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جامعة النهرين
كلية العلوم السياسية

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Political Issues

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مدير التحرير
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كلية العلوم السياسية – جامعة النهرين

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- لغة المجلة هي اللغة العربية والانكليزية على أن يراعى الوضوح وسلامة النص.
- ترحب المجلة بنشر البحوث والدراسات السياسية النظرية والتطبيقية ولا سيما التي تجعل من قضايا المنطقة والعالم محط اهتمامها، ماضياً وحاضراً ومستقبلاً، وعلى وفق الآتي:

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4. يرفق مع كل بحث او دراسة ملخصين (احدهما باللغة العربية والآخر باللغة الانكليزية/ يتضمن اهداف البحث ، المنهج والمعالجة ، ابرز النتائج واهم الاستنتاجات والمقترحات) مع ضرورة مراعاة ان الملخص مختلف اختلافا جذريا عن المقدمة وليس تكرارا لها .
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6. يرفق مع كل بحث ودراسة سيرة ذاتية مختصرة للباحث وتعهد .

- تقوم المجلة بإخطار الباحثين بإجازة بحوثهم أو دراساتهم من عدمها بعد عرضها على محكمين تختارهم على نحو سري من بين أصحاب الاختصاص.

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- يجوز للمجلة أن تطلب إجراء تعديلات شكلية أو شاملة على البحث أو الدراسة قبل إجازتها للنشر بما يتماشى مع أهدافها.
- البحوث المنشورة تعبر عن آراء أصحابها ، ولاتعبر عن راي المجلة .
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E.mail: pirj@nahrainuniv.edu.iq

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Subject Review▽

The Jewishness of Israel: an analytical conceptual Overview at radical Jewish Mindset

Al-Bassous, Hani. Israel's Judaism: A Conceptual and Analytical Perspective on Extremist Jewish Thought. Published on the Turkish Vision for Articles and Studies website, 1 December 2016. Available at:
https://rouyaturkiyyah.com/research-articles-and-commentaries

Asst. Lecturer. Omar Salman Jasim*

According to the researcher, Judaism has been politically employed since the beginning of the Zionist movement to secure the legitimacy of the settlement of the land of Palestine, and later turned into a legal pillar used to redefine the state, citizenship and rights.

Researcher Hani El-Bassous believes that Israel's insistence on recognizing the state's Judaism does not stem from a cultural or religious need, but from purely political motives, foremost of which is the demographic obsession and the fear of Israel turning into a binational one. Hence, the demand for a "Jewish state" is understood, in his analysis, as an attempt to close the horizon of political solutions, liquidate the right of return, and turn the Palestinians inside (Israel) into a population without rights.

The researcher also links the escalation of the discourse on the "Jewishness of the state

" with the rise of religious and ultra-nationalist Zionist currents, which reintroduced religion into the heart of the Zionist political project, not as a moral reference, but as a tool of mobilization and exclusion, and in this context he is credited with revealing the relationship between Israeli legislation, ideological discourse and settlement practice on the ground **(El-Bassous, 2016).**

However, this presentation, despite its importance, remains, as Sunnis later on, in need of stricter conceptual control, especially with regard to the separation between General Judaism and state Judaism and between criticism of Zionism and criticism of religion, in addition to omitting a very important axis, which is

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* كلية العلوم السياسية – جامعة النهرين Omar.salman@nahrainuniv.edu.iq

University of Al-Nahrain / College of Political Science
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the use of the concept of "anti-Semitism" and"God's chosen people" in defense of State Judaism.

Here it can be said that understanding the problematic of the "Jewish state" is impossible without returning to Judaism itself, not as a political identity, but as a religion and historical heritage formed over many centuries in different socio-cultural contexts.Judaism is, in essence, a monotheistic religion based on a moral and legislative system, on a contractual relationship between man and God, and not on the concept of sovereignty or the nation-state.

Historically, Jewish communities have lived in multiple communities and developed different modes of religiosity, interpretation, and religious practice, making Judaism a diverse space that cannot be reduced to a single paradigm. Jewish religious texts also did not contain a modern conception of the state, nor a call for the establishment of a national political entity based on religious or ethnic superiority. Rather, the idea of "salvation" in traditional Jewish theology remained tied to a divine will, not to a human political project.

Hence, the connection of Judaism with the modern nation-state represents a historical and intellectual break, not a natural extension. This break is what the Zionist discourse deliberately ignored when it reinterpreted religious texts in a political interpretation that served the settlement project and domination.

Since the concept of "State Jewry" did not appear as an organic extension of Judaism as a religion, but took shape within a specific historical and political context, the context of modern European nationalities in the nineteenth century, Zionism, in its early Genesis, was certainly not a religious movement, but a secular national project that responded to what was known in Europe as the "Jewish question", that is, the social and political exclusion of Jews within the emerging national communities. Since its beginnings, the movement has sought to transform Jews from a religious group distributed among various countries into a "political nation" that owns land and a state. In this context, religion was not the starting point, but the tool. religious and biblical symbols were later invoked to provide historical and moral legitimacy to a settlement project that, from its very first moments, faced the problem of the indigenous population's presence in Palestine. Thus, the religious narrative was transformed into a political narrative, the sacred text was transformed into a royal document, and religious history was transformed into a sovereign argument.

This transformation shows that the "Jewishness of the state" is not an inevitable result of the Jewish religion, but the result of a conscious ideological process based on the reinterpretation of religion to serve the project of the Israeli

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entity.Therefore, linking the state with Judaism was not intended to protect Judaism as a religion or represent it, but to use it to enshrine a new political reality based on exclusion and settlement.

The historical course (of the Israeli state) shows that the idea of the "Promised Land" was not conjured up as a theological concept, but was reproduced within a modern political discourse.the land in the traditional religious perception is not legal property in the modern sense and is not subject to the concepts of sovereignty and borders, but is linked to a symbolic and moral relationship.

In the Zionist project, this symbolism was removed and transformed into an exclusive political right, and thus the idea moved from the level of faith and belief to the levels of authority and law. this transition cannot be considered a natural development, but a radical transformation of the religious idea (the Israeli state) was not based on to achieve a religious content, but rather to use religion to justify the existing political reality of rape and settlement by force. This transformation is what makes Israel, in its practice, a modern nation-state, use religion as a tool of exclusion, and therefore the "Jewishness of the state" does not represent a restoration of religion, but rather its secularization in a selective way that serves the authority **(al-Sharif, 1985, pp. 19-51).**

Since its foundation, and not later, as the researcher pointed out, Israel has relied on employing Judaism at three overlapping levels: the first internal level, the second external level, and the third symbolic level. At the internal level, full citizenship was linked to Jewish affiliation, which emptied the concept of citizenship of its civic content and turned it into an ethnic bond. Externally, Judaism has been used as an umbrella link for Jews in the world, to secure political and financial support and link their fate to a country in which most of them do not live, but on a symbolic level, the Jewish memory, especially the Holocaust, has been used as a permanent moral capital that is invoked whenever criticism of state policies is directed.

This recruitment has produced serious results, most notably the reduction of Judaism in Israel, and the transformation of any political criticism into a violation of religious identity, and thus Judaism is no longer a moral framework, but has become a political cover used to justify the policies of occupation, extermination, discrimination and cleansing **(Abdul-Hay, 2021, pp. 2-5).**

The researcher also did not refer to an important concept, namely, the "Chosen People of God", as it was one of the most politicized religious concepts in the Zionist discourse and in the Jewish heritage, as this concept does not indicate

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ethnic superiority or political privilege, but rather a mandate and moral responsibility.

However, Israel reinterpreted this concept in a closed nationalist interpretation, turning it into a basis for discrimination and a pretext to justify policies of exclusion, marginalization and violence.thus, the concept was emptied of its moral content and turned into a tool of domination. the irony here is that Israel, which believes or claims to represent Judaism, violates one of its most important value principles. This coup reveals that the Judaism of the state is not a continuation of Judaism, but a break with it, and that employing religion was only a way to sanctify a political reality based on force and extremism, not on values.

In addition, the concept of anti-Semitism is a documented historical phenomenon that arose in the modern European context and was based on hatred of Jews as a religious or ethnic group. This phenomenon culminated in the Nazi Holocaust, which represents an indisputable or justifiable humanitarian crime, but the contemporary problem lies not in recognizing this crime, but in politicizing the concept of anti-Semitism and turning it into an ideological defense tool for the (Israeli state).

The definition of anti-Semitism has been expanded to include criticism of the Zionist Movement, opposition to the policies of occupation, murder and repression, or refusal to define (Israel) itself as a Jewish state.This expansion does not serve the fight against racism, but confuses religion and politics and gives the state false moral immunity.

This usage also harms the Jews themselves because it forcibly binds them to policies (state) that do not represent all of them, and turns them into a political shield.Hence, criticism of the Jewishness of the state is not incompatible with resistance to anti-Semitism, but can be considered a defense of the true meaning of the concept against Zionist political vulgarity. **(Abdul-Hay,2021,p.8).**

Based on the above, it is necessary to ask a fundamental question, namely, is Israel's Jewishness extremist or not

Although the researcher **(Hani El-Bassous)**, confirmed in his current study that the (Judaism of Israel), is of an extreme religious nature, but in fact, when we study in depth about the nature of the subject, noting that (Israel) put this thought politically and more extreme, it can be said that the thesis **(Hani El-Bassous)** succeeded in diagnosing the exclusionary dimension of State Judaism and linked it with the Zionist settlement project, but stopped at the limits of political analysis, and did not move sufficiently to the philosophical dismantling

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of the concept, the distinction between Judaism in general and state Judaism in particular implicitly, not explicitly, which weakened the immunity to put forward ready-made ideological accusations.

The absence of an independent treatment of the concept of anti-Semitism deprived the research of a central analytical tool to understand how Israel protects its ideological project from criticism, and the inclusion of this axis would have shown that the problem is not in criticism, but in silencing criticism.

This study also shows that (the Jewishness of Israel) is not an expression of Judaism nor the realization of a religious idea, but a modern political ideology that employed religion to achieve the project of an ethnic nation-state based on exclusion and the negation of the other.it is also clear that the flaw lies not only in politics, but in the philosophical foundation of the state itself, which was based in contrast to the concept of the modern state and equal citizenship.

Therefore, the criticism of the Jewishness of the state is not an anti-Jewish position, but an academic and moral practice that seeks to free religion from political employment and to re-consider the meaning of the state as a framework of justice and not an instrument of domination and exclusion.**(Al Sheriff,1985,p55).**

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