

Review of: "[Commentary] Israel: A Problem the World Created (And Now Appears Unable to Solve)"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

Dear author and dear readers,

The paper is highly readable, and in my view, the language is impeccable. At first glance, it seems to be a well-crafted article. It's commendable that the author, although evidently not well-versed in the history of Zionism as indicated in the manuscript, made the endeavor to delve into this new subject matter. However, as I progressed with my reading, I contemplated abstaining from further review as my feedback tends to focus more on academic papers.

In academic paper writing, attention to detail is crucial, and in this instance, numerous inaccuracies in details are apparent. For instance, the Hamas massacre occurred in 2023, not 2024; the State of Israel was declared on May 14, 1948, and not as suggested by the author; the electoral transition in Israel transpired in 1977, not in the year stated in the paper. Additionally, the correct name of the Zionist leader is Theodor Herzl, not as incorrectly spelled out in the manuscript. While these may seem like minor points of scrutiny, these inaccuracies are indicative of broader issues across the paper.

The misconceptions present in the paper largely stem from a lack of expertise in the field of Israel Studies. I will provide just three instances to illustrate this point: (1) The depiction of Nathan Birnbaum as a precursor to Herzl in espousing national ideas is inaccurate; while Birnbaum was a Zionist, other leaders like Pinsker held more influence. (2) The discussion on reform Jews in the US and their views on Zionism overlooks significant Zionist factions within Judaism, particularly those in the American Jewish community. (3) The claim that Jabotinsky aimed to establish a Western civilization outpost lacks contextual grounding in his works or era, and the assertion that Revisionists hold a prominent political position in 21st-century Israeli governance lacks contextual relevance and reveals a fundamental misunderstanding of Israeli political dynamics.

While sources such as Wikipedia or Jewish Virtual Library may be suitable for high school students, their validity in academic writing is questionable. If I were an aspiring scholar in Israel studies, as the author presumably aims to be, I would consider using Wikipedia as a preliminary resource to locate more credible sources. Notably, the absence of prominent academic sources in almost every event or subject highlighted in the paper is concerning.

In addition to the numerous inaccuracies identified, a significant logical fallacy is present. It is contradictory to profess objectivity and then immediately inject personal viewpoints. For example, a statement such as (excerpt from line 1, paragraph 2, page 2/33): "In an objective historical context, the success of [...] Zionism [...] may eventually be regarded as

[a] political error" represents an inherent contradiction. This logical inconsistency is also evident in other seemingly objective statements like (excerpt from line 1, paragraph 3, page 3/33): "What is required is an immediate, complete ceasefire. The current position of Israel is not only untenable, but also illogical."

Allow me to clarify: the author, like any individual, has the right to hold political opinions. If the author wishes, he can even include these opinions as recommendations for the future of the Middle East in the concluding section. However, the manuscript frequently intertwines political opinions with assertions of objectivity. My suggestion is: Strive to maintain an academic approach devoid of both objectivity and subjectivity. Just focus on being scholarly in your work.