



Why do Israelis
and Palestinians
fight?

Is their contest a
zero-sum game
that one side can
win at the price of
totally obliterating
the other?

Israel-Palestine Narratives - Mirror image

PALESTINIAN NARRATIVE	ZIONIST NARRATIVE
Zionism = Settler Colonialism	Zionism = Return > ancestral land
Colonising Palestine > conflict inherent	Peaceful Jewish settlement
Holocaust – justification for Israel creation	National struggle for Jewish state
Israel > reject peace	Palestinians > reject peace
Israel is Goliath	Israel is David
Israel responsible > Arabs' expulsion 1948	Arab refugee problem > Arab responsibility 1948
Israel - Jewish Supremacy	Israel – Citizens' equality
Israeli Apartheid	Israeli Democracy

Mentioned in the Presentation

- **Theodor Herzl**

<https://www.britannica.com/summary/Theodor-Herzl>

- **Arthur Balfour**

<https://www.britannica.com/summary/Arthur-James-Balfour-1st-earl-of-Balfour>

- **Chaim Weizmann**

<https://www.britannica.com/summary/Chaim-Weizmann>

- **Eugene Rogan**

<https://www.ames.ox.ac.uk/people/eugene-l-rogan>

- **Edwin Montagu**

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Edwin-Samuel-Montagu>

- **Edward Said**

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Edward-Said>

Zionism

Revolutionary idea – late 19th century

Jews in Czarist Russia/Eastern Europe – initial impetus

Jews in Central/Western Europe – different approach

Eastern & Western European Zionism - integrated?

‘Practical’ Zionism in Palestine until Balfour Declaration – small, almost a failure

Until 1917 Zionism was centred in Europe. Palestine was marginal

“As always when Israel needs to be defended . . . Alan Dershowitz speaks with great passion and personal courage.” —ELIE WIESEL

Theodor Herzl

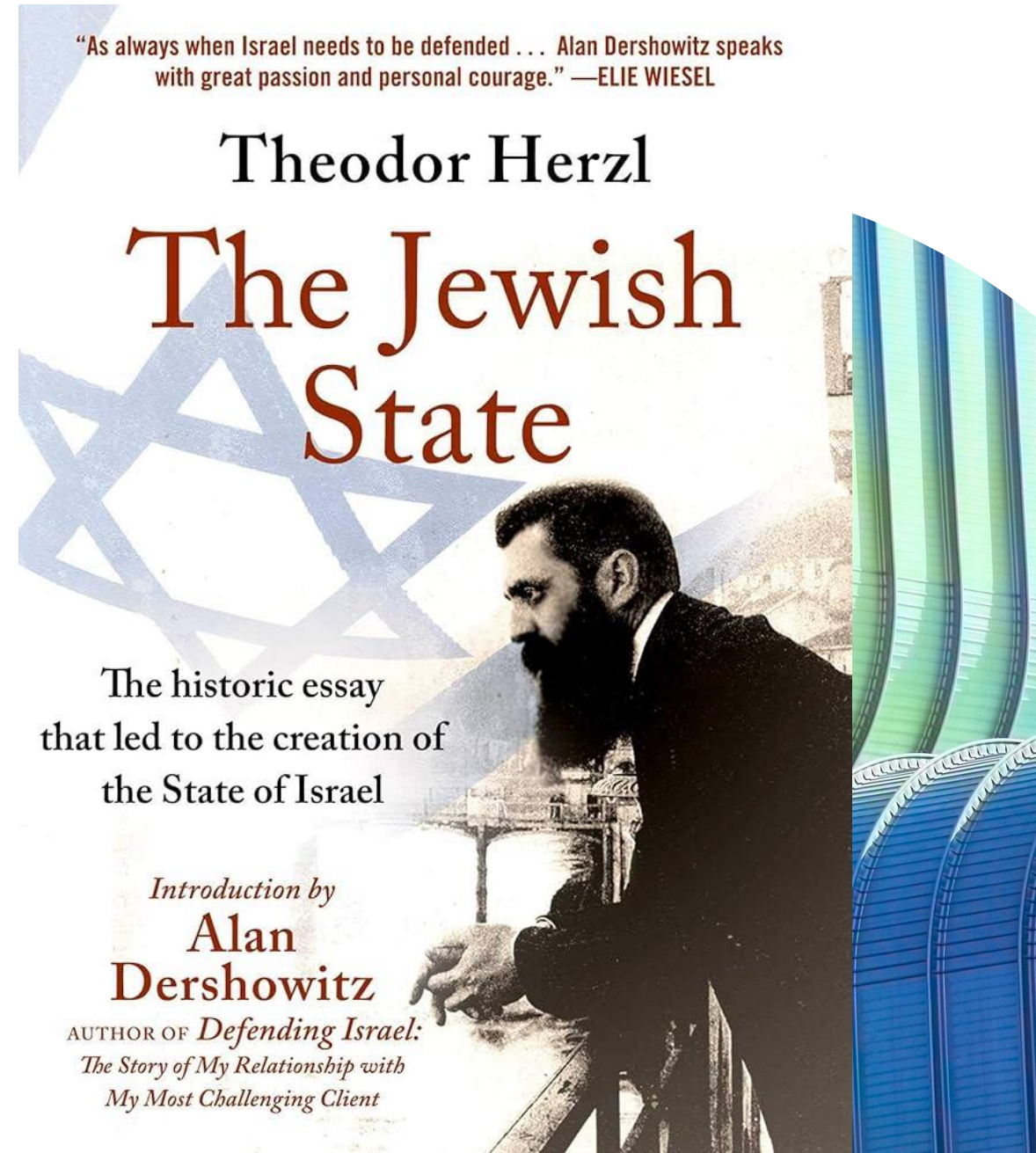
The Jewish State

The historic essay
that led to the creation of
the State of Israel

Introduction by

**Alan
Dershowitz**

AUTHOR OF *Defending Israel:
The Story of My Relationship with
My Most Challenging Client*



Foreign Office,

November 2nd, 1917.

Dear Lord Rothschild,

I have much pleasure in conveying to you, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations which has been submitted to, and approved by, the Cabinet.

"His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country".

I should be grateful if you would bring this declaration to the knowledge of the Zionist Federation.

Y. in
Arthur Balfour

Balfour Declaration British Mandate

- Zionism to 1917 centred in Europe, mainly in Vienna and Berlin
- Practical Zionism in Palestine to 1917 insignificant
- Major turning point – Balfour Declaration and League of Nations Mandate
- British Reasons: Jews had a role to play, rivalry with France over the Middle East
- Chaim Weizmann's diplomatic skills. Did Weizmann have a 'constituency?'
- Why 'mandate'? 1917-1948 British in Palestine
- Zionists could engage in land purchase, immigration and settlement

THE PALESTINE MANDATE
THE COUNCIL OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS
JULY 24, 1922

ART. 4.

- An appropriate Jewish agency shall be recognised as a public body for the purpose of advising and co-operating with the Administration of Palestine in such economic, social and other matters as may affect the establishment of the Jewish national home and the interests of the Jewish population in Palestine, and, subject always to the control of the Administration to assist and take part in the development of the country.

- The Zionist organization, so long as its organization and constitution are in the opinion of the Mandatory appropriate, shall be recognised as such agency. It shall take steps in consultation with His Britannic Majesty's Government to secure the co-operation of all Jews who are willing to assist in the establishment of the Jewish national home.

**BRITISH MANDATE FOR PALESTINE
(AS DIVIDED AFTER SEPTEMBER 1922)**

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Chaim Weizmann (1)

*“...Here was a people which had been divorced from its original homeland for some eighteen centuries, putting in a **claim for restitution**. The world was willing to listen, the case was being sympathetically received, and **one of the great Powers was prepared to lead in the act of restitution**, while the others had indicated their benevolent interest.”*

Balfour Declaration is an “act of restitution.”

Weizmann emphatically described the declaration as a “**unique act of the world moral conscience**.”

Weizmann called the Balfour Declaration “**the righting of a historical wrong**,” and an “**act of justice**.”

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Chaim Weizmann (2)

*“...How was it that the decision was actually made, and why was the pledge [the Balfour Declaration] actually given? **One factor, perhaps the decisive one, was the genuine appeal which the idea itself made to many of the leaders of Britain.** One of the differences between that time and ours is in the approach to State problems. The so-called realism of modern politics is not realism at all, but pure opportunism, lack of moral stamina, lack of vision, and the principle of living from hand to mouth. **Those British statesman of the old school, I have said, were genuinely religious. They understood as a reality the concept of the Return. It appealed to their tradition and their faith.**”*

Weizmann explained there was a **“coincidence of the interest between Great Britain and a Jewish Palestine,”** and that a **Jewish Palestine would serve British interests:**

“ We had long pointed out to the British, and I repeated it again in my interview with Lord Cecil, that a Jewish Palestine would be a safeguard to England, in particular in respect to the Suez Canal.”

British Perspective (1) Eugene Rogan

It wasn't until 1917 that Britain saw a strategic value in Zionism, and its interest in the movement began to change. The Russian Revolution in 1917 placed Russian commitment to the Great War effort in question. **Many in Britain believed Jews in the provisional government of Alexander Kerensky might encourage the Russian military commitment to the war if they saw an Entente victory advancing Zionist goals in Palestine.**

Others believed American Jews would influence then US President Woodrow Wilson to enter the war, tipping the balance in the Entente's favour, for the same reason. The US was slow to enter the war - it only declared war on Germany in April 1917 - and its population unenthusiastic about the war effort. A pro-Zionist policy might encourage influential Jews advising the White House to accelerate the US engagement. **As historian Tom Segev comments, this was Zionism turning antisemitic cliches about a Jewish international that controlled global politics and finance to its advantage.**

British Perspective (2) Eugene Rogan

There was another reason for Britain to seek a partnership with Zionism in 1917. **Just one year earlier, Sykes had agreed on a distribution of Ottoman Arab territory with Picot.** France would hardly be sympathetic to new British claims to Palestine after both **France and Russia** had made clear their own interests in the Holy Lands and had agreed to a **compromise that left Palestine under international control.**

The British needed a third party to take responsibility for such a dramatic shift in partition diplomacy. **By supporting the Zionist movement, Britain could stake its claim to Palestine not in terms of its selfish imperial interests, but as a matter of historic social justice - resolving Europe's "Jewish Question" through the return of the Jewish people to their biblical homeland.**

The Balfour Declaration, in other words, is not a commitment to the establishment of a Jewish state. I see it rather as the establishment of a compact minority community in Palestine, designed to facilitate British rule of a new colonial acquisition. Totally dependent on the British for their position in Palestine, **the Zionists would be reliable partners in managing the mandate against the predictable opposition of the Palestinian Arab majority.**

Earl Balfour 1919

Earl Balfour, memorandum addressed to the British Government on 11 August 1919:



“For in Palestine we do not propose even to go through the form of consulting the wishes of the present inhabitants of the country. ... Zionism, be it right or wrong, good or bad, is rooted in age-long traditions, in present needs, in future hopes, of far profounder import than the desires and prejudices of the 700,000 Arabs who now inhabit that ancient land.”

Edwin Montagu was not only a member of the British Cabinet but also the only member of this cabinet that was of the Jewish faith. A leading personality in British Jewry, Montagu's basic opposition to the proposed declaration did not stem from any pro-Arab sentiment. In fact, he knew very little about the Arabs when he started his opposition. He based his opposition to political Zionism on the following principles :

1. Judaism is a universal religion and not a nationality. People of different nationalities believe and practice Judaism.

2. There is no Jewish nation. There is only a Jewish religion and tradition. Palestine is no national home for the Jews, for the national home of every Jew depends on the country he belongs to and of which he is a citizen.

3. Zionism is an untenable creed that tends to shed doubt on the loyalty and patriotism of the Jewish citizens of the United Kingdom. He said, "If a Jewish Englishman sets his eyes on the Mount of Olives and longs for the day when he will shake British soil from his shoes and go back to agricultural pursuits in Palestine, he has always seemed to me to have acknowledged aims inconsistent with British citizenship". He stated that he would willingly disfranchise every Zionist and added that he would almost be tempted to proscribe the Zionist Organisation as illegal and against British national interests.

in Jewish history, but stated that it played equally important roles in the history of Christianity and Islam.

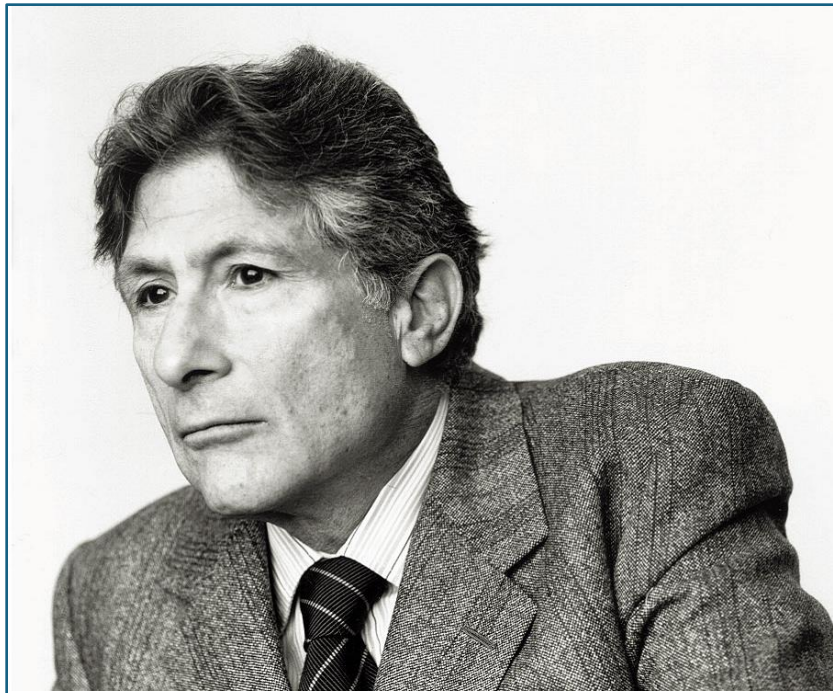
He believed the future of Palestine, as well as every other part of the former Ottoman territories, should depend on the will of its inhabitants and the free exercise of the principle of self-determination. He even reacted in the same way to a French proposal to establish a Zionist home in el-Hasa in Arabia. His solution for the problems of the Middle East, as well as any other area, was the application of self-determination.

5. He questioned the authority of the Zionist Organization to represent the Jewish people, and affirmed that in his estimation, the Jews of British birth were in the main anti-Zionists and, that the majority of Zionists were foreign born Jews living in Britain.

6. Finally, he considered the Balfour Declaration as an anti-Semitic act and stated that it does injustice to the promises made to the Arabs and to the universal principle of self-determination.

Balfour Declaration, 2 November 1917

Edward Said
1935-2003



The Question of Palestine, 1979

a) made by a European power.

b) about a non-European territory.

c) in flat disregard of both the presence and the wishes of the native resident in that territory.

d) took the form of a promise about this territory to another foreign group, so that this foreign group might, quite literally, *make* this territory a national home for the Jewish people.

THE HOLY LAND

The Moslem-Christian Case
against Zionist Aggression



Official Statement by the
Palestine Arab Delegation

Nov. 1921.

HOTEL CECIL, LONDON.

(Arabs of Palestine) felt betrayed by the power (Great Britain) which they had hitherto believed in and trusted.

The object of Zionists was not merely to provide a “home” in Palestine for poor, persecuted Jews, but they aimed at creating a Jewish state “as Jewish as England is English.”

“National home” unexplained.

Never were there any riots in Palestine before the war: never was any hatred shown to the Jew.

The moment, however, the Balfour Declaration was proclaimed and the Zionists aimed at the political and economic domination of the Arab, trouble began. For the Arab can bear no political domination by a foreigner.

Questions

1. What specific promises were made concerning Palestine?

2. What legal, political, or moral significance can be attributed to the Balfour Declaration?

3. Can the Balfour Declaration serve as a legitimate basis for claiming any part of Palestine?