RISE OF RIGHTIST IDEOLOGIES IN ISRAEL AND SHIFT OF POWER FROM LEFT TO RIGHT (THE 2ND HALF OF THE 20TH CENTURY)[1]

İsrail'de Sağcı İdeolojilerin Yükselişi ve Hakimiyetin Soldan Sağa Kayışı (20. Yüzyılın 2. Yarısı)

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Abstract

In every society, ideological changes deeply influence politics, policy makers and political parties, shaping their views, plans and election programs in the struggle for power. Inevitably, such changes have so far influenced political parties of Israel and their views on the Arab-Israeli conflict. This article has aimed to research ideological changes in Israel in the context of political parties between 1948, the year of the establishment of Israel as a state, and until the end of the 20th century, when the long-term shift from left to right largely ended with the ultimate victory of rightist ideologies in Israel. In the first decades after the establishment of the State of Israel, where the dominant political and social ideology consisted of leftist notions, approaches and views of political parties to various issues, first of all to the Arab-Israeli conflict, remarkably differed from those of rightist political parties, which gradually gained popularity and came to power in late 70's and implemented far more strict policies in regard to the mentioned conflict, nevertheless showing a definite degree of moderation in comparison to their former ideological stand. As the global ideological and political situation changed and reshaped under new conditions, so changed, depending on various factors, the balance of ideologies in Israel, reshaping views and approaches, which inevitably strongly influenced the course of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Research of this long term shift, among others, can contribute to learning the history of political ideologies and their development course in Israel in the first 50 years of existence as a state, as well as understanding the balance of political ideologies in Israel in the new millennium.

Keywords: Israel, political parties, political ideology, shift from left to right.

Öz

Her toplumda ideolojik değişimler siyaseti, siyaset kurucuları ve siyasi partileri etkileyerek onların görüşlerini, planlarını ve siyasi hakimiyet elde etmek için girdikleri seçim

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programlarını şekillendirir. Kaçınılmaz olarak bu değişimler her zaman İsrail'deki siyasi partileri ve onların Arap-İsrail çatışmasına bakışlarını da etkilemiştir. Bu makale, İsrail'in devlet olarak kurulduğu 1948 yılından sağa doğru uzun süren kaymanın İsrail'de sağ ideolojilerin tam zaferi ile sonuçlandığı 20. yüzyılın son yıllarına kadarki dönemde İsrail'deki ideolojik değişimleri partiler kapsamında araştırmayı amaçlamıştır. İsrail devletinin kuruluşundan sonraki, baskın siyasi ve sosyal ideolojinin sol düşünceden oluştuğu ilk on yıllarda siyasi partilerin farklı konulara ve tabi ki Arap-İsrail çatışmasına bakışı, gittikçe nüfuz ve alan kazanıp nihayet 70'li yılların sonunda yükselişini siyasi hakimiyeti eline almakla taçlandıran sağcı siyasi partilerin bakışından ciddi şekilde farklıydı. Sağcı partiler her ne kadar geçmişe kıyasla belli oranda ideolojik yumuşama sergileseler de solculara nazaran çok daha sert politikalar uyguluyorlardı. Küresel ideolojik ve siyasi durum değiştikçe ve yeni koşullar altında yeniden şekillendikçe farklı etkenlere bağlı olarak İsrail'de ideolojik denge de değişmekte, görüş ve yaklaşımları değiştirmekteydi ki bu da kaçınılmaz olarak Arap-İsrail çatışmasının gidişatına ciddi şekilde etki etmekteydi. Bu uzun süreli değişimin incelenmesi, İsrail devletinin kuruluşundan sonraki ilk 50 yılda mevcut olmuş siyasi ideolojilerin tarihinin öğrenilmesine katkı sunabilir ve yeni bin yılda İsrail'de var olan siyasi ideolojiler dengesinin anlaşılmasına yardım edebilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *İsrail, siyasi partiler, siyasi ideoloji, soldan sağa kayış.*

1. INTRODUCTION

At first appearance, wide spread existence of rightist and conservative ideologies in Israel can be evaluated nothing but an ordinary and even inevitable case, as Zionism, an ideology summoning all Jews of the world for participation in the formation of the Jewish State has always been a kind of nationalistic movement in its essence. However, considering factors that existed prior to the creation of the State of Israel and in the several decades after it, features and characteristics of rightist ideologies in Israel can be much better analyzed and understood. This article aims to review and investigate ideological changes in Israel in the context of political parties after the establishment of Israel as a state and until the end of the 20th century, when the long-term shift from left to right brought to the victory of rightist ideologies in Israel. In addition, the article aims to study the internal and external reasons of the mentioned shift, taking into consideration all factors that remarkable contributed to it. Research of this long term shift, among others, can contribute to studying the history of political ideologies and their development in Israel in the first 50 years of existence as a state, as well as understanding the balance of political ideologies in Israel in the new millennium. Prior to the establishment of Israel as a state – during the British Mandate, the legislative organ of Jewish Community in Palestine (Yishuv - יישוב) was the Assembly of Representatives (Asefat Hanivkharim -אספת הנבחרים) (The Knesset, n.d.) established in 1920, where the majority was usually won by a coalition of leftist parties as Akhdut haAvoda (Labor Unity - העבודה אחדות) lead by Ben

Gurion and Hapoel Hatzair (The Young Worker-הפועל הצעיר), while the right wing, represented by Histadrut Hasfaradim (The Sephardic Union - הסתדרות הספרדים) could only receive less than 20% of all votes (Abramov, 1976, p. 459). Israeli political parties emerged, in contrast to most of political parties in the world, before the State of Israel was created, which enabled to gain political experience for the state to be established in the future. In regard to their attitude related to nationalism, naturally, all parties supported nationalistic ideas, whereas the differences between nationalistic views were relatively small. Only the resolution of the UN (United Nations, n.d.) on partitioning Palestine supported both by the USA and the USSR, however, was a complication for Jews of Israel, as it made for them more difficult which political pole of the world to support (Лакер, 2000, c. 844). So, as early as the 20's of the 20th century, in the worldview and ideological position of movements and political parties constituting future state of Israel prevailed leftist views. It was not occasional, as most of first Jewish settlers, who established collective farms (resembling those established in the USSR) in Palestine, were originally were from East Europe (Laqueur, 2003, p. 639). Leftist views were dominant in cities as Tel-Aviv and Haifa, as well. The aforementioned leftist Akhdut Haavoda Party lead by Ben Gurion enjoyed a significant portion of trust among Jewish population. Remarkably, the Haganah – the main armed force of Jews in Palestine and the pioneer of the IDF also was created by the mentioned party (Peri, 1983, p. 344).

In order to detect and define ideological changes occurred in political parties of Israel between 1948 and 2001, including the inclination towards rightist ideologies assumed to be the main tendency, information was collected on the mentioned parties. In this regard, relevant academic literature was prioritized while official declarations of parties, election platforms and interviews with leaders also were included. In this way, ideological approaches presented by parties in definite historical periods, changes occurred in these approaches, as well as formation ways of main inclinations and tendencies within parties have been defined. The procedure of research included collection of relevant data and sources, study and review of the data, compilation of information within the research and an analysis of the data with consecutive conclusions. The examples of used literature include "Политические партии в Израиле – Власть и политика в Государстве Израиль: социально-политическая динамика" (Нойбергер, 1998), Benny Morris'in Camp David and After: An Exchange (Morris, 2002), גיא זוהר בדק: ש"ס תמכה בהסכמי אוסלו או התנגדה? (ערוץ 7, 2022), which reflect

approaches, attitudes and positions of Israeli political parties of the mentioned period.

The research encompasses political parties of Israel within the whole ideological range between 1948 and 2001. The main aim in choosing the field of study is defining the ways, conditions and extend of ideological shift of political parties of Israel from left to right. Priority has been given to official sources as parliaments, party declarations and well known academicians in the sphere or authoritative TV or newspapers in each of the mentioned languages. Academic literature and information sources of and on the mentioned period in several languages as Hebrew, English, Russian and Turkish have been thoroughly collected, studied, reviewed, analyzed and interpreted. This article has been compiled on the basis of information and analysis derived from a PhD thesis and therefore, no research ethics committee approval has been asked for.

2. EARLY LEFT-WING AND RIGHT-WING PARTIES

Views of Israeli left wing parties actually differed from those of European mainstream leftist ideologies. Both Akhdut Haavoda and Hapoel Hatzair did not accept doctrines of Marx, Engels and denied Leninism. In general, it would be appropriate, to consider these political parties as national-socialistic parties due to their high emphasis on nationalistic notions together with socialistic views. The representatives of the leftist parties, which realized their activities in the conditions of often clashes with local Arabs and enlarged their electorate at the expense of European Jewish settlers, nationalism and socialism were two essential ideologies, originating from and nourished by the core ideas of the promised land/Jewish homeland and the socialistic views of European societies at the mentioned time. Among the Jewish population of Eastern Europe, rabbinic Judaism still found many followers, most of whom were negligent to Zionism and thus, did not largely take part in mass migration to Palestine. From this aspect, Jews under British Mandate naturally were nationalists due to the very essence of Zionism (return to the ancient land and establishment of the Jewish State) (UN, n.d.) on one hand and, also considering the global strong socialistic trends of the 20's and 30's, mainly supported socialistic views on the other hand. Several factors providing strong leftist views in the Jewish community in Palestine and in the newly established State of Israel were, among others, poverty of masses migrating to Palestine, global leftist trends, recognition of the State of Israel by countries as the USSR, Yugoslavia and etc., as well as the ammunition and arms aid provided to Israel by

Czechoslovakia during the 1948 Arab-Israeli War (naturally, proposed by the USSR interested in further deterioration of relations between Arabs and the UK).

Throughout the settlement period up until the establishment of the state, the right wing mainly encompassed two ideologies: small-size Zionist groups with socio-economic views inclining to the right and the nationalistic-rightist ETZEL (אצ"ל), from which later split Lehi (לח"י). It should be mentioned that both organizations were considered as terrorist organizations by the UK and the UN due to their assassinations and other acts of armed violence (Schmidt, 2008, p. 254). Later, after the establishment of the state, Herut (founded in 1949 by the members of ETZEL and lead by Menachem Begin) represented nationalistic notions, while the General Zionists stayed loyal to conservative-capitalistic ideologies, but both denied leftist notions. In the 50's, when the leftist ideologies prevailed, inclination within the two groups towards merger became more sensible, but it was only in 1965 that these two rightist groups merged into GAHAL (The Block of Herut and Liberals - גוש חרות – גח"ל ליברלים), which actually was the start of the process of assimilation of General Zionists into Herut. Eventually, it lead to the establishment of Likud (Consolidation - ליכוד) in 1973, where the leading role belonged to the former Herut members as M. Begin, Y. Shamir, D. Levi, M. Arens, A. Sharon, B. Netanyahu, E. Olmert. The right camp included several small-size parties of so called 'hawks' – Hamerkaz Hakhofshi (The Free Center - המרכז החופשי), which split from Herut, Shlomtzion (שלומציון) founded by A. Sharon, Tzomet (צומת) lead by former Chief of Staff Rafael Eytan, as well as Moledet (מולדת) and Tehiya-Banai (תחייה- בנא"י). In general, throughout the history of the State of Israel, ideology in politics and society was mainly divided into two camps – left and right, with subdivisions in each camp towards liberal and hawkish sides. In the 2nd part of the 20th century, the left camp was mainly lead by MAPAY and its successor Avoda, while the right wing was represented by Herut and its successor Likud.

2.1. After 1948

After the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, leftist ideologies and left-wing parties still prevailed in the society and politics, respectively. These were parties with socialistic worldview in regard to social life and could be evaluated also as militarist-nationalist in regard to their approach to political-external matters related to the region. In this period, rightist parties with their ultranationalist and chauvinistic views represented only a minority of the population. However, beginning from the

60's, remarkable weakening was observed in left-wing positions. Until the mentioned years, the main ideological struggle was between leftists and social-democrats, while after 60's, rightist ideologies emerged as the main rival of left-wing politics and the expression of leftists that 'peace with Arab countries can only be reached under our governments, as the rightists defend too conservative positions' weakened essentially. It happened greatly due to the fact that the peace treaty with Egypt was signed in 1979 by Menachem Begin from Likud. Besides, several concessions were later made by governments lead by B.Netanyahu and A.Sharon also strengthened positions of right-wing parties in regard to the Israeli-Arab Conflict. In reality, the main discourse of the both wings related to the return of Arab refugees of the 1948 war did not differ essentially, both denying the right of return.

In the 60's, Herut was distinguishable with its agile policy. It made several corrections in its policy – became more attentive towards religious citizens, abstained from strict stiff expressions against unions and became closer to the General Zionists, which further resulted in the aforementioned GAHAL union. Later, when the gap in votes won in elections kept decreasing, rivalry between GAHAL and Avoda, a left-wing political party that emerged after a merger of MAPAI (The Party of Workers of Erez Israel - מפלגת פועלי ארץ ישראל), Akhdut Haavoda and RAFI (The List of Workers of Israel - רשימת פועלי ישראל), intensified, making political coalitions more fragile. For instance, in the 1973 elections the left-wing block Alignment (haMaarach - המערך) won by majority, but Likud increased the number of seats in the Knesset. In the later years, Likud even became more popular, especially after the resignation of Prime Minister Golda Meir and Minister of Defense Moshe Dayan as a result of publication of their faults in the 1973 war. Some voters expressed that they wished to see Yitzhak Shamir as the new Prime Minister, just because he had not been involved in previous failures (Sicherman, 1995).

2.2. Inclination to the Right within the Left Camp

In the 80's and 90's, as a result of changes as the support from the middle class, loss of functionality of unions, collapse of the socialist block with MAPAM (1984), as well as collapse of the socialist economies in Eastern Europe, the main left-wing party Avoda began to realize a series of centrist-rightist steps and already in the 1992 elections, Yitzhak Rabin announced that his government would sell state enterprises to their workers and would decrease the share of the state in the labor market. These steps were accompanied by several other decisions and measures interpreted as inclination towards the right. Actually, such decisions were a result of

complicated international and domestic political processes, which brought to remarkable 'softening' in the positions of the left-wing. In general, inclination towards rightist ideologies prevailed in the Israeli society and politics in the last quarter of the 20th century. This can be explained as a result of the following factors:

• Anti-Semitism in the USSR after the Second World War and the support presented to Arab states by the USSR;
• The impact of geopolitical realities – tensions with the neighboring Arab countries, wars and terror acts on the Israeli voters and indirectly on the left-wing parties;
• Crises within the global socialist block, its final failure and collapse;
• Failure of socialistic and leftist notions, which played an essential founding role in the establishment of the state;
• The far stricter stand of the right-wing politicians in regard to the Arab-Israel conflict;
• The inclination of Soviet Jewish immigrants towards nationalistic notions.

Predictably, all Israeli parties were influenced by events occurring in global and regional scale, but the Israeli Party most influenced in the 50's and the 60's by global events was, almost certainly, MAPAM (The United Party of Workers - מפ"ם – מפלגת הפועלים המאוחדת). Having carried the banner for a strong pro-Soviet policy and blaming capitalism between 1948 and 1952, the party underwent several changes by time. After the Suez Campaign and until the Six-Day War, the party displayed neutrality in regard to foreign affairs. The following factors significantly influenced the party's stand:

• Arrest of Czechoslovak leaders in 1952 (all of whom were Jews except R.Slansky) within the scope of political purge in the Socialist Block;
• Arrest of numerous Soviet doctors of Jewish descent in 1953 after being charged with attempt on life of Soviet rulers, collaboration with the USA and the UK, as well as rise of Anti-Semitism in USSR;
• The Czechoslovak-Egyptian Arms Deal in 1955;
• The denunciation of mass crimes of the Stalin period by Khrushchev (which was a serious blow to Soviet prestige in the world);
• The Soviet intimidations towards Israel during the Suez Campaign in 1956.

In the Six-Day War (1967), MAPAM already ceased to criticize the pro-Western policy of the government and denied its neutral stand in regard

to foreign affairs after USSR supported the Arab states. The Suez Crisis was one of the events that significantly strengthened pro-Western policy of Israeli parties and governments. As the crisis displayed that the UK and France had lost their status of superpower in the world, Israel's inclination towards the USA increased (Kissinger, 2006, p. 870). In the later period, the leading leftist Avoda party, despite its significant inclination towards political center, lost its previous status of the leading party as a result of the following factors:

- Widely accepted as the founders in the first decades after 1948, leaders of MAPAI Party, which was the core of the successor Avoda party, gradually lost their current importance as top politicians;
- Avoda lost its status of the pioneer in the issue of new Jewish settlements, and began to give less importance to military issues;
- Later, in 2000 Camp David Negotiations, acceptance of the possibility of division of Jerusalem with the projected Palestinian State by Ehud Barak (Morris, 2002);
- Demographical changes, especially high rate of fertility among Sephardic Jews, as well as mass immigration of Soviet Jews (most of whom supported right-wing policies and parties);
- Attempts of winning Arab votes in elections (Inbar, 2009).

2.3. Religious Parties and Their Right Wing Tendencies

Religious parties have always played a special role in Israeli politics. Except several countries with a dominant status of religion, no country in the world, especially those with democratic traditions as a principal criterion, experience existence of religious parties in social life and politics. Moreover, many of these parties openly oppose principles of administration and governance, which considers religion as individual choice and clearly manifest that the state should be governed on the basis of Halakha – Jewish religious law. On the other hand, religious parties in Israel actively participate in politics and coalitions, interpreting this activity as necessity for establishing the projected religious state.

Historically, Israeli religious parties usually won 12 to 15 seats in the Knesset, establishing political alliances as the United Religious Front (חזית דתית מאוחדת) and the Religious Torah Front (חזית דתית תורתית). A distinguishing feature of these parties was that they did not support Zionism due to religious considerations. Only several decades after the establishment of the State of Israel, some Jewish religious sects began to express that Zionism should not necessarily be considered separately from religion and

being Zionist did not exactly mean abjuration of religion (Нойбергер, 1998, c. 480).

The party by-low of MAFDAL (The National Religious Party - מפלגה דתית לאומית) in 1993 stated that the traditional and unique values based upon Jewish faith should be spread and applied and laws and prohibitions in Israel should base upon Halakha (The Knesset, מפלגת מפד"ל, n.d.). Established in 1956, MAFDAL was a religious party with moderate nationalistic views until 1967 and only after the Six-Day War it began to display a more right-wing discourse in regard to foreign affairs and defense issues, which also was manifested with the emergence of new leaders and the Gush Emunim (Block of the Faithful - גוש אמונים) Movement in 1974 (The Knesset, Gush Emunim, n.d.) and the party took an active part in settlement activities of the movement. Furthermore, the party began to defend ideas as the sole right of Israel for statehood between the Mediterranean Sea and the Jordan River, referring to the notion of the Promised Land (Halevi, 2013, p. 221).

During the 90's, while nationalistic-religious notions were expressed more loudly, MAFDAL became more hawkish, even positioning itself in the right of Likud. The party that had once supported the Camp David Accords and had expressed its loyalty to the peace with Egypt, announced prior to the 1992 elections that it did not accept the authority form presented to Palestine in the Camp David Accords and declared that Israel should extend towards the east and should settle more Jews in East Jerusalem. However, it also expressed that deportation of Arabs from their lands was not acceptable from the aspect of Jewish worldview.

Another important religious party in Israel in the last quarter of the 20th century was SHAS (Sephardic Guardians/the Six Orders of Torah - ש"ס שישה סדרים), which participated in most of government coalitions regardless the winning party, thus becoming a key party in establishing coalitions, partially thanks to its attention to social problems, which included, among others, "Abolishment of discrimination against Sephardic Jews in Israel" (The Knesset, SHAS, n.d.). Supported mostly by religious Sephardic community, SHAS carried the banner for conservatism and Zionism and gradually increased its electorate in every election, reaching 13% with 17 seats in 1999 elections to the Knesset.

In general, importance, role and diversity of religious parties in Israel would only increase in the new millennium. In regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a kind of dual approach was observable within SHAS;

O. Yosef, one of the leaders of the party expressed that the problem could be solved through several compromises. In the 80's and 90's, O.Yosef expressed his support for negotiations basing on the 'Saving a Soul' (פיקוח נפש) principle from Halakha, stating that despite of the belief in the right of the Promised Land, territorial concessions could be made for peace, as human life was more important than gaining what had been given by God. This was firstly expressed during the peace talks with Egypt, when most of conservatives in Israel considered any land concession as betrayal to the legacy of forefathers. On the other hand, A. Deri, another influential leader within the party, displayed a more conservative stand that was supported by more members and electorate. In the 90's, the party did not oppose the ratification of the Oslo Accords of 1993, but in 1995 it opposed the Second Oslo Accords (7 ערוץ, 2022).

2.4. Right Wing Parties and Their Strife for Power

Strengthening of right-wing parties in Israel was sensible already in the 60's of the 20th century. Immediately after the Six-Day War, for instance, the left-wing Maarach Block included GAHAL in the new National Unity Government, which can be interpreted as a remarkable approximation between the two political camps due to an imminent foreign threat. However, this approximation would not be so easy or even possible without the inclination of the left camp towards the center and liberalization of the right camp.

During the first Likud government after the first victory of the right-wing in 1977 elections (the party had always advocated the idea of "Israeli sovereignty between the Sea and the Jordan" during the election campaign) (Hernandez, 2023), the Camp David Negotiations took place, after which a peace treaty was signed in early 1979 between Israel and Egypt. On one hand, it consolidated the right-wing and increased its prestige in the society as the first government that achieved peace with the enemy, but on the second hand, several small groups, which included important figures as Y. Shamir and A. Sharon, broke away from Likud, though for a short period of time. "The public perceived that at Camp David the central ideological principle of Herut had been forfeited" (Isaac, 1981, p. 121). In the long term, however, it only paved the way for stability in the western front with Egypt and improved the image of rightists in the society.

Operation Litani that started in 1978 with the purpose of providing security in northern borders and driving the PLO from southern Lebanon indicated that the rightist government still preserved its strict position against

Arab neighbors (Morris, 1999, p. 800).

Political arena in Israel in the 70's demonstrated that the relative domination of the left-wing camp had already died out and political struggle between the two camps would be in conditions of equal and strong rivalry. Lead by Menachem Begin, Herut, predecessor of Likud, carried the banner of Revisionist Zionism and mainly preserved the principles of ETZEL (commonly known as Irgun) in regard to foreign policy and defense issues manifested in 1948:

• The Jewish motherland stretching along the two banks of the Jordan River constitutes a united land from geographical and historical aspect;
• Fragmentation of the motherland or consent to it is illegal and bears no obligation for the Jewish People;
• The duty of the current generation is restoring the broken off lands as a part of the independent Jewish State.

In the sphere of foreign policy, Herut always displayed a pro-western position. In the 50's the preference was given to France, while in later decades relations with the USA were dominant. It always opposed agreements with Germany (Reparations Agreement of 1952, Agreement on the Diplomatic Relations of 1965). However, after the victory of Likud in 1977 elections, the mentioned agreements did not lose their validity (Нойбергер, 1998, с. 152-154).

Herut opposed Israeli withdrawal from occupied regions of Arab countries, supporting the slogan 'Towards the banks of the Jordan River' (Heller, 2000, p. 277). In the campaign of the 1955 elections, it demanded immediate preparations for operations to occupy Palestine, while accusing the MAPAI government of submission to anti-national policies. In the 60's, slogans of Herut began to soften and in the 70's the map of Israel encompassing the east bank of the Jordan River already disappeared from its emblem. However, the GAHAL alliance lead by Herut demanded, on the eve of the 1969 elections, implementation of Israeli legislation in Palestine and revised its vision on borders of Israel as the land between the Mediterranean and the Jordan River.

Emerged after a merger of right-wing parties in 1973 and lead primarily by former Herut leaders, Likud became a successor of the political line of Herut – revisionist Zionism established by Vladimir Jabotinsky still in the 20's. Its leader was Menachem Begin, the former leader of Irgun, who was known for his hawkish views. Another leader of the party would be Y. Shamir, the former leader of Lehi, after the retirement of Begin in 1983.

Shamir continued traditional strict policies of his camp, already as the prime minister, and supported Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank and Gazza. The following right-wing politician Binyamin Netanyahu, chosen as the prime minister from Likud in 1996 would display a slightly softer policy in regard to the mentioned issues, despite his criticism on the Oslo Accords. During the election campaign, Netanyahu, as opposed to the concessive stance displayed by the leading Avoda Party, defended the hard line policy, indicating that only strict security measures can protect Israelis. Under constant threat of frequent terror acts during the campaign, his point was mainly adopted by the right leaning Israelis. Nevertheless, under Netanhayu's leadership Israel signed the Wye River Memorandum in 1998, which was the main reason of some breakaways from Likud.

In general, Likud was known for its conservative and nationalist stand on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. On the other hand, it was the first Likud lead Israeli administration, who returned Sinai to Egypt and achieved the first ever peace agreement with an Arab nation. It was possible partially as a result of the swift geopolitical changes in the region, especially the overthrow of the Shah government in Iran, which closely cooperated with Israel and the rise of Islamic rulers to the power in the mentioned state, as Israeli government tried to maintain the balance in the region and not to have two regional powers against itself at the same time. Besides, the party did not express the demands of Herut on Transjordan anymore, maybe due to assumptions that it would only damage Israel's image in reality. Furthermore, Y.Shamir, the then prime minister of Israel from Likud, was the first leader of the state, who met Palestinian delegation in person (Office of the Historian, 1991). However, both Shamir and his successor Netanyahu always refused any possibility of statehood for Palestine.

After decades of continuous weakening and approximately a decade of equal rivalry with the opposite right-wing camp, the Avoda lead Israeli left-wing was shaken in 1995 by the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin (BBC, 2005) and subsequently lost the 1996 elections, as S. Peres, the successor of Rabin promised to continue his predecessor's work in negotiations, while Israeli electorate once more inclined to right as a result of a series of bloody explosions in Ashkelon and Jerusalem. Eventually, Netanyahu won with a slight difference in votes and formed a new coalition government with SHAS, the National Religious Party, United Tora Judaism and etc. This rightist government signed the Hebron Protocol in 1997 concerning the withdrawal of IDF troops from Hebron region. This was followed by the Wye River Memorandum mentioned above, which included

withdrawal from a series of Palestinian territories, issues as security and struggle against terrorism, as well as delivery of some power to the Palestinian authorities (Ross, 2004, p. 874). Under the leadership of Netanyahu, Likud declared its main policy principles as 'The development of political processes for the purpose of reaching peace with all the neighbors, on the condition that historical and national interests of Israel and its security will be protected' (Keller-Lynn, Bachner, 2022).

To the increase in right-wing notions in the politics and society of Israel remarkably contributed also Yisrael Beitenu (Israel Our Home - ישראל ביתנו) Party, which was established and lead by Avigdor Lieberman, defended a hard line in negotiations and was supported mainly by migrants from the former USSR. The party was established by a breakaway group from Likud after the Wye River Memorandum as a new nationalist, liberal, secular and Zionist political group defending Revisionist Zionist ideas of Vladimir Jabotinsky. Yisrael Beitenu managed to receive support from nationalistic and established circles in Israel.

3. EVALUATION AND CONCLUSION

It has been defined that ideological shift of political parties in Israel within the studied period was related to several internal factors as demographic changes, frequent wars and etc. as well as international and regional changes as collapse of international socialist ideology and mutual relations of world powers with Israel and Arab Nations. Also, it has been defined that the peace processes related to the Arab-Israeli conflict had remarkable impact on ideological stands of political parties in Israel. Besides, it has been detected that under definite circumstances, even rightist Israeli governments may exhibit some serious compromises. For example, among the factors urging the Israeli Likud government to cede Sinai Peninsula back to Egypt was the opportunity of recognition by an important regional power as Egypt, pressure from the USA and the need to restore the regional geopolitical balance disturbed after the overthrow of the Shah of Iran, whose government conducted serious cooperation with Israel but eventually was replaced by the Islamic power considering Israel as an enemy. Furthermore, it has been observed that during the long period of rightist strengthening and rise, leftist ideologies were gradually losing their position as a result of loose attitude in matters as army, settlements and full sovereignty over Jerusalem, as well as the mass migration of Soviet Jews to Israel distanced from leftist views as a result of the notorious implementation of the USSR.

During many decades until the establishment of the State of Israel and after it, left wing ideologies and parties prevailed and dominated in politics under the British Mandate Palestine and in Israel. This situation was pretty much natural, as most of Zionist Jews repatriating to Palestine/Israel were, naturally, socialists from Europe and the global trend of socialism as a new ideology was at its peak. Therefore, even after the mass migration of Mizrachi and Sephardic Jews from the Middle East and North African countries, respectively, who were not familiar with national awareness and socialistic views in their large numbers and generally leaned towards traditional understanding of Judaism, the situation did not change remarkably. In this respect, mass migration of Soviet Jews in the 90's would prove the opposite, boosting the already right leaning population of Israel. The slow but steady rise of right wing ideologies was observable even before the establishment of the state after each clash with local Arabs in Palestine and the two most extreme representatives of far right wing were Irgun and Lehi armed groups as opposed to Haganah founded by the mainstream leftist political figure (In comparison to Haganah, which would later distinguish itself as a military power capable of extreme measures at war, Irgun and Lehi presented even much more extreme approach towards the Arab population). After the establishment of the state, leftist views still dominated in Israel and were represented mainly by MAPAI and its smaller coalition partners. In this period, i.e. during the 50's and 60's, Herut, the predecessor of GAHAL, which would later emerge as Likud, stayed the main right wing and oppositional political power, nevertheless increasing its political importance at every stage. But it was only mid 70's that the social and psychological equality in the rivalry was finally achieved and resulted in the first ever right wing government in Israel after the 1977 elections. Only less than two years after the mentioned elections, the new government signed the Camp David Accords, breaking the stereotype of incorrigible rightists. Besides, the rightist political powers had already left their most hawkish slogans stated above. The 80's and the 90's were the period, when a brisk competition for governance between the left and the right took place. However, inclination of the left wing towards ideological center had begun long ago in the 50's, the main factors of which have been listed above. It was observable that the UN Land for Peace resolution (No 242, 1967) promoted by the left was losing its legitimacy for the Israeli society. So, the general ideological trend in the Israeli politics after the establishment of the state and until the new millennium was, without question, inclination towards right. The mass repatriation of the 90's and demographic increase of religious groups in Israel also significantly contributed to this trend, as a result of which the

general shift from secular leftist notions was towards liberal, secular and conservative rightist ideologies based mainly on revisionist Zionism. In general, the mentioned shift was a long process that can briefly be summarized from historical aspect in the following main phases: gradual rise of the right inclinations until the 1974 war, which culminated in the first victory of the right wing in general elections in 1977, the keen competition of the 80's and 90's and the final victory of the right wing towards the new millennium. It was an unavoidable change, considering the support presented by the Soviets to Arab countries, often wars, later collapse of global left, conservatisation in the Middle East, the mass repatriation of the 90's, the increasing allover cooperation with the West and partial alienation from liberal-leftist-secular traditional Zionism in favor of religious-ultra nationalistic Zionism with western lifestyle and way of thinking. All these would eventually result in a far more conservative and even far-right and ultra-nationalist parties emerging as coalition partners of right wing Likud. The 2009 elections would demonstrate that the shift from left and even center to right was so serious that a centrist party, Kadima, now was unable to form a government despite its victory, as religious and right wing parties refuse to enter a coalition with it – an example well representing and declaring the critical position of far right parties in Israeli politics at the present time. The long term process of the rise of rightist ideologies and the fall of left in Israel in the 2nd half of the 20th century continued, in a natural way, in the 21st century and right wing ideologies irrevocably became dominant in Israel, guaranteeing the unprecedented ruling for right wing parties. Studies to be conducted in this sphere in the future may include reasons of partial moderation observed in the right wing after the 60's, as well as the phases and reasons of the success of rightist ideologies in Israel. Besides, influence of the changes in the views of political parties of Israel on their attitude to the Palestinian issue can also be researched.

4. SUMMARY

Research Problem

This article has aimed to research ideological changes in Israel in the context of political parties between 1948, the year of the establishment of Israel as a state, and until the end of the 20th century, when the long-term shift from left to right largely ended with the ultimate victory of rightist ideologies in Israel. In the first decades after the establishment of the State of Israel, where the dominant political and social ideology consisted of leftist notions, approaches and views of political parties to various issues, first of all to the Arab-Israeli conflict, remarkably differed from those of rightist

political parties, which gradually gained popularity and came to power in late 70's and implemented far more strict policies in regard to the mentioned conflict, nevertheless showing a definite degree of moderation in comparison to their former ideological stand. As the global ideological and political situation changed and reshaped under new conditions, so changed, depending on various factors, the balance of ideologies in Israel, reshaping views and approaches, which inevitably strongly influenced the course of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Research Questions

The research has aimed to find out whether the change of the dominant ideologically in Israel influenced the approach of leading or governing Israeli parties to the Palestinian issue and in general, how this change influenced it.

Literature Review

While abundant material can be found on political Parties of Israel of the mentioned period and on various matters related to them, nevertheless most of authors have preferred to pay more attention to issues like coalitions, ideologies, election platforms and etc. For example, one of such articles by Gideon Doron titled "Right as Opposed to Wrong as Opposed to Left: The Spatial Location of "Right Parties" on the Israeli Political Map" (Israel Studies, Fall 2005, 10, No 3, pp. 29-53) is focused only upon explaining the it, into the evaluation of the spatial locations of the Israeli political parties on a hypothetical right-to-left distribution that has defined the positions of so-called right-wing voters and right-wing parties in Israel (Doron, 2005).

Methodology

In order to detect and define ideological changes occurred in political parties of Israel between 1948 and 2001, including the inclination towards rightist ideologies assumed to be the main tendency, information was collected on the mentioned parties. In this regard, relevant academic literature was prioritized while official declarations of parties, election platforms, archive data and interviews with leaders also were included. In this way, ideological approaches presented by parties in definite historical periods, changes occurred in these approaches, as well as formation ways of main inclinations and tendencies within parties have been defined. The procedure of research included collection of relevant data and sources, study and review of the data, compilation of information within the research and an analysis of the data with consecutive conclusions. The examples of used literature include "Политические партии в Израиле – Власть и политика в Государстве Израиль: социально-политическая динамика"

(Нойбергер, 1998), Benny Morris'in Camp David and After: An Exchange (Morris, 2002), *גיא זוהר בדק: ש"ס תמכה בהסכמי אוסלו או התנגדה* (ערוץ 7, 2022), which reflect approaches, attitudes and positions of Israeli political parties of the mentioned period.

Findings and Conclusion

It has been defined that ideological shift of political parties in Israel within the studied period was related to several internal factors as demographic changes, frequent wars and etc. as well as international and regional changes as collapse of international socialist ideology and mutual relations of world powers with Israel and Arab Nations. Also, it has been defined that the peace processes related to the Arab-Israeli conflict had remarkable impact on ideological stands of political parties in Israel. Besides, it has been detected that under definite circumstances, even rightist Israeli governments may exhibit some serious compromises. For example, among the factors urging the Israeli Likud government to cede Sinai Peninsula back to Egypt was the opportunity of recognition by an important regional power as Egypt, pressure from the USA and the need to restore the regional geopolitical balance disturbed after the overthrow of the Shah of Iran, whose government conducted serious cooperation with Israel but eventually was replaced by the Islamic power considering Israel as an enemy. Furthermore, it has been observed that during the long period of rightist strengthening and rise, leftist ideologies were gradually losing their position as a result of loose attitude in matters as army, settlements and full sovereignty over Jerusalem, as well as the mass migration of Soviet Jews to Israel distanced from leftist views as a result of the notorious implementation of the USSR. During many decades until the establishment of the State of Israel and after it, left wing ideologies and parties prevailed and dominated in politics under the British Mandate Palestine and in Israel. This situation was pretty much natural, despite under the mandate, as most of Zionist Jews repatriating to Palestine/Israel were, naturally, socialists from Europe and the global trend of socialism as a new ideology was at its peak. However, the slow but steady rise of right wing ideologies was observable even before the establishment of the state after each clash with local Arabs in Palestine and the two most extreme representatives of right wing were Irgun and Lehi armed groups as opposed to Haganah founded by the mainstream leftist political figure. After the establishment of the state, leftist views still dominated in Israel and were represented mainly by MAPAI and its smaller coalition partners. In this period, i.e. during the 50's and 60's, Herut, the predecessor of GAHAL, which would later emerge as Likud, stayed the main right wing and oppositional political power, nevertheless increasing its

political importance at every stage. But it was only mid 70's that the social and psychological equality in the rivalry was finally achieved and resulted in the first ever right wing government in Israel after the 1977 elections. Only less than two years after the mentioned elections, the new government signed the Camp David Accords, breaking the stereotype of incorrigible rightists. Besides, the rightist political powers had already left their most hawkish slogans stated above. The 80's and the 90's were the period, when a brisk competition for governance between the left and the right took place. However, inclination of the left wing towards ideological center had begun long ago in the 50's, the main factors of which have been listed above. It was observable that the UN Land for Peace resolution (No 242, 1967) promoted by the left was losing its legitimacy for the Israeli society. So, the general ideological trend in the Israeli politics after the establishment of the state and until the new millennium was, without question, inclination towards right. The mass repatriation of the 90's and demographic increase of religious groups in Israel also significantly contributed to this trend, as a result of which the general shift from secular leftist notions was towards liberal, secular and conservative rightist ideologies based mainly on revisionist Zionism. In general, the mentioned shift was a long process that can briefly be summarized from historical aspect in the following main phases: gradual rise of the right inclinations until the 1974 war, which culminated in the first victory of the right wing in general elections in 1977, the keen competition of the 80's and 90's and the final victory of the right wing towards the new millennium. It was an unavoidable change, considering the support presented by the Soviets to Arab countries, often wars, later collapse of global left, conservatisation in the Middle East, the mass repatriation of the 90's, the increasing allover cooperation with the West and partial alienation from liberal-leftist-secular traditional Zionism.

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(Guy Zohar examined: Did SHAS support or oppose the Oslo Accords? (Channel 7, 2002)

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Photo 1. Wanted Poster of the Palestine Police Force offering rewards for the capture of Stern Gang terrorists (left to right) Jaacov Levstein (Eliav), Yitzhak Yezernitzky (Shamir) (future Prime Minister of Israel from Likud) (Jewish Virtual Library, Lehi or Stern Gang, date of access: 25.08.2024).

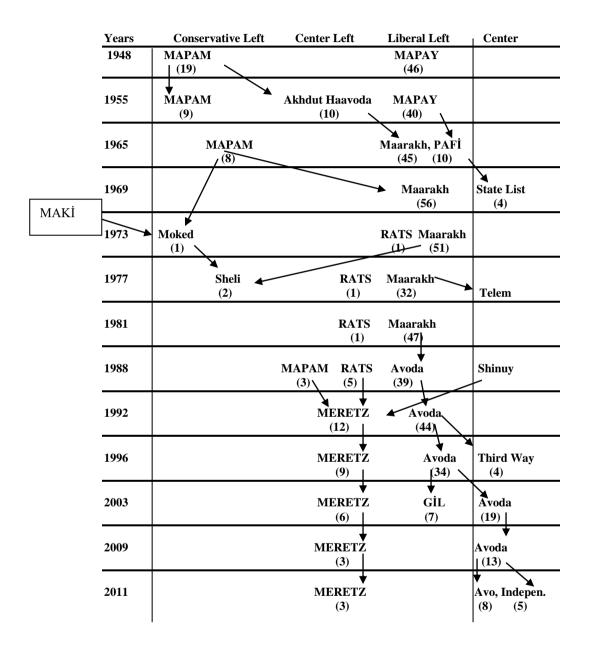| Years	Conservative Left	Center Left	Liberal Left	Center
1948	MAPAM (19)		MAPAY (46)	
1955	MAPAM (9)	Akhdut Haavoda (10)	MAPAY (40)	
1965	MAPAM (8)		Maarakh, PAFİ (45) (10)	
1969			Maarakh (56)	State List (4)
1973	Moked (1)		RATS Maarakh (1) (51)	
1977	Sheli (2)		RATS Maarakh (1) (32)	Telem
1981			RATS Maarakh (1) (47)	
1988		MAPAM RATS (3) (5)	Avoda (39)	Shinuy
1992		MERETZ (12)	Avoda (44)	
1996		MERETZ (9)	Avoda (34)	Third Way (4)
2003		MERETZ (6)	GİL (7)	Avoda (19)
2009		MERETZ (3)		Avoda (13)
2011		MERETZ (3)		Avo, Indepen. (8) (5)

MAKİ

Table 1. Evolution of Left-Zionist Parties towards the Right (Numbers indicate the seats won in elections and bear importance, showing the gradually decreasing popularity of the left).

Parties	Years	Elections to the Parliament	Years	Elections to the Unions
MAPAY	1949	36	1949	57
	1955	32	1956	58
	1961	35	1961	55
Maarakh I	1965	37	1966	51
Maarakh II	1969	46	1969	62
	1973	40	1973	58
	1977	25	1977	55
	1981	37	1981	63
	1984	35	1984	69
	1988	31	1988	55
MAPAM	1949	15	1949	34
	1955	7	1956	13
	1961	8	1961	14
Akhdut	1955	8	1956	15
Haavoda	1961	7	1961	17
RAFI	1965	8	1966	12
Avoda	1992	35	1994	33
	1996	27	-	-
	1999	26	1994	46
MERETZ	1992	10	-	-
	1999	20	-	-
	1999	8	-	-
	1992	12	-	-
	1996	9	-	-
	1999	10		

Tablo 2. Vote percentages won by Zionist political parties of Israel within the left camp

Year	Herut (Likud)	Liberals	Others	Total
1965	15	11	-	26
1969	15	11	-	26
1973	18	13	9	39
1977	20	15	9	43
1981	25	18	5	48
1984	25	13	3	41
1988	25	12	3	40
1992	32	-	24	56
1996	27	-	32	59
1999	19	-	47	64

Table 3. Numbers of seats won by right the leading right wing party in Israel between 1965 and 1999 as opposed to others, whose total number increased in the long term.