

Causes of World War I From the Perspective of the Zionist Leader Vladimir Jabotinsky

Vefa KURBAN

Ege University, Institute of Turkish World Studies, Department of Social, Economic and Political Relations in Turkish World

*Corresponding Author

E-mail: vefa_rzayeva@yahoo.com

Received: November 09, 2019

Accepted: December 24, 2019

Abstract

Vladimir Jabotinsky is known to be a journalist and a lawyer who played a crucial role in the history of Zionism. He was born on October 18, 1880 in an assimilated family in Odessa.

Putting forward the idea of establishing a military unit consisting entirely of Jews and struggling for this idea, Jabotinsky is one of the most important figures of the Jewish nationalists. Jabotinsky is known to have introduced the idea of revisionist Zionism and to be the leader of this idea.

Jabotinsky took interest in journalism and began writing for one of Russia's most important newspapers, "Odesskiy Listok". Later, he was posted to Switzerland and Italy as a correspondent for this newspaper. Jabotinsky also collaborated with the newspaper "Odesskie Novosti". He then studied Law at the University of Rome.

In 1909, Jabotinsky worked as the Istanbul correspondent of the Russian newspaper. He closely followed the Young Turk movement in the Ottoman Empire. Jabotinsky's activities in Istanbul attracted the attention of Jewish organizations and he was commissioned by the World Zionist Organization for lobby activities in Istanbul.

Jabotinsky thought that the World War I would bring an end to the Ottoman Empire and he came into prominence in the World Zionist Organization by bringing forward the idea of forming a Jewish Legion that would fight alongside with Britain to "save" Palestine from the Ottoman Empire and he also began to be recognized by the Jews from all around the world.

In 1916, Jabotinsky wrote a book called "Turkey and the War". The first edition of the book was published in London in 1917.

In this study; Jabotinsky's identity, his Zionist activities, how he explained the alleged causes of the World War I in his book called "Turkey and the War", small nations' fight for independence, his view on the dispute over Alsace-Lorraine, his interpretation of militarism and what he wrote regarding other issues will be analyzed and studied.

Keywords: Jabotinsky, World War I, Jewish Nationalism

Introduction

Who is Jabotinsky?

Vladimir Jabotinsky is a Jewish nationalist who played a crucial role in the history of Zionism. He was born on 18 October 1880 into an assimilated family in Odessa.

His father, Evno (Evgeny Grigoryevich), was from Nikopol, and his mother Eve (Eva Markovna) was originally from Berdichev. His brother, Miron, passed away when he was a child. His sister, Tereza (Tamara, Tanya) Evgenevna Jabotinskaya Kopp, founded a private, female gymnasium in Odessa.¹

Jabotinsky, one of the most important figures of Jewish nationalists, put forward the idea of forming a military unit consisting entirely of Jews and struggled for this idea.²

Jabotinsky is known to have introduced and be the leader of the idea of revisionist Zionism.³

His father lost his life when Vladimir Jabotinsky was six years old, and his mother opened a store in Odessa selling stationery, and enrolled Vladimir in a gymnasium in Odessa. Later, Vladimir got interested in journalism. In 1903, Jabotinsky came to the fore as one of the organizers of the first self-defense units in Jewish communities across Russia. In 1904, Jabotinsky went to Petersburg and started writing for "Evreyskaya Zhizn" (Jewish life) and later for Rassvet (Dawn), the Zionist journals published in Russian.⁴ Jabotinsky's essay "The Iron Wall: We and the Arabs" was published in Rassvet's Russian edition dated 4 November 1923.⁵

Afterwards, he began writing for "Odesskiy Listok", one of the most important newspapers in Russia. In the forthcoming years, he was sent to Switzerland and Italy as a correspondent for this newspaper. Jabotinsky also collaborated with "Odesskie Novosti" newspaper. Jabotinsky

1-Yevreyskiy Legion, "Vladimir Jabotinsky", https://bookz.ru/authors/vladimir-zeev-jabotinskii/evreiski_990/1-evreiski_990.html, Accessed on 10.09.2019.

2-Mahmut Salihoglu, "Jabotinsky, Zionism and Ottoman Empire", The Symposium on Palestine since the Ottomans, Atatürk Supreme Council for Culture, Language and History, Publications of Turkish Historical Society, 18-29 November 2013, Ankara, Presentations, Vol. 1, p. 1-13.

3-Mahmut Salihoglu, "Jabotinsky, Zionism and Ottoman Empire", The Symposium on Palestine since the Ottomans, Atatürk Supreme Council for Culture, Language and History, Publications of Turkish Historical Society, 18-29 November 2013, Ankara, Presentations, Vol. 1, p. 1-13.

4-E. Kaplan, "The Jewish Radical Right: Revisionist Zionism and Its Ideological Legacy", University of Wisconsin Press, 2005, p.86-93.

5-"The Iron Wall", <http://en.jabotinsky.org/media/9747/the-iron-wall.pdf>, Accessed on 11.09.2019.

studied Law at University of Roma when he was in Italy.⁶

Jabotinsky attended the Zionist Congress in 1904, where he was very impressed by Herzl's ideas. In 1909, Jabotinsky served as Istanbul correspondent of the Russian newspaper, and closely followed the Young Turk movements in the Ottoman Empire. As his activities in Istanbul attracted the attention of Jewish organizations, Jabotinsky was commissioned by the World Zionist Organization for lobbying activities. Jabotinsky believed that World War I would bring an end to the Ottoman Empire, and he came to the fore in the World Zionist Organization by putting forward the idea of creating a Jewish Legion to fight with Britain to save Palestine from the Ottoman Empire.⁷ Since the Jews would be considered as allies in that case, they would take a step towards owning Palestine.⁸

From a realistic perspective, "strategic doctrine is what transforms power into politics" and strategy is determination of politics and methods towards aims specified in war and peace times. Identities generate determinant behavioral reasons in determining and achieving and / or retaining strategic goals. Identity and beliefs provide the motivation to determine interests.[1] In this sense, the identity of Jabotinsky stands out.⁹

During the war, Jabotinsky persuaded Lord Derby, the British War Minister, and founded the "Jewish Legion" and in Palestine, he joined the Legion under the command of Allanby as Lieutenant and David Ben Gurion joined the Legion with the rank of corporal.¹⁰

The last years of World War I and the new world order established following the war were significant transitional periods in Jabotinsky's life since during this period, Jabotinsky stayed the course of being the leader of Zionists around the world.¹¹

Between 1918 and 1921, a wave of "Pogrom" spread among the Jews in Eastern Europe. This period witnessed very violent events in the region. There was a civil war between the supporters and opponents of the Communist Revolution in the region. The abdication of Tsar, the

Communist Revolution and the civil war deeply influenced the lives of the Jews in Eastern Europe.¹²

After the war, Jabotinsky settled in Palestine. In the spring of 1920, he was arrested by the British authorities for organizing a defense group called Hagana in the Arab-Jewish conflict¹³ and sentenced to 15 years in prison. However, after a short time he was amnestied.

In 1925 he founded a new party, the World Union of Zionist Revisionists, in Paris. The party's stated main objective was "the immigration to Palestine and the establishment of a Jewish majority on both banks of the Jordan which would ensure its own security".¹⁴

At the Revisionist Zionist Congress in Vienna in September 1935, Jabotinsky unveiled a ten-year plan for the transfer to and absorption in Palestine of 1,500,000 Jews from Eastern Europe.¹⁵

Jabotinsky who lived between 1880 and 1940 was one of the founders of the Zionism movement, but died without seeing the establishment of the State of Israel.¹⁶

6-Yevreyskiy Legion, "Vladimir Jabotinsky", https://bookz.ru/authors/vladimir-zeev-jabotinskii/evreiski_990/1-evreiski_990.html, Accessed on 10.09.2019.

7-7 Mahmut Salihoğlu, "Jabotinsky, Zionism and Ottoman Empire", The Symposium on Palestine since the Ottomans, Atatürk Supreme Council for Culture, Language and History, Publications of Turkish Historical Society, 18-29 November 2013, Ankara, Presentations, Vol. 1, p. 1-13.

8-Sedat Kızıloğlu, "Jews and the Development of Zionism during the Period up to the Establishment of Israel", Journal of Social Sciences, Vol. 2, Issue 1, 2012, p.49. <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/181032>, Accessed on 10.09.2019.

9-Oğuzhan Ergün, "Stratejik Bir Tercih Olarak Terörizm ve Terör Paralakısı", Adnan Menderes University Institute of Social Sciences Journal, 2018, pp.207-208.

10-Sedat Kızıloğlu, "Jews and the Development of Zionism during the Period up to the Establishment of Israel", Journal of Social Sciences, Vol. 2, Issue 1, 2012, p.49. <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/181032>, Accessed on 10.09.2019.

11-Amir Goldstein, "The End of Evolutionary Zionism—Jabotinsky and the Ukrainian Pogroms", *Modern Judaism, A Journal of Jewish Ideas and Experience*, Volume 38, Issue 2, May 2018, Pages 198–220, <https://doi.org/10.1093/mj/kjy004>, Accessed on 11.09.2019.

12-Amir Goldstein, "The End of Evolutionary Zionism—Jabotinsky and the Ukrainian Pogroms", *Modern Judaism, A Journal of Jewish Ideas and Experience*, Volume 38, Issue 2, May 2018, Pages 198–220, <https://doi.org/10.1093/mj/kjy004>, Accessed on 11.09.2019.

13-William Mehlman, "Jabotinsky...The Man and the Vision", Americans for A Safe Israel 1751 2nd Avenue New York, New York 10128, 2010.

14-Mahmut Salihoğlu, "Jabotinsky, Zionism and Ottoman Empire", The Symposium on Palestine since the Ottomans, Atatürk Supreme Council for Culture, Language and History, Publications of Turkish Historical Society, 18-29 November 2013, Ankara, Presentations, Vol. 1, p. 1-13.

15-Gil S. Rubin "Vladimir Jabotinsky and Population Transfers between Eastern Europe and Palestine" *The Historical Journal*, Volume 62, Issue 2, June 2019, pp. 495-517.

16-David Schwartz, "The Social Doctrine of Zeev Jabotinsky, from the Fathers of Zionism", *Open Journal of Political Science*, 2016, 6, 387-392 <http://www.scirp.org/journal/ojps>, Accessed on 11.09.2019.

Ze'ev Jabotinsky, his legacy and importance in Zionism

• By YAAKOV HAGOEL

Over the last century, Zionism has created visionaries who succeeded in conveying the message of a return to the Jewish homeland.

Theodor Herzl, father of modern Zionism and founder of the World Zionist Organization, of which I'm proud to be associated with today, was one of the countless people who worked tirelessly to unite the Jewish people with the purpose of establishing the Jewish State.

Sometimes it felt as if every decision taken by the official Zionist movement was agreed upon by all who believed in Zionism. However, there was one leader of the Zionist movement who took a stand for what he believed, even when unpopular. He stood up for his beliefs and did not get swept up in what was "trendy" at the time. With dignity and respect, he was able to criticize the faltering leadership of those days while warning

them of the consequences of relinquishing parts of the Land of Israel. He was a vigorous and enthusiastic young man who admired Theodor Herzl and decided to follow in his footsteps by devoting his life to the revival of the Jewish state. This young man was Ze'ev Jabotinsky.

Jabotinsky strove to continue Herzl's legacy and was honored to have met him as a delegate at the Zionist Congress of 1903. While it was Jabotinsky's first time as a delegate, it was unfortunately Herzl's last Congress, as he unexpectedly passed away the following year.

"Herzl made a huge impression on me," Jabotinsky wrote, "It is not an exaggeration... I felt I was truly standing before a chosen person, a prophet... and to this day it seems to me that his voice still rings in my ears when he swore in front of us all 'If I forget the O Jerusalem.' I believed his oath, everyone believed..."

Like Herzl, Jabotinsky suffered from public mocking at

the time but was later vindicated. The Zionist leadership called him an extremist. But today, 78 years after his death, his ideas and teachings appear in school textbooks, in literature, in plays and in mainstream political discourse.

Today, 121 years since the first Zionist Congress in Basle and 70 years since Israel's independence, we proudly look back at the amazing achievements of our country. Many of these accomplishments were achieved by people who were inspired in some way by Jabotinsky. As head of the Betar youth movement, the Union of Zionist Revisionists and co-founder of the Jewish Legion, Jabotinsky influenced many leaders over the years.

Many ideas that he wrote about in the 1920s and 1930s have now come to fruition such as the concept of individual and national pride, evident in his phrase, "every individual is a king." The revival of the Hebrew language, social justice, democratic values and self-respect which Jabotinsky

pushed for, can now be found in our modern Israeli society.

In 1923, Jabotinsky's "Iron Wall" article was published, stressing the importance of strength and deterrence in order to fulfill the rights of the Jews in their land. Those that seek to prevent the Jewish people from achieving sovereignty in their homeland, he wrote, must understand it is as futile as confronting a wall of iron.

When incitement and a denial of our very right to exist is part of daily life, it is amazing to read Jabotinsky's words and see how applicable they still are today. He was right when he advocated a policy of "no compromise" regarding the Land of Israel, while still maintaining democratic rights and freedom of worship to all religions.

Jabotinsky regarded youth education as an important component of the success of the Jewish state. Through the Betar youth movement, which is still active today, he promoted fundamental skills,

education and leadership training for the next generation.

In the 78th year of his passing, Jabotinsky will continue to be an esteemed figure in the Israeli public. A new generation is promoting aiyah, Hebrew language, Jewish pride, and high tech innovations.

Since I was a child, I have been participating in the official ceremony in memory of the writer, poet, soldier and leader Jabotinsky. I am amazed each year by the increasing number of participants at his memorial service. Veterans who served in the Irgun together with the young generation who never met him but appreciate and cherish his legacy.

Jabotinsky was and will continue to be one of the most important leaders in the Zionist world and his writings and philosophy will continue to inspire us for many years to come.

The author is the vice chairman of the World Zionist Organization.

Reference: <https://izionist.org/eng/zeev-jabotinsky-his-legacy-and-importance-to-zionism/>

Jabotinsky wrote his book "Turkey and the War" in 1916, and the book was first published in London in 1917.

World War I and Small Nationalities' War of Independence with the Words of Jabotinsky

Jabotinsky stated "the present War undoubtedly was largely a war for the control of Asia Minor".

When World War I began in 1914, Jabotinsky stated that the War would bring the end of the Ottoman Empire. Jabotinsky wrote his book "Turkey and the War" precisely during the war.

As it is known, the conflict of interest that emerged after the industrialization in Europe caused the European states to divide into two poles before the start of World War I and these poles were called the Central Powers and Allied Powers.

In other words, the main reason of World War I was the struggle between industrialized countries to seize economic and then political power in the world. States like Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy were trying to gain influence in the regions around them and obtaining colonies outside the continents of Europe and America, but they faced opposition from Britain, France and Russia, who had already shared the world.¹⁷

It seems that in the beginning of the twentieth century, the policy of colonial acquisition and expansion which had existed since 1880s almost ended. There was no longer the opportunity to find empty territories to be obtained and to settle and benefit from such territories economically. Efforts to settle in new territories in Africa and Asia were weakened. On the other hand, the reasons underlying the desire for obtaining colonies and the economic conditions that fuel

these reasons did not disappear, but rather increased. At the beginning of the twentieth century, economic competition took on a whole new look and influenced the European powers. Despite the rapid development of industry in the United States of America, he was not playing the leading role in the world economy yet. Europe was still the heart of world economy.¹⁸ World War I was to break out in such an environment.

"The reasons for the World War I, which was considered as "the war that will end all wars", are so complex that they are still controversial and have not yet been agreed upon.¹⁹ In general, the causes of this war were the continuous and natural consequences of the developments resulting from the French Revolution and the wars that lasted for a quarter of a century.²⁰ Jabotinsky emphasized that the alleged causes and the real causes of the war are not actually the same. Jabotinsky stated:

"Let it therefore be said at once, without further preamble, that the present war owes its birth directly and beyond doubt to the problem of the Near and Middle East."²¹

"...the root of the present plague is in Asia Minor, and the first and last aim of the war is to the solution of the Eastern question."²²

18-İlhan F.Akın, Political History (1870-1914), İstanbul, 2017, pp. 203-204.

19-Martin Kelly, "5 Key Causes of World War I" <https://www.thoughtco.com/causes-that-led-to-world-war-i-105515> (Accessed on 15.02.2019).

20-Fahir Armaoğlu, 20th Century Political History, (Vol. 1-2:1914-1995), Alkım Publishing House, Ankara, 2000, p.99.

21-Vladimir Jabotinsky, "Turkey and the War", London, 1917, pp. 20-21.

22-Vladimir Jabotinsky, "Turkey and the War", London, 1917, p. 21.

17-Ercüment Kuran, "First World War", Turkish Religious Foundation, Islamic Encyclopedia, <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/birinci-dunya-savasiTürkiye>. (Accessed on 19.04.2019).

Jabotinsky stated that it was necessary to distinguish the “objective” causes of the war from the factors making the war inevitable and that is the main issue to be emphasized.

“What is the way to find out the “objective” aims in the intricacies of the present conflict? First of all, by defining its causes. That is to say, from among the different things which are generally quoted as “causes of the war” we must separate those which made the war inevitable. Analyzing the different factors, we shall easily see that many of them would not have been able by themselves to provoke so enormous a conflagration; they may have added fuel, but did not make the fire; whilst a few of them, or perhaps just one of them, would inevitably have produced the conflict even if the others had not existed. The removal of these essential roots of the struggle is the natural immanent aim of the war. Without this, the settlement would not be effective even the secondary causes were removed and a new and perhaps more terrible war must follow”.²³

Common Defense Allies

Before the Great War broke out, countries in the world had always signed common defense agreements with their neighbors that could lead them into war in the forthcoming days. As per these agreements, if a country, party to a common defense agreement, was attacked, the allied countries were obliged to protect that country. The allies existing prior to the First World War were as follows:

- Russia and Serbia
- Germany and Austria-Hungary
- France and Russia
- Britain, France and Belgium
- Japan and Britain

When Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia, Russia was involved in the conflict for defending Serbia. Seeing Russia’s declaration for mobilization, Germany waged war against Russia.²⁴ Afterwards, France was involved in the war against Germany and Austria-Hungary. Meanwhile, Germany waged war against France by invading the territories of Belgium which persuaded Britain to involve in the war. Subsequently, Japan also became a party to the war which was followed by involvement of Italy and the United States in the war at the side of the Allied Powers.²⁵

As a matter of fact, the Britain-German competition underlay the disputes among the European countries, whereas Russia played a significant role in the spread of the conflict. The desire of Russia was to control Istanbul and Dardanelles, and in this way, to achieve their “historical dream” which had been brought up during the period of Petro. Germany’s increased influence on Turkey gave rise to the thought that “Istanbul path passes through Berlin”.²⁶ Therefore, first Germany then the Ottoman Empire had to be defeated. Obviously, the geopolitical positions of the countries are of great importance in every aspect. This position is greatly important for countries in terms of both defense and foreign policy.²⁷ It was Ottoman Empire’s geopolitical position that made the Empire a region of rivalry

between Russia and Germany, and Russia was uncomfortable with the predominance of Germany in the region.²⁸

Jabotinsky summarized the causes of the war as follows: “The popular list of the “aims of the war” includes the freedom of small nationalities, a fair solution of the Alsace problem, and what people call the destruction of Prussian militarism.”²⁹

Imperialism (Expansionism)

One of the most important causes of the war was undoubtedly imperialism. Imperialism can be defined as a way in which a central nation has power over a neighboring nation and which leads to conflict of interest between the central and neighboring nations.³⁰

In other words, imperialism means that a country increases its power and wealth by taking control of the territories of another country. Prior to World War I, several European countries made this issue a matter of debate and competed for several parts of Africa and Asia for their imperialist aims making this a point of contention. Due to the raw materials to be had from these regions, the conflict and tension about which country had the right to impose on these lands reached its peak. The ever-increasing competition and passion for acquiring larger empires led to increased confrontation which brought the world to World War I.³¹

Militarism

According to a commonly held opinion, militarism was another important cause of the war. The term “militarism” is mainly used to describe the tendency to prefer employing military materials and methods for the solution of national or international conflicts.³²

As the world entered the 20th century, army competitions which primarily revolved around the number of warships and the size armies had had begun. Countries, therefore, started to train more and more young male citizens to be prepared for a possible war. Starting with the HMS British Armored battleship in 1906, battleships began to grow in terms of size, speed, movements and the number of weapons and the quality of armor they had. The British armored battleship could not keep ahead of the field and soon lost its superiority as a result of the fact that the Royal Norwegian Navy and the Imperial German Navy went on to the next level with more modern and stronger battleships.³³

By 1914, Germany had almost 100 warships and two million trained soldiers. The United Kingdom and Germany had considerably expanded their navy during this time period. Military organization started playing an increasingly significant role in public policy. This increase in the military organization had an active role in countries’ participation in

23-Vladimir Jabotinsky, “Turkey and the War”, London, 1917, pp. 15-16.

24-A.S.Orlov, V.A.Georgiev, N.G.Georgieva, T.A.Sivoxina, *Istoriya Rossii*, Moscow, 2013, p.315.

25-Martin Kelly, “5 Key Causes of World War I” <https://www.thoughtco.com/causes-that-led-to-world-war-i-105515> (Accessed on 15.02.2019).

26-Akdes Nimet Kurat, *Russian History from the Beginning to 1917*, Publications of Turkish Historical Society, Ankara, 2010, s.411.

27-Burak Çınar, “Role of the Ottoman Geopolitics During the First World War”, <https://dergipark.org.tr/download/article-file/73851>, (Accessed on 31.05.2019).

28-Akdes Nimet Kurat, *Russian History from the Beginning to 1917*, Publications of Turkish Historical Society, Ankara, 2010, p. 411.

29-Vladimir Jabotinsky, “Turkey and the War”, London, 1917, s.19.

30-Johan Galtung, “A Structural Theory of Imperialism”, *International Relations*, Volume 1, Issue 2 (Summer 2004), pp. 25-46. p.30

31-Martin Kelly, “5 Key Causes of World War I” <https://www.thoughtco.com/causes-that-led-to-world-war-i-105515> (Accessed on 15.02.2019).

32-Salih TÜREDİ, Mehmet Hanefi TOPAL “Militarism ad Globalization: An Empirical research on MENA Countries and Turkey” file:///C:/Users/EGE/Downloads/Militarism.pdf, Accessed on 12.03.2019.

33- Martin Kelly, “5 Key Causes of World War I” <https://www.thoughtco.com/causes-that-led-to-world-war-i-105515> (Accessed on 15.02.2019).

the war.³⁴

After Russia's defeat by Japan in the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-1905 and the 1905 Revolution, Russia achieved to recover thanks to French loans and accelerated the armament. Between the years of 1907-1913, Russia spent 4 billion rubles on arms. In 1914, the cost of equipment of the army was 975 million rubles. Meanwhile, huge amounts were also being spent for reinforcing Russian navy. At the same time, large costs were spent on strengthening the Russian navy. However, when World War I broke out in 1914, none of the new ships had been completed.³⁵

Jabotinsky's view of militarism is as follows:

"The crushing of Prussian militarism is an obvious necessity. It cannot even be said to be one of the distinct aims of the war-it is simply an essential and inherent element of victory. The victory of the Allies, whatever be the peace terms after the struggle is won, will naturally imply the liquidation of the German dream of an "overmastering dictation." Perhaps it can be said that the buzzing of this dream has been already killed, the victory of the Allies will bury it forever".³⁶

Jabotinsky emphasizes that militarism provokes war and says, "Militarism is a system applied nowadays in the majority of civilized countries: it consists in employing a big part of the State's resources, directly or indirectly, for armaments. It is a very wicked system; it obstructs the development of education and social reforms; it poisons the soul of the civilized peoples; the removal of it would be a blessing for the World. But it is clear that it cannot be removed in Prussia without being removed at the same time and in the same measure in all the other countries it is again the old question of ideals, while we must not forget that in this war we are dealing with realities."³⁷

It is a favorite formula with many of us to say that militarism by itself is a mutual provocation to war, that the weight of military expenditures in the different countries compels them, as it were, to make good their sacrifices by utilizing the formidable weapons which they have accumulated. It may be true. But there are truths which, like medals, have their reverse sides. The facts of the last thirty-five years of world's history hardly suggest that militarism means frequency of wars between militaristic countries. It cannot be denied that the last decades which witnessed and unparalleled flourishing of militarism have been just those in which conflagrations between Great Powers have occurred much more seldom than before. The only real exception was the Russo-Japanese war. The Spanish-American war was a conflict between two nations to which the reproach of militarism can hardly be applied. The same must be said of the Anglo-Boer war: as a land-power England has never been accused of "militarism" even in pacifist pamphlets. The Italian Tripoli campaign was rather a military expedition than a war: it is enough to recall that the Italian casualties in the conquest of Tripoli amounted to a few thousands. The Chino-Japanese war belonged to the same category, and also the European expedition against the Boxers. In the Greco-Turkish war, and in the two recent Balkan wars, however cruel the latter may have been, none of the leading

militaristic Powers were engaged. The leading militaristic Powers managed to avoid the danger for a long period than would have been possible in the middle of the nineteenth century, when armaments were cheap and childish in comparison with ours of to-day.³⁸

Nationalism

Another important cause of the war was nationalism. If we are to define nationalism, first, it is the emergence or development process of nations. Second, nationalism is the sensitivity to or awareness of belonging to a nation. Third, nationalism is the representation of a nation with its language and symbols. Fourth, nationalism is a social and political movement that represents a nation. Last but not least, nationalism is both a general and an individual doctrine and ideology related to nation.³⁹

The fact that the Slavs in Bosnia and Herzegovina now desired to be part of Serbia rather than that of Austria-Hungary was the main excuse of the war. The uprising of Slavs which was originally nationalist and ethnically oriented, led directly to the murder of Archduke Ferdinand.

In overall, the wave of militarism which spread to several countries in Europe did not only contributed to the break of the war, but also caused the expansion of the war through Europe and Asia. As each country tried to prove its sovereignty and power, the war became more and more complex and prolonged.⁴⁰

When the issue was analyzed from the view of Russia, Russia aimed to "protect" the Slavic peoples who has been living Austria-Hungary. In particular, Russia was dreaming of the creation of a large Yugoslavian state with the cession of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Serbs. ("Yug" means South in Russian). The complete abolition of the Austro-Hungarian Empire was not a part of Russia's plans, but this state would take the form of the Austro-Hungarian-Czech Empire with the increase of the Czechs to the Hungarian level. If those plans of Russia ran like clockwork, Slavs would fall under Russian hegemony.⁴¹

Jabotinsky asks:

"Is the establishment of the freedom of small nations an indispensable aim of the war? This question is tantamount to another one: was it the absence of such freedom that caused the war?"⁴²

"It is useless to insist further upon this point, except to say that the status quo of many small nationalities could have yet lasted for years and years without provoking a conflict between Great Powers. The recognition of this truth compels us to conclude that even after this war a quite durable peace could be signed and kept without implying any radical improvement in the condition of subject peoples. This plane truth is so well understood elsewhere that the French insist upon "freedom of small nations" with much less emphasis

34-Martin Kelly, "5 Key Causes of World War I" <https://www.thoughtco.com/causes-that-led-to-world-war-i-105515> (Accessed on 15.02.2019).

35-Akdes Nimet Kurat, *Russian History from the Beginning to 1917*, Publications of Turkish Historical Society, Ankara, 2010, pp. 411-412.

36-Vladimir Jabotinsky, "Turkey and the War", London, 1917, pp.36-37.

37-Vladimir Jabotinsky, "Turkey and the War", London, 1917, pp.37-38.

38-Vladimir Jabotinsky, "Turkey and the War", London, 1917, s.38-40.

39-Temuçin F. ERTAN, Orhan ÖRS, "MİLLİYETÇİLİĞİN MÜPHEMLİĞİ: MİLLİYETÇİLİK NEDİR?", <http://dergiler.ankara.edu.tr/dergiler/45/2270/23628.pdf>, ERİŞİM TARİHİ, 12.03.2019.

40-Martin Kelly, "5 Key Causes of World War I" <https://www.thoughtco.com/causes-that-led-to-world-war-i-105515> (Accessed on 15.02.2019).

41-Akdes Nimet Kurat, *Russian History from the Beginning to 1917*, Publications of Turkish Historical Society, Ankara, 2010, p.411.

42-Vladimir Jabotinsky, "Turkey and the War", London, 1917, p.25.

than the English, and official Russia with still less".⁴³

Alsace-Lorraine Question

Alsace-Lorraine is a region on the German border of France. Although the names Alsace and Lorraine are associated with each other, they are very different in terms of both historical and geographical characteristics. While agriculture is in the forefront with grape production in Alsace region, Lorraine has coal and iron deposits. The region frequently caused disputes between France and Germany. While Germans dominated the region, France took its possession in the 17th century. The region constantly changed hands between Germany and France.⁴⁴

A peace treaty was signed between France and Germany in Frankfurt on May 10, 1871 and by that treaty France ceded Alsace and Lorraine to Germany. However, that inflicted deep wounds in Franco-German relations.⁴⁵

The Treaty of May 10, 1871 did not end the tension between Germany and France but lit the fuse of a new conflict. Since then, prosperous regions like Alsace-Lorraine which was captured by Germany formed the main causes of the European arms race both in political and psychological terms, and the European states carried the heavy burden of that endless race. The resulting "armed peace" turned Europe into a kind of military camp. In the meanwhile, France pulled out all the stops to resist new attacks and Germany did the same to make France take up with the cession of Alsace-Lorraine to Germany. For this reason, France and Germany entered into a number of agreements during the office of Prime Minister Bismarck.⁴⁶

Pointing out the Alsace-Lorraine problem, Jabotinsky stated:

"The Great War has shown that France keeps the memory of Alsace-Lorraine with a freshness almost unaffected by time. For many observers this fact seemed little short of revelation".⁴⁷

"Nor has France forgotten Alsace. The war has at once revived the old love that slept, but was alive".⁴⁸

Indeed, the presence of a strong country such as Germany at its elbow was worrisome for France in terms of security. Furthermore, France had been seeking revenge on Germany since 1870 and longed for recapturing Alsace-Lorraine. For these reasons, France was working up with the allies for the destruction of Germany.⁴⁹

In Jabotinsky's view, Alsace-Lorraine problem is not one of the causes of the war, and he even considers it as an injustice for France and says, "This mutual faith after half a century of severation is one of the most impressive features of this war. But in trying to weigh the exact part it plays in the present conflict we must be careful to avoid any exaggeration. Now that France is at war, she wants to recover her own fringes whose children long to return home.

But it would be a striking injustice to democratic France, even an outrageous calumny, to say that France would have ever willingly provoked the war, even for that holy cause. None of her enemies, certainly none of her friends could admit such a possibility. The Revanche party had never, in the course of the last decades, arisen to strength sufficient to influence the foreign policy of the French Republic. If this war had not come France would certainly have continued to keep a Memory and a Will in the depths of her national heart, but her actual policy would still have remained as it was seen to be on the occasion of Agadir-a policy tending to peace and prepared for sacrifices for the sake of peace. The question of Alsace cannot be considered as a cause of the war. We must insist, first of all, in fairness to France, whose hands bear no stain of all this blood."⁵⁰

Conclusion

World War I was mainly the result of the colonial war and the conflict of interest between the Great Powers. If we need to mention the specific causes of the war one by one, we can list them as follows: imperialism, nationalism, the Alsace-Lorraine problem, the assassination issue and other.

In his book "Turkey and the War", Jabotinsky states that the apparent causes and real causes of the war are not the same. According to him the real cause of the war was the conflict of interest between the Great Powers. Jabotinsky's identity and activities must be taken into consideration to understand the significance of his comments on the war.

Jabotinsky says that the break out of World War I was a direct result of the Near and Middle East question.

He considered Asia Minor as the real source of the Great War and emphasized that the initial and final aim of the war was to solve the Eastern question.

References

- "The Iron Wall", <http://en.jabotinsky.org/media/9747/the-iron-wall.pdf>, Accessed on 11.09.2019.
- A.S.Orlov, V.A.Georgiev, N.G.Georgieva, T.A.Sivoxina, *Istoriya Rossii*, Moscow, 2013.
- Akdes Nimet Kurat, *Russian History from the Beginning to 1917*, Publications of Turkish Historical Society, Ankara, 2010.
- Amir Goldstein, "The End of Evolutionary Zionism—Jabotinsky and the Ukrainian Pogroms".
- Modern Judaism, *A Journal of Jewish Ideas and Experience*, Volume 38, Issue 2, May 2018, Pages 198–220, <https://doi.org/10.1093/mj/kjy004>, Accessed on 11.09.2019.
- Burak Çınar, "Role of the Ottoman Geopolitics During the First World War", <https://dergipark.org.tr/download/article-file/73851>, (Accessed on 31.05.2019).
- David Schwartz, "The Social Doctrine of Zeev Jabotinsky, from the Fathers of Zionism", *Open Journal of Political Science*, 2016, 6, 387-392 <http://www.scirp.org/journal/ojps>, Accessed on 11.09.2019.
- E. Kaplan, "The Jewish Radical Right: Revisionist Zionism and Its Ideological Legacy", University of Wisconsin Press, 2005.
- Ercüment Kuran, "First World War", *Turkish Religious Foundation, Islamic Encyclopedia*, <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/birinci-dunya-savasiTurkiye>, (Accessed on 19.04.2019).
- Oğuzhan Ergün, "Stratejik Bir Tercih Olarak Terörizm ve Terör Paralaksı", *Adnan Menderes University Institute of Social Sciences Journal*, 2018, pp.207-208.
- Fahir Armaoğlu, *20th Century Political History*, (Vol. 1-2:1914-1995), Alkım Publishing House, Ankara, 2000.
- 43-Vladimir Jabotinsky, "Turkey and the War", London, 1917, pp.27-28.
- 44-Yasin Özkan "Two Regions One Destiny: Unshareable Lands Bosnia-Herzegovina and Alsace-Lorraine", https://www.academia.edu/38265119/Bat%C4%B1n%C4%B1n_Payla%C5%9F%C4%B1lamayan_Topraklar%C4%B1_Bosna-Hersek_ve_Alsas_Loren, Accessed on 19.09.2019.
- 45-Rifat Uçarol, *Political History, 1789-1914*, Istanbul, 2019, pp.309-311.
- 46-Rifat Uçarol, *Political History, 1789-1914*, Istanbul, 2019, pp.309-311.
- 47-Vladimir Jabotinsky, "Turkey and the War", London, 1917, p.28.
- 48-Vladimir Jabotinsky, "Turkey and the War", London, 1917, pp.31-32.
- 49-Rifat Uçarol, *Political History, 1914-2014*, Istanbul, 2019, p.10.
- 50-Vladimir Jabotinsky, "Turkey and the War", London, 1917, pp.32-33.

Gil S. Rubin “Vladimir Jabotinsky and Population Transfers between Eastern Europe and Palestine” *The Historical Journal*, Volume 62, Issue 2, June 2019.

İlhan F.Akın, *Political History (1870-1914)*, Istanbul, 2017.

Johan Galtung, “A Structural Theory of Imperialism”, *International Relations*, Volume 1, Issue 2 (Summer 2004), pp. 25-46. p.30.

Mahmut Salihoğlu, “Jabotinsky, Zionism and Ottoman Empire”, *The Symposium on Palestine since the Ottomans*, Atatürk Supreme Council for Culture, Language and History, Publications of Turkish Historical Society, 18-29 November 2013, Ankara, Presentations, Vol. 1, p. 1-13.

Martin Kelly, “5 Key Causes of World War I” <https://www.thoughtco.com/causes-that-led-to-world-war-i-105515> (Accessed on 15.02.2019).

Rifat Uçarol, *Political History, 1789-1914*, Istanbul, 2019.

Salih TÜREDİ, Mehmet Hanefi TOPAL “Militarism ad Globalization: An Empirical research on MENA Countries and Turkey” file:///C:/Users/EGE/Downloads/Militarism.pdf, Accessed on 12.03.2019.

Sedat Kızıloğlu, “Jews and the Development of Zionism during the Period up to the Establishment of Israel”, *Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol. 2, Issue 1, 2012, p.49. <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/181032>, Accessed on 10.09.2019.

Temuçin F. ERTAN, Orhan ÖRS, “MİLLİYETÇİLİĞİN MÜPHEMLİĞİ: MİLLİYETÇİLİK NEDİR?”, <http://dergiler.ankara.edu.tr/dergiler/45/2270/23628.pdf>, ERİŞİM TARİHİ, 12.03.2019.

Vladimir Jabotinsky, “Turkey and the War”, London, 1917.

William Mehlman, “Jabotinsky...The Man and the Vision”, *Americans for A Safe Israel* 1751 2nd Avenue New York, New York 10128, 2010.

Yasin Özkan “Two Regions One Destiny: Unshareable Lands Bosnia-Herzegovina and Alsace-Lorraine”, https://www.academia.edu/38265119/Bat%C4%B1n%C4%B1n_Payla%C5%9F%C4%B1lamayan_Topraklar%C4%B1_Bosna-Hersek_ve_Alsas_Loren, Accessed on 19.09.2019.

Yevreyskiy Legion, “Vladimir Jabotinsky”, https://bookz.ru/authors/vladimir-zeev-jabotinskii/evreiski_990/1-evreiski_990.html, Accessed on 10.09.2019.

<https://izionist.org/eng/zeev-jabotinsky-his-legacy-and-importance-to-zionism/>, Accessed on 11.11.2019.