

The Triumph of Military Zionism – Nationalism and the Origins of the Israeli Right

by Colin Shindler

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The constant rightwards lurch of Israeli politics and politicians and the huge wedge that is being driven between the Jewish State and many thinking and reasoning Jews world-wide as a result is one of the saddest phenomena in 21st century Jewish life. From being an issue that unified Jews and brought them strength and pride Israel has become the subject raised only by the brave, the foolhardy or the mischievous.

There are several reasons why this sorry circumstance pertains, and some of the answers may be found in Colin Schindler's excellent new book, *The Triumph of Military Zionism*. Schindler consummately and conclusively lays bare the frequently uttered asseveration that this shift in Israeli politics is due to Islamist extremism, demonstrating conclusively that the roots of Israel's rightist policies, may be found back in the 1930s ideology not of Vladimir Jabotinsky alone, but also of his rival Abba Achmeir, who struggled for the soul of the Revisionist Movement and who were impressed and inspired by other right wing political movements in Europe.

The Triumph of Military Zionism is divided into twelve chapters, tracing the tortuous and tortured history of the Revisionist Movement, its confrontations with the British Mandate and with the Jewish establishment, and its splits and internecine struggles. It is a fascinating but far from uplifting description of a movement that continues to cast a long and malevolent shadow over the State of Israel and should be required reading for any who seek to gain a glimmer of understanding into why Israeli society and politics are in their current state.

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