Canaanism: The Search for an Alternative Identity to Zionism in Israel

▶ Araştırma makalesi / *Research article*

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Abstract

Zionism, as Israel's founding ideological movement, aimed to construct a national identity through the Jewish religious tradition while presenting itself as a form of secular nationalism. This paradox—the incorporation of religious elements into a secular identity—has shaped the core "Traditionalist-Secular" divide in Israeli politics and emerged as a significant obstacle to forming a coherent nation-state identity. The official conception of Israeli identity has consistently reflected tensions between tradition and modernity, fostering the development of dissenting political positions from the state's early years. One notable response was the Canaanite movement, developed by a group of artists and intellectuals in the 1930s. Led by poet-journalist Yonatan Ratosh, the movement, known as the "Young Hebrews," critiqued Zionism's vision of identity and proposed an alternative nationalist discourse. Highlighting the distinction between Jewishness and Hebrewness, the Canaanites argued for the institutionalization of Israel as a secular nation-state. They posited that national identity should be rooted not in the religious affiliation of Jewishness but in the ethnic and geographical identity of Hebrewness. This study examines the contradictory nature of Zionist national identity and the critical nationalist response articulated by the Canaanite movement.

Keywords: Canaanism, Zionism, Young Hebrews.

Kenancılık: İsrail'de Siyonizme Alternatif Bir Kimlik Arayışı

Öz

İsrail'in kurucu fikir hareketi olarak Siyonizm, seküler bir milliyetçilik biçimi olarak Yahudi dinî geleneği üzerinden ulusal bir kimlik inşa edilmesini hedeflemiştir. İsrail siyasetindeki temel "Gelenekselci-Laik" ikiliğini de şekillendiren bu paradoksal durum –seküler bir kimliğin özünü oluşturan dinî ögeler meselesi– tutarlı bir ulus-devlet kimliği oluşturulmasının önündeki en önemli engellerden biri olmuştur. İsrail'de iktidarın resmi kimlik tahayyülü her daim geleneksel ile modern arasındaki bu kırılmadan izler taşımış ve bu durum, henüz erken devirlerden itibaren muhalif siyasal pozisyonların oluşumunu beraberinde getirmiştir. Bunlardan biri de 1930'lu yıllarda, İsrail'de bir grup sanatçı-entelektüel tarafından geliştirilen Kenancılıktır. Kendilerini "Genç İbraniler" olarak adlandıran ve başlarını şair-gazeteci Yonatan Ratosh'un çektiği bu grup, İsrail'de kurucu Siyonizm'in kimlik tahayyülünü sert bir şekilde eleştirerek yeni bir milliyetçi söylem biçimi ortaya koymuştur. Yahudilik (Jewish) ile İbranilik (Hebrew) arasındaki farka dikkat çeken Kenancılar, İsrail'in seküler bir ulus-devlet olarak kurumsallaşması gerekliliğini ifade etmiş ve ulusal kimliğin temelini de dinî bir aidiyet olan Yahudiğin değil, etnik ve coğrafi bir aidiyeti ifade eden İbraniliğin oluşturduğunu ileri sürmüşlerdir. Bu çalışmada, Siyonizm'in inşa ettiği ulusal kimlik anlayışının çelişkili karakteri vurgulanarak, buna eleştirel bir milliyetçi pozisyondan yanıt veren Kenancı hareketin bir incelemesi yapılacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kenancılık, Siyonizm, Genç İbraniler.

Introduction

> The historical event in itself, however important, does not remain in the popular memory, nor does its recollection kindle the poetic imagination save insofar as the particular historical event closely approaches a mythical model.[1]

Despite their contemporary character, national identities are mostly mythological constructs of belonging. More accurately, their potency is derived from the myths they include, even though their "construction" results from scientific and intellectual work. Because myths ignore secular, continuous time, they offer a supra-historical meaning and experience that gives reality a legitimate perspective. As Eliade pointed out, myths must exist in the background of identity for the "historical event" to activate the "poetic imagination", or, in other words, for that identity to take on a tangible form.

In modern Israel, national identity is formed around myths that the founding Zionist ideology methodically brought to the political arena. The ownership claim to the "holy lands," which acquires significance when viewed in the context of the "exile" and "return" motifs, reveals the mythical and religious components that contributed to the formation of contemporary national identity. Even now, there is a great deal of controversy around the relation between Judaism and Israeli identity. Different facets of Israel's identity crisis are highlighted by non-Jewish Israeli citizens (Palestinian Arabs), Beta Israel's[2] socioeconomic standing, and the class struggle between Sephardic, Mizrahi, and Ashkenazi communities. The question of who is "more" Israeli and who is not is often left unanswered by this identity-based paradox. Largely, this lies at the core of the state of Israel and the Israeli identity, a modern-secular political idea and the theological legitimacy fiction behind it.

Israel is a nation-state that was established on the principle of territoriality, in theory. Zionist thought, formed by the influence of nationalist ideas that flourished in Europe in the second half of the 19th century, established a nation-state imagination around the Enlightenment and secular values. This group of Jewish intellectuals, who were secular and very pragmatic, started a radical process of identity creation intending to transform Judaism –which is situated at the problematic junction of ethnic and religious affiliation– into a contemporary national identity. Beginning at the turn of the 20th century, many Old Testament-based stories as well as the whole cultural fabric contributes color to the Jewish religious identity.

As a natural consequence of this situation, terms such as Jew, Judaic, Hebrew, Israeli, and even Canaanite are often used interchangeably. The conceptual distinction between "Jew," "Hebrew," and "Judaic," which refer to ethno-religious identities, and "Israeli," a modern national identity, is notably blurred.[3] The nationalization of ethno-religious

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[1] Mircea Eliade, *Cosmos and History: The Myth of Eternal Return*, tr. Willard R. Trask (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1959), 42.

[2] The group, also known as Ethiopian Jews or *Falasha*, was brought to Israel through various waves of immigration and even official operations of the state of Israel starting in 1948. About Beta Israel, see: Steven Kaplan, *The Beta Israel (Falasha) in Ethiopia: From Earliest Times to the Twentieth Century* (New York: New York University Press, 1995).

[3] One reason for this overlap lies in the similarity of related terms in Hebrew. In the Old Testament, the word *goy* roughly means "nation," but it is almost exclusively used to refer to non-Jews. In modern Hebrew, the terms *le'om* and *uma* are preferred as equivalents for "nation," both of which have Biblical origins. Additionally, in nearly all history books published in Israel, the word *am* is used as a synonym for *le'om*. *Am* is also derived from

identities during the modern era (or their reinterpretation in more ethnically-oriented terms) represents a unique phenomenon, largely specific to the Middle East. Intellectuals from minority groups, such as Lebanese Maronites, Druzes, Armenians, Assyrians, and Nusayris, have developed nationalist discourses based on their respective communities, drawing inspiration from modern nationalist movements since the 19th century.[4] The modern identification of these communities has increasingly taken on an ethnic character, despite the presence of numerous religious myths and motifs. Zionism is not unique in this regard; rather, it aligns in many ways with other forms of Semitic nationalist discourse in the region.

The primary reason for identity confusion in Israel lies in the fact that the religious myths nationalized by Zionism still hold different meanings for Jews who are not Israeli citizens or who prioritize their religious affiliation over national identity. This confusion is undeniably linked to the exceptional situation of the Palestinians, who were rendered both "identityless" and homeless with the establishment of Israel. Canaanism emerged from a conceptual debate surrounding this contradictory position. Developed by several Jewish intellectuals, artists, and thinkers in the 1930s and 1940s, Canaanism asserts that "Hebrew" as an ethnic identity is more ancient and, therefore, more binding than "Jew" as a religious identity. Canaanites argue that this Hebrew identity forms the foundation of the modern nation-state of Israel and reject the notion of equating the "Israeli" nation with the "Jewish" identity, seeing it as inherently contradictory. While a Hebrew –or Canaanite– nation may exist, it is inaccurate to describe this community as a Jewish nation, as its roots are grounded in religion rather than language and geography.

The fundamental premise of Canaanism posits that the foundation of a modern nation should be based on ethnic, linguistic, or geographical essence rather than religious affiliation, which is theoretically sound. However, Canaanism is closely linked to discussions within Zionism during the founding years of Israel and is associated with a faction known as Revisionist Zionism. Additionally, the rise of fascist ideologies and organizational forms in Europe during the 1930s had a clear impact on Canaanism. Despite this, Canaanism has not emerged as an effective or active nationalist alternative within Israeli politics; rather, it has remained a significant concept in the realms of art, aesthetics, and intellectual discourse. Many Jewish intellectuals associated with the group known as the "Young Hebrews," led by the poet Yonatan Ratosh, became influential figures in Israel's art scene in subsequent years. Canaanism served as an important form of nationalist discourse by bringing attention to the deconstruction of identity in Israel and the myths that underpin it, thus opening up discussions about alternative Israeli identities. Nevertheless, while the founding Zionist

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the Bible and typically means "people." For the terminological studies on this subject, see: Shlomo Sand, *The Invention of the Jewish People* (New York: Verso, 2009), 28; Shaye J.D. Cohen, "Iudaios, Iudaeus, Judean, Jew", *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 69-106.

4   Ethno-religious identity refers to groups that do not constitute a nation, where it is nearly impossible to separate ethnic and religious affiliations due to their inherent integrity in pre-modern times. Examples of such groups in the pre-modern Middle East include Jews, Armenians, Maronites, Druzes, Nusayris, and other minority Christians (such as Assyrians and Nestorians). Although Armenian and Jewish identities now each have nation-states in the modern era, other groups continue to maintain their hybrid identities under minority status. This conceptualization is relatively uncommon in the literature on nationalism, particularly due to the dominant influence of constructivist theories. For a study that can form the basis for this conceptualization, see: Azar Gat, *Nations: The Long History and Deep Roots of Political Ethnicity and Nationalism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 68-83.

movement critiqued the core historical theses of Canaanism and established an original oppositional stance, its political response was quite limited.

This study will explore Canaanism as an internal critique within Jewish thought concerning the paradoxical nature of national identity in Israel. First, it will examine the efforts of founding Zionist thought to create an ethnic and national form of belonging from a religious identity. In this context, the issue of historiography –considered a fundamental factor in the construction of national identity– will be addressed, and the official historical narrative canonized by the founding Zionist movement will be analyzed. The foundations of the nation-state identity in Israel, constructed through the myths of Jewish cultural tradition, will be discussed. Subsequently, the criticisms raised by Canaanites regarding this nation-building practice will be investigated, along with the characteristics of the official identity that Canaanism seeks to revise at a theoretical level. Finally, the study will assess whether Canaanism, which has largely lost its influence in Israeli intellectual life since the 1960s, can be re-evaluated in relation to post-Zionism today, particularly regarding its stance on the Palestinian issue.

1. Nationalizing Judaism and the *Haskalah*

Israeli national identity was constructed through the nationalization of Judaism. The myths, narratives, and symbols that Judaism, as an ethno-religious identity, has preserved in written tradition for centuries have been meticulously transformed into a "nationalized" character by Zionist intellectuals. In its simplest form, this transformation entails reinterpreting Judaism as a modern national identity. Therefore, David Ohana is correct in describing the national identity narrative envisioned by Zionism as "mythical modernism."[5]

From the late 19th century to the mid-20th century, various ethnic and religious communities became subjects of intellectual pursuits aimed at constructing them as components of nation-states.[6] The process of nationalization is founded on the principle of envisioning each nationalized community and its culture as equivalent to its modern Western counterparts in various respects. This process involves the standardization of language by removing local dialects, stabilizing history through the compilation of various myths, oral narratives, and epics, and promoting symbolic indicators in public life to transform a territory into a "homeland." Such activities have often been interpreted in the literature as affirming the superiority of high culture over other subcultures[7] or a "civilizing process."[8]

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[5] David Ohana, *Modernism and Zionism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 2.

[6] This process corresponds to what Eric Hobsbawm calls "the invention of tradition." See: Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions", *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawm, Terence Ranger (London: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 1-15.

[7] Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Publisher, 1983), 35-39.

[8] Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process: Sociogenetic and Psychogenetic Investigations* (London: Wiley & Blackwell, 2000). The standardization of the Old Testament language and its dominance over Ladino and Yiddish are two key ways that Zionism interprets this process. Eliezer ben-Yehuda's writings were crucial in this regard. For more specific details, see: Taha Kılınç, *Dil ve İşgal: Eliezer ben-Yehuda ve Modern İbranicenin Doğuşu* (İstanbul: Ketebe Yayınları, 2024). Economic equality is emphasized around the subject of "settlement," and left-wing terminology is used in this discourse to actualize the Zionist founding thought's goals regarding the creation of a "high culture" centered in the Yishuv. See: Cyrus Schayegh, *The Middle East and the Making of the Modern World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2017), 76-79.

Zionism, as a modern form of nationalist discourse, is fundamentally rooted in one of the humanist Enlightenment movements prevalent in Europe during the second half of the 18th century. The "*Haskalah*," or Jewish Enlightenment, which translates to "erudition" and gained prominence among Jewish intellectuals primarily in Eastern Europe in the 1770s, is a pivotal event in the development of modern Jewish identity.[9] *Haskalah*, in which Jewish intellectuals such as Moses Mendelssohn (d. 1786), Naphtali Herz Wessely (d. 1805), and Isaac Baer Levinsohn (d. 1860) were involved, made a direct and decisive contribution to the issue of religious and ethnic interpretation of Judaism and was very influential in giving Jewish tradition a modern appearance. Inspired by the Enlightenment tradition that emphasized the triumph of reason across Europe, *Haskalah* thinkers vehemently opposed the isolation of the Jewish community in the diaspora. Prominent figures such as Mendelssohn, a leading theorist of the Jewish Enlightenment, underscored that no barriers were preventing Jews from integrating into the societies in which they lived.[10] Interpreting Judaism as a purely religious form of belonging represented a crucial step toward the secularization of Jewish thought in modern rational times. Indeed, the concept of *Haskalah* ultimately foregrounded the "assimilation" of Jews in Europe, restricted the visibility of Jewish identity in public life, and encouraged a new interpretation of the Old Testament.[11]

Like every modernist form of discourse, *Haskalah* formulated a new type of identity. It can be seen as a "phase A," or "cultural awakening," which nationalism theorists such as Miroslav Hroch and Eric Hobsbawm identified as essential for the realization of a nationalist movement.[12] The Jewish identity envisioned by *Haskalah* intellectuals represented a modern religious affiliation embedded with Enlightenment ideals, capable of integrating a rational-secular lifestyle (i.e., the national identity of the societies in which they lived) into its *habitus*.[13] Additionally, the revision of Jewish history through a contemporary interpretation of texts within the religious canon brought the ancient continuity of Jewish identity to the forefront. This Enlightenment critique of the rigid introversion characteristic of traditional Jewish thought established a new understanding of subjectivity, encapsulated in the notion of "the individual on the street, the Jew at home," for the first time on a theoretical level.[14]

From a direct perspective, Zionism emerged as a reaction to *Haskalah*. The rise of anti-Semitism across Europe in the mid-19th century demonstrated that the Enlightenment

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[9]   For detailed information on *Haskalah*, the works of Samuel Feiner are very instructive. See especially: Samuel Feiner, "Towards a Historical Definition of Haskalah", *New Perspectives on the Haskalah*, ed. Samuel Feiner, David Sorkin (Oxford: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2004), 184-221.

[10] Miri Freud-Kandel, "Modernist Movements", *Modern Judaism: An Oxford Guide*, ed. Nicholas de Lange, Miri Freud-Kandel (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 83-90.

[11] Feiner, "Towards," 185.

[12] Miroslav Hroch, *European Nations: Explaining Their Formations* (New York: Verso, 2015); Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nation since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (London: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 46-80.

[13] On the foundations of modern Jewish identity based on the *Haskalah*, see: Samuel Feiner, *Haskalah and History: The Emergence of a Modern Jewish Historical Consciousness* (Oxford: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2002), 317-341.

[14] Eliezer Schweid, "The Political Philosophy of the National Haskalah Movement in Eastern Europe", *A History of Modern Jewish Religious Philosophy*, v. II, tr. Leonard Levin (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 107-111.

could not solely produce positive outcomes.[15] It also revealed that integration was not a viable solution for Jews in Central and Eastern Europe. Events such as the Dreyfus Affair and the pogroms in the Russian Empire prompted even the most liberal, Enlightenment-influenced Jewish intellectuals in Europe to seek alternatives.[16] Zionism, which gained political momentum with the establishment of the World Zionist Organization in 1897, initiated the process of founding Israel by blending the secular nationalist discourse with the idea of a "return to the Holy Land."

However, it is misleading to describe the *Haskalah* as merely an intellectual core against which early Zionists defined themselves. Like every cultural revival movement, Haskalah proposed to reinterpret a community's way of life in a modern style. This meant that the cultural elements that gave color to the Jewish ethno-religious identity were handled in a secular-rational manner. Zionism, which built a modern national identity through Jewish religious identity, clearly adopted the modernist discourse of *Haskalah* in this regard. For example, Eliezer ben-Yehuda (d. 1922), the father of modern Hebrew, had been in Haskalah circles in his youth.[17] His intellectual works, which revived Hebrew, which was divided into different dialects and stuck in the religious sphere, in a modern, standard form, were also within the nation-building practices of Zionism.

2. Official Israeli Historiography

Israeliness was primarily made possible by conceptualizing the historical narrative of being Israeli as the latest link in an ancient chain of continuity. The historical framework established by Zionist intellectuals shaped the fundamental motifs of Israeli national identity. As is typical in nation-building practices, the cultural elements that required codification –language, history, and geography– defined the unique fabric of this identity. However, in the case of Israel, history directly influenced the development of the official conception of identity.[18] In other words, as illustrated by the example of Canaanism, alternative forms of nationalist discourse and identity constructions emerged specifically in response to critiques of this historical perspective.

The 19th century was a period which modern nations "discovered" or often "invented" their "ancient" origins.[19] Although Jewish history had been a subject of interest for European theologians and historians since the Middle Ages –primarily within the framework of

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[15] For one of the most fundamental works in the literature on the relationship between the Enlightenment and racism, see: Leon Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth: A History of Racist and Nationalistic Ideas in Europe*, tr. Edmund Howard (Heinemann: Sussex University Press, 1974).

[16] The Dreyfus Affair (1894–1906) was a political and judicial scandal in France, centered on the wrongful conviction of Alfred Dreyfus, a Jewish French army officer, for treason. The case highlighted deep divisions within French society, including anti-semitism, and became a catalyst for the Zionist movement. The pogroms in the Russian Empire, particularly during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, were violent, state-tolerated attacks on Jewish communities.

[17] Ron Kuzar, *Hebrew and Zionism: A Discourse Analytic Cultural Study* (New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 2001), 45-47.

[18] In the words of Gabriel Pitersberg; "*the authority of history replaced the authority of God*" in Israel. See: Gabriel Piterberg, *The Returns of Zionism: Myths, Politics and Scholarship in Israel* (London: Verso, 2008), 96.

[19] Hobsbawm, "Introduction", 7-10; Daniel Woolf, "Of Nations, Nationalism and National Identity: Reflections on the Historiographical Organization of the Past", *The Many Faces of Clio: Cross-Cultural Approaches to Historiography,* ed. Q. Edward Wang, Franz L. Fillafer (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006), 73.

Biblical studies– it was largely treated as a part of purely religious concept.[20] Following the *Haskalah* and within the "national" climate of the 19th century, Jewish history began to be examined in a new light for the first time. The work of Jewish-German historian Isaak Markus Jost (d. 1860), titled *Geschichte der Israeliten seit den Zeiten der Makkabäer* (A History of the Israelites from the Times of the Maccabees to Our Time), published in nine volumes between 1820 and 1829, is notable as the first modern Jewish chronicle.[21] As a strict adherent of the *Haskalah* rationalist tradition, Jost distanced himself from Talmudic sources. The choice to use the term "Israelite" in the title of his book, which he considered more authentic, rather than "Jewish" suggests that Jost did not possess a strong sense of national consciousness.[22]

The early 19th century is often regarded as an early moment for the emergence of "national consciousness." While Jost addressed ancient Jewish tradition (ethno-religious belonging) within the framework of a new intellectual style (*Haskalah*), he continued to view Judaism as a purely religious identity. Consequently, he cannot be included in the canon of nationalist historiography.[23] In contrast, *Geschichte der Juden* (History of the Jews), a study that written by another Jewish-German historian, Heinrich Graetz (d. 1891), serves as a more fitting starting point for this canon.[24] This first modern Jewish history, which was attributed global significance and authored by a Jew, represented a transition from the idea of assimilation to the Zionist movement (or proto-Zionism). Graetz's interpretation of the Bible was secular, and he adopted a "Judeo-German" identity, which continued to form the basis of European Jewry. The primary motivation behind his work was to advocate for the acceptance of Jews as equal citizens in Europe. However, his emphasis on the theme of "return to Zion" positioned Graetz at a critical juncture in Zionist historiography, leading to his book being taught as a foundational text in Israeli schools.[25]

Moses Hess's (d. 1875) *Rom und Jerusalem* (Rome and Jerusalem), published in 1862, was the first book to introduce the concept of the "Jewish race" into literature, aligning with the dominant terminology of Europe at the time.[26] Ironically, Hess was a close friend of Karl Marx and a socialist. Although he was a staunch follower of Marx's ideas, Hess perceived history as a "struggle of races" rather than merely a class struggle.[27] According to Hess, the primary reason Jews were viewed as "foreigners" by Europeans was their racial identity,

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[20] Robert Irwin, *Dangerous Knowledge: Orientalism and its Discontents* (New York: Overlook Press, 2006), 82-109.

[21] Michael Brenner, *The Prophets of the Past: Interpreters of Jewish History*, tr. Steven Rendall (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 13.

[22] Sand, *The Invention*, 67.

[23] On Jost's contribution to the consideration of Jewish national identity as a modern phenomenon, see: Michael A. Meyer, *The Origins of the Modern Jew: Jewish Identity and European Culture in Germany, 1749-1824* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1967), 170-171.

[24] Brenner, *Prophets*, 53-57; Michael A. Meyer, "The Emergence of the Jewish Historiography: Motives and Motifs", *History and Theory* 27/4 (1988), 173-175.

[25] Brenner, *Prophets*, 50. Yoav Gelber, *Nation and History: Israeli Historiography between Zionism and Post-Zionism* (London: Valentine Mitchell, 2011), 100-109.

[26] Sand, *The Invention*, 78-79.

[27] In the mid-19th century, this approach was one of the most fundamental pillars of European intellectual life. Hess was certainly in intellectual contact with names that established the scientific legitimacy of the idea of race, such as writers Joseph Arthur de Gobineau, Ernest Renan and Max Meyer. On this subject, see: Jon Efron, *Defenders of the Race: Jewish Doctors and Race Science in Fin-de-Siecle Europe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994).

rather than their religion. He argued that the only solution for the Jews, as "a pure race that has managed to reproduce all its characteristic features" throughout history, was "returning to Zion."[28] Thus, 35 years before the publication of *Der Judenstaat*, the foundational text of Zionism, Hess articulated a vision of national Jewish identity and underscored the Jewish presence in Palestine. Hess was also a close friend of Graetz. While both shared a secular approach to religious sources, it is evident that Hess represented a significant departure from the historical framework of *Haskalah*.[29]

The Graetz tradition, while influential in shaping the founding Zionist idea, occupies a distinct position following the official establishment of Israel. This school, rooted in *Haskalah* and European rationalism, emerged as a scientific counterpoint to a more radical, religion-centered historiography by the mid-20th century. The Austrian-born Jewish historian and head of the first Jewish history chair in the United States, Salo Wittmayer Baron (d. 1989), represents the final major figure of this school. Baron aimed to present Jewish history through a narrative supported by archaeological evidence and other verifiable fields of expertise, dedicating his career to a scientific revision of the Bible-centered narrative.[30]

The historical theses presented by Baron in his *magnum opus*, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*, which offer "scientific" views that neither advocate for a return to Zion nor serve as the foundation for a national historiographical ideal, are criticized by the traditional Jerusalem-centered understanding of history. The rejection of Baron by the German-Jewish historian Yitzhak Baer (d. 1980), who headed the Department of History at the newly established Hebrew University of Jerusalem, gains significance in the context of the notion of a biologically homogeneous nation. In fact, the historical debate between Baron and Baer reflects the Anglo-Saxon-German opposition regarding the interpretation of the Jewish nation, particularly around the theme of "exile."[31] For Baer and his followers, exile enhances the sanctity and ethnic integrity of the Jewish faith, which became institutionalized while the Jews remained in the Holy Land. Conversely, Baron and his followers argued that exile had the opposite effect by institutionalizing the faith. In other words, while Baer accepted the fundamental argument of the German historical school from which he emerged –reading the nation through an ethnic and racial lens– Baron approached the issue from a more functionalist perspective.[32]

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[28] Ken Koltun-Fromm, *Moses Hess and Modern Jewish Identity* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 16-18.

[29] On the other hand, it should be noted that for Hess, the primary element that ensured the inheritance of the Jewish race through generations was "religion." Race was undoubtedly of primary importance for Hess in establishing Jewish national consciousness, but the role of religion in saving it from assimilation was undeniable. See: Sand, *The Invention*, 79.

[30] Robert Liberles, *Salo Wittmayer Baron: Architect of Jewish History* (New York: New York University Press, 1995), 58.

[31] The debate between Baer and Baron constitutes one of the most critical turning points in modern Jewish historiography. See: Isaac E. Barzilay, "Yishaq (Fritz) Baer and Shalom (Salo Wittmayer) Baron: Two Contemporary Interpreters of Jewish History", *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research* 60/1 (1994): 7-69.

[32] This explains to some extent the reception that Baer's work received in Germany and continental Europe, even during the period of Nazism. See: Israel Jacob Yuval, "Yitzhak Baer and the Search for Authentic Judaism", *The Jewish Past Revisited: Reflections on Modern Jewish Historians*, ed. D.N. Meyers, D.B. Ruderman (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 77-87.

The Zion journal, founded in 1936 by Yitzhak Baer and another pioneer of Zionism, Ben-Zion Dinur (d. 1973), formed the backbone of official Jewish historiography. Dinur expanded his earlier work, *The History of Israel*, written in 1918, after joining the Department of History at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 1938, and republished it under the title *Israel in Its Land*. This book remains arguably the most definitive source of official Israeli historiography to this day.[33] Sand elucidates Dinur's dominant role by comparing him to Graetz, identifying him as the first modern Jewish historian.

> If Graetz was responsible for the foundation and scaffolding of the retroactive construction of the Jewish nation, Dinur laid the bricks, hung the beams, and fitted the windows and doors.[34]

3. Canaanite Option

The result was a set of principles that can be summarized by the "book-people-land" trinity.[35] While the intellectual foundations of this trinity were laid by Baer, Dinur, and Kaufmann, who established a field with blurred boundaries between history, mythology, and theology, its widespread adoption and attainment of *doxa* status can be attributed to David Ben-Gurion himself. The cultural policies pursued by Israel during its nation-building years necessitated naming Ben-Gurion as both the "founder of the nation" and the "founder of the state." His efforts included the policy of giving Biblical names to newborns, changing old surnames to ancient Hebrew names, renaming settlements with names from the holy texts, and attempts to "prove" mythology and theology through intensive archaeological activities.[36]

The newly established state of Israel found itself in a contradictory position; insisting on being recognized as a Jewish state belonging to all Jews worldwide while also struggling to define its "citizens" within its borders.[37] This identity issue gave rise to "Revisionist Zionism," influenced by far-right movements in Europe during the 1930s and representing an opposition wing within Zionism.[38] The "neurotic" national character of Israel,[39] rooted in the belief that it is "surrounded by enemies," alongside the social hierarchy that marginalized Palestinians and lower-class Jews, highlighted the paradoxical identity problem that permeated the establishment. These issues were systematically critiqued in the sharpest terms by a group of Jewish intellectuals who identified themselves as Young Hebrews.

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[33] Uri Ram, "Zionist Historiography and the Invention of Modern Jewish Nationhood: The Case of Ben Zion Dinur", *History and Memory* 7/1 (1995): 91-124.

[34] Sand, *The Invention*, 104.

[35] On the close relationship between national identity and geography in Israel, see: Chaim Gans, *A Political Theory for the Jewish People* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 86-92.

[36] Alan Levenson, "David Ben-Gurion, the Bible and the Case for Jewish Studies and Israel Studies", *Jewish Studies and Israel Studies in the Twenty-First Century,* ed. Carsten Schapkow, Klaus Hödl (London: Lexington Books, 2019), 15-31; Keren, *Ben-Gurion*, 100-101.

[37] Sand, *The Invention,* 21.

[38] Revisionist Zionism, founded by Ze'ev Jabotinsky in the 1920s, advocated for the establishment of a Jewish state on both banks of the Jordan River. Emphasizing military strength, territorial maximalism, and political sovereignty, it opposed the more moderate policies of mainstream Zionism and significantly influenced the development of right-wing politics in Israel. On the revisionist Zionism, see: Yaacov Shavit, *Jabotinsky and the Revisionist Movement, 1925-1948* (New York: Franck Cass, 2005).

[39] For the roots of this neurosis or anxiety, which can be traced back to the early written texts at the very foundation of Jewish tradition, see Shai Ginsburg, *Rhetoric and Nation: The Formation of Hebrew National Culture, 1880-1990* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2014), 153-195.

The group known as the Canaanites, or Young Hebrews, consisted of a small but intellectually influential circle. Led by poet Yonatan Ratosh[40] (d. 1981) and his brother, linguist Uzzi Ornan (d. 2022), the organization was founded by archaeologist Adia Gur Huron (d. 1972), sculptor Yitzhak Danziger (d. 1977), and writers Amos Kenan (d. 2009) and Benjamin Tammuz (d. 1989). Operating officially under the name "Council for the Coalition of Hebrew Youth," the group emerged as a systematic movement that primarily addressed cultural issues while sometimes offering sharp critiques of the foundational identity imagined by Zionism. Additionally, Canaanism found significant expression in paramilitary organizations such as Irgun and Lehi in the early 1940s, when the movement was at its peak popularity, revealing its connections to the far right and revisionist Zionism.[41]

The fundamental premise of Canaanism, posited that "Judaism" is a universal religion, allowing individuals from any nation to embrace it. However, the national community that constitutes Israel is defined as "Hebrew."[42] This distinction between "Hebrew" and "Jew" serves as a critique of the paradox inherent in the logic underpinning Israel's foundation.[43] While the nationalization of "Jew" as an ethno-religious identity forms the core of the founding Zionist thought, it simultaneously reveals the theological aspect of the "Israeli nation" as a secular identity. Consequently, this perspective promotes a reinterpretation of nationalism. The Canaanists' primary critique of Zionism was its reliance on an ethnic interpretation of nationalism, as they emphasized a geographical –or "territorial,"[44] as commonly referred to in nationalism literature– approach. For Canaanists, this geography encompasses "the land of Kedem" or "the land of Canaan."[45] Although these terms ar also utilized by Zionists, "Israel" does not represent an ideal spatial concept for Canaanists. Instead, they view the Hebrews' homeland, or "the land of Kedem," as including not only Israel but also a broader region comprising present-day Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq – essentially the "Fertile Crescent."

According to Canaanists, the extensive Semitic geography inhabited by Hebrew speakers predated the emergence of Judaism as a religion. For the inhabitants of the Fertile Crescent, including present-day Israel, the origins of their national identity was rooted in Hebrewness rather than Jewness. This territorial discourse theoretically facilitated a sense of solidarity

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[40] Born in Warsaw in 1908, Ratosh's real name was Uriel Shelach. He was raised in an educational environment, as both of his parents were teachers in Jewish educational institutions. Ratosh was significantly influenced by the Eastern European *Haskalah* tradition, which emphasized Enlightenment and a focus on the Hebrew language and culture. His familial background nurtured a strong interest in linguistics and Hebrew scholarship, with his siblings Rin and Ornan also becoming linguists and Hebrew scholars. Rin moved to the United States in the 1950s, distancing himself from Canaanism and political issues, while Ornan emerged as one of the founding figures of the Canaanist movement alongside Ratosh. For more detailed biographical information about Ratosh, you can see: Lutz Fiedler, *Matzpen: A History of Israeli Dissidance*, tr. Jake Schneider (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), 150-154; James S. Diamond, *Homeland or Holy Land? The 'Canaanite' Critique of Israel* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), chapter 3.

[41] Kuzar, *Hebrew*, 197.

[42] Klaus Hofmann, "Canaanism", *Middle Eastern Studies* 47/2 (2011), 274.

[43] See Kuzar, *Hebrew*, 202: "*From a Canaanite point of view, there were no Jews in most of antiquity, only Hebrews, and when Jews appeared towards the end of this era, they were not a national but a religious entity.*"

[44] On the two types of nationalism as "ethnic" and "territorial" variations, see. Anthony D. Smith, "Ethnic and Territorial Nationalism", *Encyclopedia of Nationalism*, ed. Athena Leoussi (London: Transaction Publishers, 2001), 62-64.

[45] Fiedler, *Matzpen*, 153; Ohana, *Modernism*, 95.

with other residents of the Fertile Crescent, such as Bedouins, Christians, Druze, and Levantines.[46] This distinction represented one of the fundamental differences between Canaanism and Zionism. However, the core conflict between the Zionist and Canaanist historical narratives lies in the interpretation of Zionism's discourse of "return." Canaanists contend that the sanctification of the "return to Zion" following the Egyptian and Babylonian Exiles is not an ethnic or national event, but rather a purely religious concept. From this perspective, Jewness is viewed as merely a facet of Hebrewness.

This fundamental theoretical divide also reflects a profound opposition between Zionists and Canaanites regarding the issue of their modern identities. The Jewish historical canon, emerging from Graetz onward, reinterpreted the myths surrounding Israeli identity in a national context, establishing them as official discourse. For Zionists, the Jews of the pre-Israeli region, referred to as the "old *yishuv*," were viewed as an ethnic and religious community. With the introduction of the idea of nationhood from Europe through the first *aliyah*, the "new *yishuv*" gradually adopted a national tone.[47] In other words, the newly arrived immigrants brought the concept of nationalism to the region, transforming the old religious community structure into a modern Israeli nation.

In contrast, Canaanites viewed the old *yishuv* as a purely religious community that corresponded to a pre-modern, backward category. However, unlike the Zionists, Canaanites did not accept that this old *yishuv* contained a national or ethnic "essence." This perspective suggested a significant divide between the modern era and the preceding one, directly challenging the fundamental arguments of Zionist historiography. The Zionist narrative posited an ethnic continuity from ancient times to the modern period, asserting that this identity had never entirely vanished, even if it had weakened at times. While both Canaanites and Zionists were revivalists, the Canaanites contended that the old *yishuv* had not transformed into a national community aligned with the secular nationalist ideals brought by European immigrants. Instead, they argued that the real awakening occurred in the second half of the 19th century through intellectuals within the old *yishuv*. As Kuzar notes, "Canaanite discourse is based on local renaissance, absorbing the waves of immigrants into its emergent culture."[48]

Why is this subtle nuance important? First and foremost, it emphasizes the geographical aspect of national identity, specifically territorial continuity, which is central to Canaanism. The traditions maintained by the inhabitants of the old *yishuv* were crucial for the awakening of the ancient Hebrew community. These individuals had lived in the "land of Kedem" for centuries, allowing them to preserve their way of life and cultural practices. The discovery of Ugaritic inscriptions at Ras Shamra in 1929 and subsequent studies of the language in the 1930s lent temporary support to the scientific legitimacy of Canaanite theses. Ugaritic shared numerous words and expressions with Hebrew, and the suggestion that it was a dialect of Hebrew aligned with the idea that the entire Fertile Crescent was part of the Hebrew cultural sphere.[49]

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[46] Hofmann, "Canaanism", 274.
[47] Amotz Giladi, "Yonatan Ratosh's 'Cultural Entrepreneurship' and the Invention of 'Hebrew' Nationalism", *Historical Reflections* 45/3 (2019), 82.
[48] Kuzar, *Hebrew*, 212.
[49] Shai Feraro, "The Return of Baal to the Holy Land: Canaanite Reconstructionism among Contemporary Israeli Pagans", *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 20/2 (2016), 62.

For the Canaanites, archaeology held special significance as an endeavor that would concretize and vitalize identity, rather than merely serving as a quest for political legitimacy. Historiography and archaeology aimed to embed the perception of identity cultivated through education and museums into collective memory.[50] However, this embedding was inherently limited. Every form of nationalist discourse requires practices that render the mythical character of its imagined identity and the continuity extending back to prehistory concrete, and in a sense, "real" within public life. Thus, while the official cultural policies of the government are vital, their natural integration into social life presents a problematic challenge. A symbol of Canaanism's opposition to the official Israeli identity was a statue that highlighting the inclusive Semitic character of Hebrew identity beyond Judaism.

Yitzhak Danziger's statue of "Nimrod," created in 1939, quickly became a symbol of Canaanism. Constructed from Nubian sandstone sourced from Petra, the statue emphasized the trans-Israeli Semitic character of Hebrew identity. As a mythological figure depicted in the Tanakh as a powerful and cruel king opposing Jehovah, Nimrod embodied a fundamental opposition to the core logic of Zionism.[51] Danziger portrayed this legendary hunter-king, who was not particularly favored by the Jews, as proud, naked (and uncircumcised), with a bow slung over his shoulder. When the statue was unveiled in 1944, it resonated deeply with the Israeli public. However, it also drew sharp criticism from religious circles, as well as from The Hebrew University of Jerusalem and various Zionist factions.[52]

For the Canaanites, the figure of Nimrod represented one of the most concrete symbolizations of the new Hebrew identity. He served as a perfect link, synthesizing Israel's modern identity with its roots in both Mesopotamia and the Mediterranean.[53] As Max Weber demonstrated, Nimrod epitomized the archetype of the Mesopotamian monarch.[54] The statue became an aesthetic signifier that invigorated Hebrew identity within poetic

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[50] Gelber, *Nation*, 217-245. The "knowledge of origins" that was imparted in Jewish educational institutions during the Mandate Palestine can be seen as a contemporary interpretation of Semitic consciousness, often presented with a veneer of Western-style scientific racism. While this approach undeniably reinforced the paradoxical identity vision of Zionism, it also sparked interest among the younger generation in alternative movements, such as Canaanism. See: Yoni Furas, "We the Semites: Reading Ancient History in Mandate Palestine", *Contemporary Levant* 5/1 (2020), 41.

[51] In the biblical narrative, Nimrod is described as the grandson of Ham, one of Noah's sons, and the son of Cush. In the Book of Genesis, he is characterized as "a mighty man on earth" and "a mighty hunter before the Lord." Biblical commentators often portray Nimrod as a complex, ominous figure –an evil ruler who cast Abraham into the fire and encouraged people to rebel against God. Although Nimrod's name does not appear in the Quran, Islamic commentators generally identify him as the individual mentioned in Surah Al-Baqarah, who became arrogant and disputed with Abraham after God bestowed upon him wealth and power. See: Cengiz Batuk, "Nemrud," *TDV Encyclopedia of Islam* (Ankara: TDV Publishing, 2006), 32/555-556.

[52] Ohana, *Modernism*, 122-179.

[53] In Israeli politics, there exists a perspective that embraces a more cosmopolitan understanding of identity, focused on the Mediterranean region. This concept of Mediterraneanism fosters a "geo-cultural" representation that facilitates the construction of Israeli identity in a "Western" framework. It also emphasizes the potential for cultural collaboration with other nations that share Levantine traditions, including Lebanon, Egypt, and Turkey. For further exploration of this topic, see: Yaacov Shavit, "The Mediterranean World and 'Mediterraneanism': The Origins, Meaning and Application of a Geo-Cultural Notion in Israel", *Mediterranean Historical Review* 3/2 (1988), 96-117.

[54] Max Weber, *The Agrarian Sociology of Ancient Civilizations*, R. I. Frank (London: Verso, 1998), 83-105.

imagination, integrating a mythical model into daily life and thereby embodying the Canaanite worldview.

4. Post-Zionism Debates or Canaanism on the Palestine

The post-Zionism debates in Israeli politics have primarily centered around the assertion that Zionism completed its mission with the establishment of Israel, necessitating an alternative set of policies on various issues, particularly the Palestinian issue.[55] Changes in Israeli society and the economy during the 1980s and 1990s significantly contributed to this discourse, alongside shifts in the global and regional context. The end of the Cold War and the events of September 11 ushered in a wave of neo-liberal norms, creating an environment where the Israeli economy gained greater access to the open market, leading to a more liberal orientation among new generations of the society.[56] This approach often carries a pejorative connotation, contrasting left-Zionists with extreme nationalists and radical right Zionists in Israel.[57] It does not reject the achievements of Zionism but rather embraces Israel's Jewish character and its pioneering role in supporting world Jewry, while also emphasizing its responsibilities toward its own citizens.

Although Canaanism lost its character as an intellectual movement with political outcomes from the late 1960s onwards, it persisted as an alternative avenue, particularly in matters of aesthetics and culture. Its historiographical critique of mainstream Zionism and its inclination to distinguish diaspora Judaism from Israeliness fostered a natural affinity between Canaanism and post-Zionism. Uri Avnery (d. 2018), regarded as one of the "spiritual fathers" of post-Zionism,[58] exemplifies this connection with his provocative book *Israel without Zionists*, published in 1968. Having met Ratosh in his youth, Avnery noted that although they "shared the same views on certain ideological issues," he ultimately severed ties with Ratosh and Canaanism due to fundamental disagreements.[59]

Indeed, the distinction between post-Zionism and Canaanism is as clear as Avnery emphasizes. Although both ideological positions envision Israeli national identity in ways that diverge significantly from mainstream Zionism, the "primordial" continuity characterized by geographical ties in Canaanism stands in stark contrast to the constitutional-liberal citizenship concepts emphasized by post-Zionism.[60] The primary factor that aligns Canaanism more closely with the left on the political spectrum, or suggests

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[55] Israeli theorist Uri Ram's book, published in 1993, is at the forefront of studies that brought the conceptualization of "post-Zionism" to the literature. See: Uri Ram, *Israeli Nationalism: Social Conflicts and the Politics of Knowledge* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 112.

[56] Ilan Pappe, "The Square Circle: The Struggle for Survival of Traditional Zionism", *The Challenge of Post-Zionism*, ed. Ephraim Nimni (London: Zed Books, 2003), 53-61.

[57] This ultranationalistic branch of the Israeli right is often referred to as neo-Zionism. The term neo-Zionism has frequently been employed to describe the reactionary stance adopted by mainstream Zionism in response to the discussions surrounding post-Zionism. On this subject, see: Ram, *Israeli Nationalism*, 123-124.

[58] Ram, *Israeli Nationalism*, 113.

[59] Avnery describes Canaanism as "romantic, anachronistic, and divorced from reality." See Uri Avnery, "Benjamin's Inn: A tribute to artist, writer, and editor Benjamin Tammuz, the 'Canaanite,' on the occasion of the publication of a new edition of his writings in Hebrew", *Haaretz*, 27 December 2007.

[60] Hofmann, "Canaanism", 286. Some researchers, such as Diamond and Shavit, have a different view on this issue. Diamond claims that Ratosh was the first "post-Zionist intellectual." See: Diamond, *Homeland*, 5; Yaacov Shavit, *The New Hebrew Nation: A Study on Israeli Heresy and Fantasy* (New York: Routledge, 1987), 140-143.

a connection to leftist or post-Zionist ideologies, is the movement's "alternative" stance regarding Palestine and Arabs in general.

When considering that the Canaanists envisioned a new modern Hebrew identity centered on Palestinian Judaism, it becomes evident that their stance on the Palestinian issue differs significantly from that of mainstream Zionism. In fact, their perspective on other Semitic peoples of the "land of Canaan" reflects this distinction. For Canaanism, the Arab people of the Fertile Crescent are often viewed as a "medievalistic" or "backward" community.[61] Yet, this characterization also applies to the old *yishuv*, which Canaanism idealized and regarded as foundational to the modern Hebrew nation. An examination of the writings of figures associated with revisionist Zionism, particularly during the mandate period, reveals that Canaanists were generally more inclusive and open-minded in their relations with non-Jewish peoples of the Middle East. Ratosh, who authored the movement's manifesto in 1943, stated:

> And the backward population in our land, this assemblage of communities and families and contradictions, whose seeming unity is the work of the British, for they are those who have been organizing them against us... this population, which nobody knows how much Hebrew blood flows through its veins... we the Hebrews, released from the barriers of religiousness and communality, will be able to accept anyone among them who would wish to assimilate... and become one of us, with all the duties and the rights.[62]

In the eyes of the Canaanites, Palestinian Arabs were a community with ancient Hebrew origins that had distanced themselves from their "original" national identity due to manipulative British actions. For Ratosh, Palestinians were viewed as Hebrews who had converted to Islam at a certain point in history, leading to the conclusion that there was no theoretical difference between a Jew-Hebrew and a Muslim-Hebrew.[63] The Arabs, recognizing this reality, opposed the colonialist policies in the land of Kedem and embraced the essence of their identity, rooted in their "Hebrew" origins. Thus, the Canaanites regarded them as a kindred Semitic community open to cooperation.[64]

Conclusion

Canaanism should fundamentally be understood as a call for the secularization of Israeli society and politics. The deep paradox inherent in Zionism's founding identity gave rise to troubling dissent even during the mandate period. The Canaanism movement emerged from the influence of some young individuals within the revisionist Zionist school, led by Jabotinsky. Rather than merely rejecting the identity project constructed by Zionism, this group asserted that their national identity was not Jewish but Hebrew. They argued that Hebrews, as the first inhabitants of the ancient land of Kedem, existed even before Judaism emerged as a religion. In essence, the Semitic peoples of the Middle East were Hebrew before they became Jews or Muslims. The Young Hebrews institutionalized this identity ideal as a form of nationalist discourse that encompassed the entire Fertile Crescent, extending beyond

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[61] Roman Vater, "Beyond bi-nationalism? The Young Hebrews versus the 'Palestinian Issue'", *Journal of Political Ideologies* 21/1 (2016), 47.

[62] Yonatan Ratosh, "Masa haptikha", 198 akt. Vater, "Beyond bi-nationalism?", 48.

[63] Hofmann, "Canaanism", 274.

[64] Kuzar, *Hebrew*, 219.

the borders of the Mandate Palestine and, after 1948, the nation-state of Israel. Contrary to common perceptions, Canaanite nationalism did not operate within a racist framework; rather, it was a type of nationalism rooted in geographical determinism, a prevalent concept in the interwar Middle East that could be termed territorial nationalism. For the Canaanites, the foundation of the modern Hebrew nation was not based on ethnic or racial continuity but on a tradition of spontaneous coexistence among peoples who had shared the same geography for centuries.

The Canaanites represented a significant element of an alternative nationalism with an oppositional character in early Israeli political life. Their discourse on the Palestinian issue during the Nasser era, when Pan-Arabism reached its zenith, stood in stark contrast to official Zionist rhetoric. Saying that, the Canaanites opposed not only Zionism and Western colonialism but also Pan-Arabism. However, neither this ideal of identity nor their call for cooperation among Arabic-speaking peoples, nor their aspiration for Semitic political and cultural unity, resonated within Israel or across the Fertile Crescent. Over time, Canaanism emerged as an early reference point in discussions of post-Zionism.

One possible reason for the failure of Canaanism could be despite its compelling alternative appearance, was disconnected from the contemporary realities of the region. Following World War I, other territorial nationalisms that mirrored the foundational principles of Canaanite ideology also faltered. Egyptian Pharaohists, Lebanese Phoenicians, Syrian nationalist Antun Saadeh and supporters of the Syrian Social Nationalist Party (SSNP), and even Anatolianists in Turkey ultimately succumbed to the rise of ethnic nationalisms, which rendered geography insufficient as the sole determinant of national identity. Additionally, another contributing factor to the decline of Canaanism is the historical fact that Hebrew was never a language spoken throughout, or even predominantly in, the Fertile Crescent. This reality undermines one of the fundamental tenets of the Canaanite doctrine. Just as it is impossible to categorize all communities in Europe under a single label of "European nation" based solely on their shared Indo-European language family, the existence of a modern Hebrew nation similarly presents significant challenges.

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