

The Revisionist Zionism Origins of Classical Liberalism in Israel

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The comprehensive and insightful examination of Israel presented by Walter Block and Alan Futerman in their work, *The Classical Liberal Case for Israel*, serves as a compelling response to the misguided attempts to challenge the country's right to exist in the Jewish homeland. This achievement stands out due to its meticulousness and scholarly approach. The authors' argumentation is sound, exhibiting a profound level of consideration, extensive research, and support from a multitude of historical and contemporary sources. Discerning readers will undoubtedly find great value in the breadth, depth, and cogency of their analysis.

Nonetheless, I find that there is a captivating historical aspect that warrants additional clarification. The authors rely on a set of classical liberal convictions and principles, which have a comparable ideological trend within Zionism, namely Revisionist Zionism. The founder and leader of Revisionist Zionism was Ze'ev Jabotinsky, as the authors are well aware:

Among the different perspectives of Zionism, we find that of Vladimir Ze'ev Jabotinsky and the movement he founded, the Zionist Revisionist, as the best and most compatible with our classical liberal and libertarian approach. Jabotinsky was a classical liberal and thus a champion of individual liberty. In fact, he was an enemy of both fascism and communism (Block and Futerman 2021, pp. 43-4).

To demonstrate this, the authors provide a few quotations directly from Jabotinsky himself and from a few secondary sources. I believe this subject merits a more elaborate discussion, as it not only serves to counter prevailing and often misleading portrayals of Jabotinsky, but also highlights historically and intellectually significant aspects of his ideology. These facets, which have only gained wider recognition in more recent times, have exerted a substantial influence on Israel that often goes under-appreciated if not unacknowledged.

In what follows I will address three key matters. Firstly, I will counter the accusations levied against Jabotinsky, attempting to portray him as a Fascist. If proven true, such allegations would undermine any claim of associating him with classical liberalism. Secondly, I will underscore various elements of his political, social, and economic ideology. Lastly, I will provide a concise and tentative suggestion as to how Jabotinsky's ideas influenced the development of the State of Israel, founded eight years following his death on August 3, 1940. It is time to re-evaluate and recognize

Jabotinsky's historical pivotal role in transitioning Israel from a socialist state to a more extensively classical-liberal one.

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During the formative years of his political career, Jabotinsky faced vehement attacks from his political adversaries, who sought to label him as a fascist. One notable figure among them was David Ben-Gurion, the notable socialist founder of Israel, who famously referred to Jabotinsky as "Vladimir Hitler." Throughout the 1930s, Ben-Gurion did not shy away from drawing comparisons between Revisionist Zionism and the Nazi party. The accusation of fascism, whether expressed directly or by insinuation, has persisted over time, finding resonance not only among political figures aligned with the socialist and progressive left but also among various scholars, even to this day.¹

Should this accusation hold true, it would undoubtedly present a significant challenge to characterize Jabotinsky as a classical liberal.² Consequently, it becomes imperative to examine the evidence and arguments put forth in support of this claim. The accusation is predicated on four main assertions: (1) Jabotinsky nurtured a "cult of leadership" around him, (2) allegations of "racism," (3) "guilt by association" with fascist leaders, and (4) the charge of "militarism."³ Let us evaluate each of these assertions.

Jabotinsky undeniably possessed exceptional leadership qualities and played a pivotal role in the establishment of various institutions and political movements. From the early stages of his involvement in the Zionist movement, he emerged as a prominent figure. Between 1914 and 1915 he, alongside Josef Trumpeldor, established the Zion Mule Corps, a Jewish logistical unit within the British army that participated in the ill-fated Gallipoli campaign. In 1917 and 1918 Jabotinsky defied the agenda of the Zionist leadership by creating the 38th Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers, a combat unit that actively served in the British campaign in Israel, marking the first Jewish fighting force in centuries. In 1923 he led the Betar movement, a new Zionist youth organization named in honor of Trumpeldor (who died defending Tel-Hai, a northern Zionist village, in 1920). Subsequently, in 1925, Jabotinsky founded the Revisionist Zionist party, marking a significant milestone in his political career. In 1931 he established the National Workers Association in Israel. In 1935 he also founded the New Zionist Congress, in defiance of the World Zionist Organization. Notably, Jabotinsky's leadership also extended beyond political and social spheres. In 1933 he began leading the "Irgun," a paramilitary offshoot of the socialist Hagana, which evolved into the National Military Organization (commonly referred to in Hebrew as "Etzel"). Through these diverse initiatives and organizations, Jabotinsky's leadership shaped the landscape of the Zionist movement and left a lasting impact on the trajectory of Israel's development.

Undoubtedly, then, Jabotinsky was a man of considerable achievements and many followers. Several of the organizations he founded have endured, with respective adjustments and modifications, to this very day. But what was Jabotinsky's leadership role and style? Did he foster a "cult of leadership," a significant element of the fascist agenda known as the "Führerprinzip"?

Even a cursory understanding of Jabotinsky's character and legacy renders this question nearly absurd. Even some of those who accused him of fascism acknowledge that he did not actively seek the adulation he received, although it was undoubtedly plentiful (Schechtman 1961, p. 178). Despite being a naturally charismatic leader, Jabotinsky neither aspired to be in such a position nor actively cultivated personal admiration for himself.⁴ His overall perspective on political leadership is well elucidated in an essay he wrote in 1934 on Theodor Herzl:

Things were different when I was young, and I am of the opinion that they were much better than they are now. It was our belief that nations or churches or movements consist of people who are all equal, each one a prince or a king. When elections come it is not individuals who are chosen but programmes. Those who are elected are only the instruments to carry out the programme. We, the mass of the people, listen to them and obey them not because they are leaders, but because we have

elected them to do what we want done... you do not obey their will, but your own will, expressed in the election... Very often, too, it was a fiction, as all human doctrines are, but I prefer it to what we have now. There is more pride and more glory in it, though it bears the discredited name "democracy"... Real leaders are born rarely, and often they are recognized by the fact that they have no desire—no claim to lead.)Jabotinsky 1934a, pp. 216-217.⁵

Let us now delve into the alleged racism attributed to Jabotinsky. It should be recognized that the understanding and discourse surrounding race in the 1920s and 1930s differed significantly from contemporary conceptual frameworks. Therefore, it is crucial to approach Jabotinsky's discussions on race within the contextual understanding of his period in order to ascertain whether his utilization of race carries any substantial prejudices or discriminatory intentions. Undertaking such a comprehensive examination of the topic would extend beyond the confines of this paper. Nonetheless, we can outline a few pertinent points for consideration.

Admittedly, Jabotinsky considered Jews as a nation with a racial and biological component. However, it is important to note that he did not ascribe deterministic qualities or entertain notions of racial superiority within this idea. Instead, he employed the prevailing language of race that was common in his time, often using the term to refer to racial differences where we would now prefer to emphasize cultural distinctions.

The central aspect of Jabotinsky's conception of race resided in his conviction regarding the correlation between geography and race. Jabotinsky contended that the land of Israel, which has been inhabited by the Jewish nation for centuries, constituted their only natural homeland. He believed that since the geography of this land played a crucial role in shaping the biological characteristics of the Jewish people, only in this specific geographical context they would feel at ease. However, he stated very clearly that "there are no superior and inferior races" (Jabotinsky 1911a, p. 147).

While his geographical theory may appear nonsensical from a contemporary standpoint, it is important to highlight that Jabotinsky's main utilization of race was innocent when compared to the racial theories prevalent during his time. The entire discussion was not much more than a minor point in his Zionist agenda. Consequently, it can and should be regarded as an insignificant and innocuous aspect of his overall views.⁶

Let us turn to the "guilt by association" accusation. While it is true that Jabotinsky had connections with individuals holding dubious ideologies, such as fascists, extreme nationalists, and antisemites, isolating and decontextualizing these connections is a form of cherry-picking. To assess someone's beliefs and ideological inclination, we must examine these associations' context, content and intention. Simply highlighting them without considering the broader picture is an oversimplification that often indicates propagandistic motives.

Jabotinsky, as a political leader with a specific Zionist agenda, actively sought to engage individuals from diverse ideological orientations in order to promote his cause. He tirelessly advocated for Zionism in Eastern Europe, Western Europe, England, the United States, and any other relevant location, irrespective of the leader or political party involved. Consequently, it is true that Jabotinsky signed an agreement with the Ukrainian nationalist and antisemite Symon Petliura in 1921 and corresponded with Benito Mussolini, the Italian "Duce," in 1922 and later. However, it is equally true that he met, for example, Lloyd George in 1921 and Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1940. Thus, using the flawed logic of guilt by association, one could depict Jabotinsky as endorsing any one of a wide range of major and conflicting political ideologies.

Moreover, this approach overlooks Jabotinsky's motive in those interactions. He did not "associate" with these leaders. His primary objective was to garner support for the Zionist movement by engaging with individuals in positions of power, regardless of their political identification. His interactions with various ideological figures were pragmatic efforts to advance the Zionist cause and to save Jewish lives, and not an endorsement of any ideology. For example, the agreement with Petliura was about establishing a local Jewish defense body in Ukraine, since there were dangers of additional pogroms following the Ukrainian war of independence. Jabotinsky, as was his habit, was quite forward and clear about the issue:

The party struggle over the rule of Russia is none of our concern; we do not intend to ally with Ivan or Pyoter. In this fight between wolf “A” and wolf “B,” we are only interested in one thing: not letting the Jewish lamb be slaughtered in this violent arena where it dwells. Based on this cold calculation, I made a deal to form a Jewish force composed of Jews and led by a Jew (Jabotinsky 1925, pp. 52-53).

In summation, Jabotinsky maintained a pragmatic approach towards all political parties and leaders, prioritizing the protection of Jewish lives and Zionist interests above ideological disagreements or political affiliations. For this purpose he was willing to engage and sign agreements with liberals, fascists, communists, and antisemites alike. It is worth noting that other Zionist leaders, including Herzl and Jabotinsky’s contemporary opponent David Ben-Gurion, exhibited similar behavior of diverse contacts while pursuing similar goals.⁷

We now come to the final accusation, that of “militarism.” It is undeniable that Jabotinsky, early on, held a firm belief that the land of Israel could, regrettably, only be obtained through violent conflict with the Arabs, due to their hostility towards Zionism. He articulated his thoughts on this matter in a number of famous articles, most notably in “The Iron Wall” from 1923, which has become a cornerstone of Israeli statesmanship. However, similar ideas can be found in various other lesser-known essays, which not only underscore Jabotinsky’s moral claims for the Zionist cause, but also highlight his pragmatic and realistic analysis of the situation on the ground. As an example, in 1930 he penned the following passage in English under the heading of “Bi-national Palestine”:

I confess that there are moments when I, too, dream dreams of an Arabo-Jewish agreement on Palestine. Ture, these are moments of exceptional tiredness... Then I dream about a great pan-Arab gathering entertaining representatives of a long belt of lands stretching from Agadir to Bassora; and the Jewish delegate, facing that gathering, openly and honestly claims the whole of Palestine, in both sides of the Jordan, for his own people’s home and state, to settle and govern. In my dream, this is what he says: “This land is less than one hundredth of the immensity of space which god has given you, and my people are homeless; and in my heart I have always called this land mine. I must have it or die; I am ready to fight over it, but perhaps fighting is not necessary;— perhaps, O sons of father Ibrahim, Ishmael will uphold the claim of Israel, not because compelled to nor because deceived, but simply because it is right that god’s earth should be re-distributed so that a homeless nation may re-occupy its ancient kingdom?” And the great gathering’s answer in my dream is in the affirmative.

I very much doubt whether this dream of mine has any chance of ever coming true. I am afraid we shall get Palestine only by fighting. But at least it is a clean and honest dream, as honest and clean as the other and more likely expedient—fighting.⁸

This approach epitomizes Jabotinsky’s thoughts on security and international relations. He embraced a deeply pragmatic approach that underscored the indispensability of statehood and national power for achieving Zionist goals, particularly in the face of competing Arab interests in the region. This perspective was the cornerstone of his “Iron Wall”: “As long as the Arabs feel that there is the least hope of getting rid of us, they will refuse to give up this hope... only when there is no longer any hope of getting rid of us... will they drop their extremist leaders whose watchword is ‘Never!’” (Jabotinsky 1923a, 259-260).⁹

Furthermore, Jabotinsky consistently underscored that the morality of the inevitable conflict is contingent upon the morality of the Zionist cause itself. In his view, since the Zionist goal is morally justified, any ensuing war, however regrettable, would possess both moral and political legitimacy. And what is more important for our purpose, due to the perceived necessity of such a conflict, Jabotinsky argued that it is imperative for Zionists to adequately prepare for it in order to secure victory.

These consistent claims by Jabotinsky, emphasizing that the establishment of a Jewish army has to be an integral part of Zionist goals, as well as his actions in fulfilling that mission, form the foundation of the accusation against him as a “militarist.” However, despite facing initial cynicism and rejection, it is noteworthy that his perspective proved to be correct. Max Nordau, for instance, wrote to Nahum Sokolow, on Jabotinsky’s first attempt to form a Jewish military force in 1914: “I definitely reject his plan, which is both fanciful and undesired.” Nevertheless, within a few years, Jabotinsky’s viewpoint became the prevailing approach among most Zionists, including his staunch rival, the socialist Ben-Gurion. This shift in opinion demonstrates the acknowledgment of the necessity and validity of Jabotinsky’s stance on the importance of military preparedness for Zionist objectives. It is not a sign of fascism, but of realism.

Indeed, one can find comparable statements from Ben-Gurion, albeit a decade or more later. Take, for example, Jabotinsky’s reaction to being portrayed as a militarist:

War is evil... War is ugly, but army life “in itself” contains many good aspects... first of all the comradery of army life, their Spartan simplicity and equality between rich and poor; secondly the hygienic factor of fresh air and physical workout, and third, military discipline (Jabotinsky 1929, p. 42).

And now compare that to Ben-Gurion:

There is an organization in our country, that still gains the respect of the entire nation—it is the army, which can be a moral educator for the people... The army serves even now as a unifying force. In the army there are no ethnic, class, or party distinctions; in the army everyone are equal, everyone wear the same uniform (Ben-Gurion 1959, pp. 343-344).

A similar convergence of views can be observed on deeper issues, particularly regarding the Zionist requirement for a Jewish fighting force. For instance, in the early 1920s, Jabotinsky corresponded with Richard Lichtheim, a German Zionist, expressing his perspective on this matter:

I would like to see military training become as common among Jews as lighting Sabbath candles once was. It’s needed because the danger zone is rapidly spreading over the globe... Even our vegetarian friends must realize by now that we are faced with only two possibilities: either to forget about Palestine—or to fight a war for it (Halkin 2014, pp. 137-138).¹⁰

And here is Ben-Gurion, responding in early January 1948 to a statement made in a workers’ conference that “the wisdom of Israel is the wisdom of redemption”:

The wisdom of Israel is now the wisdom of war, and nothing else. That and that alone. Without this wisdom even the words “state” and “redemption” are emptied of meaning... we are facing a supreme challenge unprepared, and we must pass it, otherwise it will be the last test, after which there will be nothing but doom. And because of that it is hard for me now to understand any other language but that of war. I hear every other language as a foreign tongue... we will focus the essence of our life, all our senses and organs, in one unified will: the will to win ... if we fail this test, all talks about “redemption” and “state” and “Tikun Olam” and the future and liberty and all the rest of the good and beautiful things—now all of these are **but words, words, words**. The real test, the only test is winning the war. This is the test of our will (Ben-Gurion 1948, pp. 19-20).

Numerous examples demonstrating such similarities abound, underscoring the fact that Jabotinsky’s call for Jews to prepare themselves for self-defense, whether for their local protection in the diaspora or to prevail in an inevitable existential war against the Arabs in the land of Israel, became the common viewpoint

embraced by nearly all Zionists. This highlights that the issue at hand is not one of militarism by any stretch of the imagination, but rather a matter of survival in a harsh reality. The primary distinction between Jabotinsky and socialist Zionists lies in their timing. Jabotinsky, utilizing his acute foresight and rational assessment of international affairs, regional dynamics, national interests and human nature, acknowledged the imminent threats Jews faced. In contrast, many other Zionists initially refused to acknowledge the violent perils confronting them.¹¹

Truth be told, Jabotinsky foresaw the need to form a military body because he was equipped not only with a sharp mind, but also with a strong sense of realism, predicated on a rather grim view of human nature.¹² He was living in a violence ridden era, in which brutal power and marching armies were lurking behind national interests, waiting to appear on the world scene. This was true in Europe, as it was true in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. He also saw that the Arab world would refuse to concede any land to the Jews, and reject, including by force, any political Jewish entity in the land of Israel.

By the late 1930s, the necessity of establishing a Jewish army was recognized by almost all Zionists, regardless of their ideological orientation, as a matter of common sense. Now, to argue that liberalism and realism are contradictory would be indefensible. Liberals are not naïve individuals who advocate for liberty only to surrender their hard-earned achievements and freedoms to violent aggressors. What is truly remarkable about Jabotinsky is not his conclusion that the Jewish people must establish a fighting force, but rather his foresight and early leadership on this matter.

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It is worth noting that Jabotinsky did not write comprehensive philosophical works, whether moral or political. His worldview can primarily be reconstructed from a collection of sources, including letters, speeches, numerous newspaper articles, essays published in political journals, and a limited number of more extensive writings, such as his autobiography or the platform of the New Zionist Organization. Like any individual, Jabotinsky exhibits occasional inconsistencies in his views, and over his extensive span of approximately forty years of Zionist and political activity, he also changed his perspectives on certain issues.

That said, it is also noteworthy that Jabotinsky held certain ideas and agendas constantly and consistently throughout his life. These ideas and agendas were frequently reiterated by him. Among these, as we have seen, one can highlight his realism and his unwavering commitment to Zionism. To those we can add his dedication to the entirety of the land of Israel, encompassing both sides of the Jordan River. But more importantly for the purposes of this paper, and often overlooked—despite being one of the most prevalent and profound themes in Jabotinsky’s thinking—is his adherence to (classical) liberalism.

In the following discussion, I will provide a brief illustration of Jabotinsky’s fundamental liberal principles and address some of the alleged contradictions in his thought, aiming to unravel certain complexities and offer additional context. It is important to note that due to the extensive volume of Jabotinsky’s writings, only a few examples can be provided for each claim.¹³

Let us delve into a text written by Jabotinsky in 1939, a year before his death, titled “The Betar View on State and Social Problems,” where he presents a fundamental political distinction between two types of governments:

First: is it a commonwealth where the individual is regarded as sovereign, his liberty as the base of all legislation and the state’s power to limit that liberty [is] only admitted when absolutely indispensable,—or is it a commonwealth where the individual is, above all, a subject, and the state claims the right to direct every aspect of his life and activity?

And secondly: is it a commonwealth where public criticism of the established order is free to all, or is it prohibited? These two criteria suffice, regardless of whatever may be written in the constitution, to tell a democracy from its opposite...

These two criteria suffice, therefore, also to establish what is the real basic tendency of our ancient tradition with regard to state power. That tradition obviously **detests** the very idea of state power, and only tolerates it in so far as it is indispensable and inevitable. In everyman's life and activity—in his individual "kingdom"—as much as possible [he] should be left outside of the state's interference; the best rule would be that as long as one "king" does not en[c]roach upon his neighbors' "sovereignty," he should be left alone; if that is really impossible, for there unfortunately are dangers without and needs within which compel a collective effort, let it be strictly limited to the really inevitable minimum. It is, in short, a mentality to which a "totalitarian" state would be anathema: its true ideal, on the contrary, would be a kind of well-behaved anarchy, and as that is impossible—at least let it be (forgive the clumsy term) a "minimalitarian" state.¹⁴

Jabotinsky consistently advocated for the basic concepts mentioned here throughout his life. They formed an integral part of his enduring political philosophy and worldview. The notion that "every man is a king" encapsulates his belief in the inherent self-worth of individuals and their entitlement to respect and personal liberty. However, although Jabotinsky was clearly fond of the idea of an "anarchic utopia," which might be considered a corollary of this ideal, he also believed that it is impractical. Consequently, Jabotinsky proposed a pragmatic approach that strikes a balance between individual liberty and the necessities of social and political order. Realism dictates the need for a construct that can uphold as much personal liberty as possible, while safeguarding against internal and external threats, both nationally and individually. In Jabotinsky's view, the most viable solution to achieve this delicate balance was the establishment of a nation-state.

In his Autobiography Jabotinsky famously wrote:

In the beginning, God created the individual, a king who is equal among kings. It is far better that the individual errs vis-à-vis the community rather than the opposite, since "Society" was created for the benefit of the individual... It will be pointed out to me that there is a contradiction between this philosophy and the essence and content of my nationalistic agenda. One of my friends who read this manuscript reminded me of another tune he heard from me—"in the beginning God created the nation." There is no contradiction whatsoever. The second tune I indeed composed for those who contend that: In the "Beginning" "Humanity" was created. It is my sincere belief that in a contest between the two, it is the "Nation" which comes first; and it is the "individual" who precedes the "Nation". Even should the individual subject his life to the service of the nation, that too, in my opinion, is not a contradiction, since it is his free choice—free will and not obligation (Jabotinsky 1936, p.38).¹⁵

As a side note I will remark that this sheds light on another aspect of Jabotinsky's alleged "militarism." His emphasis of discipline and obedience in military life can now be viewed in the broader context. They are a necessary part of army life, but Jabotinsky always insisted that the very decision to join the military, Betar, or the Irgun, is completely voluntary. Naturally, every organization has its own inherent structure and rules aligned with its teleology, but the choice to become a member of such an organization remains, for Jabotinsky, an individual's prerogative. There is no illiberalism here.

Before discussing Jabotinsky's view on democracy, another question arises: Does his nationalistic goal of establishing a state, despite knowing the high price, numerous obstacles, and heavy sacrifices involved, undermine his belief in the self-worth of those individuals whom he claims to always prefer over their communities? Here is Jabotinsky's answer in response to an accusation made by Rabbi Stephen Wise (a Zionist leader in the US) that "To Revisionism, as to Fascism, the state is everything and the individual nothing." Jabotinsky rebutted:

Where, in what resolution or declaration or authoritative article have you read it? Personally I hate the very idea of a “totalitarian State,” whether Communist or Fascist, call them all “Polizei-Staat,” and prefer old-fashioned parliamentarism however clumsy or inefficient; and ninety-nine per cent of my hardy comrades share this attitude. What Dr. Wise obviously mistook for his bogey is the fact that we maintain and will go on maintaining that the striving for the creation of a Jewish State should be, to all those who accept it as their ideal, miles above any class or individual interest. But so did Garibaldi hold the creation of the Italian State paramount, so did Lincoln the unity of America; which does not mean that they wanted an Italy or an America where the State would be everything and the individual nothing. To those who think before speaking, the difference should again be clear (Jabotinsky 1935).

Jabotinsky’s thinking revolved around the Jewish condition as an urgent crisis that demanded a swift solution. Obviously, the means employed to address an emergency are sometimes extreme and unwelcome under normal circumstances. Jabotinsky believed that European and Arab antisemitism necessitated the establishment of a Jewish state for the protection and welfare of Jews. The means to achieve this goal may be harsh and require personal and national sacrifices, but they must be employed to guarantee Jewish personal and national liberty. Israel, in Jabotinsky’s vision, would be a place where Jews can live freely and safely, unlike in other state, where they are primarily identified as Jews, often deprived of their individual self-worth and subjected to hatred, coercion, and violence.

Having acknowledged the impracticality of ideas like “pan-basilea” or “peaceful anarchy” as utopian ideals, or in his words, “so long as the ideal cannot be realized, democracy... should be acknowledged as the closest to it” (Jabotinsky 2038, p.219) it is not surprising that Jabotinsky’s preferred regime was a version of liberal democracy. Among various systems, he believed that liberal democracy stands out by fostering personal liberties and recognizing the inherent worth of each individual.

Jabotinsky was indeed an “old fashioned” parliamentarian. He dislikes authoritarian regimes, preferred majoritarian rule, and saw democracy as an advancement in human spirit and freedom. “Democracy as such,” he wrote in *Homo Homini Lupus*, “is something admirable. We all desire and aspire towards it.” However, like many liberals, Jabotinsky also recognized the risks of the “tyranny of the majority” and the potential deprivation of individual and minority liberties in democratic regimes. He was also acutely aware early on that democracies can foster antisemitism and hatred of minorities, and strongly rejected the “arrogant and condescending lie,” that “all prejudices, racial, national or religious, are supported by absolutism; but under democracy, they are non-existent and repulsive” (Jabotinsky 1910, p.259).¹⁶

To explain this perspective, Jabotinsky offers the following account:

The racist prejudices of the past were mainly ingrained in the masses. Permitting the masses to participate in government was far from improving the lot of the oppressed peoples. What benefit could come to the Jews by the fact that Romania had a constitution? What did the Jews gain by the fact that Finland had the finest democratic system in the world? The question of the blacks in the United States exemplifies this gloomy picture most blatantly... It would seem therefore that neither the right to vote nor compulsory education can cure this malaise (Jabotinsky 1910, pp. 259-260).¹⁷

Undoubtedly, Jabotinsky’s interest in the Jewish condition in the diaspora led to his concern for oppressed minorities in general. Since he found that no regime can overcome these prejudices—of which, for him, antisemitism was the most troubling, and deeply rooted in Europe—his solution was to create a democratic Jewish nation-state. To tackle the danger of oppressive majoritarianism, Jabotinsky proposed two political mechanisms. One was institutional, and included well-known components such as a constitution, separation of powers, rule of law, etc.¹⁸ The other was normative: a spirit of compromise, in which majorities attempt to reach agreements with ad-hoc minorities in order to reduce state coercion to a minimum:

Democratic governments were created under the banner of the struggle against different types of minority governments. This was the contra-impetus of the pendulum. However, it is not exactly true that democracy blindly identifies itself with majority rule. The value of democracy is not at all in this, that the minority, i.e. 49 equal kings out of 100, or 10, or even one out of 100 should feel themselves enslaved. The sense of the mainspring of democracy should rather be sought in the science of agreement and compromise (Jabotinsky 1938, p. 219).¹⁹

The idea of political compromise between majorities and minorities also held significant importance in Jabotinsky's vision of Arab-Jewish relations and political cooperation in Israel—to be made possible once the “iron wall” was constructed and the Arabs acknowledged the establishment of the Jewish state as an unalterable reality. Jabotinsky's final essay on the subject was written in 1940, stating that “the Jews are willing to guarantee that the Arab minority will receive the maximal rights which they demand, and which they never received in any other state.” These rights encompassed Jabotinsky's well-known proposition that in any government led by a Jewish prime minister, the deputy would be an Arab, and vice versa. Furthermore, he advocated for an “equal share of duties and benefits issued by the state,” granting Arabic and Hebrew equal status in all state matters. Additionally, Jabotinsky proposed a “cultural autonomy” for Arabs, encompassing religion, education, welfare, and equal access to all holy places (Jabotinsky 1940, pp. 222-225).

To sum up, at his core, Jabotinsky was an individualist and liberal. He viewed democracy as a potentially liberal institution, much preferable to authoritarian regimes. As he himself illustrated his democratic commitment: “I believe in... freedom of expression, association, gathering and press, in democracy, in universal suffrage, in equality before the law and in a state that stands above classes” (Jabotinsky 1927a, p. 214). Nevertheless, Jabotinsky also saw that democracies can be oppressive and therefore offered political mechanisms to reduce this threat, both generally and more specifically regarding the relationship between the future state of Israel and its Arab minority.

Thus far, we have dealt with Jabotinsky's liberalism as applied to his general view of government and political regimes. But the more interesting and challenging issue is economics. Liberalism, at its core, is tied to economic activity as an essential manifestation of personal liberty. When we examine Jabotinsky's writing on economics, we need to factor in two historical issues. First, during the 20s and 30s, the West experienced significant economic crises. Free markets and liberalism were subject to intellectual critique and political attacks, identifying them as the source of this failure. And so, Jabotinsky is writing at a time when liberal principles are under a strong ideological attack. Second, it should be remembered that during Jabotinsky's life, communism was not yet viewed as an authoritarian regime; many in the West saw it as another French Revolution, which for them represented an expansion, modernization, and realization of the ideals of liberty and equality.

Let us begin our examination with Jabotinsky's rebuttal of the socialist-communist—including in its Zionist branch—critique of the “unproductive” occupations such as merchants and traders. In 1927, a year in which Jabotinsky devoted considerable attention to economics, he wrote an article titled “The Grocer,” in which he elaborated on his views regarding modern economy. Despite its nearly 100-year-old age, his perspective remains quite relevant and acute:

They want to end the grocer... He is unproductive, a middleman, stealing from both the producer and the buyer; a parasite, a socially redundant phenomenon that played no productive role in world history... This is a bad, dangerous and foolish recitation!... Social life is complex and decentralized... However, commerce can be considered almost as its “heart” or a central operation... Merchants and grocers have made the world our backyard. Remove them, and cities like Paris, London, and New York would look like villages... Without the grocer, even the factory has no right to exist... “Unproductive”? Columbus contributed more to manufacturing than all the peasants and workers of his generation in Europe combined. He was a merchant by trade and was sent by merchants to trade (Jabotinsky 1927b, pp. 101-105).

Clearly, Jabotinsky's perspective on social and economic life was more comprehensive and holistic in comparison to his left-wing ideological counterparts. He recognized both the complexity and benefits of modern economic trade.

Furthermore, his astute understanding of economics is evident in an essay from the same year, provocatively titled "We the Bourgeoisie!" (Jabotinsky 1927a). The essay begins by listing and praising notable liberals while lamenting the negative connotations being associated with the words "democratic" and "liberal."

This is an important piece that merits further attention, as it provides valuable insights into Jabotinsky's thoughts and positions, which contrasted with the prevailing trends of his time. He expressed concern over the fact that "the Ideology of Liberty is gradually being pushed in favor of the 'police state' ideology," and noted that the bourgeoisie is facing attacks from these expanding ideologies. Nonetheless, he reassured his bourgeois friends by stating, "We have absolutely nothing to be ashamed of."

Interestingly, Jabotinsky confessed here that in his youth he too believed in socialism. What changed his perspective? The social and political "experiments" conducted in Russia and Israel, which convinced him of the fallacy of socialism and communism. It is only through creativity that humanity and nations can progress, he claimed, and creativity requires a society where private entrepreneurship is embraced and the promise of private gain exists. Jabotinsky then proceeded to express a series of more general observations:

The individual element is fundamental and inevitable in fostering creativity. Humanity does not march towards socialism—it marches in the opposite direction: and therefore, if there is a class that claims to be the harbinger of the future (an assumption that us, the bourgeoisie, do not believe in...)—if there is such a class, then it is us, the bourgeoisie, the enemies of the police super-state and advocates for the ideology of individualism."

Jabotinsky also recognized that the way socialist and communist thinkers envision the future is entirely out of touch with reality. While they, who believe they have deciphered the mysteries of history, advocate for a vision where "the worker" and physical labor occupy the central position in economic life, modernity propels us in an entirely different direction:

just as pox, cholera, slavery, torture, ghetto, bribery, and just about all bodily or social diseases will be eradicated one day, so will poverty be eradicated, and it will be eradicated in the 'framework' of this economic individualistic regime, which will triumph over both cholera and the regime of peasant oppression... The world is guided by the visionary proponents of private enterprise, entrepreneurs and organizers. They have brought forth all that has enriched human culture... They are both the creators of progress and its carriers.

The future, according to Jabotinsky, belonged to the bourgeoisie and not, as falsely maintained by the left, to the proletariat. He considered this to be a profound misunderstanding, because, he argued, manual labor, which was seen as the essential core of the proletariat, was on the verge of being historically diminished. In 1932 Jabotinsky further elaborated on this:

The real mission of the Robot is to oust human labour, and that the evolution of machinery is inevitable destined to dethrone the proletariat... The time will come when the part played by direct human labour—the actual physical effort—in the production of commodity values will become quite insignificant, a quantity tending to zero. (Jabotinsky 1932a).²⁰

But there is another side to consider here, which makes things a little more complex. Some interpreters suggest that his socio-economic thought contained elements of socialism and statism, challenging the percep-

tion of him as a staunch advocate of free market ideology. These arguments are mostly predicated on several articles where, at first glance, Jabotinsky may appear to have aligned himself somewhat with such ideas.

For example, in 1927 Jabotinsky wrote an article in which he might seem to aim for a balance between socialist ideas and his own emphasis on entrepreneurship and a free economy. He sought to achieve this by invoking the biblical notion of “jubilee.” According to Jabotinsky, a society could fully embrace the mechanisms of capitalism but periodically “level the playing field” through redistribution, after which the free market would start anew. Additionally, he supported certain accepted limitations on work, such as observing the Sabbath. Such a method, he argued, would be more formidable, economically beneficial, and tuned to human nature.

We need to delve further into these ideas, but it is important to note that even within this context, Jabotinsky unapologetically expressed his underlying convictions:

I am a son of that social stratum whose very name has become a curse word: the bourgeoisie... I believe that the culture that sustains us is almost entirely the fruit of its regime... And I believe this regime has the capacity to incorporate significant social corrections while preserving its essence... Without the burden of military budgets, this could already have been achieved in many countries... I believe that it can not only withstand upheavals without being undermined but also integrate them in its system... without resorting to bloodshed (Jabotinsky 1927c, pp. 178-179).²¹

We see here that Jabotinsky did not perceive capitalism as a flawless or impeccable system. He believed that sometimes it might require augmentation and supplementation through social policies. However, he also believed that capitalism’s shortcomings are not as detrimental as those found in socialism and communism, and furthermore, that these shortcomings can be addressed and peacefully rectified within the framework of capitalism.

In other instances as well, Jabotinsky presented bold economic suggestions. For example, in 1932 he authored “Chapters in the Social Philosophy of the Bible,” wherein he advocated for three social principles: “Jubilee,” “Shabbat,” and “Peah.” Within this article, he referenced Josef Popper-Lynkeus, who proposed that all citizens should be relieved of three fundamental concerns: “food, clothing, and a home” (Jabotinsky 1932b, pp. 188-191). Jabotinsky firmly believed that this ideal, combined with public education, could be realized within a timeframe of less than a hundred years.

We are now approaching the well-known and frequently quoted concept of the “Five Ms” (with M representing the Hebrew letter Mem”), which outlines the state’s responsibility towards five fundamental human needs: food, clothing, home, education, and health.²² In 1934 Jabotinsky pushed the boundaries even further in terms of the role he assigns to the state:

What we refer to as the “elementary needs” of an ordinary individual—the very things for which people today fight over, seeking employment and rioting when they cannot find it—encompass five essential components: food, housing, clothing, access to children’s education, and the ability to seek medical treatment when ill. In Hebrew, we can symbolize these as the “five Ms”... In every country and every era, there exists a recognized concept of a sufficient minimum for each of these needs. It is the responsibility of the state... to ensure that every individual who expresses the need for these “five Ms” receives them” (Jabotinsky 1934b, pp. 75-77).

Considerable attention has been given to this article, with interpretations varying from perceiving Jabotinsky as embracing socialism to being a proponent of a “maximalist” welfare state.²³ Those who lean towards such perspectives often highlight those proposals for social corrections. On the other hand, others argue that such interpretations go too far, and emphasize Jabotinsky’s unwavering commitment to liberal principles throughout his life.²⁴ It should also be pointed out that even in this article Jabotinsky explicitly rejected socialism, referring to its notions as a “fatal mistake,” “coercive,” and even “a curse.”

Undoubtedly, personal inclinations play some role in these interpretations, which exhibit a preference for a particular version of Jabotinsky. And it is true that there is a tension in his writings about economics that allows for some interpretative flexibility. What are we to make of it? I will attempt to offer an interpretation that might reduce some of the discrepancies.

It is important to bear in mind that Jabotinsky, as a leader of a political movement, is primarily concerned with addressing the severe economic crisis of his era and presenting a solution that can help mobilize a mass movement—while not giving up his liberal convictions. His strategy seems to be to shift the focus from the concepts of the “proletariat” and “class war” to the issue of poverty and “war on poverty,” while presenting this transition as relying on biblical social thought, which, he argued, is essentially different from socialism. This point, in fact, is quite clearly articulated in “Social Redemption.”

Admittedly, Jabotinsky’s proposal of the “Five Memos” may appear to be somewhat extreme, but it is important to consider three important contextual caveats that lend credibility to his assertion that in no way does this align him with socialism.

First, Jabotinsky’s proposed means, regardless of any naivety or impracticality his proposals might be guilty of, consistently prioritize the preservation of a free market devoid of intervention. While there may be a minor consideration of taxation to finance state support, Jabotinsky emphasized that such taxation should not be significant during normal circumstances. The government must maintain its distance from the free market, entrepreneurship, private enterprise, and various forms of creativity, ensuring their autonomy.

Secondly, it is crucial to clarify the type of poverty that Jabotinsky refers to. It is easy to misinterpret his stance on this issue when applying a contemporary lens, since the understanding of poverty has changed. In present-day OECD countries, except for the United States, poverty is measured relatively, which means that what is measured is really inequality. Interpreting Jabotinsky through this perspective would be misleading. Jabotinsky is not concerned with relative poverty; quite the opposite, he views inequality as a necessary driver and facilitator of economic and human progress. His focus is on absolute poverty, considering the actual economic distress prevalent during his time. He sought to eradicate absolute poverty through state intervention, and nothing more.

To support these two points, we can reference the concluding section of Jabotinsky’s “Chapters in the Social Philosophy of the Bible”:

Nevertheless, the disparity between the rich and the poor will persist. It may not be as glaring, bitter, and tragic as it is today, but a difference will remain. This difference will continue to tempt individuals, fueling a universal race among... [S]ocialism... aims to eliminate the disparity between the rich and the poor permanently by stripping citizens of any opportunity to accumulate wealth. Yet, in doing so, it also eliminates their ability for private initiative and the most effective motivator for self-creation (Jabotinsky 1932b, p.191).²⁵

Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, Jabotinsky believed that state reliefs are temporary and should be treated as emergency measures. As he wrote in 1938:

The “minimum state” stands as the most normal and healthy institution for all kings, operating solely when true necessity arises... Defining this “minimum” requires a certain degree of flexibility. In times of war or crisis, be it economic or political, there may be a need to expand this “minimum”—similar to how a patient submits to the care of a physician **during a period of illness**, neither exceeding the required duration nor surrendering entirely to it (Jabotinsky 1938, p. 218).

Furthermore, this essay concludes with an unequivocal validation of private property and the concept of “ownership of things,” asserting that “the worldview on which this essay is founded recognizes private property... as the fundamental basis, axis and lever of the social market.”

In the long run, Jabotinsky argued, the real cure to poverty is capitalism. As he wrote in “The Jubilee Ideal”: “My heart is sure that the social order called ‘Bourgeois’ or ‘Capitalist’ will modify gradually to a means of eliminating poverty; namely, the lowering of the wage beneath the level of subsistence, hygiene, and self-respect.” (Jabotinsky 1927c).

It seems, therefore, that Jabotinsky thought that only the flourishing of free markets, the ascent of the middle class, entrepreneurship, and social mobility ensured by liberalism, will eradicate poverty and render state intervention redundant. The real war on poverty, therefore, is the battle against socialism. However, until such an economic victory is achieved, it is up to the state to provide remedial subsistence services, while making sure that if they contradict economic liberty, they do so minimally and temporarily.

I find that this relieves at least some of the tension in Jabotinsky’s writings between his sworn liberalism and the allegations of statism and socialism, which he denied. He might not have succeeded in finding the appropriate economic means, he might have failed in convincing some of his readers that the tension is resolved, but it is quite untenable to claim that Jabotinsky himself did not think that he should never be thought of as socialist or statist.



We now arrive at the final section, which addresses Jabotinsky’s influence on present-day Israel. To do so, it is important to start with a brief historical context, as Revisionist Zionism has long been depicted as an insignificant movement, overshadowed by the prominence of Socialist Zionism.

This picture is misleading. Jabotinsky’s antagonism to socialism and communism had a profound effect on Zionist history. It is true that Jabotinsky wanted Revisionist Zionists to cooperate with socialist Zionists under the ideology of “one banner,” i.e., postponing all ideological disagreements until the mutual goal of founding a Jewish state is realized. However, during the 30s, as Socialist Zionism took over the Zionist congress and the institutions in the land of Israel, they aggressively oppressed Revisionist Zionists and refused to cooperate.²⁶ As the conflict intensified, the schism between the two factions widened.

By 1935, the tension within the socialist-controlled Zionist congress grew beyond containment, prompting Jabotinsky to establish a parallel body: the “New Zionist Congress.” Remarkably, in a matter of months, the number of voters for his new organization reached 713,000, surpassing the 635,000 voters of the old and well-established Zionist Congress (Katz 1993, p. 939). This illustrates what is now recognized by some historians: Revisionist Zionism had a serious and positive social trajectory in the Jewish population and became highly influential.²⁷

Although this surprising political achievement was short-lived, owing to the onset of the Second World War and Jabotinsky’s death in 1940, it remains a puzzling phenomenon that demands explanation. How could the right-leaning and more liberal New Zionist Congress surpass the established left-leaning socialist one so swiftly?

The explanations offered for this event—by the few scholars who are willing to admit its magnitude—revolve around the political differences between Jabotinsky and Ben-Gurion concerning Zionist matters, such as their divergent approaches towards Britain or the Arabs. But there has to be more to it. New mass and counter-establishment movements are rarely formed based solely on nuanced political inclinations regarding foreign affairs. There must have been an ideological and practical component that resonated more deeply with the hearts, actual lives, and belief systems of its supporters.

Originally, the World Zionist Organization (WZO) was led by moderates with a liberal streak, such as Herzl and Weizmann. However, during the 30s, it came under the leadership of Socialist Zionists and underwent radicalization. Two significant Jewish and Zionist populations felt uneasy with this transformation. One comprised religious Zionists. While initially, most religious Jews opposed Zionism, the rise in antisemitism and Jewish insecurity in Europe prompted many to reconsider their stance. For this group, the anti-religious overtones in the radicalizing socialist WZO served as a strong deterrent.

The second group that experienced growing discomfort with the new socialist outlook of the WZO consisted of middle- and upper-class Jews, including business owners, shopkeepers, merchants, independents, entrepreneurs, and, in general, more free-market and free-profession-oriented Zionists. The typical bourgeoisie, despised by socialists of that era, found it harder and harder to commit to the socialist-led WZO.

Much of this tension was already evident in the Yishuv, which had a significant number of Jabotinsky followers. After the Second World War and the formation of Israel, many more Jews who were influenced by Revisionist Zionism in the diaspora immigrated to Israel. Due to the prominence of the Israeli socialist-led state institutions, the Israeli liberal right remained dormant and held limited political influence. Nevertheless, it constituted a substantial minority, oppressed to a high degree by the left Labor Party (Mapai) governments, yet self-conscious of its identity and principles.

And then, during the 70s, a significant twist occurred in the Israeli plot. It took three decades, but finally Jabotinsky's successors in Israel, primarily Menachem Begin and the "Herut" ("liberty") party, successfully formed a political alliance with Sephardi Jews, who had mostly immigrated to Israel from Arab countries. Much like the liberal right, many Sephardi Jews suffered under Mapai, as they rejected secularization and held firm to traditional religious Jewish habits and values. Consequently, they faced discrimination, and their social mobility was hindered.

And so, a significant group joined the Herut party, and by so doing embraced their liberal values and critique of the socialist and statist policies advocated by the Israeli left-wing governments. In 1977 the Israeli right won its first elections, and though Begin himself cannot be considered a devout student of Jabotinsky, this transition of power led to a real, albeit gradual, overhaul of Israeli economics (see Fuksman Sha'al 2011, pp. 173-193). The liberation of the Israeli economy has begun.

The liberation of the Israeli markets intensified from the 1990s onward, particularly during the tenure of Benjamin Netanyahu, who served as prime minister (1996-1999), later as finance minister (2003-2005), and since 2009 again as prime minister, winning several elections. Netanyahu is the most classical-liberal leader of the Zionist right since Jabotinsky. His father, the distinguished historian Ben-Zion Netanyahu, actively participated in the Revisionist Zionist movement and worked with Jabotinsky. Benjamin Netanyahu's own partial education in the US and his study of economics also contributed to his social and economic liberal agenda. As a result, he initiated reforms, modernized, and liberalized the Israeli economy.

The results of this shift are indeed most impressive. As demonstrated by the Israeli Bureau of Statistics, especially under the leadership of Likud, Israel has successfully transformed from a slow industrial economy into an advanced high-tech economy, surpassing—relative to size—all other nations in the world. This transformation has led to Israel's success, even under complex conditions, making it a thriving and prosperous country; a "start-up nation".²⁸

In conclusion, Jabotinsky's worldview has left a lasting impact on contemporary Israel through three deep currents. Firstly, an Israeli population directly influenced by his writings and leadership. Secondly, some of the institutions he established, although marginalized by Israeli socialist governments, persisted (e.g., the youth movement Betar), and other institutions were created by his followers in Israel, most notably the "Herut," now Likud, party. And finally, Israeli leaders, like Benjamin Netanyahu, are also indebted to Jabotinsky and Revisionist Zionism. This triad of revisionist society, institutions, and leadership, has significantly contributed to shaping the trajectory of Israel's development and its modern identity.

Jabotinsky's influence can be likened to a seed that lay dormant for approximately 40 years before sprouting, and since then, it has grown into a flourishing tree. Present-day Israel, though still lacking in many classical-liberal aspects, aligns much closer to Jabotinsky's vision than to any other Socialist Zionist one. While his impact may have been delayed for a considerable period, Jabotinsky has emerged as the most influential political Zionist leader, with a significant impact on a variety of current issues. His ideas and legacy continue to shape Israel's development.

In 1935, Jabotinsky wrote to Ben-Gurion, expressing his "one banner" doctrine, alleging he is willing to set aside all economic and social disputes, even if the state that would form would be ultra-religious or so-

cialist. But then he added: “However, I will leave a letter to my son to revolt, but on the envelope I will write: ‘Open 5 years after the celebration of the Hebrew State’.”²⁹ It took more than five years, but Jabotinsky’s liberal revolution eventually did come to fruition, making it entirely appropriate to defend it, as Walter Block and Alan Futerman have done, on classical-liberal principles.

NOTES

- 1 For a recent example see Heller 2017.
- 2 As is well known, in contemporary parlance “liberalism” often denotes “progressive,” hence the need to modify “liberalism” with “classical.” Henceforth, I will employ “liberalism” in its classical original sense.
- 3 See, for example, Tress 1984.
- 4 As even the hostile Tress writes (op. cit.): “there is doubt about Jabotinsky’s willingness to be placed in that mystical leadership position,” p. 322.
- 5 The translation is from Jabotinsky 1934a. Unless otherwise stated, translations are my own and derived from the Hebrew. Additionally, I translate the Hebrew titles of these works when they are referenced.
- 6 Jabotinsky’s remarks on race are collected in Ratzaby 2004. I believe that critical readers will easily discern the artificial and strained compilation of scattered and de-contextualized remarks. For his early and more elaborate view see Jabotinsky 1913.
- 7 For example, Herzl met with Vyacheslav Plehve, the Russian minister of the interior and an antisemite, in order to promote Jewish and Zionist interests (see Tzur 2004, p. 389). This would be true for most leaders; it’s simple diplomacy. This is why “guilt by association” is a weak argument.
- 8 The original document can be read here: https://www.infocenters.co.il/jabo/jabo_multimedia/a%201/115025.pdf
- 9 The English text is available here: <http://en.jabotinsky.org/media/9747/the-iron-wall.pdf>
- 10 Examples for this logic are abundant; one of my favorites essays is Jabotinsky 1931b.
- 11 Unrealistic expectations among Jews in “Palestine” took two forms: some hoped for peace, while others relied on English protection from the Arabs. Jabotinsky deemed the first as fanciful and the second as impractical and immoral. Cf., e.g., Jabotinsky 1923b and Jabotinsky 1931a.
- 12 In 1910, when he was just 30 years old and before assuming a prominent Zionist role, Jabotinsky penned an article in *Odesskie Novosti* titled “Homo Homini Lupus” (A Man is a Wolf to Other Man). In this piece, he discusses the “battle of wolves” and extols the virtues of continuous preparedness, general distrust, and skepticism toward justice and honesty in international affairs. He states there that it is the powerful who dictate their version of justice, and therefore, to enforce justice and morality, one must possess power. This state of affairs, he writes, is likely to persist “for a long time.” See Jabotinsky 1910.
- 13 Jabotinsky’s Bibliography lists 2,354 distinct items; see Graur 2007.
- 14 Written originally as an address to Betar in Warsaw, and subsequently published in Betar’s journal in New York. The original can be viewed here: https://www.infocenters.co.il/jabo/jabo_multimedia/a%201/115303.pdf.
- 15 Translated in Sarig 2006, pp. 48-49.
- 16 See also Jabotinsky 1911b, pp. 210-219.
- 17 Translated in Sarig 2006, pp. 66-67.
- 18 In my article, titled “Jabotinsky Without Jabotinsky,” I respond Kremnitzer and Fuchs 2013. I challenge their propagandistic claims suggesting that Jabotinsky would endorse the unprecedented and undemocratic power wielded by the Israeli Supreme Court. It is interesting to note that Jabotinsky himself did not specifically address judicial power and refrained from using the term “human rights,” possibly due to his association of such universalist political assertions with a communist agenda (rb.gy/s9r7g).
- 19 Translated in Sarig 2006, p. 67.
- 20 The translation is Jabotinsky’s, the original manuscript can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/m94wjd8b>. See also Galili and Shwartz 2017.
- 21 Part of the translation is from Sarig 2006, p. 85.

- 22 All of these begin with Mem in Hebrew.
- 23 E.g., Ben-Hur 1993, pp. 80-81: "Jabotinsky's welfare state was maximalist".
- 24 E.g., Galili 2015.
- 25 It is worth mentioning that in Hebrew, what is now referred to as the "welfare state" was once known as the "assistance state." Similarly, Jabotinsky's concern was not the well-being of poor citizens as measured against the well-off, but rather state assistance for their most fundamental needs.
- 26 For example, the "London Agreements" between Jabotinsky and Ben-Gurion in 1934 were ratified by the revisionists but rejected by the socialists in 1935.
- 27 E.g., Halpern and Reinhartz 1998, pp. 80-81: "[T]he Revisionists aroused a broad segment of the Jewish community and of Jewish youth, especially in Poland and in the Yishuv in Palestine. They developed into a major opposition party, with a special attraction for all aggrieved groups who were disaffected from the Zionist establishment..."
- 28 Per the term coined in Senor and Singer 2009.
- 29 The letter can be found here: rb.gy/fdrqx.

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