

The 1946 Exchange between Rav Tzair (Chaim Tchernowitz) and Rav Binyamin (Yehoshua Radler-Feldman) on Bi-Nationalism and the Creation of a Jewish State

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In his *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle observed that there are reasons for friendship. He argued that the highest form of friendship is one where two friends share similar virtues and interests and respect one another's character. I believe that Aaron Panken and I enjoyed such a friendship. We not only had the highest mutual respect for one another, we also shared countless interests. Among these interests were a love of the State of Israel, a love for Rabbinic and Hebrew texts, a love for public discourse among Jewish intellectuals, and a love for the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion. I hope to pay tribute to Aaron and these specific interests in which we both delighted by focusing in this essay on a debate that took place in 1946 between Rav Tzair (Chaim Tchernowitz) and Rav Binyamin (Yehoshua Radler-Feldman) over the issues of political Zionism, bi-nationalism, and the formation of a Jewish state.

Rav Tzair (1871–1949) was professor of Talmud and Rabbinic literature at the Jewish Institute of Religion and a scholar of prodigious proportions. He was a *talmid muvhak* of Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Spektor of Kovno and taught Chaim Nachman Bialik and other Zionist and Hebrew language luminaries in the renaissance and

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renewal of Jewish life that he helped foster in Odessa through the creation of a rabbinical seminary there in 1907. In 1914, Tchernowitz received his Ph.D. from the University of Wuerzburg and in 1923 assumed his position at JIR at the invitation of Stephen S. Wise. Rav Tzair was the author of the magisterial *Toldot HaPoskim* and *Toldot HaHalachah*, works that have earned him enduring fame as an outstanding luminary in the field of Rabbinics, and he was also the founder and editor of the Hebrew monthly *Bitzaron* and an ardent political Zionist.¹

Rav Binyamin (1880–1957) was born in Galicia and received a traditional religious education. He was also an ardent Hebraist and active Zionist from youth, as well as a voracious reader of German literature. Rav Binyamin lived at different times in Berlin and London. He was a close friend and collaborator of Yosef Haim Brenner and earned the praise and respect of Shai Agnon. Radler-Feldman made *aliyah* in 1907, becoming a founder of Brit Shalom along with Judah Magnes and others in 1925 and serving as editor of its journal *Sh'i'fateinu* even as he remained active in religious Zionist circles. While he parted company with Brit Shalom in the 1930s when the group would not insist on unrestricted immigration quotas for Jews in Palestine,² Rav Binyamin remained active in groups promoting Arab-Jewish rapprochement until the end of his life. He worked unceasingly for peace and partnership between Jews and Arabs and participated in organizations like the Jewish-Arab League for Rapprochement and Ihud, and he was the founder and editor of the Ihud journal, *Ner*, which challenged the Israeli public to affirm and respect the rights of its Arab citizens and to accept responsibility for the expulsion of Arab residents from Israel.³

By presenting and analyzing a highly charged debate that took place between these two men in the Hebrew polemical literature of their day, I will illuminate their respective and divergent positions on Zionism and the creation of a Jewish state. In so doing, I hope to display the variety and effervescence as well as the divisions in Zionist thought that existed immediately prior to the creation of the State. My essay will indicate how a famed professor of Talmud at JIR, in whose line Aaron Panken would one day stand as a scholar and teacher, stood firmly ensconced in the Revisionist camp of Jabotinsky and Begin. From that perspective, Rav Tzair showered criticism on Rav Binyamin and his allies like Judah Magnes who

were advocates of a bi-national state in Palestine. While I am certain Aaron would have parted from a number of the views of Rav Tzair, I know he would have enjoyed reading and reflecting on this argument between Rav Tzair and Rav Binyamin and that he would have delighted in the thoughtful and learned disagreements both these men put forth in such a classically beautiful Hebrew. He would have seen each as worthy of respect and resonated to their cadences. I hope this essay constitutes proper tribute to Aaron—my friend and my successor, who so loved HUC-JIR and who led our *beit midrash* to ever greater heights.

The Position of Rav Binyamin

Writing in *HaDoar* in June 1946, Rav Binyamin reported a private correspondence he had with one of his friends regarding “the policy of Bi-Nationalism” advocated by Magnes and his party.⁴ The friend had written that he completely opposed the idea of a Jewish political state in Palestine and assumed that Rav Binyamin was similarly disposed. While the correspondence was intended to be private, Rav Binyamin elected to respond publicly because the matter was of such pressing public import and should not be confined to the private realm.⁵ He indicated that he did not stand in “100% opposition” to the establishment of a state, nor was he absolutely opposed to the idea of a “partition” (*chalukah*) of the Land between Arab and Jew. Finally, he even claimed that he did not unqualifiedly support the creation of a bi-national state. He wrote that he saw “light and shadows” in each of these proposals.

However, if his interlocutor believed that Jewish support for bi-nationalism grew out a sense of *rachmanut* (compassion) for the Arabs, then he was surely mistaken. Rather, Rav Binyamin argued that his thinking on these issues was informed by a “realistic assessment” of the situation in 1946 Mandatory Palestine. First, he maintained that the British would never agree to a Jewish state on both sides of the Jordan. Those Revisionists who believed such a goal attainable were mistaken. He wrote, “If we merit even the shadow of an independent Jewish state,” we will receive “only a portion of the Land. There are no prospects to achieve more than this.” Secondly, Rav Binyamin asserted that if Palestine were divided, then the Arab section would be ruled by the Husseini family, who were the majority party among the Palestinians. This frightened

Rav Binyamin because the Husseini clan was “fanatically opposed to the Jewish national home”⁶ and its leader, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, Hajj Amin Husseini, had made a “wartime alliance with the Nazis”⁷ and completely rejected any notion of a Jewish state in Palestine.

Most significantly, Rav Binyamin argued that “a partition” into two states would assure an unending future of conflict between the two states. Should a Jewish state and an Arab state be declared, both Jews and Arabs would declare their opposition to the other state. Rav Binyamin warned, “Neither we nor they will willingly agree to partition. Neither we nor they will agree to surrender any ground. Two sovereign peoples will be free to prepare for the next conflict. The extremists among the two peoples will be the victors. Armed conflict will be unavoidable.” What then would emerge from a partition into two states? Rav Binyamin feared this “would be the end” of Jews in the Land, “perhaps the third *churban* (destruction),⁸ unless the Russians conquer Jew and Arab alike.”

Rav Binyamin acknowledged that advocates of the creation of a Jewish state did not desire such outcomes. However, no other outcome, in his view, could be reasonably foreseen. From his vantage point, the growth and strength of the *yishuv*⁹ would be possible and armed conflict avoided only if the domination of the Husseini family over any portion of the Land was prevented. He maintained that such a position arose from considerations of *realpolitik* and that those who advocated this stance in the Zionist camp did this not “on account of *ahavat Yishmael* (love of the Arab people), but because of *ahavat Yisrael* (love of the people Israel).” With this dire warning, Rav Binyamin rested his case.

The Response of Rav Tzair

Rav Tzair identified with the positions of Revisionist Zionism and had the greatest admiration for Vladimir Jabotinsky.¹⁰ It was no wonder then that he responded immediately to Rav Binyamin and the circles Rav Binyamin represented with a sharp rejoinder.¹¹ Indeed, Rav Tzair did not hesitate to criticize the positions Rav Binyamin put forth in his article. While he spoke with respect of Rav Binyamin and clearly admired his learning, he stated at the outset that he was glad that Rav Binyamin published this private exchange of letters publicly because it revealed what was really

in the hearts and minds of the members of Ihud and the camp of "Magnes and his allies." Tchernowitz attacked "these defenders of the descendants of Ishmael," and complained that they arrogantly "preach their words of ethics to us." Rav Tzair stated that these Jewish advocates of the Arab cause assert "that we, the Children of Israel are 'bandits (*listim*)' who have come to" Palestine to "steal the inheritance of the Arabs (*B'nei Yishmael*)," despite the well-known commentary by Rashi on Genesis 1 that contends that God gave the Land of Israel to the Jewish people. In making this last comment, the religious traditionalism of Rav Tzair was apparent. Rav Tzair continued by going beyond the words of Rav Binyamin himself and expressed his upset that Ihud and its supporters charged their fellow Jews with disturbing Arab "security on their land" and what he saw as the Ihud claim that Palestine is "both legally and ethically theirs (the Arabs), and that they (the Arabs) are therefore entitled to remain its masters forever."¹²

Rav Binyamin's essay clearly provoked the ire Tchernowitz held towards the entire Ihud camp. Rav Tzair charged that the words and demands of these "Musarniks" were ones of "scorn and derision (*dofi*)." While he felt compelled to acknowledge that Rav Binyamin himself stood firmly anchored within the bounds of "historical Judaism," Rav Tzair stated that he was puzzled by his stance and asked rhetorically how a Torah scholar like Rav Binyamin could identify with such circles. He stated that one might think there would be a rationale for this. However, the article Rav Binyamin penned indicated that he and those in his circle possessed no "great secret" or "great dream." Theirs were nothing more than "*patumei milei b'alma* (words of enticement)" designed to seduce a buyer into accepting a proposition or proposal that was untenable.¹³ In sum, Rav Tzair said that the grounds on which Rav Binyamin stood in making his arguments were "incorrect and his conclusion [therefore] illogical."¹⁴

Rav Tzair charged that the advocates of bi-nationalism "impeded" the realization of Jewish national sovereignty in the Land of Israel because their pronouncements supported the notion that the Zionists "are the robbers and [the Arabs] are the robbed." In so doing, the policies of men like Rav Binyamin and Magnes actually strengthened the Arab cause. Instead, Rav Tzair contended that the Jews should claim both sides of the Jordan and assert that all *Eretz Yisrael* belongs to the Jews. If this assertion were made by

all Jews, then a compromise between Jew and Arab might in fact one day be possible. While Rav Tzair was not sanguine about such a compromise, he did believe that Arabs “would not dare to demand” the entire Land should there be such Jewish unity. Rather, Rav Tzair claimed that the Arabs would reluctantly accept a compromise in the face of such a Jewish claim and peace might thereby be achieved. He stated that the 1919 letters of “King Faisal to Dr. Weizmann and Justice Frankfurter demonstrated”¹⁵ the truth of his assertion.¹⁶

Rav Tzair then went on to address the specific arguments of Rav Binyamin and argued that the establishment of a Jewish “state” in the Land of Israel would not necessarily lead to “partition” of the Land between Jew and Arab. Rather, he believed that all the Land of Israel on both sides of the Jordan ought to constitute the Jewish state. This was justified from both moral and historical perspectives as well as from the standpoint of international law as the Balfour Declaration dictated explicitly. He declared that the Peel Commission proposal to partition the Land between Jew and Arab did not arise from a concern for the plight of the Arabs or the Arab nation nor from the claim that the Arabs “were plundered.” Rather, Britain exploited an argument of “fairness” to each side as a pretext for furthering their own interests. Indeed, the British desire to retain significant sovereignty over the Land as expressed in the Morrison-Grady Report in 1946 bore witness to this British intention.

Rav Tzair contended that it would be a tragedy if the Jewish people acquiesced to the stance of Ihud that saw “our [Jewish] claim” as being less “than half the Land.” Indeed, if the Zionist camp failed to lay claim to the whole Land of Israel, then what kind of fair compromise could ever emerge. As Tchernowitz dramatically declared, “What will remain to us? A narrow and depleted ghetto in the midst of a vibrant Arab state?” He then angrily charged, “This is the perspective of Rav Binyamin and his group.”¹⁷

Rav Tzair then went on to state that Rav Binyamin could not possibly know with certainty that “partition” would lead inexorably to Husseini family rule over an Arab sector or state. He observed that there was much “enmity among their families,” and therefore no one could know with certainty who would rule over an Arab state. At the same time, Rav Tzair applauded this enmity among their families because he was convinced that “we could exploit this

for the good of the Jewish state." Furthermore, he thought it irrelevant whether the Husseini family or any other family ruled over an Arab state because he was convinced that any Arab state would be hostile to a Jewish one. After all, Rav Tzair chided Rav Binyamin and his allies, "None of the Arab notables" affirm even in "a weak way any sympathy" for the bi-national visions of Ihud. Magnes, Rav Binyamin, and their party should recognize that despite the antagonisms these Arab families often exhibit towards one another, "they all are of one mind in their hatred of Zionists." Thus, if an Arab state should emerge and the Husseini family should rule over it, "Why should this disturb us?"¹⁸ Rav Tzair clearly felt that Arab hostility towards a Zionist state was so all-encompassing among the Arabs that whichever Arab would rule was of no consequence to the Zionists should an Arab state ever emerge. He believed that they would all be hostile to a Jewish state.

Tchernowitz critiqued as illogical the claim of Rav Binyamin that partition of the Land would lead to ongoing belligerence between the two states should two states be created. Such words were no more than unsubstantiated "*divrei nevuah* (words of prophecy)." Rav Tzair asserted that those in his camp were not "completely naïve (*temimim b'yoter*)." Of course, there would be external opposition from the Arab side. That was to be expected. However, there would be internal opposition as well, and that it is what concerned him most. Indeed, Rav Tzair stated explicitly that he feared "internal discord" among "our different groups and our political, economic, spiritual, and religious" parties more than he did "external confrontation with our Arab neighbors." In fact, he claimed that he did not fear the Arabs at all. After all, a Jewish state could be attained only with the agreement of England and the family of nations who would "whisper into the ears of the Arabs that they should be 'good children (*yeladim tovim*).'" What power would the Arabs have then? On the contrary, when "a Jewish state is founded that is spiritually and culturally strong, and possibly, armed with military strength as well—something which I do not seek—England herself will be an ally of this new state. And it is possible that other great nations will also seek to be close to [the Jewish state]." Rav Tzair clearly believed that military power and the capability of a state to employ force would secure the safety of the Jews.¹⁹

Rav Tzair concluded that the danger the Arabs posed to the Jews was greater now that there was no Jewish state than if Arabs and

Jews would one day be divided into separate states. He argued that now “the Arabs are silently supported by England and perhaps others, and we cannot openly oppose them. However, if the Jews have a state with an army, we can openly oppose them.” His view that the reliance upon military force that a Jewish state would provide as a guarantor of Jewish safety is once more expressed in this statement. In contrast, in the single bi-national state that Ihud proposed, Rav Tzair asserted that the Husseini family could create greater havoc than if a Jewish state and an Arab state were fashioned separately. “In a single state,” Rav Tzair opined, “it is impossible to think that there will be peace and tranquility between two nations who are so different from one another in life, religion, faith, worldview, economic, familial, and spiritual status. Arabs and Jews are as distant from one another as East is from West.”²⁰

Addressing himself directly to Magnes and those like Rav Binyamin who Tchernowitz believed supported the ideal of bi-nationalism, Rav Tzair contended, “If one people [the Arab one] is always the majority and the other [the Jewish people] is forever a minority, as Magnes proposes, . . . will there not be confrontation” on every issue? He contended that the first such question would surely be on the “burning question of [unrestricted] *aliyah*.” There would be fights each day. While it would be wonderful if “the greatness and strength of the Jewish settlement” could be attained “without the fear of armed conflict,” Rav Tzair felt it was impossible to achieve such security without the military might a Jewish state would grant the Jewish people. He concluded his essay by asking—almost mockingly—whether “Ihud had achieved an agreement with the Husseini family or any other Arab party. Is there any desire for this [bi-national state] from the Arab side?” Rav Tzair clearly felt the answer to these questions was a resounding no, and he provocatively and challengingly completed his essay by asking, “What reality is attached, Rav Binyamin, to the idea you and your friends have of bi-nationalism?” For Rav Tzair, the hopes for a bi-national state were both illusory and dangerous for the Jewish people, and his defense of Revisionist Zionism and the need for a Jewish state unapologetic. Despite his respect for Rav Binyamin on many levels, his disagreement with him on the issues surrounding political Zionism and the necessity for the establishment of a sovereign Jewish state could not have been more pronounced.²¹

Afterword

The essays of Rav Tzair and Rav Binyamin presented in this article testify to the polarity and intensity of diverse views in Zionist circles on the near-eve of the establishment of the State of Israel. Echoes of these arguments abound today in the Jewish community as critics and supporters of *M'dinat Yisrael* and its political and cultural policies clash with one another. Such pluralism reflects the ongoing and contentious vitality of the Zionist dream. As a matter of historical interest, it is fascinating to note that a man like Rav Tzair with his strong support of Revisionist Zionism walked the halls and taught in the classrooms of JIR in the years prior to the creation of the Jewish state. I believe my friend Aaron Panken would have applauded this even as I am certain he would not have agreed with all his views. At the same time, I am certain Aaron would have been even more delighted by the intellectual effervescence and unbounded Jewish passion Rav Tzair brought to his vocation and that he would have applauded the esteem Rav Tzair displayed towards Rav Binyamin even as he vociferously disagreed with him. I am sure he would have seen this exchange as an instructive model for our community today.

Notes

1. For a sampling of the information on the life and works of Rav Tzair, see his autobiography, Chaim Tchernowitz, *Pirkei Hayim* (New York: Bitzaron, 1954); Eliezer Raphael Malachi, *P'eri 'ets Hayim; bibliyografyah shel kitve Haayim Tshernovits (Rav Tsa'ir) u-reshimat ha-ma'amarim she-nikhtevu 'alav ve-al sefarav* (Hebrew) (New York: Va'ad HaYovel, 1946); Hillel Bavli, Pinkos Churgin, and Simon Halkin, *Kovetz Rav Tzair: Li-mel'ot hamishim shanah le'avodatoha-sifrutit* (New York: Bitzaron, 1948); and Benjamin Hoffseyer, "Rabbi Chaim Tchernowitz, 'Rav Tzair,' and the Yeshiva in Odessa," (Ph.D. dissertation, Yeshiva University, 1967).
2. As Anita Shapira notes in *Israel: A History* (Waltham: Brandeis University Press, 2012), 87, "After some deliberation the British government . . . issued a document known as the 1939 White Paper, stating that immigration [of Jews to Palestine] would be limited to 75,000 over five years and that any further immigration would be conditional upon Arab consent." Rav Binyamin found such restriction unacceptable.
3. For a sampling of information on the life and works of Rav Binyamin, see Rav Binyamin, *Mi-zaborov mei-ad kinneret: sipu-rei zichronot*

(Tel Aviv: Agudat ha-sofrim ha-'iv'rim le-yad D'vir, 1950); and Yehuda Even-Shemuel, Naftali Ben-Menachem, and Shraga Kadari, *R. Binyamin: zikhrono li'verachah* (Jerusalem: n.p., 1958). During the past decade, the secondary literature on Rav Binyamin has grown quite significantly. David Myers, Reuven Gafni, Zohar Maor, and Anita Shapira are among the prominent scholars who have written on him. He like, Rav Tzair, is surely worthy of a full-scale monograph.

4. Rav Binyamin, "Elef shirtutim v'shirtut—A Thousand Drawings and Sketches (Random Observations)," *HaDoar* 28, no. 1 (Sivan 5706): 686–87. All quotations of Rav Binyamin in this article are taken from p. 687.
5. The context for this assessment by Rav Binyamin extended back for more than a decade and was only intensified by events and proposals of 1946. A full historical review is not possible here. However, in 1937, the Peel Commission had recommended the partition of Palestine and the creation of a Jewish state. This recommendation was opposed by the indigenous Arab population and led, in the words of Rashid Khalidi, *The Iron Cage: The Story of the Palestinian Struggle for Statehood* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2006), 111, to "heavy casualties" among the Arabs. Such widespread "rebellion by the Palestinians," according to Khalidi, "give[s] ample evidence of their willingness to make sacrifices in order to achieve their national goals of independence from Britain and an end to the process whereby they saw their country slipping under the control of foreigners [Zionists]." The Jews, in opposition to the near unanimity Palestinians displayed in rejecting the Peel proposal and its vision of a Jewish state, were divided. As Anita Shapira observed, "The partition plan led to bitter dispute among Jews. Supporters saw it as the seed of an independent Jewish state, while for opponents it meant giving up the vision of the historical land of Israel . . . Another group of opponents based their objections. . . on the rational argument that the partitioned Jewish state would be unable to sustain itself and to absorb and be a refuge for masses of Jews." Shapira, *Israel*, 84. The argument over partition and how political autonomy over Palestine was to be achieved continued among all the parties throughout the next nine years. By 1946, the joint British-American Morrison-Grady Plan that would have provided for permanent British hegemony in Palestine while granting limited autonomy to Jews and Arabs was rejected by all sides. For a full description and analysis of this plan and Zionist and Arab rejection of it, see Michael J. Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers: 1945–1948* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), chaps. 6, "The Morrison-Grady Report"; 7, "Zionist Policy: The Return to Partition"; and 8, "Arab Policy in 1946," 116–202. The key point that emerges from all these

accounts is that Arabs and Palestinians were near unanimous in their rejection of any plan that would allow for Zionist political hegemony in Palestine while Jews themselves were divided into different camps regarding the establishment of a Jewish State. This provides the historical backdrop for the debate between Rav Tzair and Rav Binyamin and explains why partition of Palestine emerged once again in 1947 despite the anger and disappointment all the principals in the conflict exhibited over such division.

6. Shapira, *Israel*, 81.
7. Khalidi, *The Iron Cage*, 62 and 127.
8. Here Rav Binyamin employed the classical Rabbinic term used to reference the destruction of the First Temple at the hands of the Babylonians and the Second Temple by the Romans. In using this term, Rav Binyamin not only resurrected a traditional trope from Jewish history but intended to convey how disastrous he believed it would be for the Zionists to erect a Jewish state under contemporaneous political and demographic conditions in Palestine.
9. The term used to describe the Jewish settlement in the Land.
10. In his work *Masechet Zikhronot: Partzufim ve-ha'a'rakhot* (New York: Va'ad ha-yovel, 1945) Rav Tzair wrote a chapter on "Jabotinsky," 181–91. This essay is laudatory in every way. Tchernowitz states that he knew Jabotinsky "almost from his childhood," and he provides one glowing description after another of Jabotinsky and his intellectual prowess and activist talents. On pp. 182–83, Rav Tzair writes of Jabotinsky, "Only in an environment like that [of Odessa] could a man of brave and mighty spirit like Jabotinsky emerge, a man who would dream of the resurrection of the heroism and the claims for integrity and equality of the nation of Israel among the nations [of the world] . . . Jabotinsky was by his nature a fighter. He was a type of hero reminiscent of the heroes of Israel during the era of the Judges."
11. The article, Chaim Tchernowitz (Rav Tzair), "The Perspective of Bi-Nationalism," while published originally in 1946, can be found in *Hevlei Geulah: Kovetz ma'a'amarim 'al ma'a'vak l'hakamat medinat yisrael* (Travail of Redemption: Essays on the Struggles for the Establishment of the State of Israel) (New York: The Shoulson Press, 1949), 198–201.
12. *Ibid.*, 198.
13. The phrase is taken from *Bava M'tzia* 66a.
14. Tchernowitz, "The Perspective of Bi-Nationalism," 199.
15. T.G. Fraser, *Chaim Weizmann: The Zionist Dream* (London: Haus Publishing, 2009), 73–74, reports that on December 11, 1918, prior to the 1919 Paris Peace Conference, then Syrian King Faisal ibn Husain met with Chaim Weizmann, and on January 3, 1919, the two signed "what was to become known as the Faisal-Weizmann

agreement," which "would allow for the implementation of the Balfour Declaration." The two men agreed to "promote the close co-operation" between what would become an Arab state and a Jewish state, "the boundaries of which would be defined after the Peace Conference." As Neil Caplan reports, in his article "Faisal Ibn Husain and Zionists: A Re-examination with Documents," *The International History Review* 5, no. 4 (November 1983): 565, when Faisal shortly thereafter expressed hostile views towards Zionism in the French newspaper *Le Matin*, Felix Frankfurter, then a U.S. Zionist delegate to the Peace Conference, met with Faisal to determine the actual views of the King. On March 1, 1919, after their meeting, Faisal wrote a warm letter to Frankfurter, saying:

We feel that the Arabs and Jews are cousins in race, have suffered similar oppressions at the hands of powers stronger than themselves, and by a happy coincidence have been able to take the first step towards the attainment of their national ideals together. We Arabs, especially the educated among us, look with the deepest sympathy on the Zionist movement. Our deputation here in Paris is fully acquainted with the proposals submitted yesterday by the Zionist Organization to the Peace Conference, and we regard them as moderate and proper . . . We will wish the Jews a most hearty welcome home. With the chiefs of your movement, especially with Dr. Weizmann we have had, and continue to have the closest relations. He has been a great helper of our cause . . . Our two movements complete one another. The Jewish movement is national, and not imperialist: our movement is national and not imperialist, and there is room in Syria for us both.

The correspondence between Faisal and Frankfurter is reprinted on pp. 581–83 of the Caplan article. As Rashid Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 166ff., points out, these meetings between Faisal and Weizmann and Frankfurter provoked the ire of many Arabs at the time and caused any number of Palestinians to become disillusioned with Faisal and his willingness to compromise with the Zionists. Of course, as Caplan indicates in his essay (p. 561), the interpretation and authenticity of the agreement between Faisal and Weizmann and the letter between Faisal and Frankfurter as well as the precise attitudes of the King towards Zionism have been the objects of considerable scholarly debate and polemical argument for a century now. However such debates and arguments are adjudicated, there is no question that Zionists like Rav Tzair viewed Faisal as a "moderate" who was willing to accept a Jewish state in Palestine. He believed this was so only because Faisal recognized that the Jewish claim was in fact to the entire Land. Hence, a "two state solution" was a compromise he could entertain. In his essay, Rav Tzair was

asserting that Faisal was willing to make such a “compromise” only because the Zionists of 1920 made “maximal claims” to the Land.

16. Tchernowitz, “The Perspective of Bi-Nationalism,” 199.
17. *Ibid.*, 200.
18. *Ibid.*
19. *Ibid.*, 201.
20. *Ibid.*
21. *Ibid.*