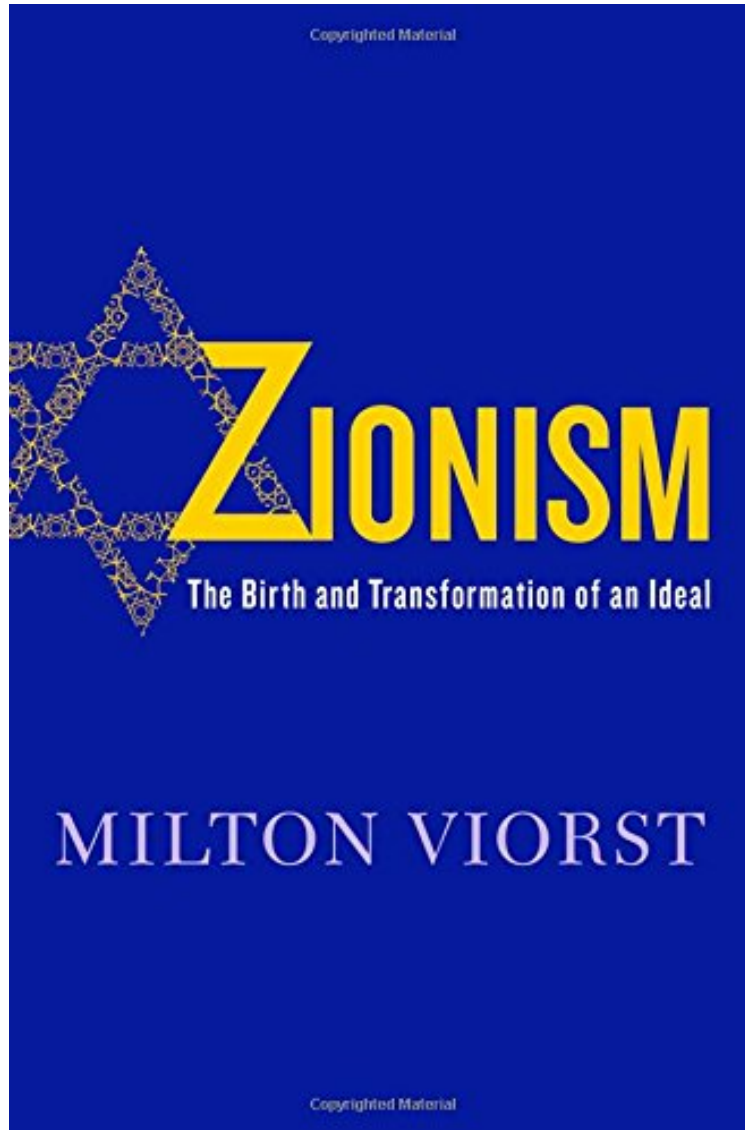


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# Zionism: The Birth and Transformation of an Ideal

*Milton Viorst*

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#1093351 in Books Viorst Milton 2016-07-19 2016-07-19 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.67 x .5 x 6.421, .0 #File Name: 1250078008336 pages Zionism The Birth and Transformation of an Ideal | File size: 63.Mb

**Milton Viorst : Zionism: The Birth and Transformation of an Ideal** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Zionism: The Birth and Transformation of an Ideal:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I learned a great deal from this well-writtenBy susan j. tolchinAn extraordinarily erudite description and analysis of the birth and development of Zionism. I learned a great deal from this well-written, insightful book. A must read for anyone interested in learning about Zionism and the background for

the conflicts between Israel and its neighbors. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Clear and compelling

By Lisbeth B. Schorr I've never read such a clear and compelling history of Zionism. So much that I never understood but yearned to, has become illuminated!

3 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Some Leading Zionists biographies

By William Garrison Jr. Zionism: The Birth and Transformation of an Ideal by Milton Viorst (2016). Initially I was expecting an extensive analysis of the overall Zionism movement since the 1880s through 2010ish. And this book does cover this era, but it is stronger in the 1880s-1920s than thereafter. I learned a lot about these four decades from this book. However, during this limited time period the author primarily discussed just the influences of the usual suspects: Herzl, Weizmann and Jabotinsky. While reading about these leaders, what I found lacking was the author not listing the specific policies that they were trying to implement. The author provided generalities about some of their personality conflicts, but I was left yearning to learn more about how they communicated and interacted with the lesser Zionists within Poland and Eastern Europe. The author noted how these luminaries might entice thousands of Jews to attend some speech, but I don't recall the author noting through what publications or groups informed the Jewish masses to learn of some upcoming speech/confab. The author noted that some Jews were openly split between the secular-Zionists versus the Orthodox-rabbis who didn't want to have anything to do with secularism. However, I don't recall the author listing any numbers as to how many Jews participated in or championed these different camps. I just didn't get any feeling as to what percentage or number of Jews supported the various camps. When discussing the Jews immigrating to British-held Palestine, I don't recall the author really mentioning how many Jews were immigrating after 1920 (although the author did state that there were about a million Arab-Palestinians and 400K Jewish-Palestinians). The author offered little (no) discussion as to how many Zionists differed or supported the pro-capitalist versus pro-socialist (communist) agendas of the various Zionist political parties. As the author began discussing the 1980-2010s, I developed the feeling that although there was much to discuss about the various peace proposals between the various Israeli governments and their PLO-PA (Hezbollah/Hamas) counterparts, the author decided to rather rush through these periods as he barely mentioned even the highlights of the different peace-negotiation offers. There is no comparison of (for example) 17 proposals offered by the Israelis compared to 21 submitted by the Palestinians. The author pretty well blames the Israelis for failing to submit a successful peace settlement with the Arab-Palestinians: Does Zionism's recent silence on the issue suggest that the Jewish DNA contains an immunity to peace? (p. xi) and he wrote something along the line that Israelis are going to have to offer more in peace incentives to the Palestinians in order to secure their acceptance. However, the author doesn't spell out what additional incentives need to be offered. While reading this book, I stumbled across an article written by an Israeli officer that I found illuminative (from which partial comments are:) There was nothing particularly remarkable about the fact that in July 2004, just weeks out of high school, I was joining the army. Military service here is mandatory, and while growing up, it was probably one of the most reliable facts of life. That I was to be *kravithat* is, in a combat unit wasn't as obvious. Only about 15 percent of Israeli soldiers are fighters, but it was what I wanted. It wasn't that I found combat so enticing a prospect; it was pure old-fashioned Zionism. It is this humanist feeling that I found lacking throughout this book. Because of the limited scope of this book, and because it concentrated on the influences of just a handful of well-known movers-and-shakers, I think a more accurate title for this book would have been: Some Leading Zionists. {Nov. 2016 update: regarding the development and influence of Zionism, I highly recommend the recent publication of "Israel: A Concise History of a Nation Reborn" by D. Gordis. }

From serving as the Middle East correspondent for *The New Yorker* to penning articles for the *New York Times*, Milton Viorst has dedicated his career to studying the Middle East. Now, in this new book, Viorst examines the evolution of Zionism, from its roots by serving as a cultural refuge for Europe's Jews, to the cover it provides today for Israel's exercise of control over millions of Arabs in occupied territories. Beginning with the shattering of the traditional Jewish society during the Enlightenment, Viorst covers the recent history of the Jews, from the spread of Jewish Emancipation during the French Revolution Era to the rise of the exclusionary anti-Semitism that overwhelmed Europe in the late nineteenth century. Viorst examines how Zionism was born and follows its development through the lives and ideas of its dominant leaders, who all held only one tenet in common: that Jews, for the first time in two millennia, must determine their own destiny to save themselves. But, in regards to creating a Jewish state with a military that dominates the region, Viorst argues that Israel has squandered the goodwill it enjoyed at its founding, and thus the country has put its own future on very uncertain footing. With the expertise and knowledge garnered from decades of studying this contentious region, Milton Viorst deftly exposes the risks that Israel faces today.

"The book will be especially useful to those new to the idea of Zionism and its historical implications while also providing food for thought to readers more engaged with the topic." - Kirkus

About the Author MILTON VIORST was the Middle East correspondent for *The New Yorker* and has written for the *New York Times Magazine*, the *Atlantic*, *Middle East Policy*, *Ha'Aretz*, *The Nation*, the *Washington Post*, the *L.A. Times*, and the *Wall Street Journal*. Viorst's books on the Middle East include *In The Shadow of the Prophet*, *Storm from the East*, and *What Shall I Do with This People?* He has served as a Ferris Professor at Princeton. Viorst lives in Washington, D.C. with his wife, the

poet Judith Viorst.