CHAPTER VI
CREATION OF THE JEWISH STATE AND THE
OTTOMAN EMPIRE

By the 1880s, the growth of anti-semitism in Germany and Austria as well as the avalanche of pogroms in Russia and East Europe convinced a considerable section of the Jewish intelligentsia that assimilation was no longer a desirable nor a possible solution of the ‘Jewish Question’. They came to realize that Jews were not only a religious group, but also a separate nation, bound by a common faith and sentiment rather than by land. According to these Jewish nationalists, the Jewish question could only be saved if the Jews stood on par with other nations, which could be attained by the collective return of the Jews to the ranks of the nations as a people living in their homeland. This was why Dr.Theodor Herzl, as the founder of political Zionism, insisted that the Jews should be granted sovereignty over a portion of the globe large enough to satisfy the rightful requirements of a nation”\(^1\).

Herzl was not only an ideologist, but also an efficient organizer. In order to negotiate with the Great Powers in the pursuit of Zionist objectives Herzl needed a strong base for which he could rely for the support of his policies. Therefore, he was determined to built the Zionist movement as an actor in international relations with the necessary apparatus of the institutions and program. For this purpose Herzl envisaged a congress of representatives of the Jewish people to be the chief organ of the Zionist movement. The institutional

\(^1\) Theodor Herzl. The Jewish State : An Attempt to a Modern Solution to the Jewish, London, 1946, Chapt. II.
framework of the Congress, he thought, should be in the nature of a national assembly, composed of representatives from each local Zionist community. Based upon these rules, the first Zionist Congress was convened at Basle, Switzerland, on 27th August 1897. In the Congress, which was attended by more than two hundred delegates from all over the world, the Zionist first formulated a program defining their aims, and second laid the foundations of a permanent organization. With respect to the pronouncement of their ultimate aims, the Zionists were cautious not to insist on founding a ‘state’. The Congress agreed to establish a ‘home in Palestine’. The government of the Zionist movement was entrusted to the Actions’ Committee which under presidency of Herzl, was responsible for the execution of all policies undertaken in the name of Zionist organization. In the second Congress which was held in Basle in August 1898 it was decided to establish a bank under the name of Jewish Colonial Trust to serve as the financial instrument to the organization\textsuperscript{2}.

Palestine, which became the focus of the Zionists, was neither empty nor free of an existing sovereignty. It was part of Asiatic Princes of the Ottoman Empire, inhabited by the Arab subjects of the Sultan. Therefore, Herzl admitted that the “decision is in the sole hands of His Majesty the Sultan”\textsuperscript{3}. Knowing debt-stricken state of the Turkish economy, his strategy to convince the Sultan was to make him a financial offer he would not dare to refuse. Herzl came to Istanbul in

the middle of June 1896 and through Philip de Newlinski\(^4\), he requested the Sultan to issue a charter, enabling the Jews to colonize Palestine in return for twenty million pounds. Newlinski lobbied at the palace and is reported to have said to Abdul Hamid II, “without the help of the Zionists, the Turkish economy would not stand a chance of recovery”\(^5\).

Again with Newlinski’s ability to open doors in the Ottoman capital, Herzl managed to see the Grand Vizier, Hald Rifat Pasa, but the latter did not like the project at all. In any event, the authoritative Turkish response came on the second day of his stay. The Sultan was adamant. He told Newlinski “if Mr. Herzl is as much your friend as you are mine, then advise him not to take another step in this matter. I cannot sell even a foot of land, for it does not belong to me, but to my people. My people have won this empire by fighting for it with their blood and have fertilized it with their blood. We will again cover it with our blood before we allow it to be wrested away from us”\(^6\).

Herzl was not discouraged. Thanks to Professor Arminus Vambery\(^7\), the Sultans confidant who acted as a double agent between Britain and Turkey\(^8\) Herzl was granted an interview with Abdul Hamid II on 19 May 1901\(^9\).

Herzl discovered that Abdul Hamid II had the most ardent desire to get the Ottoman Public Debt Administration which was under the supervision of the European powers into his own hands. Herzl, therefore, devised a plan to liberate

\(^{5}\) Ibid.
\(^{8}\) Public Record office, Foreign office, Bambery Papers, 1895-1911.
\(^{9}\) Diaries, III, 960-963, 977-997, 1001-1009 (Central Zionist Archives, 800/32).
the sultan from the grip of European financiers, a project that he described, like
the legend of Androcles is removing the thorn from the foot of the lion. Consolidation of the ottoman Debt involved buying up the debt on the stock exchange by a Jewish syndicate within a period of three years. The acquisition of Turkish securities, Herzl stressed, would be on condition of the announcement of an Imperial Charter for the Colonization of Palestine by the Jewish people. On the basis of the charter, the Jewish Colonial Trust would found a land company, incorporated under Turkish law, and would be charged with settling and organizing the Jews in Palestine.\(^\text{10}\).

It was true that the sultan was highly attracted on the consolidation scheme. When he ascended to the throne, Abdul Hamid II was compelled, owing to the exhausted state of Ottoman financial sources, to accept European control over Turkey’s debts by the decree of Mubarreem.\(^\text{11}\) The sultan's fiscal policy in the years to follow aimed at the gradual paying up of the debt in order to release the Turkish economy from European bondage.\(^\text{12}\) Such control, he thought, jeopardized Turkish sovereignty and obstructed the economic development of the country.\(^\text{13}\) Abdul Hamid’s greatest nightmare was to share the fate of Egypt which was de facto, if not de jure, occupied by the British after having failed to honour her debts.\(^\text{14}\) Therefore the sultan considered the Zionists’

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\(^{10}\) A. Galante. *Abdul Hamid II et le Sionisme*, Hanumra March 1933, 2-11.


\(^{12}\) Ibid.


project as a ‘wonderful idea” in saving Turkish economy from European tutelage\textsuperscript{15}.

Despite the favourite attitude of the sultan, Herzl left the Ottoman capital empty handed. The very reason he could not reach an agreement with the Turks, was his determination to regard his consolidation schemes together; he expected the sultan to concede in the letter for his efforts in the former. The Ottomans, however, viewed consolidation separates from the granting of a charter for the Zionists to colonize Palestine. Abdul Hamid II received Herzl in the anticipation that he could serve as a go-between with the Ottomans and the Jewish financial houses. But when Herzl underlined his demand for a charter the sultan was irritated and droped any idea of reaching an understanding with the Zionists in financial matters. In his later negotiations, in February and July 1902, Herzl tried to convince the Ottomans of the Zionists’ loyalty. But all in vain\textsuperscript{16}. According to the Turks, “the purchase of Palestine, thus becomes a political question and not one of swelling our exchequer”\textsuperscript{17}.

The Ottomans, indeed, had their own deep-seated political considerations for refusing the Zionist proposals. At a time when the multinational Ottoman Empire was feeling the presence of a separatist movements in Balkans and East Anatolia, the Turkish Government feared the possibility of nurturing another nationality problem within its domains. Although the Zionist Program (1897) spoke of a Jewish “home” in Palestine secured by “public law”, the Ottoman

\textsuperscript{15} Arif Huseyin Bey. \textit{Hatıralar}, Hand Book No.8, p. 17.
\textsuperscript{16} \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{17} Diaries, IV, 1319.
authorities were not native enough to accept these declarations prima facie. They took Herzl’s Dee Judenstaat as a guide to the sincerity of the Zionist aspirations. With respect to the clause “public law” Ottomans had no illusions. Anthopoulos Pasa wrote from London on 8 June 1898 that “with the increase in the number of flourishing colonies in Palestine, the Zionist colonizers would not be contented to live under Ottoman municipal law”. He added that the Zionists, contrary to what they had said at Basle, would press for international recognition under the law of nations 18.

The Ottoman ambassador in Berlin, Ahmet Tewfik Pasa, not only interviewed Herzl several times but also sent agents to the Congress to obtain accurate information respecting the aims of the Zionists. In a detailed report to Porte, Ahmet Tewfik Pasa wrote on 17 August 1900 that “we must have no illusions about Zionism. Although the speakers at the Congress dwelled upon vague generalities such as the future of the Jewish people, the Zionists, n effect, aim at the formation of a great Jewish state in Palestine, which would also spread towards the neighbouring countries. According to the Ottoman ambassador, since Palestine could not possibly accommodate all the persecuted Jews throughout the world, totaling few million people, the Zionist would use this ‘home’ as a base for their future expansionist activities 19.

Ahmed Tewfik Pasa’s worries fell on sympathetic ears in Istambul. When Herzl and his colleagues started negotiating with Neville Chamberlain, the British Colonial secretary, over the issue of Jewish colonization in the Sinai, Abdul

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19 Friedman, Germany, Turkey and Zionism, p. 73.
Hamid II must have felt that Tewfik Pasa’s fears were justified. Thus Abdul Hamid II admitted in his memoirs that the Zionists were not only interested in agricultural pursuits, as Herzl had argued, but were aiming to establish a government of their own in Palestine\(^\text{20}\).

As early as 1895, the sultan claimed that he understood their “evil projects” and he added that the Zionists were too naïve to think and he would accept their proposals. He stressed that as much as he protected his Jewish subjects and respected the competent Jewish officials in the service of the porte, he was still the enemy of those Jews who entertained certain ideas over Palestine\(^\text{21}\).

Abdulhamid II thought that the irrigation and settlement of Jews in Palestine was harmful to the interests of Ottoman Empire insofar as they would lead to the emergence of a “Jewish Question”, and especially dangerous at a time when the Turkish government had American troubles on its hands\(^\text{22}\).

The Ottomans not only feared to face up to another nationality problem within the Empire, but also did not ward to increase the influence of the Great Powers over the affairs of the Empire. One of the most important avenues through which the Powers tried to place Turkey under their tutelage was by the extensive use of the capitulations\(^\text{23}\).


Turks never had a disposition towards commercial activities, which they considered to be degrading to their chivalric culture. The rationale, therefore, behind the issuing of extraterritorial privileges was to attract foreign merchants and companies to Turkey. This was how early Ottoman sultans thought they could cultivate the rich economic resources of the Empire. These capitulations were issued from a position of strength, and as far as the sultan was concerned, possessed no binding obligations. He had the power to cancel them altogether.

With the advent of the nineteenth century, the Ottoman Empire, having lost its initial vitality, was placed with the pale of the Europeans political system whose more powerful members in the 1856 at the Congress of Paris undertook to preserve its territorial integrity. As a result, the capitulations acquired the features of law, becoming inter alia an instrument of exploiting Turkey’s economic resources on the one hand and of swelling the Turkish market within European industrial products on the other\(^\text{24}\)

The most objectionable abuse of the capitulations, from the Turkish point of view, was how it led to the emergence of the Protégé (Limaye) system. The protégé system was an institution by which Ottoman subjects could acquire foreign nationality of foreign protection without being required to reside in the country granting the protection and thereby be entitled to the capitulations in the region.

It was France, as the champion of Catholicism that placed the Maronites, Jacobites and confess under her protective wings\(^\text{25}\). While Britain did the same

\(^{24}\) Ibid.  
for Pruzes and Protestants\textsuperscript{26}, Germany for the Templars\textsuperscript{27} and finally Russia for the Orthodox, Copts and Abyssinians\textsuperscript{28}.

Haunted by the fear of opening another door for European influence, Abdul Hamid II stressed to Herzl that all Jewish immigrants must become Ottoman subjects and placed under Millet system\textsuperscript{29}. Yet, despite the guarantee given by the Zionist leader, his followers who managed to infiltrate to Palestine, sought and acquired foreign protection. Britain was the first power to take the Jewish settlers under its protective wing\textsuperscript{30}.

British protection was viewed with suspicion by other powers, most of whom thought that the British found in the Jews another means of increasing their influence in Palestine at the expense of other government. Thus, each power initiating the British, did not hesitate to issue certificate of production to the Jewish settlers, hoping that, by doing so it would counter balance the influence of the rest.

From the Turkish point of view, these developments were particularly disconcerting. The Ottomans firmly believed that the Zionists were “another advance guard of further political European influence in the Ottoman Empire\textsuperscript{31}. In a report, Ali Ferruh Bey, the Ottoman Minister in Washington, wrote that the “time has come for His Imperial Majesty to take certain measures, privileges enjoyed by the nationals of the donor country in Turkey. Initially this system was

\textsuperscript{27} \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{29} \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{30} \textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{31} \textit{Ibid.}
extended to a handful of members of the religious communities in the Holy land. With the nineteenth century, however, the protégé system became very attractive to the non-Muslim subjects of the Empire. First of all, at the time when the Ottomans levied higher taxes to make up for the depleted sources of the Empire, the protégé system placed to be a convenient device in escaping such a burden, for the protégés of foreign powers, according to the capitulations, were immune from the ottoman fiscal system. Second, the political advantage under the protective wing of great powers, the nationalist movements within the Empire could afford to become more militants in the pursuit of their separatist ambitions. The Turks thought that the extension of the protégé system was a step in the direction of the succession of the territories inhabited by the protected nationals.

The Great Powers also repeated substantial benefits from the alliance with non-Muslim groups in the Ottoman Empire. First, the influence of the West in the orient had increased. The greater the number of her protégés, the greater would be the concerned country's exploitation of the capitulations. Second, the non-Muslim protégés in Turkey had also provided the great powers within the pretext to intervene in Ottoman internal affairs. By upholding the so-called rights of the Ottoman minorities, the Great Powers more often than not tried to shape Ottoman policies to fit their imperial interests. In Palestine, too, the great powers were exploiting religious differences in order to establish her respective spheres of interest to repair the flats which his ancestors had committed by allowing the non-Muslim communities to settle in Palestine. As the journey of the German Emperor to Jerusalem clearly showed, Catholics, Protestants, Orthodox, and
Jews prepare the ground for the powers to enhance their respective spheres of political and religious ambitions within the Ottoman lands”\textsuperscript{32}.

Istambul took the advice and decided to buttress the loyal elements in Palestine with Muslim immigrants. The sultan declared, “We cannot view Jewish immigration favourably. We could only open our borders only to those who belongs to the same religion as we do”\textsuperscript{33}.

Indeed, when Muslim Circassian refuges, in the face of growing repression in the Balkans and Russia, fled to Turkey, Abdulhamid II settled them in Hauran\textsuperscript{34}.

Because of the factors cited, the Ottomans took the Zionist movement seriously from its inception, and devised their policies to deal with it accordingly. It was Abdul Hamid II himself who laid the cornerstone of the Ottoman reaction toward the Zionist. He was determined that the Turkish Government should to the best of its efforts prevent Jewish immigration and settlement in Palestine\textsuperscript{35}.

The Sultan, in turn, asked the cabinet to discuss the entire situation carefully at their meetings and work out detailed policies to cope with Zionist phenomenon both at home and abroad. The final program, as formulated by the Council of Ministers and approved by the Sultan, entitled four sets of policies, for whose execution different ministries were charged responsible. While the Ministry for foreign affairs was asked to pursued the powers not to lend any support to the

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{33} Abdul Hamid, \textit{Siyasi Hatratim}, p. 73.
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{35} A Osmanoglu, \textit{Babum Abdulhamid}, Istambul, 1960, p. 46.
Zionist movement, the ministry of interior had to find ways of preventing them entering the country. For those Jews who, despite the efforts of the concerned ministries, managed to get in, it was up to the Porte to make such that they did not acquire foreign nationality and become entitled to capitulatory rights. Further, it was up to the Department of Land Registration to prevent them from acquiring land in Palestine and environs.

Since Germany was the European Power most sympathetic to Turkey, the Ottoman Government thought that it should win first the support of the Kaiser for its anti Zionist policies. Yet, that was going to be difficult. Wilhelm II had already cleared himself ready to intervene with the sultan on behalf of the Zionists. Tewfik Pasa, on institutions from the palace, told Wilhelm II on his tour to Jerusalem in 1880 that “the Sultan would have nothing to do with Zionism and an independent Jewish Kingdom”\textsuperscript{36}.

The Ottomans tried to convince him that since Zionism was a serious threat to Turkish sovereignty, Germany’s support to Herzl’s plan was incompatible with the German policy of maintaining the integrity of Ottoman Empire. “The Germans should renounce the idea of introducing Jewish people into the international community as a state, because this project, by creating a state at the centre of the Ottoman Empire, would assure the ruin of Turkey”. Turkish propaganda in this connection was effective. The Allegemeine Zeitung

\textsuperscript{36} Friedman, \textit{Germany, Turkey and Zionism}, pp. 65-68.
wrote on 11 August 1900: “Live and let live; this should be the policy of great powers, not only toward the Jews, but also towards the Turks”\textsuperscript{37}.

As a result, Wilhelm II, anxious not to arouse the suspicion of the Sultan whose goodwill be needed for the successful implementation of his Prang Nach Osten policies, lost his entire enthusiasm for Zionism.

It appears that Germany played a pivotal role in the shaping of the Power’s attitudes towards Zionism. In her withdrawal of support from Herzl, Russia followed Germany’s example. Plehve, the Russian Minister of the Interior, had written to Herzl in August 1903 that “so long as Zionism consisted of wanting to create an independent state in Palestine…. The Russian Government could be completely favourable to it”\textsuperscript{38}. It seems that Russians gave their support to the Zionist to take the wind out of German sails. Suspicious as they were of the Wilhem Stresse’s ambitions in the Near East, St. Petersburg must have thought that if the establishment of a Jewish state were unavoidable, it would be better to have it under Russian rather than German protection. But, once the Germans backed down fostering the Zionist cause in Palestine, the Russian Government must have realized that there was no need to complicate international relations with another nationality question. Thus, it placed the Jewish question in cold storage.

As for the French, Paris was wholeheartedly against Herzl’s project. Considering that Paris had always regarded Syria (and Palestine) has been sphere of interest, the French government watched suspiciously over events in

\textsuperscript{37} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{38} Ibid.
Palestine. As Bodenheimer, who accompanied Herzl in his Middle Eastern town in 1889, wrote "Any incautious declaration of a protectorate of a Jewish state would have led to dangerous complications. Should the French Fleet, alerted at Toulon have anchored off the Syrian coast, trouble would certainly have ensued".

Having recognized potential danger to world peace, Britain contended to offer Herzl and his followers politically less sensitive spots, like Uganda and Cyprus, to fulfill their irredentist aspirations.

At home, the Ottomans met the Jewish immigrants with a series of "Entry Restrictions". As early as 1882, the Ottoman local authorities in pursuit of orders from the Ministry of the Interior, prohibited all foreign Jews, with the notable exception of pilgrims, to visit Palestine.

Jews, however, could always enter Palestine as pilgrims, and then outstay their welcome. The Mutsarril of Jerusalem, Rauf, Pasa, recognized that this did not accord with the Ministry's real purpose, so he turned to Istanbul for advice. It was decided in 1884 that henceforth, Jewish pilgrims could only enter Palestine if their passports were properly issued by Ottoman Consuls abroad.

On arrival, they were to hand over a deposit, guaranteeing their departure, and they were to leave after thirty days.

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41 Ibid.
42 Ibid.
43 Ibid.
When a bad harvest and anti-semitic outbreaks in Roman during 1899 led to a new influx of Jews to Palestine, the Ottomans met the challenge by issuing on 21 November 1900 a circular with respect to the “conditions of Entry into the Holy Land by Hebrew Visitors”\textsuperscript{44}.

According to these regulations, the Jews were no longer required to pay cash deposit as a guarantee that they would depart after one month. Instead, all Jews, including Ottoman subjects, were to surrender their papers on entry and, in exchange, were to receive a residence permit allowing them to stay in Palestine for three months. This permit, because of its color, became known as the Red Ticket. It was to be handed back by the pilgrims on departure so that a check could be kept on Jews visiting Palestine. Detailed registers were to be compiled every month to enable the authorities to expel pilgrims whose permit had expired. Officials who failed to enforce these orders would be severely punished. The Jews who did not act in conformity with the existing orders were refused admission, and they were conducted back to the steamers that brought them to Palestine. It must be stressed, however, that during these procedures the Jews “suffered no ill-treatment whatsoever by any one”\textsuperscript{45}.

The Ottoman authorities tried their best to deny foreign protection to Jews who managed by some illegal means to enter the country. The Bureau of Nationality at the Porte, set up in 1867, was charged to examine the claims of

\textsuperscript{44} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{45} PRO, F.O. 195/2028 No. 5H Dickenson to O’Conor, Jerusalem, 12 Oct. 1898.
foreign nationality. If the evidence proved to be unsatisfactory, the Bureau had
the right to refuse registration\textsuperscript{46}.

Believing that the Protégé system constituted as “source of inexhaustible abuses”\textsuperscript{47} said Pasa, the Grand Vizier, with a note dated April 1887, ordered the local authorities in Palestine that unless the Jews could produce documentary evidence to prove their right to foreign protection they must be treated as Ottoman subjects\textsuperscript{48}.

In fact, the willingness on behalf of the Turkish authorities to implement these measures was remarkable. The British ambassador in Istambul, Sir William White, was surprised that the “Porte is pursuing the practice of asserting its own sovereign rights even at the risk disobliging the old claims of friendly powers”\textsuperscript{49}.

After the issue of protection, the Ottoman government turned its attention to another aspect of Jewish settlement in Palestine, the question of land sale to the Zionists, the Ottomans tried to prevent the Zionists from acquiring real estate in Palestine. The law declared that “subjects of foreign governments are allowed to take advantage of the rights to possess property within or without towns in part of their Imperial dominations with the exception of the Hejae lands in the same way as Ottoman subjects”\textsuperscript{50}.

\textsuperscript{46} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{47} PRO, F.O.83/173, No. 394, White to Salisbury, Therapia, Sept. 1891.
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{49} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{50} Ibid.
Having realized this, the Turkish government on 5 March 1883 passed a law especially designed to stop Jewish settlers from obtaining any land in Palestine\textsuperscript{51}.

Ottoman Jews, however, were not restricted in their purchase of land. It was they who, on behalf of the Zionist colonizers, concluded transactions with Arab landlords and registered the property with the local authorities under their names. Thus, in November 1892 Mutasarrif of Jerusalem, Ibrahim Hakki Pasa, was ordered by the Department of Land Registration to stop the sales of land to all Jews, including the Ottoman subjects\textsuperscript{52}.

Although the Zionists failed to accomplish their political objective of acquiring a charter for a proposed Jewish state, they managed, despite Ottoman intransigence, to penetrate and settle thousands of their followers in Palestine. By 1908, the Jewish population of Palestine had risen to 80,000, three times its number in 1882, when the first entry restrictions were imposed\textsuperscript{53}.

By 1908, the Jews had acquired some 156 square miles of land and set up twenty six colonies\textsuperscript{54}. The failure of the Ottomans to prevent the establishment of Zionist foothold in Palestine must not be placed squarely on the shoulders of the local authorities\textsuperscript{55}.

\textsuperscript{51} FRUS (1906) No. 1370, Jay to Secretary of State, Istambul, 25 April 1906.
\textsuperscript{52} PRO, F.O. 195/1765, No.35, Dickenson to Clare-Ford, Jerusalem, 30 Dec. 1892.
\textsuperscript{54} Sokolow, \textit{History of Zionism} London, 1918, pp. 238-239.
\textsuperscript{55} Friedman, \textit{Germany, Turkey and Zionism}, p. 120.
During the period under consideration, Palestine was governed by exceptionally honest and competent administrators who earnestly administrated the Porte’s regulations\textsuperscript{56}. The wide gap between the theory and practice of the Ottoman policies was attributable to the intervention of the powers on behalf of the Zionist colonizes.

Of all the great powers, Germany and Russia had genuine interests in the promotion of Zionist policies. As Herzl told Wilhelm II and W.K. Plehve, the exodus of the Jews from these countries, from the domestic point of view, meant that the socialist movement would be deprived of its leaders and supporters on the one hand, and anti-Semitism would be sapped of its impetus on the other\textsuperscript{57}.

With respect to external considerations, both the Germans and Russians must have thought that these Jewish elements once placed under their protection would prove themselves useful agents for the enhancement of their respective spheres of interest at that part of the Ottoman Empire.

Wilhelm II admitted that the Jews could play an invaluable role in Germany Drang nach Osten. He was convinced that the “settlement of the Holy Land by the Wealthy and industrious people of Israel will bring unexampled prosperity and blessing to the Holy Land, which will do much to revive and develop Asia minor. Such a settlement would bring millions into the purse of the Turks… and so gradually help to save the ‘sick Man’ from bankruptcy… The Turk will recover … and it would not be so easy to dismember Turkey”\textsuperscript{58}.

\textsuperscript{56} Friedman, Op. Cit.
\textsuperscript{57} PRO/F.O. 5900, No. 36, Moore to White, Jerusalem, 24 May 1889.
\textsuperscript{58} Friedman, Op. Cit.
Germany had a vested interest in the preservation of the Ottoman Empire, for she knew that in the case of disintegration and scramble of Turkey she had to share the spoils with the other powers. At present, however, the Kaiser’s Germany commanded an unrivaled position in Instambul, thanks to the concessions – among which the Borlin-Bagdad railway project was the most formidable – granted by the Sultan. Moreover, the German drive to the East had one inherent weakness: the flow of capital was not backed by a stream of immigrants. So deep rooted was the Ottoman’s opposition to foreign colonization that General Von der Goltz, the German Military adviser to Turkey, had to advice his countrymen “not to migrate to the Near East if friendly relations with the Ottoman Empire were to be maintained”\(^59\).

These factors clearly explains why Jewish colonization was viewed favourably by the Germans.

Russia was also guided by similar considerations, extending her influence in the Middle East. As aptly described by the British Consul in Jerusalem:

“Pan-slavism in Macedoma supplements the religious influence of the Holy Mountain, and in the same way Orthodoxy in Palestine is seconded by a racial policy, and of a rather remarkable type. There are, indeed, few slaves, but there are plenty of Russian subjects, and these are Ashkerazim Jews, the erstwhile inhabitant of Poland and the Ukraine who, driven thence by a relentless persecution, find themselves to their astonishment personae grater to the Russian Consul-General in Jerusalem. Despite the regulations of the Turkish

government against Jewish Immigration, the influx continues, and the Russians
do not omit, by extending their comprehensive protection to the Israelites, to add
to their political bow a second string of no new strength\textsuperscript{60}.

It appears that one of the more important factors to influence the attitudes
of all powers was their preoccupation with the preservation of their privileges
conferred under the capitulations. Jewish settlers, in order to enjoy the privileges
conferred upon foreigners under their umbrella of capitulation, sought and
obtained foreign protection, more importantly, these certificates, unlike Ottoman
passports, failed to mention the religion of the possessor. By making it very
difficult for the local authority to distinguish a Gentle European from Jewish
Protage, the Zionists could easily evade the Turkish restrictions. The powers, in
the meantime, had to safeguard Jewish interests as if they were their own
nationals. When the representatives of the powers in Palestine found out that
the settlers had been obtaining certificates by fraudulent means with the sole
objection of escaping the Turkish regulations\textsuperscript{61}.

They started to consider the gradual withdrawal of their protection upon
Jews\textsuperscript{62}.

The powers however had put themselves in a terrible dilemma. If they
admit that the Zionists forfeited certificates of protection and declined to watch
over Zionist rights, it would have been fault admission on their part that the
Turkish viewpoints on capitulations (as well as on the protege system) was

\textsuperscript{60} F.O. Correspondence 7307, No. 91, Bigham to Foreign office, Jerusalem, 24 Dec. 1698.
\textsuperscript{61} PRO, F.O. 1951/2028, No. 67, Dickenson to O’Conor. Jerusalem, 21 Nov. 1898.
\textsuperscript{62} PRO, F.O. 78/3630, No.6, Earl Granville to Lord Dufferin, London, 28 January 1884.
correct: an institution ridden with abuses, obsolete, and ripe for abolition. Because they did not desire to forego the reservoir of power and influence they had established over the affairs of the Ottoman Empire. The powers had no choice but willingly or reluctantly, to become the promoters of Jewish colonization in Palestine.

As a result of the intersession of the powers on behalf of the Zionists, Ottoman policies restricting Jewish immigration and settlement in Polestine were evaded. With respect to the entry restrictions, the ambassadors in Istambul made it clear to the Porte that the right of their subjects to travel within the Ottoman dominions was secured by the capitulations, and, therefore, anti-Zionist regulations were considered to be ipso facto null and void as far as they regard persons enjoying their protection.63

The representatives of the powers not only prevented the expulsion of the Jews who did not possess proper documents, but also provided them with a loophole to secure their entry to Palestine. After intimating the Turks, the powers gained from the Ottoman government the concession that entry restrictions would only be applied to Jews coming to Palestine “en masse”, but Jews who arrived in single families would not be molested.64

As the foreign Jews could now enter Palestine with no difficulty, the Porte in June 1900 tried to stop them from disembarking at Ottoman ports, requesting the powers to instruct their shipping companies not to take abroad Jews

63 DDF, 2nd series 1. D/146, Delcasse to Constans, Paris, 19 March 1901, p. 18
intending to settle in Palestine. But, the powers rejected this appeal, and the Porte’s problems remained\(^{65}\).

With respect to the question of land sale to Jews, it must be remembered that in November 1892 the Mutasairf of Jerusalem, Ibrahim Hakki Pasa, was ordered to stop the sale of Miri (public) land to Jews. As most of the land to Palestine was Miri, there were land protests from foreigner – Jewish and Gentile – who had invested in land. The embassies in Istambul took up their cause, protesting a manifest breach of the capitulations. As with the entry of individual Jewish settlers, the powers were able in 1893 to extract a concession from the Porte regarding land purchase. Foreign Jews, legally residents in Palestine, would be permitted to buy land on condition that they could prove their legal status in the country and undertook not to let “illegal Jews” live on their land (if urban) or set up a colony on it (if rural)\(^{66}\).

In conclusion, it could be said that if the Zionists lost on the diplomatic front and failed to obtain a charter for a Jewish home in Palestine, they won in another way. Thanks largely to the intervention of the Powers, the Zionists evaded the Turkish regulations of immigration and settlement, and were by and large successful in establishing in Palestine a stronghold in the form of colonies which was destined to become the nucleus of the future Jewish state, Israel. In 1911, seeing that all his government’s efforts had been in vain, Abdul Hamid II, by then deposed and exiled, admitted to his private physical that the achievements of the Zionists in Palestine were just an introduction, preparing the

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\(^{65}\) PRO/F.O. 78/5479, No. 218, O’Conor to Salisbury, Istambul, 27 June 1900.

\(^{66}\) Ibid.
ground work for accomplishing their ultimate goal: “I am sure with time they can – and will be successful in establishing their own state in Palestine”\(^67\).

\(^{67}\) PRO/F.O. 78/5479, No. 218, O’Conor to Salisbury, Istambul, 27