

THE JERUSALEM POST

AUGUST 30, 2019

MAGAZINE

STATE OF ISRAEL IS BORN



THEODOR HERZL 2019

The father of modern Zionism is more relevant than ever: Leading thinkers tell us why

► Special Philanthropy Section

Cover

- 6 When and how did Herzl develop Zionism?
• By GOL KALEV
- 10 Statehood and spirit
• By BENNY LAU
- 12 On the 70th anniversary of Mount Herzl
• By ARIEL FELDSTEIN
- 13 Firsthand tales of Herzl from my grandfather
• By DAVID FAIMAN
- 14 Herzl's 'Altneuland' mirrors today's society
• Interview with SHLOMO AVINERI



Philanthropy

- 20 JDC
- 22 Yad Labanim

Sections

- 4 Prime Minister's Special Message
Editor's Note
- 16 Arab Press
- 18 Three Ladies – Three Lattes
- 24 Wine Talk
- 26 Food
- 28 Tour Israel
- 32 Profile – Dr. Yitzhak Levy
- 34 Observations
- 38 Books
- 42 Judaism
- 44 Games
- 46 Readers' Photos
- 47 Arrivals



COVER PHOTO: Dan Groover Arts (053-221-3734)
Photos (from left) : Pascale Perez-Rubin and Neta Livneh;
Marc Israel Sellem

SAY WHAT?

By LIAT COLLINS

Tzchapha צ'פחה

Meaning: A friendly, strong pat on the back/head

Literally: From Arabic for a slap on the head

Example: When they met up, the two guys gave each other a tzchapha.

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MAGAZINE

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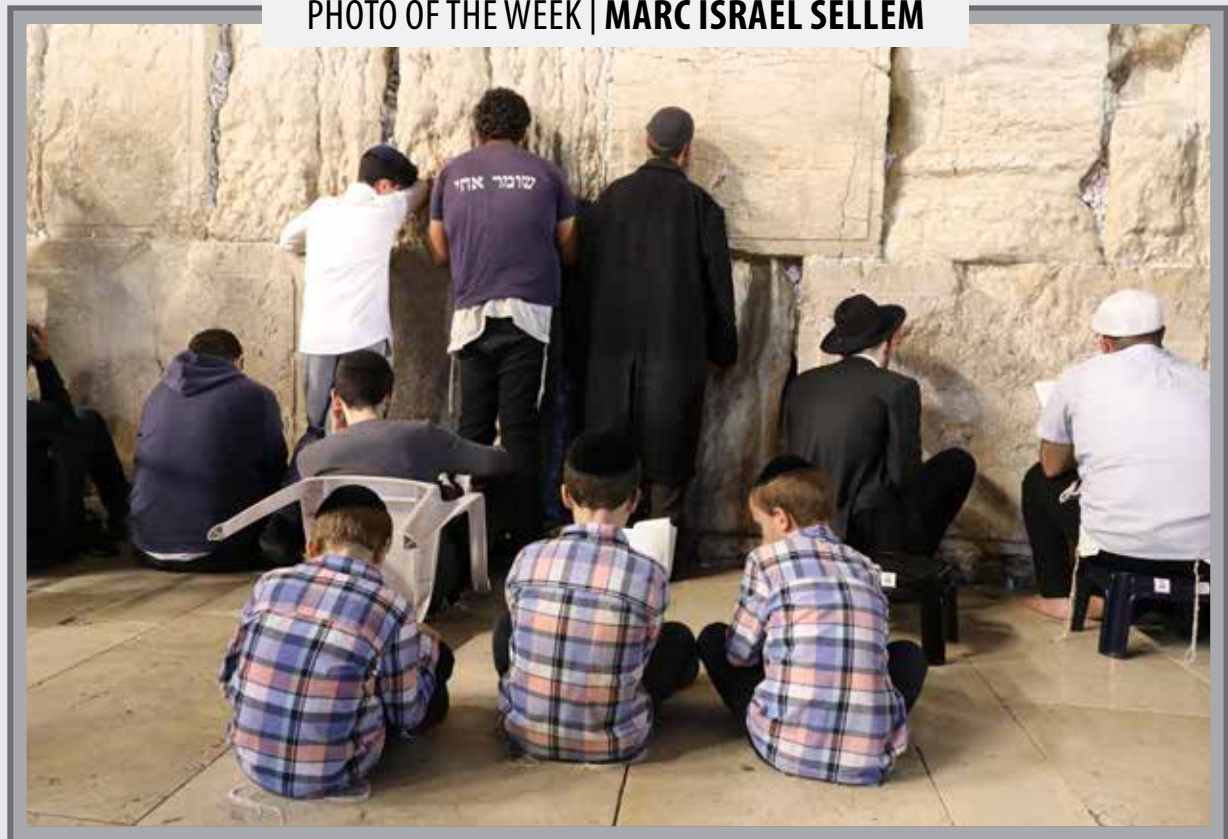
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PHOTO OF THE WEEK | MARC ISRAEL SELLEM





A SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM PRIME MINISTER BENJAMIN NETANYAHU TO 'MAGAZINE' READERS

Herzl is our modern Moses. To his people in bondage, he offered freedom and salvation. He foresaw the destruction of European Jewry and called for a Jewish state as a safe haven and as a means for national and personal redemption.

He envisioned a modern technological state proud of its past and able to secure its future with science and free enterprise. It would be able to defend itself by itself, with its own Jewish army. It would be respected by the nations of the world as a beacon of progress.

In large measure, we have surpassed Herzl's vision.

We have transformed Israel's economy from its socialist roots – which Herzl disdained – into a free-market economy that unleashed the genius of our people, precisely as



(Marc Israel Sellem)

Herzl prophesied. We have turned Israel into a rising global power.

Our citizens, Jews and Arabs alike, enjoy the freedoms denied elsewhere in our region and a level of prosperity that now exceeds Japan's. Our military

and intelligence prowess is universally respected.

The nations of the world seek our cooperation, including many Arab states that view Israel as an important ally in the battle against Iran and the other forces of militant Islam.

We are not without our blemishes, but which country isn't? And despite the lingering efforts to delegitimize the Jewish state, many understand that no other democracy can claim achievements equal to ours in the face of constant challenges to our security and our very existence.

If the Jewish leadership failed Herzl, it was in failing to identify in time the threat of virulent antisemitism, which he warned against. If, following World War I and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the Zionist leadership had forcefully pressed for a Jewish state,

millions of our people would have been saved and Israel's population would today number perhaps 20 million.

Still, what we have achieved is a remarkable testament to the life force within our people that Herzl successfully mobilized.

In his last book, Stefan Zweig movingly describes his extraordinary meetings with Herzl in Vienna, and the terrible grief that seized the multitudes of Jews when he died: The prophet was no more, and with him died his great vision. Like Moses, Herzl would not live to see the Jewish people take root in the Promised Land. But Herzl's vision lived on, 50 years after its promulgation; the hope of generations was realized.

May we continue to be worthy of his greatness and of his unbounded faith in us.

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Dear Readers,

In this week's *Magazine*, we are proud to share perspectives from some leading thinkers about the more-pertinent-than-ever topic of Theodor Herzl and Zionism, as well as a special address from the prime minister of the Jewish state that Herzl envisioned, Benjamin Netanyahu.

Gol Kalev offers new insight on the question of how Herzl came up with the idea of Zionism. In his analysis he highlights Herzl's strong Jewish consciousness and faith, illustrating how for Herzl Zionism was also about the return to Judaism.

Rabbi Dr. Benny Lau provides a fresh explanation of Rav Kook's eulogy of Herzl, which in turns leads to new understanding of Rav Kook's own view of Herzl.

Prof. Ariel Feldestein explains how Mount Herzl has turned into Israel's national temple. As such, Herzl, long after his death, continues to serve as a symbol of unity for Israelis at times of conflict and division.

Prof. David Faiman links Herzl's generation to today by sharing stories he heard from his grandfather about his friendship with Herzl – in particular, the dramatic events surrounding the Uganda proposal in which Faiman's grandfather, Rev. Goldbloom, played a key role.



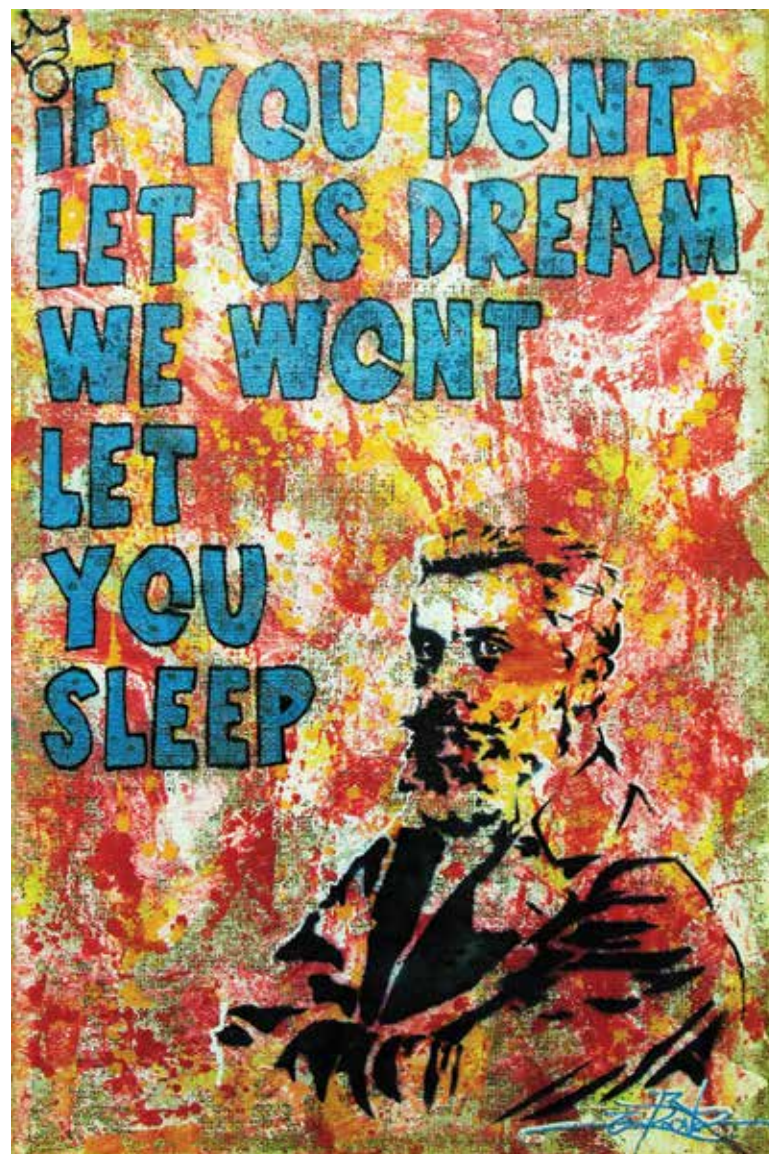
(Marc Israel Sellem)

Finally, Prof. Shlomo Avineri brings in Herzl's vision, as expressed in *Altneuland*, to today's Israel. Avineri reflects on how Israeli society is functioning relative to Herzl's vision.

This week marks the anniversary of the First Zionist Congress (August 29-31, 1897). The journey Herzl led – from Basel, Switzerland, in that long-ago August to Jerusalem in August 2019 – continues onward. Understanding Herzl helps us understand who we are today, and it is my hope that this issue of the *Magazine* contributes to that effort.

As always, I welcome your comments and letters and thank you for your readership.

Erica Schachne
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(Dan Groover Arts)



What inspired Herzl's Zionism?

One of the Jewish nation's greatest mysteries remains unsolved. To attempt to unravel it, one needs to delve deeper into understanding Herzl and his Zionism

• GOL KALEV

Theodor Herzl stunned the Jewish world. He turned a vision into a political movement that revolutionized Judaism. The establishment of the Jewish state, a mere 50 years after he launched his movement, was just one component of Herzl's Zionist ideal.

But where did all this come from? This question consumed Herzl himself. He wrote in June 1895 to Austria's Chief Rabbi Moritz Güdemann about his idea: "How did I find it? I do not know."

Some historians determined that Herzl's idea was a result of the Alfred Dreyfus trial in December 1894. But this was already 12 years after Herzl wrote in his diary an angry reaction to Eugen Dühring's antisemitic book *The Jewish Question*. Reading Dühring, he said, was like a "smack on his head." It was also more than two years after Herzl wrote his article on French antisemitism, and a full month after Herzl completed his play *The New Ghetto*, his critical analysis of liberal European Jewish society. In that same August 1895 letter to Rabbi Güdemann, Herzl wrote: "I estimate that for 13 years now this idea is running inside me."

To apprehend Herzl's idea and attempt to trace its origin, one needs to grasp Herzl. Core to understanding Herzl is recognizing his Jewish consciousness and unshakable faith. Herzl was certainly not a religious Jew, but just like many secular Israelis today, he was a believer and consumed religious experiences *à la carte*. (Herzl was arguably an early prototype of the *datlaf*, the secular Israeli Jew who occasionally observes religious rituals). He demonstrated aspects of his strong faith on various occasions. For example, Herzl described freedom in the Jewish state in a divine context. "Nobody will stand above us, except the Almighty God," he said. Similarly, he wrote about the journey to the Promised Land that "God, in his inscrutable goodness, has promised us."

Herzl was so adamant about his Judaism that when he was on the verge of getting his big break as a novice writer, the Jewish editor of the prestigious *Deutsche Wochenschrift* advised him to resubmit his article with a non-Jewish pen name. Herzl refused, saying he would continue to carry his father's name and was prepared to withdraw his submission.

It is this unshakable Jewish core that Herzl brought to Zionism. He established Zionism not as a breakaway from Judaism, but as a Jewish ideal. "God would not have preserved our nation for such a long time had there not been another purpose designated for us in the history of mankind," Herzl wrote in his diary early in his Zionist thinking. He launched the first Zionist Congress with the traditional *sheheheyanu* blessing, thanking God for bringing the Jewish people to that moment. Herzl clarified to the Zionist Congress that Zionism would not do anything that might hurt religious practices. Indeed, Herzl founded Zionism as a Jewish concept.

Yet, as Herzl's Zionism broke out from his inner consciousness into a large-scale political movement, there were naturally various views and parties which arose. In the 1935 elections to Zionist institutions more than 30 years after Herzl's death, an adamantly secular stream led by David Ben-Gurion won. Ben-Gurion and his colleagues consolidated power and held a firm grasp of Zionism for the next 40 years. Hence Israel's establishment and its formidable years were shaped by a staunchly secular image. This mid-20th century secularization of Zionism as an ideal perhaps contributed to a retroactive over-secularization of Herzl as a man.

Just as Herzl's Jewish core is often misunderstood, so is his Zionism. Herzl's Zionism had both practical and philosophical aspects, but the focus tended to the practical side – the establishment of the Jewish state. Not only was Herzl's Zionism over-secularized, it was also under-ideologized.

'Our ideal goes further than that'

This is understandable as the practical aspect was so successful. Just as Herzl predicted, 50 years after launching the process in Basel, Switzerland, the Jewish state he dreamed of



ON THE first days of the journey to visit Palestine, Herzl – atop a donkey – and his party pass through Port Said, Egypt, 1898. (Photos: Wikimedia Commons)

*Not only was Herzl's
Zionism over-secularized, it
was also under-ideologized*

was established. But here lies a core misunderstanding of Herzl's Zionism, which Herzl was well-aware of. "There are those people who do not understand us properly and think that the goal of our efforts is to come back to our land," Herzl said in 1899. "Our ideal goes further than that. Our ideal is the great eternal truth."

While Herzl expressed frustrations about the misunderstanding of the ideological aspect of Zionism, he spent much of his time developing the practical side that would lead to actionable deeds. Herzl recognized that European Jew-hatred was permanent. No matter how the Jews would evolve, Europeans would funnel their opposition to counter that evolution. This included the Jews' loyal patriotism to their European countries, something Herzl described as "running to extremes." Herzl witnessed how Europeans developed philosophies, ideologies and mechanisms to oppose the extreme patriotism of Jews to their European home countries. He concluded that Europeans would never accept the Jews, and was particularly concerned that as Jews became more successful, Europeans would only escalate their opposition to them. (A prediction that arguably turned true in the last decade. As the success of the Jewish state surged, so did the intensity of European opposition to it). Herzl recognized that the Jews will never be safe without their own state. As a result, Herzl created in Zionism a reactionary and practical solution to save the Jews from the imminent dangers of European Jew-hatred.

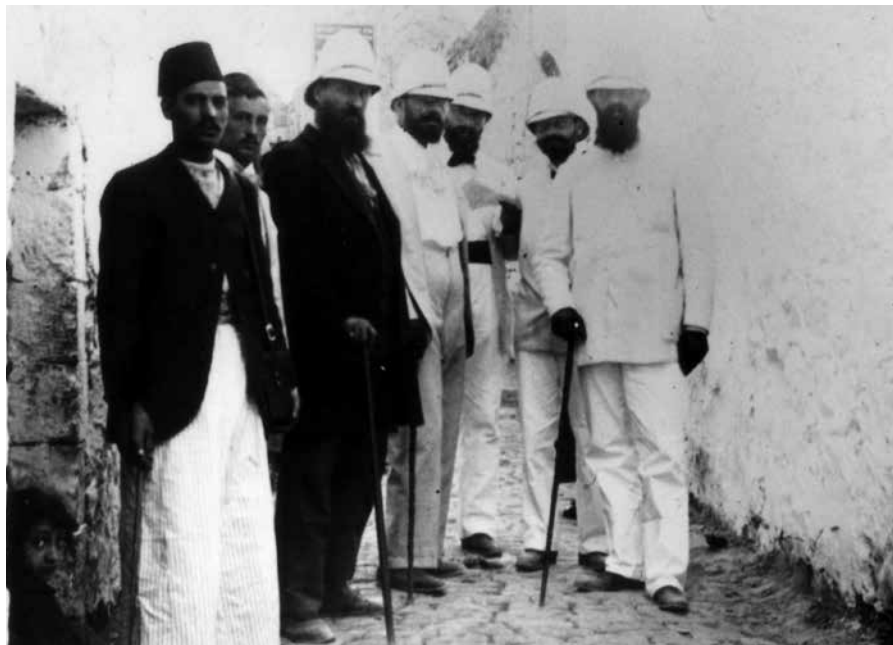
But Herzl also recognized the organic nature of Jewish nationalism. He viewed Zionism as an infinite ideal that would keep the Jewish nation-religion intact long after the Jewish state would be established. "I believe in honesty that even after we achieve our land, the Land of Israel, it [Zionism] will not stop being an ideal," He wrote shortly before his death. "Because in Zionism, as I understand it, is embedded not only the aspiration to the Promised Land... but also the aspiration to moral and spiritual completion." This ideological aspect was Herzl's deeper meaning of Zionism. The misery of the Jews in Europe was a tool to draw Jews into Zionism – a "propelling force," as he described it. "Antisemitism turned us into Jews," he told his friend Max Nordau. "Antisemitism contains the Divine will to make good," he once argued, "because it forces us together, its pressure unites us, and this unity will make us free."

One testament of how crucial the ideological aspect of Zionism was to Herzl, relative to the practical one, is expressed through his adamant opposition to Jewish "infiltration" into Palestine. Herzl thought the idea of just coming home in some loosely-organized manner would be futile. He even referred to it as "childish" in an October 1894 article. Moreover, if European antisemitism was what pushed the Jews toward one another and united them, what would unite the Jews once that pressure lifted? Herzl therefore rejected the "practical" idea of simply returning, and instead planted the seeds for a Jewish transformation. Indeed, even before the First Zionist Congress began, Herzl noted the progress of this nascent transformation. "Already Zionism was able to achieve something magnificent that was considered before impossible: The tight union between the ultra-modern elements of Judaism with the ultra-conservative elements of Judaism... such union is possible only on a national basis."

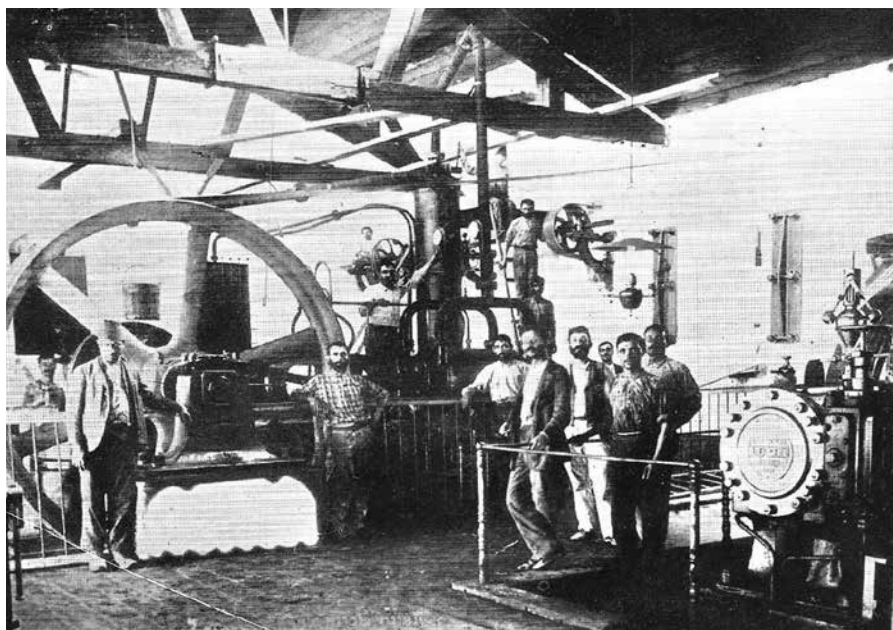
Similarly, when Herzl famously stated right after the closing of the First Zionist Congress, "In Basel I founded the Jewish state," he certainly did not mean the practical aspect. On the contrary, he clarified, "A territory is merely the concrete basis. The state itself, when it possesses a territory, still remains something abstract." In this abstraction lay the



GOLDA AND Theodor:
Street art.
(Yaffa Phillips/Flickr)



A ZIONIST
delegation led
by Herzl in
Jerusalem's Old
City, 1898.



RISHON LEZION
winery in the
early years: Is this
where the secret
to Zionism was
planted? Pictured:
Winery machines,
prior to 1899.



secret to the infinity of Zionism.

Herzl recognized that very few people fully understood this deeper layer of Zionism. Indeed, according to Herzl, only two people understood his idea in a flash: One as a follower, Max Nordau, and one as an adversary, his supervising editor at *Neue Freie Presse*, Moritz Benedikt.

Not only was Herzl alone in his comprehensive understanding of Zionism, he was also alone as the chronic outsider. He was an outsider to Vienna when he first arrived as a teenager; he was an outsider to German nationalism when he joined a nationalist fraternity in university; and he was an outsider to Paris when he moved there as *Neue Freie Presse*'s Paris correspondent.

The outsider is free to see the truth

Similarly, Herzl engaged with the Jewish question from the outside. He was an outsider to the closed Orthodox Jewish communities in Vienna; he was an outsider to the mass Jewish populations in Russia, with which he was not familiar; and he was an outsider to the "Russian colonies" composed of young Russian-Jewish students that emerged in Western Europe.

"He knows absolutely nothing about the Jews," Russian-born Hovevei Zion leader Menachem Usishkin concluded, after meeting Herzl in May 1896. In fact, Herzl was also an outsider to the Jewish establishment and to its lead thinkers. He did not even hear of Leon Pinsker's *Auto-Emancipation*, the 1882 book that inspired so many Jews at the time, while he was developing his own ideas.

As an outsider, Herzl could keep a clear mind to observe nuances. He was not shackled by the burden of being a rabbi, an academic or a Jewish leader. He was not beholden to a business plan, precedent, indoctrinated supervisors, nor to the status quo. Herzl was free. He was free to see his truth. Like the outsider Moses, Herzl saw what enslaved Jews could not see, and he was ready to lead the exodus out of Europe. Just as with Moses, this was not just a physical exodus that would lead to the establishment of the Jewish state, but also a transformative philosophical exodus. "The proximity to Europe is bad," Herzl wrote, "because in the first 25 years of our existence we need, for our development, some rest from Europe, its wars and social complications."

Herzl's being an outsider was paramount to developing Zionism. So much so that when he finally read Pinsker's *Auto-Emancipation* days before the scheduled publication of *Der Judenstaat* (*The Jewish State*), he said: "It is a good thing that I did not know it or perhaps I would have abandoned my own undertaking."

Herzl did offer occasional, subtle, carefully-worded mystical speculations about when and how he came up with Zionism. At one point he hinted it had occurred in the realm of his subconscious; at another that it was in a childhood dream. At a different instance, he speculated that it arrived in a bottle of brandy he received from wineries in the Land of Israel. "Perhaps there was hidden the idea of Zionism," he wrote.

Herzl seemingly chose to address the conundrum of where the idea of Zionism came from at the grand finale to his landmark novel *Altneuland* (*The Old New Land*), published in 1902. There, he posed that same question in a different form. Zionism, now manifested in a Jewish state, is described as a "new and happy form of human society." Herzl concludes the novel by asking, "What created it?" He once again offers various theories, such as necessity and will power, but seems to refute them with a better answer he chose to end his novel with. Herzl recognized that in fiction he could be more daring and have greater liberty to expose his truth, which could be ridiculed if expressed as opinion. Mastering his pen, Herzl knew which ideas to write as actionable deeds, and which dreams to hide behind the protective veil of fiction. And yet, as he said in the epilogue to *Altneuland*, "Dreams are not so different from deeds as some may think."

The question of where and how Herzl received his Zionism remains a mystery. Yet, what is clear is that when he arose and proclaimed his Zionist message, it was not a departure from

Judaism, it was an enhancement of Judaism. As Herzl stated in his opening speech of the First Zionist Congress: "Zionism is the return to Judaism, even before it is the return to the Land of the Jews." ■

The writer analyzes trends in Zionism, Europe and global affairs. He is a board member of the America-Israel Friendship League and chairman of the AIFL think tank. For more of his articles visit: EuropeandJerusalem.com



As an outsider, Herzl was free to see his truth –

From top:

SHTETL JEWS (Pictured: The synagogue in Pinczów, Poland; from book by George K. Loukomski).

WESTERN EUROPE (Pictured: Le Palais Garnier, Opera de Paris, where Herzl used to attend the opera).



Statehood and spirit



RABBI ABRAHAM ISAAC KOOK, 1924.
(Photos: Wikimedia Commons)

• BENNY LAU

On 20 Tamuz 5664 (July 3, 1904), Theodor Herzl died suddenly at the age of 44.

Rabbi Abraham Isaac HaCohen Kook made aliyah two months prior to Herzl's death and was appointed rabbi of Jaffa and the colonies. As part of his position he was requested to eulogize Herzl.

For a rabbi raised and educated in the world of the yeshivas of Lithuania it was a difficult and challenging act. Herzl was far from Rabbi Kook's spiritual world. Herzl did not believe traditional Judaism was meaningful or relevant to the nation's revival, and wished to keep religion secluded in synagogues, far from the strongholds of political influence.

Rabbi Kook labored to create the eulogy through an in-depth project that sought to compare the roots of traditional Judaism and Herzl's role in building the nation. The eulogy was based on a hidden verse written by Prophet Zechariah at the period of return of Zion. The verse depicts a national grief in which everyone eulogizes a central figure who would be stabbed by a sword. The mourning would be as if for an only son or a firstborn son.

"And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on

me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son. On that day the weeping in Jerusalem will be as great as the weeping of Hadad Rimon in the plain of Megiddo. The land will mourn, each clan by itself" (Zechariah 12:11).

What does it mean "the weeping in Jerusalem will be as great as the weeping of Hadad Rimon in the plain of Megiddo?"

The key to understanding the verse was given to us by Yonatan ben Uziel, the first-century BCE translator of the books of Prophets. According to his translation, this eulogy comprises an eulogy for two kings from the time of the First Temple: Ahab, king of Israel, and Josiah, king of Judah.

King Ahab was slain in Ramot Gilad by Hadad, King of Aram, hinted by the words "Hadad Rimon." And King Josiah was killed by Pharaoh in Megiddo Valley, mentioned as "the plain of Megiddo."

Rabbi Yosef said, "If it weren't for the translation of this verse we would never know what it means. Yonatan ben Uziel's translation says: 'On that day the lamentation in Jerusalem would be as the mourning of Ahab son of Omri, slain by Hadad Rimon in Ramot Gilad and the lamentation of Josiah son of Amon slain by Pharaoh in the plain of Megiddo.'"

A combination of these two kings together is the secret of mourning in Jerusalem. Ahab is mentioned as a courageous king who took good care of his people in every aspect, including foreign and security policies, economic growth and national pride. Ahab's act of bravery, standing on his chariot bleeding and wounded as he hid his wounds from his own soldiers earns great respect and is praised as noteworthy by Jewish sages.

ON THE other hand, Ahab's biggest sin was his attitude toward the Jewish religion. The Prophet Elijah called him "hater of Israel" because he brought the god of Sidon into the kingdom of Israel through his wife, Jezebel, who was the daughter of king of Sidon. The story of Kerem Navot, which Ahab coveted, and which through a fake trial inherited the vineyard by killing its owner, makes the character controversial. Does he deserve being regarded to as a national hero, or should he be remembered for shame and disgrace?

Josiah is tagged in complete opposition to Ahab. No other king was credited with so many detailed praises, which reached their zenith in Book of Kings.

"Neither before nor after Josiah was there a king like him who turned to the Lord as he did with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his strength (2 Kings 23:25).

This is a one-of-a-kind description that uses the words of the Bible, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength." That is how the ideal follower of God is depicted. There is no higher rank than that.

How does the Prophet Zechariah compose the lamentation in Jerusalem during its salvation with the combination of these two opposite kings?

This unique combination empowers the hidden power of the two and the waste in their deaths. Ahab's roots come from the legacy of the tribe of Joseph (sons of Rachel), and Josiah's roots come from house of David, who is linked to the tribes of Judah (sons of Leah). The dispute between these two legacies is created during the days of the tribes; is mended during the days of David and Solomon; and breaks again during the days of Rehoboam, son of Solomon and Jeroboam from the tribe of Ephraim. Joseph was to take care of material life, and Judah was to take care of spiritual life.

The distribution of the kingdom of Israel into two nations gave birth to a significant disadvantage in each of the kingdoms. Even in the days of Ahab and Josiah these disadvantages were still visible. Ahab was a man of doings and passionate care for his people, while spirituality was far from him. Josiah was a man of vision and mending of religion but his vision of the state was flawed. Josiah's temptation in attempting to stop Pharaoh in Megiddo cost him his life. His ambition of being a single ruler to all the tribes of Israel without a touch of foreign rule gave birth to hastiness.

RABBI KOOK writes in his lamentation: "And here is the trait of national affection that was seen in Ahab who liked Israel very

much. And he held the doings of his ancestors by adding one more city to Israel, and 'Record holders said everyone is coming to life in the afterlife, Lee Gilad, it's Ahab who fell in Gilad, that God pretends to be at war even after having been struck by arrows so as not to scare Israel. This kind of courage comes from excessive and wonderful love. He also respected the Torah by guarding it's outwardly composure with honor, in front of Hadad, and with all that he did not recognize the value of Torah and its specialty where all of Israel's advantages lie. Thus he went in the ways of Jezebel and in the abominations of the nations of the land according to the extent that would then rule in the spirit of time."

On the other hand, Josiah enhanced his spiritual side like no other among all the other kings. Ss the Bible says, "Neither before nor after Josiah was there a king like him who turned to the Lord as he did with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his strength," to the point where he did not want to relate Israel with the nations of the world, and thus the Prophet Jeremiah forfeited on that which he was tasked to allow the soldiers of Egypt to pass through Israel.

For that reason the two points converged in Ahab and Josiah, those of Joseph and Judah, the power of the Messiah of the house of Joseph and the house of David. Thus by removing the next disadvantage of preparing the nation, to not use its power, the individuals are well remembered. Eventually it was possible to unite forces and combine the two into a complete being. That way the eulogy would expand by adding the two tendencies, as their purpose in practice happens. That shall be their sacrifice and recognition to each other, and double, to become the lamentation of Ahab and Josiah together, to stand as a lesson to unite forces, to be wise into putting them together in a system that would bring general good.

Every political leader has its strong and weak points that are unique to him. Ahab was the "responsible" leader who took care of the economy, security, foreign relations and statehood. His statehood was impeccable. His disadvantage was the lack of value in the spiritual life of Israel, and his dragging behind his wife, Jezebel, was his demise.

Josiah knew well the meaning of the spirit of Israel. But by sticking to the Torah he was seeking to reach the ultimate goal of a nation that is independent from the rest of the world. He was ahead of his time and stuck to his goal even by disregarding Jeremiah.

Only a future merging of the two – between the calculated maturity and statehood of Ahab and the acknowledging of the value of spirit of Josiah – could bring hope to the future of the State of Israel. ■

The writer is a rabbi and author who heads the 929 initiative - learning one chapter of the bible per day. He is a research fellow at the Israel Democracy Institute and head of its Human Rights and Judaism in Action project.

Translated by Alon Einhorn.



'JEZABEL AND Ahab Meeting Elijah in Naboth's Vineyard Giclee.' Print by Sir Francis Dicksee (1853-1928).



THEODOR HERZL on his voyage to Israel via ship, 1898.

Rabbi Kook's eulogy of Herzl was based on a hidden verse written by Prophet Zechariah at the period of return of Zion

מדברים אנגלית ואוהבים לטייל בארץ ישראל?
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On the 70th anniversary of Mount Herzl – the national temple

• ARIEL FELDESTAIN

For hundreds of years, since the Jewish people were violently exiled from the Land of Israel (70 CE), they remained faithful to it in the lands of the Diaspora and never ceased to pray and hope to return to the ancient homeland and rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem. This yearning was expressed in prayer and religious ritual, and all Jews were committed to realizing this dream one day.

Over the generations, Jews ascended to Jerusalem and stood in front of the stones of the Western Wall, the last remnant of the Temple, trembling and pleading, their prayers filled with yearning for the day when the Jewish people would return to Zion. Some 1,800 years later, the national immigration to the Land of Israel began and the Zionist movement was established. The immigrants who arrived in the Land of Israel replaced religious yearning with national yearning, and in the process abandoned the dream of returning to Jerusalem and establishing the Temple there. They chose to redeem their homeland in the coastal plain and the Galilee, to replace the prayer book with the plow, and replace the dream rebuilding of the Temple with the establishment of a Jewish state. During this process, Jerusalem became a distant dream, and the longing for it became increasingly intense.



AN HONOR GUARD stands next to Herzl's coffin on August 16, 1949, when his remains were brought to the Land of Israel for burial. (Wikimedia Commons)

Nevertheless, over the years, among the leaders of the Zionist movement, the notion that Jerusalem and no other city could be the national capital of the state took form. The religious yearning for Jerusalem became a national yearning and the story of King David, who made

Jerusalem the capital of his kingdom, became a national story with no theological characteristics.

On November 29, 1947, the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution 181 on the partition of the Land of Israel into two states for two peo-

ples and the transformation of Jerusalem into an international territory under the auspices of the United Nations. It was clear to the heads of the Jewish Yishuv in the Land of Israel in general and to David Ben-Gurion in particular that making Jerusalem the capital of the Jewish state would now be much more complex and problematic. Therefore, Ben-Gurion began to formulate steps that would enable the de facto establishment of Jewish sovereignty and its symbols in Jerusalem. In the period under discussion, Ben-Gurion's proposal to relocate the Knesset building and the seat of government from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem was accepted. The decision to bury Herzl in Jerusalem was another step in this campaign.

ON NOVEMBER 24, 1948, the provisional government decided to set up a joint committee with the Jewish Agency to deal with bringing Theodor Herzl's remains to the State of Israel. This was the first step that paved the way for his reburial on a hill at the entrance to the Bayit Vagan neighborhood of Jerusalem on August 17, 1949. In his will, Herzl did not refer to his burial place in the Land of Israel. Over the years, two sites were suggested as appropriate: Mount Carmel and Jerusalem.

Those who supported Herzl's burial on Mount Carmel relied on the testimony of David Wolffsohn, Herzl's personal friend and president of the World Zionist Organization. According to them, while Herzl did not explicitly state the desire

Conundrum of the cloth: Solved after 70 years

A 70-year-old mystery surrounding the re-interment of Theodor Herzl's remains in Jerusalem was solved a few weeks ago. The pall that draped Herzl's coffin mysteriously vanished sometime after the 1949 ceremony and was not found since.

The cloth was prepared in Vienna in 1936 by architect Oscar Strand and artist Arthur Weisz, as plans were made to move Herzl's remains to what was then British-controlled Palestine. The cloth was then shipped to Jerusalem. When World War II broke out, those plans were put on hold. Tragically, Weisz was murdered in Auschwitz.

Upon the establishment of the State of Israel, one of David Ben-Gurion's first decisions was to fulfill Herzl's wishes and bring his remains to Israel for re-interment, and the cloth was used to cover the coffin. The cloth (*parochet*) was removed in the ceremony and was entrusted in the hands of the Jewish National Fund, but it mysteriously vanished. Years of efforts to locate it bore no fruit. After 70 years, a decision was made to replicate it. In July 2019, during Herzl's annual memorial ceremony, the replica was publicly presented. But then, a month later, the story took an unexpected twist: the original cloth was found in a JNF warehouse.

Weisz's son, Yitzhak Weisz, is author of the book *Herzl – A New Reading*, originally written in French and translated

into Hebrew and English. Weisz tells the *Magazine*: "I spent years in the Zionist Archives doing research for my book, and all this time I had no idea that my father was involved with Herzl in any way." After submitting the book for publication, Weisz wandered into the Book Gallery, a rare book and print store in Jerusalem, where he saw a poster of the front page of the August 17, 1949, issue of *Haaretz*, announcing the reburial of Herzl's remains in Israel. The caption of a photo showing the cloth draping the coffin caught his attention and, stupefied, he realized that the cloth had been prepared already in 1936. This led Weisz right back to the Zionist Archives, and after searching through hundreds of pages, he discovered that it was indeed his father who crafted the cloth.

"I feel as if my father covered the body of Herzl, and I in my book shed true light on the ideas of Herzl's that had been so falsified," Weisz reflects.

This month's astonishing reappearance of the original cloth was a startling experience for Weisz, who was three years old when his father was taken to Auschwitz.

"I feel that I had the opportunity to do the mitzvah of *kibud av* (respect one's father) and also grant him immortality in some way: now, the thousands of people who read my book and contemplate this cloth will know that one of those six million Jews murdered in the Holocaust was a Jew named Arthur Weisz." — Gol Kalev

to be buried there in his will, he often mentioned it in personal conversations. They also relied on a quote from Herzl's book, *Altneuland*. Nevertheless, most of the committee members felt that the most appropriate burial place was Jerusalem. Herzl's burial in Jerusalem symbolized the full realization of the Zionist idea, the return of the Jewish people to their homeland and Jerusalem, the capital of the Jewish kingdom from the time of King David.

After Jerusalem was agreed upon, the question arose of where in Jerusalem. The most appropriate place according to Jewish belief was the Mount of Olives, but this area and the other places holy to Judaism were in Jordanian hands. Therefore the committee recommended choosing the hill opposite the entrance to the Bayit Vagan neighborhood in the western part of the city.

Ben-Gurion envisioned Mount Herzl as the national pantheon that would symbolize Jewish national fulfillment and be a place of pilgrimage for citizens of the state. Mount Herzl was the national answer to the Western Wall, which symbolized the holy place and during this period was outside the borders of the state. In the planning of Mount Herzl, the emphasis was placed on integrating into it the national cemetery, in which the heads of state would be buried alongside the fallen soldiers of Israel, the silver platter of the State of Israel. At the top of the mountain would be the tomb of Theodor Herzl, the visionary of the Jewish state.

Ben-Gurion's vision was partially realized when he chose to be buried in Sde Boker in a plot overlooking the Zin River. Some other heads of state also chose not to be buried on Mount Herzl. Only after the Six Day War and the liberation of the Old City was a symbolic connection forged, like an umbilical cord, between the Western Wall and Mount Herzl. The events of the Memorial Day for the Fallen of Israel's Wars open with a ceremony at the Western Wall Plaza, while the opening ceremony of Independence Day celebrations take place at Mount Herzl. Over the years, the ceremony at Mount Herzl symbolized the unity and integration of Israeli society, which each year marks the realization of the Zionist idea and its success. In recent years, political disputes have arisen around the ceremony, symbolizing the fissures in Israel's social unity and sense of partnership. Mount Herzl, the national temple, which was supposed to symbolize national redemption and the fulfillment of the Zionist vision, became a place from which to trace the cracks and splits that characterize Israeli society. ■

The writer is a professor of the history of the Zionist movement and leadership; he published a series of articles and books dealing with issues related to these subjects. In recent years he has been researching the shaping of Theodor Herzl's image in the collective memory.

Learning firsthand about Theodor Herzl...

... from my grandfather Rabbi Jacob Koppel Goldbloom (1872-1961), a forgotten Zionist activist

• DAVID FAIMAN

My grandfather, known in English Zionist circles as the Rev. JK Goldbloom (1872-1961), but "Zeyde" to me, died when I was 17. We had always been very close, and during his final illness we shared a bedroom.

In fact, his influence on me was so great that it was obvious to us both that I would eventually make aliyah, the dream Chaim Weizmann had denied my grandfather because his Hebrew teaching in London was considered far more important for the Zionist cause than for Zeyde to become just another Hebrew teacher in Israel.

His "Ivrit b'Ivrit" method of teaching resulted in literally hundreds of his pupils immigrating to Israel. Other pupils would also turn up in all kinds of unexpected places. For example, when inquiring at an Oxford Library for a copy of a children's play Zeyde had written in 1916, about life in Eretz Yisrael in 2016, the librarian informed me that the library did not have the play but that he, personally, had performed in it during his childhood!

I vividly recall the hypnotic effect my Zeyde's synagogue sermons would have on congregants, urging them to send their children to Eretz Yisrael (the only words I could understand because he invariably spoke in Yiddish on such occasions). I also recall my grandmother Rivka telling us that when Zeyde practiced a Zionist speech in his sleep, she waited patiently until he finished and then applauded enthusiastically. "So that's what woke me up!" Zeyde added with a smile.

Not surprisingly, on their living room wall there hung a large wooden bas relief of Zeyde's "messiah," and he even named his youngest son, Benjamin Ze'ev Herzl. Naturally, I was keen to learn as much about all the famous Zionists with whom he had personal contact, primarily, of course, about Herzl.

One of my early recollections is of Zeyde opening a book and allowing me to copy a poem he had composed on the occasion of his first meeting with Herzl when Herzl first visited London in 1896. Zeyde was unaware at the time that Herzl knew no Hebrew, and would consequently be unable to appreciate the craftsmanship that had gone into the 10 lines, which, in style, could have come straight out of the standard prayer book. Each line began with a Hebrew letter that together spelled out the acrostic: "To the glory of Herzl: May his torch bestow enlightenment" (my translation).

THE POEM was written in rhyme, with two quatrains followed by a couplet. The first quatrain enumerated various places on Herzl's crowded itinerary, persuading monarchs and other dignitaries to recognize the Jewish nation's need for a land of its own. However, the second quatrain ("HERZL" in acrostic) included the line: "Command, command, put your words into our mouths!" After having met with the high and mighty of Great Britain, what was Herzl's "command"? To hold the next Zionist Congress in the country that he regarded as having the foremost importance to the cause.

Zeyde often mentioned the shine that emanated from Herzl's face and the hypnotic intensity of his eyes. So it was natural for him to work tirelessly to organize the Fourth Zionist ("London") Congress in 1900. From then on, Zeyde took part in all Zionist Congresses until his death.

In my teens, I was too young to know anything about the



SEALING STAMP of the Jewish National Fund depicting Theodor Herzl in his iconic posture on the balcony of the Hotel Les Trois Rois in Basel, Switzerland, during the First Zionist Congress, 1897. The quoted Psalm 137, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning," was how Herzl ended his closing speech at the Sixth Zionist Congress in Basel in 1903. (Wikimedia Commons)

politics of these congresses, but one stands out because of a radio tape I treasure, of Zeyde being interviewed on the 50th anniversary of Herzl's death. In it, he relates that at the Sixth Congress, in Basel, the tendentious issue of Uganda came up. Zeyde, who was an indefatigable propagandist for Eretz Yisrael, was ready to vote against the proposal (to send a commission of inquiry to Uganda to check out its suitability for a future Jewish state). However, Herzl sent Zeyde a message via Israel Zangwill, urging him to persuade his fellow English delegates to vote in favor of accepting the British government's proposal. In the interview, Zeyde explains in beautiful, fluent Hebrew how he found himself caught between "a hammer and anvil."

How could he go against the will of his almost messianic hero and vote for a cause that was anathema to him? He goes on to recount Zangwill explaining that Herzl regarded it as being of the utmost importance that the congress should unanimously agree to the government's offer in order to keep the lines of communication open. Yet after the congress, when back in Britain, Herzl would permit Zeyde to continue his agitation against Uganda. ■

The writer is professor emeritus of physics at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. After an academic career in elementary particle physics and applied solar energy (see Wikipedia), his retirement hobbies are biblical geography and musicology. His latest book is Giacomo Meyerbeer: A Deliberately Forgotten Composer (to be published by Gefen).



Herzl's 'Altneuland' can be used as a mirror to judge our society today

In an interview with the 'Magazine', veteran historian Shlomo Avineri shares his thoughts on the significance of Herzl, the vision he articulated in his seminal work and how it is reflected in today's Israel

• GOL KALEV

Prof. Shlomo Avineri is arguably the most known contemporary expert on Theodor Herzl. Having written numerous books on 19th-century political philosophy, Avineri also has a broad understanding of the time period and can place Herzl's vision in this context.



HERZL STREET in 1934, during Tel Aviv's early years. The city is named after Herzl's work 'Altneuland'; 'Tel Aviv' is the title of the Hebrew translation of 'Altneuland.' (Photos: Wikimedia Commons)

Avineri is not just an intellectual; he also fulfilled Herzl's vision with his own deeds, serving as the director-general of the Foreign Ministry in the 1970s.

He sat down with *The Jerusalem Post* to reflect on Herzl's legacy.

"In the public discourse of Israel, Herzl is usually called the visionary of the state. This is unfair," Avineri says, "because it gives him more credit than he deserves and less credit than he deserves.

"More credit because he was not the first person in the 19th century who had a vision of a Jewish state – there were others that preceded him. People like [Moses] Hess and [Leon] Pinsker wrote a book that created some impact, but had no follow-up.

"On the other hand, Herzl gets too little credit because he was not just a visionary, he was also a man of action. Herzl created an organization that became the foundation of the Jewish state. There is a clear continuation from the Executive Committee of the Zionist Congress to the provisional government of Israel in 1948. You did not need to reinvent the wheel or make constitution decisions when Israel was founded, because there was a political culture and a multiparty system."

Indeed, Herzl laid the foundation not only for the Jewish state but also for its democratic nature.

"Democracy is not an outcome of a text but of political culture," Avineri explains. "In America, the 13 colonies had representative assemblies and then they became the foundation of the federal system. Similarly, the Zionist organization had a political culture that can be traced back to Herzl, and that became the foundation for the government of Israel."

But was Herzl's Zionism merely a movement for the establishment of the Jewish state, or also a transformative ideology that would serve the Jewish people long after the Jewish state would be established?

To answer this, Avineri places Zionism in its historical context: "Zionism was a response to what was happening in Europe, where identities were shifting from religious identities to national and cultural identities. Until the 19th century, people's main identity was religious – both their own identity and the way they were viewed by others. In the 19th century, people shifted to define themselves in national and ethnic ways – as Italians, as Romanians. Around the same time, there was a revival of Jewish culture that went beyond religion, including the revival of the Hebrew language. Herzl responded to the emergence of that Jewish culture and gave it the institutional structure."

Avineri stresses: "Ideas have power when they capture the imagination of a lot of people and are then translated to institutions. If ideas remain just in op-eds of newspapers, they are interesting and important, but do

not have the staying power."

Avineri says that this is part of the reason Herzl decided to write *Altneuland*: "Herzl wrote a very unusual book – a utopia published in 1902, in which he describes how a Jewish commonwealth in Palestine would look in 1923."

Avineri claims that *Altneuland* was unique in a number of ways: "National movements have manifestos about a claim, about history, about what they want to achieve, but I am not aware of any national movement that has a blueprint of how its society will look like after it receives independence. Herzl did exactly that – the book describes the country, its institutions and its social life. It is not just about Jews having a right, but also about what Jews would do once they achieve the state."

THIS IS where Avineri sees the significance of *Altneuland* to today's Israel: "We can use the book as a mirror by which we can judge our own society today. It seems to me there are three elements that Herzl addresses that are germane to the challenges Israel is facing today: equal citizenship, social and economic order, and the relationship between state and religion."

Avineri explains each of those elements and how Herzl's view is expressed in *Altneuland*: "When it comes to equal citizenship, women in *Altneuland* have the right to vote. This is just as they did in the Zionist organizations. In 1902, this is quite revolutionary. Also, Herzl was very much aware that Palestine is not empty. Some of the people he describes in *Altneuland* are Arabs, and one of them is even one of the country's leaders. Herzl did not imagine in 1902 that there would be an Arab national movement in Palestine. At that time there was no Arab national movement anywhere. But Herzl recognized that there are non-Jews, and that they should be given equal rights.

"This is the core of the political narrative of the book. The country in 1923 is in the middle of an election to the parliament, and there is the emergence of a new political party led by a recent immigrant, a rabbi, who says that non-Jews should not have equal rights, because it is a Jewish state. The plot in the book is about how the political establishment in the country is fighting this Jewish racist."

Avineri points to the peculiarity of this: "Utopias usually show a perfect society. Herzl, being a journalist, having spent time in France, was very much aware that all societies, including democratic ones, have serious issues. Just as there can be racists in Europe, there can be racists amongst the Jews. Herzl describes the argument of the Jewish racist party and then the arguments of the liberals who want to maintain the

democratic structure of a liberal Jewish commonwealth. The liberals' argument is twofold: On the one hand, it goes back to Jewish sources, remembering we were slaves in Egypt and invoking quotes from the Bible that speak about equality. But there is also another argument, which claims that a modern state needs to be based on equal citizenship."

The second element in *Altneuland* that Avineri feels is relevant to today's Israel is social order: "Herzl was not a socialist. He was critical of revolutionary socialism. But he was also very much aware of some of the dilemmas of capitalism. The kind of social order he describes in the Jewish commonwealth in *Altneuland* is a mix of capitalism and socialism. He gives it a name: mutualism.

"Herzl takes the better elements of capitalism (freedom and initiatives) and the better elements of socialism (justice and equality). In contemporary terms, it is a social democratic welfare state. On the one hand, there is no private ownership of land, so there will not be land speculation. Services such as electricity are run on a national basis, there are old-age homes and medical insurance – something quite revolutionary in 1902. On the other hand, retail marketing and retail commerce are in private hands. So you have a combination of socially controlled elements of solidarity and the ability of people to do business."

Avineri points to another unique aspect in *Altneuland*: "There is no army in *Altneuland*. The Jewish commonwealth is established through international agreement, and therefore there is no need for an army. However, there is national service. Every young man and woman, after finishing high school, spends two years in national service, as teachers, nurses or welfare workers in old-age homes. Herzl's idea of mutual-

ism is of very deep solidarity."

Avineri moves on to address the third element of *Altneuland* relevant to today – that of religion and state: "Herzl was not religious, but he understood that respect for religion is an important social element of cohesion and a very central element of Jewish consciousness. He therefore respected the role of religion in the public sphere. Herzl describes that on Friday afternoon, the city of Jerusalem is closing down. Everybody goes either home or to synagogue, because, as Herzl said, the Sabbath dwells in people's hearts. Herzl even said that the Temple will be rebuilt. It is not where the mosque is – the mosque is part of the skyline of Jerusalem in Herzl's book. The Temple is basically a modern Orthodox synagogue – men and women sit separately."

SO HOW did the utopia translate into reality?

"All those elements in *Altneuland* are about trying to be inclusive," Avineri explains. "Indeed, when Israel was established, it followed these inclusive lines: Israel allowed in 1948 those Palestinian Arabs who remained in Israel and did not flee or were not expelled to participate in the first election, and that was in the middle of war. Israel maintained that Arabic is the second official language. Israel also maintained that Arab citizens have a right for state-sponsored education in their own language and own culture."

But in Avineri's view, there has been a shift since: "In the last few years, there are forces and political parties and leaders in Israel who try to diminish the equal rights of Israeli-Arab citizens, and that is done in the name of Zionism – this is utter nonsense. The Zionist vision, as expressed by Herzl, views Israel



as a Jewish state that respects the civil and cultural rights of its minorities."

Avineri points to a shift on social and economic issues as well: "For many decades, Israel was used as a model for social democratic parties in Western Europe: the kibbutz, the Histadrut labor federation, the idea that you can balance social responsibility and solidarity with a society that has private enterprise. In the last decades, the Israeli welfare state has been undermined by far-reaching privatization. The element of solidarity has been pushed aside and replaced by capitalist components, including land speculation."

Avineri acknowledges that this is part of global developments, but concludes: "Israel today is far away, not only from what it has been until two or three decades ago, but also from the vision of Herzl, which was trying to create a third way, to use a contemporary term, between capitalism and socialism."

Avineri claims Israel has also moved

away from such a third way when it comes to state and religion: "The role of religion in Jewish national consciousness is, on the one hand, a fact, but it is also a contested fact, since it depends on interpretation. Israel was able to create something that was called the status quo, which was trying to ensure some aspects of Jewish identity in the public space. This enabled coexistence.

"In the last few years we see radicalization on both sides: On the ultra-Orthodox side we see attempts to enlarge the scope of religious institutions and religious control. On parts of the left-wing radical seculars, we see an attempt to identify any religious element as evidence of Israel moving in the direction of Tehran. We live in a more polarized situation today."

So should the vision that Herzl outlined in *Altneuland* be taken into consideration when chartering the direction of Israel?

Avineri is clear: "*Altneuland* can be a model to what historical Zionism tried to achieve. On those three issues - equal citizenship, a third way between capitalism and socialism, and an uneasy coexistence of state and religion – there is something one can learn from Herzl more than from any other Zionist activist, thinker or politician."

Shlomo Avineri is professor emeritus of political science at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and a member of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities. In his latest book, Karl Marx: Philosophy and Revolution, Avineri traces the impact of Marx's Jewish background, as well as his father's conversion, on his writing. The book was published on August 6 by Yale University Press. For more articles by the interviewer: europeandjerusalem.com

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