



The Wandering Jew, by Joseph Ferdinand Keppler, 1901

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By Gilad Atzmon

02/09/08 University historian, Professor Shlomo Sand, opens his remarkable study of Jewish nationalism quoting Karl W. Deutsch:

A nation is a group of people united by a common mistake regarding its origin and a collective hostility towards its neighbours" [1]

As simple or even simplistic as it may sound, the quote above eloquently summarises the figment of reality entangled with modern Jewish nationalism and especially within the concept of Jewish identity. It obviously points the finger at the collective mistake Jews tend to make whenever referring to their 'illusionary collective past' and 'collective origin'. Yet, in the same breath, Deutsch's reading of nationalism throws light upon the hostility that is unfortunately coupled with almost every Jewish group towards its surrounding reality,

whether it is human or takes the shape of land. While **the brutality of the Israelis towards the Palestinians has already become rather common knowledge**, the rough treatment Israelis reserve for their 'promised soil' and landscape is just starting to reveal itself. The ecological disaster the Israelis are going to leave behind them will be the cause of suffering for many generations to come. **Leave aside the megalomaniac wall that shreds the Holy land into enclaves of depravation and starvation**, Israel has managed to pollute its [main rivers](#) and streams with nuclear and [chemical waste](#).

"When And How the Jewish People Was Invented" is a very serious study written by Professor Shlomo Sand, an Israeli historian. It is the most serious study of Jewish nationalism and by far, the most courageous elaboration on the Jewish historical narrative.

In his book, Sand manages to prove beyond any reasonable doubt that the Jewish people never existed as a 'nation-race', they never shared a common origin. Instead they are a colourful mix of groups that at various stages in history adopted the Jewish religion.

In case you follow Sand's line of thinking and happen to ask yourself, "when was the Jewish People invented?" Sand's answer is rather simple. **"At a certain stage in the 19th century, intellectuals of Jewish origin in Germany, influenced by the folk character of German nationalism, took upon themselves the task of inventing a people 'retrospectively,' out of a thirst to create a modern Jewish people."** [2]

Accordingly, the 'Jewish people' is a 'made up' notion consisting of a fictional and imaginary past with very little to back it up forensically, historically or textually. Furthermore, Sand - who elaborated on early sources of antiquity - **comes to the conclusion that Jewish exile is also a myth, and that the present-day Palestinians are far more likely to be the descendants of the ancient Semitic people in Judea/Canaan than the current predominantly Khazarian-origin Ashkenazi crowd to which he himself admittedly belongs.** Khalid Amayreh and many others regard as the "Nazis of our time". Astonishingly enough, in spite of the fact that Sand manages to dismantle the notion of 'Jewish people,' crush the notion of 'Jewish collective past' and ridicule the Jewish chauvinist national impetus, his book is a **best seller in Israel**. This fact alone may suggest that those who call themselves 'people of the book' are now starting to learn about the misleading and devastating philosophies and ideologies that made them into what

Hitler Won After All

Rather often when asking a 'secular' 'cosmopolitan' Jew what it is that makes him into a Jew, a shallow overwhelmingly chewed answer would be thrown back at you: **"It is Hitler who made me into a Jew"**. Though the 'cosmopolitan' Jew, being an internationalist, would dismiss other people's national inclinations, he insists upon maintaining his own right to 'self determination'. However, it is not really he himself who stands at the core of this unique demand for national orientation, it is actually the devil, master-monster anti-Semite, namely Hitler. Apparently, **the cosmopolitan Jew celebrates his nationalist entitlement as long as Hitler is there to be blamed.**

As far as the secular cosmopolitan Jew is concerned, Hitler won after all. Sand manages to enhance this paradox. Insightfully he suggests that “while in the 19th century referring to Jews as an ‘alien racial identity’ would mark one as an anti-Semite, in the Jewish State this very philosophy is embedded mentally and intellectually” [3]. In Israel Jews celebrate their differentiation and unique conditions. Furthermore, says Sand, “There were times in Europe when one would be labelled as an anti-Semite for claiming that all Jews belong to a nation of an alien type. Nowadays, claiming that Jews have never been and still aren’t people or a nation, would tag one as a Jew hater”. [4] It is indeed pretty puzzling that **the only people who managed to maintain and sustain a racially orientated, expansionist and genocidal national identity that is not at all different from Nazi ethnic ideology are the Jews** who were, amongst others, the leading targeted victims of the Nazi ideology and practice.

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There Is No Jewish History

It is an established fact that not a single Jewish history text had been written between the 1st century and early 19th century. The fact that Judaism is based on a religious historical myth may have something to do with it. An adequate scrutiny of the Jewish past was never a primary concern within the Rabbinical tradition. One of the reasons is probably the lack of a need of such a methodical effort. For the Jew who lived during ancient times and the Middle Ages, there was enough in the Bible to answer most relevant questions having to do with day-to-day life, Jewish meaning and fate. As Shlomo Sand puts it, “a secular chronological time was foreign to the ‘Diaspora time’ that was shaped by the anticipation for the coming of the Messiah”.

However, in the light of German secularisation, urbanisation and emancipation and due to the decreasing authority of the Rabbinical leaders, an emerging need of an alternative cause rose amongst the awakening Jewish intellectuals. The emancipated Jew wondered who he was, where he come from. He also started to speculate what his role might be within the rapidly opening European society.

In 1820 the German Jewish historian Isaak Markus Jost (1793-1860) published the first serious historical work on Jews, namely “The History of the Israelites.” Jost avoided the Biblical time, he preferred to start his journey with the Judea Kingdom, he also compiled an historical narrative of different Jewish communities around the world. Jost realised that the Jews of his time did not form an ethnic continuum. **He grasped that Israelites from place to place were rather different.** Hence, he thought there was nothing in the world that should stop Jews from total assimilation. Jost believed that within the spirit of enlightenment, both the Germans and the Jews would turn their back to the oppressive religious institution and would form a healthy nation based on a growing geographically orientated sense of belonging.

Though Jost was aware of the evolvement of European nationalism, his Jewish followers

were rather unhappy with his liberal optimistic reading of the “Jewish future.”

From historian Heinrich Graetz on, Jewish historians began to draw the history of Judaism as the history of a nation that had been a ‘kingdom’, expelled into ‘exile’, became a wandering people and ultimately turned around and went back to its birthplace.” [9]

For the late Moses Hess, it was a racial struggle rather than a class struggle that would define the shape of Europe. Accordingly, suggests Hess, Jews better return and reflect on their cultural heritage and ethnic origin. For Hess, **the conflict between Jews and Gentiles was the product of racial differentiation, hence, unavoidable.**

The ideological path from Hess’s pseudo scientific racist orientation to Zionist historicism is rather obvious. If Jews are indeed an alien racial entity (as Hess, Jabotinsky and others believed), they better look for their natural homeland, and this homeland is no other than Eretz Yizrael. Clearly, Hess’s assumption regarding a racial continuum wasn’t scientifically approved. **In order to maintain the emerging phantasmic narrative, an orchestrated denial mechanism had to be erected just to make sure that some embarrassing facts wouldn’t interfere with the emerging national creation.**

Sand suggests that the denial mechanism was rather orchestrated and very well thought out. The Hebrew University decision in the 1930’s to split Jewish History and General History into two distinct departments was far more than just a matter of convenience. The logos behind the split is a glimpse into Jewish self-realisation. In the eyes of Jewish academics, the Jewish condition and Jewish psyche were unique and should be studied separately. Apparently, even within Jewish academia, **a supreme status is reserved for the Jews, their history and their self-perception.** As Sand insightfully unveils, within the Jewish Studies departments the researcher is scattering between the mythological and the scientific while the myth maintains its primacy. Yet, it often gets into a stalling dilemma by the ‘**small devious facts.**’

The New Israelite, the Bible and Archaeology

In Palestine, the new Jews and later the Israelis were determined to recruit the Old Testament and to transform it into the amalgamate code of the future Jew. The ‘nationalisation’ of the Bible was there to plant in young Jews the idea that they are the direct followers of their great ancient ancestors. Bearing in mind the fact that nationalisation was largely a secular movement, the Bible was stripped of its spiritual and religious meaning. Instead, it was viewed as an historical text describing a real chain of events in the past. The Jews who had now managed to kill their God learned to believe in themselves. Massada, Samson and Bar Kochva became suicidal master narratives. In the light of their heroic ancestors, **Jews learned to love themselves as much as they hate others, except that this time they possessed the military might to inflict real pain on their neighbours.** More concerning was the fact that instead of a supernatural entity – namely God – who command them to invade the land and execute a genocide and to rob their ‘promised land’ of its indigenous habitants, within their national revival project it was

them as themselves, Herzl, Jabotinsky, Weitzman, Ben Gurion, Sharon, Peres, Barak who decided to expel, destroy and kill. **Instead of God, it was then the Jews killing in the name of Jewish people.** They did it while Jewish symbols decorate their planes and tanks. They followed commands that were given in the newly restored language of their ancestors.

Surprisingly enough, Sand who is no doubt a striking scholar, fails to mention that **the Zionist hijacking of the Bible was in fact a desperate Jewish answer to German Early Romanticism.** However, as much as German philosophers, poets, architects and artists were ideologically and aesthetically excited about pre-Socratic Greece, they knew very well that they were not exactly Hellenism's sons and daughters. The nationalist Jew took it one step further, he bound oneself into a phantasmic blood chain with his mythical ancestors, not before long he restored their ancient language. Rather than a sacred tongue, Hebrew had become a spoken language. German Early Romanticist never went that far.

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Who invented the Jews?

Quite early on in his text, Sand raises the crucial and probably the most relevant questions. Who are the Jews? Where did they come from? How is it that in different historical periods they appear in some very different and remote places?

Though most contemporary Jews are utterly convinced that their ancestors are the Biblical Israelites who happened to be exiled brutally by the Romans, truth must be said. Contemporary Jews have nothing to do with ancient Israelites, who have never been sent to exile because such an expulsion has never taken place. **The Roman Exile is just another Jewish myth.**

"I started looking in research studies about the exile from the land" says Sand in an Haaretz interview [11], "but to my astonishment I discovered that it has no literature. The reason is that no one exiled the people of the country. The Romans did not exile peoples and they could not have done so even if they had wanted to. They did not have trains and trucks to deport entire populations. That kind of logistics did not exist until the 20th century. From this, in effect, the whole book was born: in the realization that **Judaic society was not dispersed and was not exiled.**"

Indeed, in the light of Sand's simple insight, the idea of Jewish exile is amusing. The thought of Roman Imperial navy was working 24/7 schlepping Moishe'le and Yanka'le to Cordova and Toledo may help Jews to feel important as well as schleppable, but common sense would suggest that the Roman armada had far more important things to do.

However, far more interesting is the logical outcome: If the people of Israel were not expelled, then **the real descendants of the inhabitants of the Kingdom of Judah must be the Palestinians.**

“No population remains pure over a period of thousands of years” says Sand. [12] “But the chances that the **Palestinians are descendants of the ancient Judaic people are much greater than the chances that you or I are its descendents.** The first Zionists, up until the Arab Revolt [1936-9], knew that there had been no exiling, and that the Palestinians were descended from the inhabitants of the land. They knew that farmers don’t leave until they are expelled. Even Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, the second president of the State of Israel, wrote in 1929 that, ‘the vast majority of the peasant farmers do not have their origins in the Arab conquerors, but rather, before then, in the Jewish farmers who were numerous and a majority in the building of the land.’”

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As one would expect, Sand approves **the largely accepted assumption that the [Judaized Khazars](#) constituted the main origins of the Jewish communities in Eastern Europe, which he calls the Yiddish Nation.** When asked how come they happen to speak Yiddish, which is largely regarded as a German medieval dialect, he answers, “the Jews were a class of people dependent on the German bourgeoisie in the east, and thus they adopted German words.”



Khazaria was a well-known empire in the early middle ages. The only reason you haven't heard anything is because of the Jew angle. [INCOG]

In his book Sand manages to produce a detailed account of the Khazarian saga in Jewish history. He explains what lead the Khazarian kingdom towards conversion. Bearing in mind

that **Jewish nationalism is, for the most part, lead by a Khazarian elite**, we may have to expand our intimate knowledge of this very unique yet influential political group. The translation of Sand's work into foreign languages is an immediate must. (It is forthcoming in French, as reported in [Are the Jews an invented people?, by Eric Rouleau](#)).

What Next?

Professor Sand leaves us with the inevitable conclusion. Contemporary Jews do not have a common origin and their Semitic origin is a myth. **Jews have no origin in Palestine whatsoever** and therefore, their act of so-called 'return' to their 'promised land' must be realised as an invasion executed by a tribal-ideological clan.

However, though Jews do not constitute any racial continuum, they for some reason happen to be racially orientated. **As we may notice, many Jews still see mixed marriage as the ultimate threat.** Furthermore, in spite of modernisation and secularisation, the vast majority of those who identify as secular Jews still succumb to blood ritual (circumcision) a unique religious procedure which involves no less than [blood sucking by a Mohel](#).

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If Sand is correct, and I myself am convinced by the strength of his argument, then Jews are not a race but rather a collective of very many people who are largely hijacked by a late phantasmic national movement. If Jews are not a race, do not form a racial continuum and have nothing to do with Semitism, then 'anti-Semitism' is, categorically, an empty signifier. It obviously refers to a signifier that doesn't exist. In other words, **our criticism of Jewish nationalism, Jewish lobbying and Jewish power can only be realised as a legitimate critique of ideology and practice.**

Once again I may say it, we are not and never been against Jews (the people) nor we are against Judaism (the religion). Yet, we are against a collective philosophy with some clear global interests. Some would like to call it Zionism but I prefer not to. Zionism is a vague signifier that is far too narrow to capture the complexity of Jewish nationalism, its brutality, ideology and practice. Jewish nationalism is a spirit and spirit doesn't have clear boundaries. **In fact, none of us know exactly where Jewishness stops and where Zionism starts as much as we do not know where Israeli interests stop and where the Neocon's interests start.**

As far as the Palestinian cause is concerned, the message is rather devastating. **Our Palestinian brothers and sisters are at the forefront of a struggle against a very devastating philosophy.** Yet, it is clearly not just the Israelis whom they fight with rather a fierce pragmatic philosophy that initiates global conflicts on some gigantic scale. **It is a tribal practice that seeks influence within corridors of power and super powers in particular. The American Jewish Committee is pushing for a war against Iran.** Just to be on the safe side David Abrahams, a 'Labour Friend of Israel' donates money to the Labour Party by proxy. More or less at the same time two million Iraqis die in an illegal war

designed by one called Wolfowitz. While all the above is taking place, **millions of Palestinians are starved in concentration camps and Gaza is on the brink of a humanitarian crisis.** As it all happens, 'anti-Zionist' Jews and Jews in the left (Chomsky included) insist upon dismantling the eloquent criticism of AIPAC, Jewish lobbying and Jewish power posed by Mearsheimer and Walt. [15]

Is it just Israel? Is it really Zionism? Or shall we admit that it is something far greater than we are entitled even to contemplate within the intellectual boundaries we imposed upon ourselves? As things stand, we lack the intellectual courage to confront the Jewish national project and its many messengers around the world. However, since **it is all a matter of consciousness-shift, things are going to change soon.** In fact, this very text is there to prove that they are changing already.

To stand by the Palestinians is to save the world, but in order to do so we have to be courageous enough to stand up and admit that it is not merely a political battle. It is not just Israel, its army or its leadership, it isn't even Dershowitz, Foxman and their silencing leagues. **It is actually a war against a cancerous spirit that hijacked the West** and, at least momentarily, diverted it from its humanist inclination and Athenian aspirations. To fight a spirit is far more difficult than fighting people, just because one may have to first fight its traces within oneself. If we want to fight Jerusalem, we may have to first confront Jerusalem within. We may have to stand in front of the mirror, look around us. We may have to trace for empathy in ourselves in case there is anything left.

Some related information:

[Archeologists Discover Ancient Khazar Kingdom](#)

The Khazars were known to be a semi-nomadic Turkic people who dominated the Pontic steppe and the North Caucasus regions from the 7th to the 10th century CE. The origin of the Khazars and their apparent conversion to Judaism is the subject of major dispute among modern historians.

In the 7th century CE, the Khazars founded an independent khaganate, or kingdom, in the Northern Caucasus along the Caspian Sea. It is believed that during the 8th or 9th century, around the height of their kingdom, the state religion became Judaism at the order of the king.

The first Jewish Khazar king was named Bulan, which means "elk", though some sources give him the Hebrew name Sabriel. His grandson, the king Obadiah, strengthened Judaism among the Khazars, inviting more rabbis into the kingdom and building synagogues.

Arthur Koestler's [The Thirteenth Tribe](#)

* My blog posts on all this: [The Most Monstrous Meme in History](#)

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