no common border or territorial dispute. In the era following the peace with Egypt and the disintegration of Israel's eastern front, only nuclear weapons could be seen as posing an existential threat to the Jewish state. Together with the Holocaust denial uttered by a fanatic religious leadership, the prospect of a nuclear Iran activated the traditional traumas of the past.

Conclusion

We started this chapter with a short account of post-Holocaust theology. In doing so I have provided a glimpse into the wide range of literature that has developed over the years. My main purpose was to show the road from catastrophe that led to the restoration of the Jewish state. Our

ability to comprehend the tremors of such a colossal earthquake is limited. I have made an attempt to delineate the potential shockwave of such an event which underlines the indispensability of Jewish statehood for the survival of the Jewish people. Even though at the outset of statehood the Israeli leadership did not know how to relate to the Holocaust trauma, eventually the ordeal penetrated the national cognizance and became an essential part of the self-perception and identity of the nation. The connection between the State of Israel and the Jews, even in the Diaspora, as a means of survival, has been demonstrated throughout this book. Racist anti-Semitism made it clear that it was vital to build a Jewish state. The Holocaust made that the ultimate conclusion.

But once the Jewish state was born the challenge was to keep it alive. Aware of the hatred that had surrounded the pre-state Yishuv and continued against the newborn state, some national leaders even in the early stages of statehood turned their eyes to the ultimate weapon. The geo-strategic conditions that did not change over the first two decades of statehood induced even the skeptics to continue thinking of the nuclear option. Even Washington tacitly accepted the Israeli need for nuclear deterrence.

Israel's nuclear option, in effect, transformed the nature of war in the Arab–Israeli conflict. The Jewish–Palestinian conflict became more salient and low intensity warfare more prominent. The Holocaust–nuclear weapons linkage has received a new turn with attempts by rogue states like Saddam Hussein's Iraq and Shiite Iran to become nuclear and a nuclear preventive doctrine evolved. Israel's prime ministers applied it respectively against Iraq and Syria. The massive investment to stop the Iranian endeavor has yet to be resolved. Similarly, the Jewish Palestinian interaction continues to bubble as a low intensity conflict.

Notes

1 In Rubenstein's argument, the experience of the Holocaust totally shattered the traditional Judaic concept of God, especially as the God of the covenant with the Jewish people. See Richard L. Rubenstein, *After Auschwitz: Radical Theology and Contemporary Judaism* (Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill: 1966).
2 For a collection of these views, see Michael L. Morgan, *Beyond Auschwitz: Post- Holocaust Jewish Thought in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).
3 The most comprehensive book concerning this question is Dina Porat, *The Blue and the Yellow Stars of David: The Zionist Leadership in Palestine and the Holocaust, 1939–1945* (Cambridge. MA: Harvard University Press, 1990). See also Moshe Kol, "A Fair Judgement towards the Leadership of the Zionist Movement and of the Yishuv Leadership," in S. Avni (ed.), *Massuah: A Yearbook on the Holocaust and Heroism* (Tel Aviv: Massuah, 1987), 7–12 [Hebrew]; and "Symposium: The Yishuv in Eretz Israel and the Theme of Salvation during the Holocaust," ibid., 19–35.
4 For a sample of authors who express these feelings among Israelis see Amnon Rubinstein, *From Herzl to Gush Emunim and Back* (Tel Aviv: Schocken, 1980), Chapter 7. For quotes from both the right and the left wings of the Israeli political spectrum to this effect, see Eliezer Don Yehiya, "Memory and Political Culture: Israeli Society and the Holocaust," in Ezra Mendelsohn (ed.), *Studies in Contemporary Jewry, vol. IX: Modern Jews and their Musical Agenda* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 152.
5 For a full picture of these Hungarian Jewish scientists, see Istvan Hargittai, *The Martians of Science, Five Physicists Who Changed the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University

Press, 2006).

6   On the Jerusalem–Negev equation, see David Ben-Gurion, *The Restored State of Israel* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1969), 166–168 [Hebrew].

7   This thesis is difficult to prove although it is mentioned in the literature. See for instance: Benyamin Pinkus and Moshe Tlamim, "Atomic Power to Israel's Rescue: French–Israeli Nuclear Cooperation, 1949–1957," *Israel Studies* 1 (Spring 2002): 104–138.

8   Zaki Shalom dedicates a whole chapter to that debate that was more elaborate than presented in the present chapter. Zaki Shalom, *Between Dimona and Washington* (Beersheba: Ben-Gurion University Press, 2004), 86–101. See also Avner Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb* (Tel Aviv: Schocken Books, 2000), 137–151.

9   Avner Cohen in his Hebrew version of *Israel and the Bomb* brings two studies that play up the nuclear aspect of the 1967 crisis – Shlomo Aronson, Ariel Levita and Emily Landau. See Avner Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 334 [Hebrew]. They all admit that it is difficult to evaluate fully the weight of the nuclear factor in the crisis.

0   Peres hinted that he had suggested to Dayan to demonstrate Israel's nuclear capability in order to deter the Arabs. Shimon Peres, *Battling for Peace: Memoir* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1995), 166–167.

1   Seymour Hersh argues that it is virtually certain that Israel received accelerated aid from the United States during the 1973 Yom Kippur War, by threatening to use nuclear weapons against the Arabs. Seymour M. Hersh, *The Sampson Option*: *Israel's Nuclear Arsenal and American Foreign Policy* (New York: Random House, 1991), Ch.17.

2   It is difficult to assess what Sadat implied in this statement. Nevertheless, a million soldiers in a war must be connected to a nuclear strike. See Ariel E. Levite and Emily B. Landau, *Israel's Nuclear Image: Arab Perceptions of Israel's Nuclear Posture* (Tel Aviv: Jaffe Center for Strategic Studies, 1994), 41–43.

3   On the nuclear debate following the Yom Kippur War, see Efraim Inbar, "Israel and Nuclear Weapons since October 1973," in Louis Rene Berés (ed.), *Security or Armageddon: Israel's Nuclear Strategy* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1986), 61–78. See also Horowitz, "Continuity and Change," 48–54. See also Robert W. Tucker, "Israel and United States Dependence on Nuclear Weapons," *Commentary* 60 (1975): 29–43.

4   Yossi Melman, a leading journalist on Israeli security activities analyzed this in an article in *Ha'aretz*, April 24, 2008.

5   Rodger W. Claire, *Raid on the Sun: Inside Israel's Secret Campaign that Denied Saddam the Bomb* (New York: Broadway Books, 2004), 100. Quoted in Bennet Ramberg, "Osirak and Lessons for Iran Policy," *Arms Control Today*, May 2012. For a comprehensive analysis on the influence of the Holocaust on Begin's foreign policy, see Yoni Aviv, "Pure against Contaminated: Menahem Begin's Holocaust Consciousness and its Impact on his Political Behavior," *Hiyo-Haya* 6 (2008): 63–96 [Hebrew]. For Begin's announcements concerning this, see ibid., 88–89 and www.hayohaya.huji.ac.il/pdf.6.Yoni_Aviv.

6   Shlomo Argov who was seriously injured and bed-bound for the rest of his life was very distressed when he found out about the war. He dictated a letter saying:

> If those who planned the war had also foreseen the scope of the adventure, they would have spared the lives of hundreds of our best sons.… They brought no salvation.… Israel should go to war only when there is no alternative. Our soldiers should never go to war unless it is vital for survival. We are tired of wars. The nation wants peace.
>
> (Argov 2003)

7   For a further analysis of the Begin Doctrine, see Efraim Inbar, "The 'No Choice War' Debate in Israel," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 12 (March 1989): 22–37. Begin's rationale was criticized by most of Israel's strategic analysts. Aharon Yariv, the head of military intelligence during the Six-Day War, argued that the Lebanon War was distinctly different from the 1956 and the 1967 wars which had been guided by a preventive and pre-emptive logic, while the goals of the 1982 war were to impose a new order on Lebanon.

8   That was the rationale he delivered in the opening of his famous speech of August 8 1982 at the National Defense College. See *Historical Documents 1982–1984*. Address by Prime Minister Begin at the National Defense College- 8 August 1982, vol. 8: 1982–1984. Available   online   at www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/foreignpolicy/mfadocuments/yearbook6/pages/55%20address%20by%2(

9   For studies on the Intifada, see Arye Shalev, *The Intifada: Causes and Effects* (Tel Aviv: Center for Strategic Studies, 1990), Chapter 1 [Hebrew]; and Zeev Schiff and Ehud Yaari, *Intifada*: *The Palestinian Uprising: Israel's Third Front* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1990), Chapters 2–4. For an additional view, see Emmanuel Sivan, "The Intifada and Decolonization," *Middle East Review* 22 (Winter 1989–90): 2–7; Efraim Inbar, "Israel's Small War: The Military Response to the Intifada," *Armed Forces and Society* 18 (Fall 1991): 29–50.

0   In 2006, the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs in association with The International Association of Jewish Lawyers and Jurists published a document entitled "Referral of Iranian President Ahmadinejad on the Charge of Incitement to Commit Genocide." In 2012, the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs published a collection of articles pointing to Iran's global aspirations. See Shimon Shapira (ed.), *Iran: From Regional Challenge to Global Threat* (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, 2012).

1   The interview was conducted shortly before Netanyahu was sworn in as prime minister. See Jeffrey Goldberg, "Netanyahu to Obama: Stop Iran – or I Will," *The Atlantic Monthly* (March 31, 2009).

2   On August 21, 2015, two journalists who are writing the biography of former Minister of Defense Ehud Barak, leaked to the television a recording that described four meetings between 2009 and 2012 in which a preventive attack on Iran's nuclear infrastructure was considered. Netanyahu's minister of defense during his 2009–2013 administration indicated how close the Israel cabinet had been to reach a decision to attack Iran. The decision did not pass because the prime minister and the minister of defense were unable to achieve a majority in the inner forum of the cabinet. It seems that the chiefs of Israel national security establishment (Mossad, Security Service, and the IDF chief of staff) either objected or were doubtful regarding the strategic results of a preventive attack, hence Netanyahu, Barak and Foreign Minister Lieberman remained in the minority. See Barak Ravid, *Ha'aretz*, August 23: 1.

3   On International Holocaust Remembrance Day Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu accused Iran of planning another Holocaust. "Holocaust denial is continued energetically by a central state in the world," he told the Israel cabinet in Jerusalem.

     Not by groups. Not by single individuals. Not by marginal elements. But by Iran, whose leaders on a daily basis and at the United Nations and any other platform deny that the Holocaust occurred, while at the same time they prepare what they believe will be an additional Holocaust: The destruction of the Jewish state.

                                                                          (*Ha'aretz* January 27, 2013)

4   Netanyahu's speech to a joint session of the US Congress – March 3, 2015. Available online at: MFA Info Dept. skira@mfa.gov.il.

5   For further details see www.whitehouse.gov/issues/foreign-policy/iran-deal.

8   Conclusion

In a question during an interview by Alan Johnson Editor of *Fathom* with Michael Walzer entitled "Excavating the Jewish Political Tradition," on his fourvolume work *The Jewish Political Tradition*, which was defined by David Novak as "one of the most ambitious Jewish intellectual efforts of recent years," Walzer replied:

> What we mean by the Jewish political tradition is simply the long history of Jewish reflection on the political experience of the Jews. It's a political reflection on the experience of ancient Israel, and then of exilic Jewry. It's not political writings *by* Jews but political writings *about* the Jewish political experience.
>
> (Johnson 2013)

The Waltzer definition and the one provided by the late Daniel Elazar (see Introduction) are the foundation of this academic undertaking. I, however, have gone one step further and extended the idea of learning from the history of Jewish experience as reflected in written works to the field of foreign policy. The main assertion advanced in this book is that based on historical experience, together with a political tradition that was developed by the Jewish people over the years, it is also possible to discern a Jewish tradition in foreign policy. The millennia long existence of the Jewish people, together with constant interaction with neighbors and host countries, more often than not in a hostile environment, produced the Jewish foreign policy tradition. After 3,000 years of Jewish presence on the world scene, there is an academic justification for defining a Jewish foreign policy and conducting research on it. However, being careful not to expand into a study of Jewish civilization as a whole, I have restricted this study to the contemporary leading schools of international relations and have attempted to delineate core features defining the Jewish international experience. In short, I have tried to define the guiding principles of Jewish foreign policy tradition from the Jewish narrative and experience but as seen from the perspective of international relations.

The case study, on which I chose to apply the theory of the Jewish foreign policy tradition, is the Jewish polity that began to emerge during the second half of the nineteenth century and culminated in the establishment of the State of Israel. My conclusions are divided into six topics: survival in the Jewish foreign policy tradition; Jewish identity and the Land of Israel; religion and the Jewish state; the nuclear option; Jewish universalism; and finally, the Palestinian challenge.

Survival in the Jewish foreign policy tradition

A survey of some aspects of the Jewish interaction with "outsiders" as presented in Chapter 2, emphasized a recurring rationale: Jewish interaction with the surrounding world was always accompanied by a survivalist imperative. This guiding principle overrides another sacred principle – that of dwelling in the historical home of the Jewish nation – Eretz Israel – the Land of Israel (see below). This theme is evident immediately at the outset of the Jewish narrative.

The Jewish story begins with Abraham, the patriarch of the nation migrating to Canaan at God's command, but then moving to Egypt to save his family from starvation and then returning to take root in the Promised Land. The Book of Genesis ends with both Jacob and Joseph requesting that they be buried in the land from which they had migrated.

Following the destruction of the First Temple, we encounter the theme of survival in the story of Queen Esther. Again the motif of Jewish survival appears on the eve of the destruction of the Second Temple when a leading rabbi makes the difficult choice and tacitly accepts the destruction of Jerusalem by proposing to Emperor Vespasian an exchange with a new Jewish spiritual center in Yavneh.

What is distinctive in this tradition of Jewish foreign policy? Is not survival the natural primary desire of all nations? Professor Isaiah Berlin was wont to quote the noted American humorist, Dorothy Parker, who was alleged to have said "The Jews are just like everybody else, only more so." The Jewish drive for security was sometimes misunderstood and even regarded by some as exaggerated; nevertheless, it is deeply ingrained in the Jewish persona.

The following dialogue between Isaiah Berlin and a Polish Poet Beata Polanowska-Sygulska, defines the meaning of the above statement. The topic was Jewish assimilation:

> POLANOWSKA-SYGULSKA: Have you ever personally encountered cases of "exaggerated assimilation?"
>
> BERLIN: I once met a German Jewish refugee, I think in 1934, in London. He'd fought in the German army in the First World War, and been decorated. I said to him "You got away from Germany quite early, you were lucky. Where did you go?" "I went to Switzerland," he replied. I said "But didn't you find Switzerland a little dull?" "Yes, very." "Then why didn't you go to Paris, surely much more interesting?" He drew himself up and said "I would never dream of going to the country of our enemies." He was a German patriot. Driven out by Hitler as a Jew, a pariah, a menace, he still displayed his medals – that is being a member of a minority who lived in a deep illusion. When people try and live with another people with whom they strive to identify themselves, they tend to go too far in their zeal, to exaggerate and overdo it. People don't like apes and parrots. They don't like to be imitated, or, in the case of Heine, to be mocked. A famous American humorist, Dorothy Parker, who was Jewish, is alleged to have said "The Jews are just like everybody else, only more so."
>
> (Berlin and Polanowska-Sygulska 2006, 130)[1]

To argue that the Jews were survival oriented is not an expected insight of Jewish international behavior from either an historical or a current perspective. To the outside observer, the urge for survival does not exactly correlate with a national history replete with slavery in a foreign country that lost its territory at least twice, and evolved for most of its history in the Diaspora. Turning to the contemporary era, Jewish survival as the main leitmotif of the nation contradicts some widely-held current insinuations in academic circles that the State of Israel is far from survival-oriented, but rather demonstrates imperialistic or colonial aspirations, or is basically racist.

Moreover, survival is not emphasized in every culture. To fully appreciate the Jewish high regard for life one should consider another religion. The Hezbollah leader, Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, a bitter enemy of the State of Israel, defined the difference between the Jewish state and Shia Moslems:

> We have discovered how to hit the Jews where they are the most vulnerable. The Jews love life, so that is what we shall take away from them. We are going to win, because they love life and we love death.[2]

This quote emphasizes not only the difference between the two cultures, but indicates the extra weight given to life in Judaism. Nasrallah understands this but perceives it as a weakness.

Here I submit a second insight that goes beyond the proposition that the Jewish preoccupation with survival was justified by the hatred encountered by the Jews throughout history. Starting with the earliest Jewish narrative I argued that survival is rooted in the Jewish story irrespective of antipathy toward the Jewish people. Hence I proposed that deep instincts explain the behavior of the Jewish people dwelling in its historic land. This survivalist legacy passed to the sovereign Jewish state to the extent that many accuse Israel of over-reacting in its search for security, as well as being unwilling to take risks for peace, suspecting hidden motives or dangers.

A feeling of obsessive insecurity has become seen as a trade mark of Israel's national security and foreign policy. As one can identify in British foreign policy a greater sensitivity to maintaining the balance of power in Europe or in France to preserving French culture in its foreign policy, this unique striving for survival is all-important in Jewish history. This seeking survival lies at the heart of the story of the Jewish Diaspora; Jews must continue to survive – even without living in the Promised Land but, at the same time, aspiring to return to it. In short, the most striking characteristic of the Jewish foreign policy tradition, whether as a sovereign state or a Diaspora community, is the supreme need for survival. Another example of the theme that survival might go beyond physical threats can be found in the fact that one of the main issues on the current agenda of American Jewry is Jewish continuity.

A third insight concerns the dividing line between survival and brute power. Certainly the search for survival can take on imperial aspirations. The dividing line between defensive and offensive action can be breached very easily. The search for power for defensive reasons can theoretically be diverted into the search for power for its own sake. Can such tendencies be discerned in the Jewish case? Several applications were applied. one of them is the Jewish approach to statehood. In the Jewish political tradition there is a functional approach to the state, a suspicion of monarchs and a certain natural prudence in the approach to power. This attitude is accompanied by very cautious behavior in alliance politics, territorial expansion and national aggrandizement.

Israel's ability to maintain its democratic regime is a remarkable achievement given the nature of the regimes surrounding her and the constant military challenges it has faced since achieving independence. Traditional Jewish prudence regarding state power has undoubtedly contributed to its democratic strength.

Jewish identity and the land of Israel

As we have seen, together with the attributes of power, the Jewish foreign policy tradition also incorporates a national identity based on historical territory. The Jewish narrative begins with the

Land of Israel promised by the covenant between the Almighty and the founding father of the nation, Abraham (Genesis 15:18–21). The story of Genesis continues with the linear descendants (Isaac, Jacob and Joseph) and revolves around the Land of Canaan which eventually becomes the Land of Israel. The rest of the Pentateuch depicts the exodus from Egypt and the long trek to the Promised Land. Virtually almost the whole Hebrew Bible (the "old Testament") concerns the Land of Israel. It is no coincidence that many Israeli leaders have stated that the Bible is "our Title Deed."

The concept of return to the Land of Israel accompanied the Jewish people in the Diaspora and re-emerged strongly with the awakening of nationalism in the nineteenth century. In accordance with ethnic-nationalism theory, modernity awakened a hitherto dormant identity and transformed the Jews from a passive to an active mode. The territorial component transformed the Jews from an ethnic group to a national movement. Since identity dictates interests, the Land of Israel was, by definition, destined to play a major role in the foreign policy of the Zionist movement.

What happens in the modern day and age when national-territorial drive clashes with survival? Such a clash occurred several times since the advent of the Zionist movement and is still a major component of the Israeli political agenda. The first such clashes appeared with the appearance of the Zionist movement on the world Jewish stage and continued through the pre-state era.

Political Zionism, motivated by the physical threats that appeared at a later stage than the national awakening, moved to the forefront in the Zionist movement. Soon after the movement began the national and the state-oriented approaches clashed twice: once during the uganda controversy in 1903 and again in the 1937 partition debate following the recommendations of the Peel Commission (see Chapter 3). Following the 1947 uN partition resolution, the leadership of the Zionist movement faced a major dilemma: that of choosing between outright rejection of the partition or accepting uN recognition of a Jewish state in just part of the historical Land of Israel. In retrospect, even the military strategy of the 1948 War of Independence (Chapter 4) indicates a leadership decision to accept partition. Moreover, Prime Minister Ben-Gurion was even prepared to divide Jerusalem in order to insure the emergence of a Jewish state within defensible geo-strategic borders. At the same time, he opposed the uN decision on the internationalization of Jerusalem and declared the divided city to be the capital of Israel.

In summarizing the pre-state deliberations (Chapters 3 and 4), the emerging conclusion is that once there was a polity in the Land of Israel (unlike at the time of the uganda controversy) the debate tilted in favor of a security and survival option. The international context of the two decisions should be emphasized. The 1937 decision was taken at a point in time when the Jewish people was confronted by an increasing wave of anti-Semitism, and the 1947 decision took place in the aftermath of the worst catastrophe in Jewish history. How did the Israeli leadership conduct its foreign policy following the establishment of the state?

In the period between 1948 and 1967, several strategic decisions were taken. Perhaps the most important one was that of international orientation. Despite the presence of prominent Jewish communities in both the blocs that were emerging on the global scene Ben-Gurion ultimately chose the united States over the uSSr. Without going into all the pros and cons (see Chapter 5) the main factor was the ability of the Jewish community in the united States to influence the American government's foreign policy, by comparison to the powerlessness of the Jewish community in the Soviet union. The courting of a great power, first engaged in by Herzl, became a cornerstone of Israel's foreign policy doctrine.

It was during those years that the leadership of the newly-born state developed its national security doctrine. In essence the whole of the Israeli leadership, with the exception of the Herut Party, accepted the partition of the country as it had emerged from the 1949 cease-fire agreements following the War of Independence. The geo-strategic conditions of the country and not irredentist aspirations influenced the policy of "red lines" that Israel adopted as *casus belli* that would justify retaliation. The adoption of deterrence as the main rationale of the national security doctrine indicated that in essence, the doctrine was prima facie a defensive one. To be sure, on the operational level the military doctrine was offensive, but this was because of the lack of geo-strategic depth. Thus, while it was Israel that attacked first in both 1956 and 1967, the pre-emptive attacks were strictly in response to aggression by the Arab states. In 1973, when the IDF held back and did not pre-empt, it paid heavily in casualties. Indeed, once Egypt was ready to exchange territories for peace, even the right wing government led by Menachem Begin accepted the deal.

Another test of public support for the defensive rationale in the Israel–Arab wars came during the 1982 Lebanon War. once the war had deteriorated from a limited retaliation operation to one with goals extending beyond the defensive rationale, it lost domestic support and the government withdrew to defensive lines. Again, no irredentist aspirations developed with regard to territories temporarily occupied in Lebanon.

Religion and the Jewish polity

Another group of issues concerning the relationship between security and territory is in the area of religion and state. The return to the Land of Israel is rife with religious – almost mystic – connotations. However, that same land also has deep religious significance for Islam in general and in particular, for the Arab Moslem and Christian populations that live there. As we shall see, religion plays a significant role in the Jewish–Palestinian Arab conflict.

Since the departure point of this study is the Jewish political tradition, the topic of religion must first be seen in the context of church and state relations in Israel and only then in foreign policy. religion is an important facet of tradition. One celebrated quotation that expresses this relationship well is attributed to the leader of cultural Zionism, Ahad Ha'Am: "More than Israel has kept the Sabbath, the Sabbath has kept Israel" (1898).[3] Indeed, from the onset of Zionism there has been tension between the religious and the secular components of the national movement in terms of culture. religion was in the background of Zionist foreign policy but was subsumed in the broader enterprise. The Zionist Movement and, later on, the State of Israel, succeeded in arriving at a modus vivendi defined as the "political accommodation" model. During the early years of the state, the role of religion according to this arrangement was mostly within the domestic arena. While the newly established state was overwhelmingly concerned with survival, the territorial issue was of minor concern.

However, from 1967, religion started playing an ever more prominent role in Israel's foreign policy. The conquest of parts of the historic Jewish biblical lands during the Six-Day War aroused strong ethno-religious feelings. However, the full strength of national identity appeared only after the ordeal of the 1973 Yom kippur War in a process that articulated the existential essence of Jewish foreign policy. Despite its original domestic orientation, after 1973 religion spilled over into the arena of foreign policy. The leading movement driving this change was religious Zionism. This movement was the most ideologically primed for a Messianic awakening. But even here, one can identify the strength of the survival element. The group

known as Gush Emunim appeared on the scene and started to gain strength only after 1974. In the years that have followed, the movement led by religious Zionism has so far settled over 400,000 Jews in the West Bank, now widely known by the biblical names, Judea and Samaria. This settlement drive was often accompanied by outbursts of Jewish violence against the local Palestinian population. However, despite the increasing radicalization of the national religious sector, it has so far, demonstrated loyalty to the state. A major test was during the 2005 evacuation of the Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip, when 8,000 people were expelled from their homes as part of the Israeli pullout from the Strip, and yet opposition was almost always contained on a passive level and did not end up in violence.

The linkage between religion and land is not shared by all Jewish religious sectors. religion in Israeli politics is not the sole province of religious Zionism. ultra-orthodoxy (*Haredim*) has accompanied the Zionist movement but took a different route. Skeptical about the ability of secular Jews to end the state of exile, they hesitantly joined the national Jewish project in a limited power sharing arrangement. Primarily concerned in securing autonomy in education, their influence on foreign policy was minimal. With the appearance of Shas, the ultra-Orthodox Sephardi party in the mid-1980s, they even provided a coalition alternative to the religious Zionist party in forming a government. The more moderate attitudes of these two groups on the issue of the territories allowed successive governments to move the peace process ahead while maintaining the basic power sharing structure. For them the importance of the survival of the Jewish people surpasses the wholeness of the historical Land of Israel.

The nuclear option

The role of survival in the Jewish political foreign policy tradition must obviously culminate in a consideration of the impact of the Holocaust. I chose to leave this issue to the final chapter and linked it to the nuclear option. The ultimate existential test has been a move in the Israeli leadership toward a possible nuclear option in order to ensure survival. Aware of the degree of hatred that surrounded the newborn state, some Israeli leaders turned their eyes to the ultimate weapon. The geo-strategic conditions, that over the first two decades did not change the asymmetry between Israel and its neighbors, induced even skeptics to continue to support the nuclear option. only a cataclysmic affliction such as the Holocaust can explain the consideration of such extreme measures by a newly established small country, and, to a certain extent, its tacit acceptance by Washington and some leading European states.

The linkage between the Holocaust and nuclear weapons took a new turn with attempts by rogue regimes like Iraq under Saddam Hussein and Shiite Iran to become nuclear states. It was not by coincidence that the Iranian nuclear enterprise was accompanied by Holocaust denial. In accordance with the survivalist mindset, a nuclear preventive doctrine evolved. Prime Ministers Begin in 1982 and olmert in 2009 applied it respectively against Iraq and Syria. Prime Minister Netanyahu devoted massive international efforts to stopping the Iranian endeavor, one that is yet to be satisfactorily resolved.

Jewish universalism

To be sure, having identified norms like Jewish survival or the Land of Israel as the core values, we seem to have positioned Judaism as very particularistic in its relation to universal values. As we saw in Chapter 2, philosopher Michael Walzer has exposed universal norms in traditional

Judaism. Indeed together with the strength of realist considerations, the Jewish political tradition also contains universal values as advanced by the biblical prophets. Most renowned, of course, is the Messianic vision of the "end of days" by Isaiah. Students of Jewish philosophy, like Menahem kelner, identified this dilemma among medieval Jewish thinkers and argued that, for instance, even Maimonides perceived that the Messianic era will be shared by all humanity and all nations will adopt the "true religion" [*dat ha-emet*] (kelner 2015, 106).[4]

Zionism from its inception as a nineteenth century movement surrounded by other nationalist movements and influenced by its biblical sources faced the dilemma of choosing between universalism and Particularism. As we have seen in Chapter 3, Zionist thinkers like Moses Hess stated that the Jewish people was the only people in the world whose religion was at once national and universalist (Hertzberg 1970, 129). Herzl, the statist, saw a harmony between the Jewish interest and that of the world community (ibid., 32).

While some elements in the Zionist movement originally hoped to accomplish their goals through international institutions like the League of Nations, others concentrated on the goal of building a state that would meet Jewish national aspirations and solve existential problems. When the time came to implement the Zionist vision, it even tried to give the Diaspora-based movement a territorial-statist orientation (Chapter 4). During the early stages of the State of Israel, Ben-Gurion tried to delineate a non-alignment international orientation. His eventual turn to the West was presented as a decision choosing democracy over tyranny, but in essence, as we have seen, it was based on the influence of American Jewry in the united States. Ben-Gurion also adopted the biblical prophecy of Isaiah "Light unto the Nations" [*Or legoyim*] and thus defined the mission of Israel. The continued threat to the existence of a Jewish state, especially after the Yom kippur War (Chapter 6), deeply concerned Israeli public opinion and the call was slowly replaced with "A Nation that Dwells Alone," (Numbers 23:9). And yet Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, in an address to the Herzliya Conference restated the aspiration of Israel to serve as a "Light unto the Nations" (Netanyahu 2010).

Similarly, the Jewish code of war and attitudes to killing, defined as a "just war" [*milhemet mitzvah*] can be seen as an attempt to confine the use of violence to defensive purposes and to be restrained by a council of elders. In Chapter 2 we saw the internal debate among religious Zionist rabbis and academics in their attempt to present an ethics code for Jewish state after 2,000 years of exile. The mere fact that medieval thinkers like Maimonides and nineteenth century rabbis like Hirsch Leib Berlin (*Hanatziv*) wrote about the Jewish code of ethics during wartime indicates their belief that in the future there would be a Jewish state and hence it would need a code of war.

In this context, it should be noted that there is a body of deeply offensive religious literature that surfaced in Israel during the last ten years or so in books such as *Torat Hamelech* [The king's Law] written by two extremist rabbis, Yitzhak Shapira and Yosef Elizur, published in 2009. This book, which contained very permissive details on killing gentiles during war, was heavily condemned by mainstream rabbinical authorities.[5] More important, the IDF'S conduct of warfare is governed by strict laws and regulations, partly based on Jewish tradition. The 1992 IDF Code of Conduct combines international law, Israeli law, Jewish heritage and the IDF's own traditional ethical code.[6]

The Palestinian challenge

Finally, it is pertinent to turn to the major challenge of Israeli foreign policy that has been

paramount ever since the beginning of the Zionist enterprise in the Land of Israel, namely arriving at an accommodation with the Arab inhabitants. The Jewish–Palestinian Arab conflict takes place precisely in the convergence zone between identity and survival.

Without going into the whole question of Palestinian identity, there is no question that since the aftermath of the 1967 Six-Day War, the Palestinian issue has occupied the central role on the Israeli political agenda. As explained in Chapter 6, the Arab inhabitants that had not fled from Palestine in 1948 were now under the political jurisdiction of Israel. Inadvertently, the State of Israel now included the three main territorial segments (Gaza, the West Bank and Arab citizens of Israel) of the Arab population of Mandatory Palestine, and this was a factor in forming their national identity even if they did not wish it to be so. one outcome was the revival of the intercommunal conflict between Jews and Arabs that was prevalent during the time of the British mandate. However, this time the situation was more complex as Israel was now concurrently involved both in an interstate conflict with the Arab states and an intercommunal one with the Palestinians under its rule (Sandler 1984, 54–78). It was no coincidence that what was known as the Arab–Israeli conflict (existential) turned slowly into the Jewish–Palestinian (identity) conflict.

Conceptually, the Israel–Palestinian conflict slowly replaced the Arab–Israeli conflict, both on the international scene and in the domestic Israeli discourse. From the Israeli perspective, the Palestinian threat touched upon two dimensions of Jewish identity: the geographical Land of Israel and the Jewish character of the state. The Arab Palestinians inhabited significant parts of the country and, at the same time, constituted a growing population that could lead to the potential demographic transformation of the Jewish state into a bi-national state. The concept used to describe this dilemma received the title "geography versus demography."

The Land of Israel versus the Palestinian demographic threat became intensified with the Jewish settlement drive following the Likud coming to power in 1977. Whereas Jews and Palestinian Arabs clashed sporadically during the pre- state era, paradoxically the first major clash between the State of Israel and the potential entity that claimed to replace the Jewish state occurred only during the 1982 Lebanon War. This war, unlike all the previous ones, was not an existential confrontation. only now did the two entities claiming the right over Eretz Israel–Palestine clash directly. The intercommunal conflicts that ensued expressed themselves in three *intifadas* in 1987–1991, 2000–2005 and the so called "singles" intifada that started in September 2015.

Despite the violence that has erupted sporadically between Jews and Palestinians, the intifadas do not in themselves present a physical threat to Israel. And yet there is no issue that is more hotly debated in Israel than the future of the Palestinian territories. The issues that surfaced following the occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in 1967 did not dissipate and are still at the heart of Jewish politics and society. ultimately, it is this debate that encapsulates the main dilemmas of Jewish foreign policy tradition.

On the surface, the debate involves issues that touch upon the normative side of the Jewish political tradition. Critics of continued Israeli control of the West Bank postulate the danger of a military regime in territories in which the Arab population does not enjoy the same political rights as Israeli citizens. According to this viewpoint, there cannot be a state in which democracy is limited to the citizens of Israel while the Palestinians do not enjoy equal rights. ultimately adherents to this viewpoint maintain that limited democracy and the realities of the occupation will destroy Israel's democratic foundations. Although hardly any Zionist in Israel defines the situation as akin to apartheid, the fear of the critics is that Israeli democracy could deteriorate to

that of the past regime in South Africa. other points that are raised are defiance of international law, the spill over into Israeli society, the immorality of occupation and related negative normative actions that have overtaken Israeli society since 1967 (Abulof 2012, 79–90).

The supporters of continued Israeli control of the territories (now since the evacuation of the Gaza Strip in 2006 is limited to the West Bank) base their arguments on religious, historical rights and even international law. According to the latter, the Israeli occupation resulted from a defensive response to an unprovoked aggressive attack on Israel in June 1967 by the kingdom of Jordan, the country that had occupied the West Bank in 1948,

What is significant from the current book's perspective is that ultimately both sides to the conflict turn their ideological positions into survival terms. The critics of the continued occupation of the West Bank maintain that if Israel does not detach itself from the West Bank it could turn into a bi-national state. one state between the Mediterranean and the Jordan river would bring to an end the Zionist vision of an independent Jewish entity. The alternative would be a Jewish state smaller in area, but a democratic one.

Correspondingly, the opponents of a division of the Land of Israel have slowly modified their position from a purely ideological standpoint to a security rationale. The establishment of a Palestinian state in Judea and Samaria, they maintain, would pose a geo-strategic danger to the physical existence of the State of Israel. As indicated in Chapter 5, the proximity of the West Bank to all of Israel's population and industrial centers, its topography and the narrow waist of Israel give essential strategic depth and importance to the retention of Judea and Samaria. Even if many of those that promote this strategic argument are at heart motivated by ethno-religious and national identity beliefs, the fact that the geo-strategic rationale is the one which reaches the heart of the Israeli public, indicates the centrality of the survival element in the Israeli psyche.

The conclusion that emerges from this book is that in the Jewish foreign policy tradition, when the two maxims contradict each other – on the one hand, the Land of Israel that expresses Jewish identity and on the other, the survival of the Jewish state – it is the latter that prevails. Hence, a fully-fledged Palestinian proposal that would satisfy Israeli security needs and be backed by international guarantees would ultimately be accepted even by a right wing government.

Nevertheless, in the current stage of the Israel–Palestinian conflict, it is possible to delineate three issues in which national identity becomes a constituent of survival. In these areas, given Palestinian demands, even a left-center Israeli government would not be able to compromise.

The first of these areas concerns borders. The best proposal a Palestinian entity could offer would be an Israeli withdrawal to the 1967 borders with moderate changes that would allow the major Jewish settlements – such as Ma'aleh Adumim, Givat Ze'ev and Ariel, in the West Bank (Judea and Samaria) – to become part of Israel. The Palestinian state would be compensated in exchange by receiving territories carved out from within pre-1967 Israel. under such conditions, Israel would still have to evacuate at least one-third of its settler population which could account for more than 120,000 people. Such a move might lead to an outbreak of civil war in Israel that was avoided in 2005 because it involved the forced evacuation of only 8,000 settlers from the Gaza Strip. According to unofficial sources, Israel has offered to withdraw from 92 percent of the West Bank while the Palestinians were ready to accept a deal in which Israel would keep only two percent of the occupied territory. Without going into the exact costs, the figures would be astronomical.[7]

Apart from the political issue it is difficult to see any Israeli government acceding to such an existential risk. one ethno-religious locality that any Israeli government would have to be

particularly careful in sharing with the Palestinians would be the Tomb of the Patriarchs in Hebron, a place that for both Jews and Moslems is deeply hallowed ground (Hassner 2009, 73–74).

The second area where identity and survival encounter each other in a possible Israeli–Palestinian settlement is the right of return of the 1948 Palestinian refugees, a demand that is a core claim of the Palestinians. An influx of Palestinians into pre-1967 Israel would imply a threat not only to the wholeness of the Land of Israel but also to the State that came into being in 1948 within borders recognized by uN resolutions 242 and 338. The persistent refusal of President Mahmud Abbas to recognize Israel as a Jewish state in a two-state solution means that the Palestinians are still not ready to accept a Jewish state on any part of the land. Similarly, the refusal of the Israeli religious right to accept the two- state solution springs from a parallel rationale. According to their rationale, a Palestinian state situated within the historic Land of Israel would cut the carpet away from under the feet of Jewish historic rights even in part of Eretz Israel. This is precisely the crossroad where identity and survival encounter each other.

The third area where identity and survival meet is the issue of Jerusalem. For both sides, Jerusalem is the number one core issue. The Palestinians have turned Jerusalem and especially the Temple Mount or *Haram al-Sharif* [The Noble Sanctuary] into the core of their identity. For Moslems, the Haram al-Sharif is the third holiest place in Islam (after Mecca and Medina). officially the Hashemite monarch is considered as guardian of the two Moslem holy places on the mount – the al-Aksa Mosque and the Dome of the rock shrine – however, the Palestinians see themselves as guardians of the whole holy area. They have designated Jerusalem as their capital and the Haram al-Sharif is the symbol of the future Palestinian state.[8]

As discussed in Chapter 4, for the Jews, for millennia, Jerusalem has been at the heart of their prayers and their identity, both as a religion and as a people. *Realpolitik* dictated to Ben-Gurion that Jerusalem had to be divided between Israel and Jordan so as to save the city from internationalization, but he followed that strategic move by making West Jerusalem the capital of Israel. Following the unification of the city in 1967, a new partition of the city and especially the Temple Mount, would be injurious not only to the soul of the Jewish state but to the soul of the Jewish people around the world.

In short, Jerusalem has become the core of both Palestinian and Israeli identity. Significantly, secular leaders on both sides are now bound by a sacred monument that represents the identity of each nation. Jerusalem, including the Temple Mount on which two Moslem shrines exist, underwent socio-political institutionalization. This is exactly where identity and survival cross each other.

In conclusion, this study has proposed the existence of a Jewish foreign policy tradition emanating from a lengthy existence and constant interaction with foreign powers. The desire for survival, the most striking characteristic of Jewish foreign policy tradition and one that overshadows all other characteristics, is of particular significance in light of the gap between this tremendous drive and inherent limitations in seeking power. Accordingly the foreign policy of the State of Israel was not newly-born *ad nihilo* but continued a three millennia-old tradition. Zionism was the response to an existential threat that began developing in the nineteenth century and tragically came to fruition in the Holocaust. By most accounts it is impossible to identify an expansionist motif beyond the needs of security and survival in a hostile environment. The desire to preserve the integrity of the whole of Eretz Israel following the 1967 war may be seen as the natural outcome of the ethno-national motif in Zionism. The future of the Palestinian–Jewish conflict will be decided by these two factors – namely security and national identity.

Jewish foreign policy within the area of political tradition is an area that should be studied further. Israel–Diaspora relations, for instance, can be analyzed on the basis of Jewish foreign policy tradition. one possible route would be to investigate how foreign policy lobbying by Diaspora Jews seeking to ensure the survival of the Jewish state bestowed both Israel and the Diaspora communities with power far exceeding their proportional weight. It has allowed Israel to exploit the Diaspora structure and provided American Jewry with power far beyond that of the conventional power of a non-state actor. Given the growing importance of non-state actors around the world, better understanding of the ways in which they can gain power and exert influence in international affairs is crucial to any study of foreign policy.

Notes

1   This quote was given to me by Arie Dubnov the author of a book on Berlin. See Arie Dubnov, *Isaiah Berlin: The Journey of a Jewish Liberal* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012). others have associated the quote on the Jews to Heinrich Heine. Polanowska-Sygulska wrote her doctoral thesis on controversies about the concept of liberty in Poland while conducting dialogues on her research with Isaiah Berlin from 1983 until his death in 1997.
2   www.azquotes.com/quote/593667.
3   For this famous quote See Ahad Ha'Am, "Sabbath and Zionism," *Hashiloach* 3 (1898). Another version is "More than the Jews have kept the Shabbat, Shabbat has kept the Jews." Available online at www.azquotes.com/author/29003-Ahad_Ha'Am.
4   This book, dedicated to kelner's work on Jewish universalism contains *inter alia* several articles that exhibit his academic and public work to advance Jewish universalism. one major contribution of kelner's work was his demonstration, against many opponents, that Maimonides was not a particularist (kelner 2015, 6–8). See also kellner, *Maimonides, on Judaism and the Jewish People* (Albany, NY: State university of New York Press, 1991).
5   For critical reactions to this book from the orthodox rabbis see the most prominent authorities at the time rabbi Yosef Elyashiv and rabbi ovadaya Yosef, *Ynet* June, 29, 2011. For a more balanced version see Ido rechnitz and Elazar Goldstein, *Jewish Military Ethics* (ofra: Mishpetei Eretz Institute, 2013) [Hebrew]. For a critique from the opposite direction see Noam Chomsky, *Fateful Triangle: the United States, Israel, and the Palestinians* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 1999), 153–154.
6   www.idfblog.com/about-the-idf/idf-code-of-ethics.
7   For a rough estimate see, for instance, a *Globes* study from october 11, 2011. Since that time the demography has changed in the direction of more Jewish settlers.
8   For a full analysis of the cross-cutting agreements with regard to the Temple Mount, see Nadav Shragai, "The Status Quo has been Dead for a While," *Makor Rishon*, May 20, 2016: 15.

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