



Forward

Herut has chosen to honor the 140th anniversary of the birth of the great Zionist leader Ze'ev Jabotinsky with a collection of articles and essays that are culled from our ongoing Zionist History Book Of The Month™ project. These pieces were originally published in either 2019 or 2020.

The adage that knowledge is power is especially true for Zionists, and when we undertook the Zionist History Book Of The Month™ project we did not anticipate the tremendous success it has become. The articles about these books have been published throughout the world by dozens of newspapers and news websites.

Also, in this eBook we have added a special article by American-born Israeli journalist and lifelong Jabotinsky movement activist Yisrael Medad. Serving as Director of Educational Programming and Information Resources at The Menachem Begin Heritage Center in Jerusalem until his retirement in 2017, Medad has written a tribute to Jabotinsky's confidant, collaborator, and biographer Joseph Schechtman, who passed away 50 years ago this year.

Also included, is a book excerpt from **Jews Make the Best Demons: "Palestine" and the Jewish Question** by Eric Rozenman. Jabotinsky was a militant foe of anti-Semitism all of his adult life and with the tremendous rise in Jew-hatred over the last several years, we thought that adding this special feature to this eBook provides a much needed perspective on this ongoing danger.

In September 2020 I was honored to be a presenter in a special online educational speaker series "Who's Jabotinsky and why does he matter in 2020: A lecture series by the Jabotinsky Institute and World Herut."

This webinar series was promoted on social media with the hashtag #JabotinskyMatters and the publication of the eBook is very much a continuation of our educational work that is aimed at introducing Jabotinsky's school of thought to those who may be unfamiliar with it as well as those who seek to misrepresent who Jabotinsky was.

This ongoing, two-front work will always be at the core of what Herut sees as our educational mission, and we can think of no better way to memorialize Jabotinsky than to make available a collection of essays designed to help guide individuals in their independent study of Zionist history through the reading of great books.

Karma Feinstein Cohen
Executive Director
World Herut

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Herut North America (HNA) is a grassroots Jewish activist movement committed to Zionist education. HNA is part of the **World Herut** organization which conducts training around the world focused on building the next generation of unapologetic, defiant, Zionist leaders. HNA is a component of the **American Zionist Movement** and fielded a successful slate in the 2020 **World Zionist Congress** elections that garnered four times as many votes as it had in the last election in 2015. Herut North America welcomes your membership and invites your involvement in one of the fastest growing pro-Israel groups in the U.S. today.

Please consider becoming a member of Herut today. Visit www.HerutNA.org for membership information.

Reflecting on the 50th *yahrzeit* of Joseph Schechtman

By Yisrael Medad

My copy of Joseph Schechtman's Vladimir Jabotinsky, the second volume, I managed to have the author dedicate to me on February 1, 1968 and he labeled me a 'faithful Jabotinskyaner'. I presume that was on the occasion when the Yeshiva University Betar Club hosted him and I think I read out too much of his own life's activities and works because when I finished, he thanked me for 'that obituary'. I even ended up working alongside his wife during the year I was employed at the Zionist Archives and Library in the old Jewish Agency offices on Park Avenue.

Schechtman was knowledgeable, smart, political, a true European gentleman and witty as I learned traveling on the subway with him. A certain form of the Hadar character was also reflected in his manners. The senior *madrachim* in Betar had to have read his books on the Mufti, on the Aliyah operations during the Israel's early years, on TransJordan and even population transfers. Later on, I learned more about him from Laurence Weinbaums's history of Polish Revisionists in the 1930s, acting not as an intellectual or historian but as an involved politician.

Schechtman was a Revisionist and was not afraid of clashing even with Menachem Begin. And in getting to know that aspect was a whole new window on the history of the movement for me.

To engage him in conversation demanded of one not only to be relatively cognizant of the matter at hand so as not to be told off, or it be suggested he might be wasting his time if he was annoyed, but to be able to gain from his immense knowledge, his experience and to appreciate his insights. He challenged those who sought his counsel and thereby increased our ability to think and to arrive at rational decisions. He educated us. He taught us. He made us better Zionists.

Editor's note:

Joseph B. Schechtman (1891–1970) was a lifelong Zionist leader and close colleague of Ze'ev Jabotinsky's. Today he is perhaps most often remembered as Jabotinsky's biographer. The two-volume biography was published with the title "**Rebel and Statesman the Vladimir Jabotinsky Story: The Early Years**" and "**Fighter and Prophet: The Vladimir Jabotinsky Story, the Last Years, Volume Two.**" It should also be noted that he was the chairman of the Association of American Zionists-Revisionists, wrote many other books and various other booklets, and in addition was a member of the executive committee of the World Zionist Organization / WZO until his death.

Ze'ev Jabotinsky:

As one of the kindlers of the spirit within our Hebrew youth for whom I have toiled and shall continue to do so for the rest of my life, I ask...answer...with deeds...the next generation will see in real life whether or not you have answered my challenge; for if not, you must be held accountable.

(From a 1926 speech)

The Western Wall Wars by Zev Golan

When the Western Wall Was A Battleground For Jewish Rights

By Moshe Phillips

The book titled **The Western Wall Wars** (Whirlwind Press) appeared in late 2019 and details the stories about the young men who, from 1930 to 1947, violated British regulations which banned the sounding the shofar at the Western Wall at the conclusion of Yom Kippur services each year.

Moshe Zvi Segal was the first of these young men and he was arrested for sounding the shofar. He blazed a path forward for young Zionist revolutionaries to follow in what was the longest running Zionist underground operation in its history.

Rabbi Moshe Segal (1904-1985) was the quintessential Zionist rebel and was a key figure in the histories of Betar, Brit HaBiryonim, Irgun, LEHI (Stern Group), and Haganah and he was the founder of the Brit HaShmonaim religious youth movement. All of these organizations were part of the movement initiated by Ze'ev Jabotinsky (1880-1940) who was the greatest pre-World War Two Zionist leader after Theodor Herzl. Segal himself was a close comrade of Yitzhak Shamir when the later prime minister was a 1940s commander of LEHI.

Author Zev Golan knew Rabbi Segal personally and interviewed him many times in addition to attending his lectures and translating his writings. Golan is one of only a handful of Americans who made it their business to seek out the aging heroes of the Irgun and LEHI and to get to know them, their stories, and the ideas that animated their deeds while they were still alive.

The Western Wall Wars is subtitled **How the Wailing Wall Became the Heroic Wall** and is a direct result of Golan's relationship with Segal. In 1930, Segal was the first individual to violate the British regulations against the sounding of the shofar at the Western Wall at the conclusion of the Yom Kippur service. Until 1947, a volunteer from the Irgun, Betar, or the Brit HaShmoniam sounded the shofar every year – often after receiving personal training from Segal in both the mitzvah of shofar as well as how to elude the British police. The British authorities went to great lengths to stop the shofar from being sounded. British efforts to stop Jews from performing a mitzvah probably will seem impossible to fathom to today's readers and that is just one of the reasons this book is so important.

The book explains how Segal and the others who followed in his footsteps transformed the Western Wall from a site of wailing to one of national pride. The book reveals the details of the actual operations at the Western Wall and the full stories of the volunteers who were arrested, escaped from prison, and/or deported to prisons in Africa. Some were involved in the 1946 Irgun attack on the King David Hotel and other Irgun or LEHI operations. Many later fought in Israel's wars. **The Western Wall Wars** also covers Arab attempts during the 1920s to drive the Jews from the Western Wall and the Jewish response to the Arab effort. Segal was a leader of the opposition in this area as well.

Ze'ev Jabotinsky: 2020/ Marking the 140th anniversary of his birth 5781

The emerging Jewish Underground in the pre-1940 period was a time when the Jabotinsky movement suffered the slings and arrows of the leftist establishment and bravely soldiered on. The light of history has shown that the stances of the Jabotinsky Zionists were correct. If Jabotinsky had been more successful, perhaps the tragedies of the Holocaust and the loss of life in the 1948 war could have been lessened. Progressive historians have always downplayed -- and often completely removed -- the role of Jabotinsky's movement from their histories of Zionism. This book helps to preserve authentic history and that is a highly praiseworthy thing.

The story of the Zionist underground in the pre-state period told here also helps the reader to understand the ideology that guided these warriors as they fought for Jewish rights and rebelled against the British Empire.

And this is no small thing. The ideology of Jabotinsky, Rabbi Segal and their comrades is just as instructive and relevant now as it was many decades ago--probably more so.

Now that the Jewish People possess a sovereign Jewish State, the concept of just what a Jewish State should rightly be is of vital importance. Avrum Burg, a former Speaker of the Knesset, who was also a former chairman of both the World Zionist Organization and Jewish Agency, said, "To define the state of Israel as a Jewish state is the key to its end," in a June 2007 interview with Israel's Haaretz newspaper. Now, we live in a time when many radical Jewish organizations in the U.S. struggle to redefine Israel as something other than a Jewish State.

For today's Zionists to be truly successful in a way that transcends politics and elections -- in a nation transforming-way -- we must reevaluate the philosophy of the heroes who fought for Israel's freedom and Jewish rights in Jerusalem. These heroes were not only the ideological heirs of Jabotinsky, but the champions who brought Jabotinsky's deepest hopes into reality. ☆

Long Is The Road To Freedom by Ya'acov Meridor

"I Was Arrested at 3AM" for Zion

By Moshe Phillips

Ya'acov Meridor begins his memoir of the nearly three year period of his life he spent in a British prison camp and elsewhere in East Africa with hundreds of other young Zionists with the words "I was arrested at 3AM on the 13th of February, 1945."

His book is titled **Long Is The Road To Freedom** and was first published in a U.S. edition forty years later. Meridor died 25 years ago this summer and his remarkable book is worth recalling as is his amazing life.

But more than the tale and the man we should take the time to consider the overwhelming sacrifices that the women and men who comprised Israel's founding generation took upon themselves and be inspired to do more for the Jewish People.

Meridor was just 19 when he led over two dozen other young members of the Jabotinsky movement against the British blockade that was in place stopping European Jews from entering the Land of Israel. Once in Israel, he joined the Irgun underground army, as did hundreds of other recent immigrants. He rose quickly and became a part of the underground's leadership.

The summer of 1940 left the Irgun reeling. The Nazis launched their North Africa Campaign in June and Ze'ev Jabotinsky died in August.

In May 1941 Meridor agreed to accompany the commander of the Irgun, David Raziel, on a British army conceived commando sabotage mission to Iraq aimed at destroying a high value target, an aviation fuel depot near Baghdad. The operation was during the pro-Nazi Rashid Ali al-Gaylani coup that had led to what is remembered as the Anglo-Iraqi War. Raziel was killed in action. Subsequently, Meridor became the Irgun's commander after he returned home.

When Menachem Begin arrived in the British Mandate in 1943, Meridor handed over his command to him. Meridor, however, did not leave the Irgun and continued as a member of its high command.

In 1945 Meridor was captured by the British, at the time he was second-in-command of the Irgun. Begin depended on Meridor so thoroughly that he relates in his memoir **The Revolt** that when he learned of Meridor's arrest he "thought the blow (to the Irgun) would be fatal."

It is seldom remembered today that the British Mandate authorities sent over 430 Jews to prison camps in East Africa in an attempt to disable the Zionist revolt against them.

Meridor was one of the highest ranking prisoners, and as such, he personally led five escapes from the camps and spent 18 months at large.

His imprisonment and escape make up the bulk of **Long Is The Road To Freedom** and Meridor's exploits rival --and at times surpass-- those dramatized in the World War Two epic 1963 film **The Great Escape**.

On January 14, 1947, Meridor and future Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Shamir escaped prison through a 200 foot long tunnel they had dug by hand. Later, they hid in an oil truck's tank for three days as it was driven over the Djibouti border. Eventually, Meridor made his way to France and it was there that he was granted political asylum.

Meridor arrived in Tel Aviv on a flight with other exiled top Irgun leaders. It was the first passenger flight to land in the new State of Israel.

He was at the center of the tragedy of the Altalena episode when Jewish forces attacked Irgun soldiers without provocation and killed many.

After Israel's independence, Meridor turned to politics and, alongside Begin, founded the original Herut party. He won a seat in six out of the first 10 Knesset elections and eventually served as Israel's Minister of Economics and Inter-Ministry Coordination when Begin was prime minister, and most fittingly, held the post under Shamir as well. He died in 1995 at the age of 81.

Yitshaq Ben-Ami, a leading Irgun member and the father of the founder of J Street, Jeremy Ben Ami, wrote about Meridor in his Irgun memoir **Years of Wrath, Days of Glory**. "Meridor was undoubtedly one of the most courageous men we ever had..." ☆

Letters to Talia by Dov Indig

46 Years After the Yom Kippur War, A Personal Look at Israel's Losses
By Moshe Phillips

As we approach the 46th anniversary of the Yom Kippur War we have chosen a book to launch Herut North America's **Zionist History Book Of The Month™** project with a book that illustrates the revolution that took place in the short time between the 1967 Six-Day War and 1973. The revolution that occurred was one in the way Jews from all over the world viewed Zionism and the State of Israel and their nexus with Jews and Judaism.

In these times, when so many Jews in the U.S. are completely disconnected from Israel and Zionism, there may not be a better book to read than *Letters to Talia* even though its words were penned decades ago. The Hebrew edition of the book was originally published in 2005 and became hugely popular, but somehow the book never achieved the status it so richly deserves outside of Israel.

Letters to Talia is eerily reminiscent of *Self-Portrait of a Hero: From the Letters of Jonathan Netanyahu 1963–1976*. Both reveal the tragic loss that Israel has suffered by sacrificing its best and brightest on the fields of battle for generations: 23,741 soldiers were remembered on *Yom Hazikaron*, the Day of Remembrance earlier this year. Millions of Jews the world over will again mourn for these soldiers this year at Yizkor on Yom Kippur. *Letters to Talia* is a collection of correspondence between a kibbutz born secular Israeli high school girl and an Israeli soldier named Dov Indig, one of Israel's fallen heroes.

Indig fell in combat in the Yom Kippur War on October 7, 1973, 11 Tishrei 5734 fighting the Syrian army on the Golan Heights. Indig was a dedicated yeshiva student and part of the Religious Zionist movement.

In early October 2012, a book release event was held in the Knesset for the English edition and Prime Minister Netanyahu and other notables attended. Hagi Ben-Artzi, Sara Netanyahu's brother, edited the book and figures prominently in numerous letters from both writers.

Many of the letters center around Talia's desire to put the Jewish religion in proper context in her life as a modern, thinking young woman and Dov's answers to her questions and his army experiences.

What makes the book so moving is not just the emotion that each writer attaches to their search for truth, but the commitment they demonstrate to the Jewish People, their love of the Land of Israel, and their faith in the State of Israel.

The topics tackled encompass an entire range of issues from the Israeli surrender of Sinai to women's rights and from emigration to the Diaspora to a critique of Western culture. The reader is left to ponder how these young Israelis could have had more common sense than the politicians who surrendered so much of the lands liberated in 1967 that feature so prominently in the book.

Subjects such as religious coercion and the importance of Israeli settlements are discussed at length. The depiction of their visits to Sinai are vivid and leave the reader with a better sense of what Israel lost when this vast area was surrendered to Egypt at Camp David.

Here are a few random quotes that give a sense of the patriotism of these young Israelis:

Dov: I am happy to hear from you that most of the kids hold that it is forbidden to give up Sinai and it is forbidden to be tempted by the promises of the Arabs, who until today have broken all of them.

Talia: I really envy you that you were on the Golan Heights. I love hiking there more than anywhere else in Israel.

Dov: How fortunate we are that we are privileged to be soldiers in the IDF [Israel Defense Forces], which defends the lives of Jews in Israel and throughout the world.

Talia: We thought that our amazing victory in the Six-Day War would put an end to wars, and that the Arabs would resign themselves to our existence, but it turns out that we made a mistake.

Read the book for yourself, you will be moved by the experience. ☆

The First Tithe by Israel Eldad

The Mind Of A Zionist Revolutionary

By Moshe Phillips

This Hebrew month, Tevet, marks the 24th anniversary of the death of Dr. Israel Eldad, Zionist philosopher, confidant of Menachem Begin, and co-leader with Yitzhak Shamir of a 1940s Zionist paramilitary organization that fought against the British army.

Dr. Eldad's memoirs of Israel's battle for independence titled **The First Tithe** (Ma'aser Rishon) were published in English for the first time in 2008. Eldad originally published this volume of memoirs in Israel in Hebrew in 1950. It went through five editions in Hebrew and was considered must reading for Israelis who wished to understand the years before the British abandoned the Mandatory Palestine. The book is primarily about his experiences as a leader in the Zionist underground LEHI (the Hebrew acronym for the Fighters For the Freedom of Israel, better known as the Stern Gang or Stern Group). The subtitle of the book is "Memoirs and Edifying Discourses of the Hebrew War for Freedom." Eldad's book covers the period between 1938 and 1948, hence the title meaning a tithe of 10 years. The final part of Eldad's **The First Tithe** contains his penetrating analysis of the early history of the Israeli Army. He covers the failure of Israeli Army to capture Jerusalem's Old City in 1948, the decision of the LEHI to disband and integrate into the Israeli Army and the brutal attack on the Irgun arms ship *Altalena* by Palmach forces.

One of the interesting tales Eldad relates is the story of how at the Betar World Conference in Warsaw in 1938 Eldad publicly clashed with the great pre-World War Two Zionist leader Ze'ev Jabotinsky during a debate following Menachem Begin's proposal to call for an immediate armed revolt against the British Mandate. After leaving Warsaw after the city's fall to the Nazis, Eldad and his wife shared an apartment with Begin and his wife in Vilna. In his autobiographical book **White Nights**, Begin recalls playing chess with Eldad when the Soviet NKVD security police came to arrest him. Here we get Eldad's take on the same episode.

In 1944, Eldad was seriously hurt while attempting to escape from British custody in Jerusalem. Eldad was finally freed after a dramatic prison break engineered by the LEHI. He was still wearing a cast on his back from the injuries he sustained during his first escape attempt. This story may be as close as **The First Tithe** comes to what the reader may expect to find in an underground army leader's memoir.

A far more important passage in the book is Eldad's recollections of celebrating Passover seder in a British prison camp for two consecutive years. The emotions the prisoners felt as they yearned both for their personal freedom to be with their families and their longing

to be free in a strong and independent Jewish State are brought to life. The story of the seders are interwoven with his commentary on the Haggadah and how he related it to Zionist independence in front of the prisoners and the British as he led the seders.

Zev Golan's translation brings Eldad's distinctive voice to English successfully. No easy task. The new English edition has been published by the Tel Aviv based Jabotinsky Institute. This translation also includes a short biographical sketch of Eldad by the Golan. Golan knew Eldad personally and interviewed him many times, the connection shows throughout the volume.

Geula Cohen, the veteran Israeli politician and journalist who passed away last month, had a longtime association with Dr. Eldad. The two worked together on her underground radio station broadcasts for the LEHI. Eldad wrote much of broadcaster Cohen's radio scripts and later they collaborated on Eldad's publication called *Sullam*, created after Israel's independence.

In Cohen's book **Woman Of Violence** (later known as **The Voice Of Valor**) she wrote: "it was Eldad who, in article, essay, and poem, chiseled on walls of stone the gospel of war. And these stones pierced hearts, coursed through veins, and emboldened men to fight."

Cohen was right. Eldad was one of a kind and **The First Tithe** reflects his uniqueness and passion for Zionism. ✧

When They Come for Us, We'll Be Gone:
The Epic Struggle to Save Soviet Jewry
By Gal Beckerman

"When They Come for Us, We'll Be Gone" 10 Years Later
By Moshe Phillips

As we approach Passover we are reminded of the more recent "Let My People Go" in Jewish history -- that of the rallying cry of the Zionist activists who defeated the Soviet superpower in the Twentieth Century. Gal Beckerman's 2010 history of the battle waged in both the former USSR and in the US to rescue Russian Jews is titled "When They Come From Us, We'll Be Gone; the Epic Struggle To Save Soviet Jewry" and it received much attention when released 10 years ago and still stands today as the most successful book to cover the topic. This is a time of worldwide resurgent violent anti-Semitism and this book's portrayal of how grassroots Jewish activists and community based organizers joined together to change the landscape of Jewish history is the exact type of inspiration that is needed right now. All who care about the Jewish future would benefit from re-examining Beckerman's study.

Beckerman is a journalist and not a historian and in his book he departs from the sanitized, establishment view of the fight for freedom and sheds light on many corners of the Soviet Jewry movement that others would have purposely neglected.

Early in his narrative Beckerman singles out the groundbreaking work of the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry / SSSJ and Yaakov Birnbaum as the catalysts for the American side of the campaign. The lesson that Jewish students with little money and no political power can initiate change by working in a disciplined and smart way is a highly instructive one.

A careful reading of the book leaves one with the fact that activists inspired by the great pre-World War Two Zionist leader Ze'ev Jabotinsky, on both sides of the Iron Curtain. More than that, these activists were very often at the forefront of the Soviet Jewry movement in the formative years of the struggle. Unfortunately, Beckerman draws no conclusions from this and he seems mostly oblivious to the fact that adherents of Jabotinsky collectively made a more substantial contribution to the campaign than any other ideological grouping.

The book opens with a look at Yosef Mendelevitch and his fellow Riga based activists. In this section, Beckerman illustrates that it was the older Jabotinsky activists that in the 1960s inculcated in the younger Jews, who were Mendelevitch's age, a new outlook: "by showing a young person a map of Israel, teaching him a few Hebrew songs, and exposing him to Jabotinsky's essays, they could alter his sense of himself."

On Mendelevitch himself Beckerman writes that "The first piece of illegal writing Mendelevitch read, typed and loosely bound with a needle and thread, was a collection of Jabotinsky's writings."

In the depiction of the rise of SSSJ Beckerman notes the central role adherents of Jabotinsky played in Birnbaum's efforts.

This Jabotinsky connection repeats itself in America again and again. Later, when the 1965 creation of the first successful adult activist group, the Cleveland Council on Soviet Anti-Semitism is covered, Beckerman relates that "the group found inspiration in...Jabotinsky" but he fails to make any connection to the Riga activists who were also inspired by Jabotinsky four chapters earlier.

Later, when the Jewish Defense League's part in the story is covered, Beckerman notes that veterans of the Jabotinsky movement made up many of its early leaders and activists. However, again, he does not point out that the decisive commonality in all of these isolated groups and efforts was Jabotinsky.

Who was Jabotinsky? Ze'ev Jabotinsky (1880-1940), is a figure who is too often forgotten today. He was a Zionist leader, orator and writer and he founded the Jewish Legion during World War I, as well as the Haganah self-defense units in Jerusalem in 1920. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's father, Benzion, served as Jabotinsky's personal secretary just after the outbreak of World War II.

What were Jabotinsky's vital contributions? His words, deeds, and ideas animated a generation of young Jews to resist the Nazis, rescue fellow Jews from Hitler's forces, and fight for the freedom of Israel as soldiers in the Irgun and the Stern Group/LEHI. Later, the movement for freedom for Soviet Jewry both in the United States and inside the Soviet Union itself was led by Jabotinsky Zionists and this is all interrelated.

Beckerman provides the evidence of the key role Jabotinsky's devotees played in freeing Soviet Jews but does not present the much needed closing argument. And it was needed. The book is uniquely inspiring to would-be young Zionist activists --it's virtually a handbook for them-- but the soul in the story is missing. And that is Jabotinsky's exclusive brand that is comprised of a blend of four ingredients: Jewish pride, street activism, devotion to duty, and unapologetic Zionism. ✧

Free Jerusalem:

Heroes, Heroines and Rogues Who Created the State of Israel

By Zev Golan

What Did The Fighters For Israel's Independence Want?

By Moshe Phillips

With the election of Menachem Begin as Israel's Prime Minister in 1977 and the subsequent premiership of Yitzhak Shamir, US Jews were exposed to the stories of Zionism's militant undergrounds on an entirely new level. However, if one wanted to read more about these organizations and their deeds, good literature on the subject was hard to find. More often than not, the only material available was limited to poorly translated memoirs.

Zev Golan, a foremost expert on Israel's pre-state underground Jewish militias, changed this situation with his book, **Free Jerusalem**, published in 2003 by Devora and because of this it is an easy choice for Herut North America's second "Zionist History Book Of The Month." **Free Jerusalem** is the history of the early days of the Irgun (or Etzel), the LEHI (or Stern Group), the Haganah and lesser known groups such as Abba Achimier's Brit HaBirionim and Rabbi Moshe Zvi Segal's Brit HaShmonaim. **Free Jerusalem: Heroes, Heroines and Rogues Who Created the State of Israel** was a valuable addition to the tragically small number of English language books available at the time on the history and ideas of these brave men who fought to create a modern Jewish State and remains a must read for those who want to understand the revolutionaries who fought to create the modern Jewish State.

Golan chose the focus of his work carefully, rather than write about the more famous episodes in the history of the Jewish undergrounds, he detailed the early days of the struggle against the British Mandatory authorities and the Arab rioters. Included are the strong roles of Betar and Abba Achimier's Brit HaBirionim in the launch of the first acts of opposition to British policies.

Although born in the US, Golan demonstrates complete mastery over his subject matter. Early in his professional career, Golan was the assistant curator at the Hall of Heroism Museum, the former Jerusalem Central Prison where many Irgunists and LEHI fighters were imprisoned by the British during their revolt. Later, Golan spent years interviewing the soldiers of the Irgun and LEHI and translating their memoirs and writings.

Of special interest in **Free Jerusalem** is the inclusion of an excerpt of Golan's translation of the memoirs of Dr. Israel Eldad, **The First Tithe**. Eldad, who died in 1996, was the chief propagandist and ideologist of the LEHI and a figure that remains largely unknown to American Jews. In 2012, the Jabotinsky Institute published Golan's full translation of **The First Tithe**.

In addition to Israel Eldad and Achimier, Golan also introduces his readers to the poet Uri Zvi Greenberg. Greenberg had a profound influence on the commanders and fighters of the Irgun and LEHI and was later a winner of the Israel Prize.

Golan's style is for the most part casual and the stories he tells are compelling. Most of these tales were never before available to English speaking audiences. By and large, Golan glosses over the more well-known events in the history of the Irgun and the LEHI. Events such as the Acre prison jail break, the King David Hotel bombing and the assassinations of Lord Moyne and Count Folke Bernadotte have been written about before and are not central to Golan's narrative. Instead, **Free Jerusalem** gives the background of the organizations and the soldiers who formed the leadership and rank and file of the groups.

Golan examines the motivations and ideas of the fighters as well as the circumstances that led to the formation of their organizations from a fresh perspective. Readers are exposed to the underlying reasons for fighting as understood by the men themselves. At times, though, Golan seems more comfortable depicting the individual exploits of his subjects and exploring their character than engaging in lengthy explanations of the Irgun and LEHI's revolutionary Zionist ideologies.

Free Jerusalem begins with an account of the attempts by Ze'ev Jabotinsky, Joseph Trumpeldor and others to defend Jewish lives and property during the anti-Jewish Arab riots of the 1920s. The stories of the origins of the Haganah, Irgun and LEHI are told in an original and exciting manner. As Golan has said "A teacher can be for or against what happened, but to make history boring - that is unforgivable." At times Golan's penchant for connecting the Land of Israel in the 1920s and 1930s to America's Wild West seems strained. Golan's comparisons of Trumpeldor to Davy Crockett and Tel Chai to the Alamo and his use of imagery taken from Westerns are all awkward and can be distracting.

Golan chooses to end his narrative with the period surrounding the assassination of Avraham "Yair" Stern by the British mandatory police in 1942. Many other written accounts of the Zionist underground revolt against the British begin with Stern's murder. Golan's perspective is unique and aids in making **Free Jerusalem** interesting and original. The many illustrations, which include photographs, reproductions of wanted posters and newspaper articles, enhance the book. There are many important improvements over the first edition of the book (published in 1998 by Sdan Press with the subtitle "**The true story of the Jewish Zealots who fought the British Empire and Arab gangs in the wild frontier days of Israel**"), which was not distributed in the United States when it was published.

Free Jerusalem should be read eagerly by anyone with an interest in the Jabotinsky movement, the history of the Irgun and LEHI or the history of the Yishuv (pre-state Israel). More importantly, this book is a must for anyone seeking a better understanding of the Israeli-Arab conflict. The subjects of Golan's book 80 and 100 years ago faced the same issues facing Jews in Israel today. In the face of Islamic Arab terrorism, the choice the soldiers of the Irgun and LEHI was to fight and to defend Jewish lives, property and interests by any means necessary. Whatever your point of view, the lessons that can be learned from **Free Jerusalem** are valuable and especially applicable to today's Middle East. ☆

Special Book Excerpt from

'Jews Make the Best Demons: "Palestine" and the Jewish Question'

By Eric Rozenman

Introduction What's Old is New Again

Jews and non-Jews who wish them well believe the Holocaust ended in 1945. But if the Holocaust began with ideas and words, only ending in round-ups and gas chambers, then more to the point it was interrupted until it could be resumed with ideas and words.

Israelis and non-Israelis who support the Jewish state think Israel emerged victorious from several major Arab-Israeli wars. Therefore, they seek to “correct” rather than quash anti-Zionist, anti-Jewish prejudices in Diaspora and open the way to peaceful Arab-Israeli coexistence in the Middle East.

But more accurately, Israel won large, even existential battles. Yet the war itself, now in its tenth decade, continues. Enemies still undefeated, still confirmed or reconfirmed in anti-Israel, antisemitic mythology, continue to fight. By non-military as well as armed means they conduct a relentless war of attrition aimed at eventual destruction.

If all this were not so, Israel would not be the only one of the world's approximately 200 countries whose capital city hosts no foreign embassies; which periodically has issued gas masks to all its citizens (small tent-like protectors for infants); given endless incitement and terrorism against it feels compelled to wall itself in, ghetto-like, from neighbors; and is openly and repeatedly threatened with destruction by an Iran intent on nuclear weapons and still bolstered by international trade.

Hatred of Israel, of the Jewish state, reanimates hatred of the Jewish people. In fact, the old hatred of the Jewish people compels much of the newer hostility to the Israeli state. In that sense, anti-Zionism is antisemitism and can hardly be otherwise.

“The Palestinian narrative,” historical revisionism leading to denial of the Jewish people's past, incites hatred of Israel. In that way, it functions as the new blood libel. To the significant extent it complements Sunni Islamic imperialism, it also denies the Jewish present and, by implication, future. This imperialism rejects Judaism (not to mention Christianity) as a religion on equal footing with Islam.

The original blood libel—the fantastic charge that Jews murdered non-Jews and used their blood for religious purposes—began among ancient Greeks, was well-established in medieval Christianity, current in czarist Russia and revived by Nazi Germany. Today it circulates widely in Arab-Islamic lands. It does so at times independently, but often as part of the lie of Palestine.

Ahad Ha'am (Asher Ginsburg—his Hebrew pen-name means “One of the People”), was a late 19th century cultural Zionist. He termed the blood libel accusation “the solitary case in which the general acceptance of an idea about ourselves does not make us doubt whether all the world can be wrong, and we [the Jews] are right, because it is based on an absolute lie, and is not even supported by any

false inference from particular to universal.” Actually, there have been more than a few cases in which the Jews, or the Jewish state, have been right and “all the world wrong.” These include but are hardly exhausted by claims Jews control international finance, run the world’s communications media, concocted the HIV- AIDS virus to attack their enemies, that Israel welcomed the 1967 Six-Day War as an opportunity to conquer Arab land, and that Zionism is racism.

Today, the primary case in which the Jews are right and much of the world wrong is the Palestine lie. It falsely charges that the Jews, as Zionists, ethnically cleansed an indigenous people from the land of Palestine, there established an imperialist, racist regime and that the Jewish state—Israel—undermines Middle Eastern and even world-wide stability. In fact, the Palestine lie has a) camouflaged antisemitism as anti-Zionism and b) promoted as justified a resurgence of antisemitism. In this way it functions as the direct descendant of the original blood libel. By no coincidence it repeatedly invokes the original to reanimate it if not return it to respectability. Calls for Jewish destruction on the streets of Europe and colleges campuses in North America have followed.

For those acquainted with the history of the blood libel and familiar with the inversions and fabrications of “the Palestinian narrative,” reexamining either topic may seem tedious. The falsifications are similar. But reexamining both the libel and the narrative have become inescapable. In increasingly “post-modern” Western culture, facts are decreasingly determinative. Which is to say, post-modern becomes pre-modern, empirical rationality yielding once more to romantic superstition.

For many, but perhaps now a minority, the Hebrew Bible’s civilizing ethical monotheism remains a social-cultural cornerstone. In the West’s none-too-distant past a majority including, for example, John Adams and Winston Churchill, took the Bible’s civilizational centrality for granted. Members of Britain’s Peel Commission went to Mandatory Palestine to investigate the Palestinian Arabs’ anti-British, anti-Jewish rebellion in 1936—a rebellion armed and funded by Nazi Germany and fascist Italy. Commissioners asked Zionist leader and later Israel’s first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, by what right the Jews claimed the Holy Land. The secular but Jewishly knowledgeable Ben-Gurion pointed to a copy of Scriptures and reminded them, “the Bible is our mandate.” Sacrificing a Jewish state—and sacrifice it would be, in the original sense of ritual offering—the West would sacrifice its ethical anchor.

However, a large and growing number imagines post-modern, secular materialism can survive untethered from traditional values short-handed as “Judeo-Christian ethics.” Whereas the blood libel once made Jews agents of Satan, the Palestine lie now casts them as agents of racism, equivalent to the anti-Christ in the secular fundamentalist catechism. “Racist!” like “heretic!” before it, as some have noted, is the ultimate malediction and authorizes the ultimate sanction.

So the West once again finds itself at a perversely familiar junction. The Jews, the Zionists, the Israelis are right, and much of the world is wrong. But such elevated outlier status for the Jews is intolerable. Therefore, the position of their enemies can be tolerated, even embraced. André Gide—who won the Nobel Prize for Literature when it still mattered—observed, “Everything that needs to be said has already been said. But since no one was listening, everything must be said again.” So it is about the Jews, Israel and their enemies.

The Holocaust did not begin with concentration camps and gas chambers. Steven Blaney, public safety and emergency preparedness minister in the cabinet of staunchly pro-Israel Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper, felt compelled in 2015 to repeat a truism: “[The] Holocaust did not begin in the gas chambers, it began with words.”

Those words led from slander to marginalization, from marginalization to isolation, and from isolation and dehumanization to the death camps. Blaney’s observation, not new, was again necessary. Obfuscation aside—and it is limitless on the subject of the Jews and their state, whether intentional or unintentional, informed or ignorant—such words again enter common conversation, especially via the Internet. ...

Chapter Two: Denial, Revisionism and Narrative

... In 2007, a 22-year-old man who called [Elie] Wiesel’s account of the Holocaust fictitious pulled him out of a hotel elevator in San Francisco and attacked him.”

The attacker’s name was Eric Hunt, who, when convicted on false imprisonment-felony hate crime charges one year later, was described as a “troubled” New Jersey man. He had yanked Wiesel out of the elevator in an attempt to “persuade” him “to renounce the Holocaust.” But metaphysically, his name could have been Haj Amin el-Husseini, or that of el-Husseini’s relative and ideological heir Yasser Arafat, or Arafat’s successor as leader of the Palestine Liberation Organization, Mahmoud Abbas. Not to mention many other “troubled” people, including the countless followers of al-Husseini, Arafat and Abbas, their apologists, enthusiasts or competitors—Arab, Muslim, European, North American, Christian, secular or even Jewish. Any passionate subscriber to the Palestinian narrative would do.

“Narrative” is the post-modern literary, historical or psychological term of art for a tightly held, highly personalized substitution and often partial if not complete falsification of factual history. Can history be factual? Isn’t it an artificial construct by those with “hegemonic” power in any given society?

Is medicine fact-based, or is what one physician’s biopsy reveals to be a malignant tumor just another doctor’s wart? Are metallurgy and alchemy branches of the same discipline, or does the former rest on science, the latter on superstition? On Dec. 7, 1941 did Japan bomb Pearl Harbor, or was it the other way around, with the United States launching a surprise attack on Tokyo?

If reality hangs, Rashomon-like, on one’s personal, subjective perspective, on a gaggle of conspiracy theorists’ websites, then even though one person’s blizzard is never another’s heat wave, non-existent tunnels under a real Washington, D.C. pizzeria could be the site of a fictitious child sex abuse ring connected to Hillary Clinton—as asserted by the Internet-deluded in the fall of 2016. If those pizzeria tunnels were real, or at least virtually real, then one person’s terrorist could be another’s “freedom fighter”—as apologists for Palestinian terror have asserted for decades. This gossamer foundation of moral relativism constitutes an imagined shield for those who believe lofty sentiments immunize them against at least passive complicity in terrorist murder. By such pretexts they excuse, if not justify, the slaughter of Israelis and, if necessary, their Jewish and non-Jewish backers. They cover their excuse with the academic gloss of post-modernism,

which in this case amounts to not only Holocaust revisionism and Zionist demonization but also Jewish obliteration. Such obliteration is epitomized, as noted, by the United Nations Educational, Social and Cultural Organization's repeated denials in 2016 and 2017 of Jerusalem's Jewish identity. First the word, then the deed....

Praise for *Jews Make the Best Demons: "Palestine" and the Jewish Question*

"Rozenman's cry from the heart establishes the clear connection between the old antisemitism and the new anti-Zionism. Only the blind or the wicked can deny his truth, proven by exemplary research; everyone else will learn from him." – Daniel Pipes, founder of Middle East Forum and *Middle East Quarterly*.

"Copiously researched and elegantly written, this book offers an uncommonly insightful analysis into the alarming increase in antisemitism and its offshoot, anti-Zionism, throughout the world ... This is a brilliant book that should be required reading for anyone concerned about the oldest prejudice threatening our civilization once again." – Juliana Geran Pilon, Senior Fellow, Alexander Hamilton Institute for the Study of Western Civilization, author of *The Art of Peace: Engaging a Complex World*

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Jews Make the Best Demons: "Palestine" and the Jewish Question, the most revealing work on anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism in recent years, is available at www.barnesandnoble.com and www.amazon.com



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