



Zionism

Zionism is the Jewish national movement of self-determination in the land of Israel – the historical birthplace and biblical homeland of the Jewish people.

While there was a continuous Jewish presence in the land of Israel over the millennia, the yearning to return to Zion, the biblical term for both the Land of Israel and Jerusalem, has been the cornerstone of Jewish religious life since the Jewish exile from the land two thousand years ago, and is embedded in Jewish prayer, ritual, literature and culture.

Modern Zionism emerged in the late 19th century in response to the violent persecution of Jews in Eastern Europe and widespread societal anti-Semitism in Western Europe. Modern Zionism fused the ancient Jewish biblical and historical ties to the ancestral homeland with the modern concept of nationalism into a vision of establishing a modern Jewish state in the land of Israel.

The “father” of modern Zionism, Austrian journalist Theodor Herzl, consolidated various strands of Zionist thought into an organized political movement, advocating for international recognition of a “Jewish state” and encouraging Jewish immigration to build the land.

Today, decades after the actual founding of the Jewish state, Zionism continues to be the guiding nationalist movement of the majority of Jews around the world who believe in, support and identify with the State of Israel. While some have sought to politicize Zionism, at its core Zionism is not affiliated with a particular

political perspective or with particular Israeli policies. Zionists, those who support Zionism, are represented on the right, left and center, hold disparate political views, but are unified in their fundamental support for a Jewish national state.