

The cult origins of the fundamentalists behind the 'Temple Mount' plot

by Joseph Brewda

The Jewish fundamentalist fanatics who sparked off the current crisis in Jerusalem, with their demand to rebuild Solomon's Temple on an Islamic holy site, may seem crazy—but they're a great deal more than that. Their leaders are *intelligence operatives*, deployed to carry out a deadly mission on behalf of Israeli and British intelligence services, and with the increasingly unabashed support of the Israeli government. The origin of the fundamentalists' latest provocations must be traced back to the founding of the Zionist movement itself, as an intelligence operation to wreck the rational, Mosaic current in Judaism, in favor of mysticism and chauvinism, and to maintain the Middle East as a boiling cauldron of religious conflict.

On Oct. 17, Gershom Solomon, the leader of the Temple Mount Faithful, gave an interview to the London *Daily Telegraph* on his sect's program. The sect had attempted to lay the foundation-stone for "King Solomon's Temple" at the Haram al-Sharif Islamic grounds in East Jerusalem on Oct. 8, with explosive consequences.

The Al Aqsa mosque "must be dismantled and moved to Mecca," Solomon raved. Al Aqsa is a product of "Arab imperialism." Once the mosque and the nearby Dome on the Rock are removed from the "Temple Mount"—the Jewish fundamentalist name for the Haram al-Sharif—"the Third Temple must be rebuilt" in their place. "God gave us this land forever," he ranted, "and what God has given cannot be taken away by other people"—such as Arabs.

Solomon is in many respects a typical Israeli agent provocateur. His formulations and actions are intended to provoke religious war. A Likud bloc party operative, Solomon was assigned to form the police-agent sect back in 1982.

Since that time, Solomon's group, and various of its affiliates, have repeatedly attempted to blow up the mosque. These affiliates include the Ateret Cohanim yeshiva, a Jewish day school formed by Israeli intelligence agents Mattiyahu Dan and Rabbi Shlomo Aviner in 1978; the Kach party, formed by former FBI and CIA informant Rabbi Meir Kahane; and the Gush Emunim "settlers' movement," whose leader, Rabbi Moshe Levinger, was recently jailed for shooting West Bank Palestinians.

Despite their insanity, the groups are overtly supported by the current Israeli government of Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, the former head of the Stern gang. Housing Minister Ariel Sharon, Foreign Minister David Levy, and Yuval

Ne'eman, the minister of science and technology, are among the groups' most visible and vocal promoters. These political figures do not merely support these groups because their wild provocations serve the war aims of the current government. They support these groups because their insane Temple Mount project is and has been central to the Zionist cult beliefs upon which the Jewish state was formed.

A cabalistic heresy

Although Zionism is usually depicted by its current apologists and advocates as a form of secular Jewish nationalism, nationalism per se is hardly the primary source from which the movement springs. Zionism can be traced back to the Kabbalah, the Jewish mystical heresy which the Babylonian priesthood had imposed on Mosaic Judaism in the first centuries of the Christian era. The Kabbalah is best described as a Jewish form of the gnostic heresy which was then plaguing Christianity, a heresy based on a radical rejection of reason within religion.

One of the central objectives which became associated with the cabalist tradition, and the Zionist movement which it later spawned, is the reconstruction of the Temple of Solomon, which was destroyed in 586 B.C. This fixation on Solomon's Temple partially derives from the Old Testament report that King Solomon was associated with a project of introducing various Babylonian cults into Judaism. It is noteworthy that the notorious fourth century A.D. Byzantine emperor Julian the Apostate had also sponsored an effort to rebuild the temple, and turn Jerusalem over to a paganized Judaism, as part of a broader attempt to destroy Christianity.

For such reasons, it is not surprising that the first major eruption of Zionism in modern times was led by the seventeenth-century cabalist Sabbati Sevi. Sevi proclaimed himself the Messiah who was to lead the Jewish diaspora back to the Holy Land. A central feature of his messianic cult was the rebuilding of "Solomon's Temple" on the Haram al-Sharif.

As in the case of the Temple Mount fanatics today, Sevi was not only a mystic kook, but also an intelligence agent. This would-be messiah was the son of the British East India Company's official agent in Istanbul, then the center of the vast Ottoman Turkish empire, and was patronized by the powerful Recanati and Luzzatto families of Venice. Zionism was already being nurtured by both the Venetian and British

empires as a means of disrupting the Ottoman Turkish empire which then controlled Palestine. The British oligarchy, and the Recanati and Luzzatto families, continue to be primary promoters of the "Temple Mount" project today. Edouard Recanati, for example, runs the Temple Mount Foundation. His family owns Israel's third largest bank, the Israeli Discount Bank.

The Venetian onslaught

Back in the thirteenth century, the Luzzatto family began a campaign to nurture the growth of the cabalism in an effort to destroy the rational tradition associated with Moses, and in favor of something more useful to the Venetian oligarchy. In the seventeenth century, Moses Recanati, the chief patron of Sabbati Sevi, intensified this effort through directing Sevi's messianic movement and financing the mass publication of Jewish mystical texts. In the eighteenth century, Moses Chaim Luzzatto, the leading cabalist of his day, moved from Venice to Palestine, in order to cultivate this current with the Jews of the region.

In the nineteenth century, this campaign became associated with a denunciation of "Attic" Judaism led by Rabbi Samuel David Luzzatto, the founder of the rabbinical academy of Padua. By "Attic" Judaism, Luzzatto meant the Platonic current associated with Philo of Alexandria. Luzzatto advocated what he called "Abrahamic" Judaism, one opposed to Western notions of reason and political freedom. This outlook is currently expressed by such Temple Mount lunatics as Rabbi Meir Kahane, who once said regarding his program, that "Jewish leaders and intellectuals, the liberal Hellenists who drink from the milk of gentilized Western culture, will be forced to confront and choose: a Jewish state or a Western democratic one?"

The Kook tradition

The major proponent of "Abrahamic" Judaism in the early days of the twentieth century was Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, later the chief Rabbi of the Holy Land. Kook formed a network of yeshivas which later trained many of the leaders of the 1940s Irgun, and its split-off, the Stern gang, which helped found the Israeli state. The leader of the Irgun during the 1948 Israeli war of independence was Menachem Begin, later the prime minister of Israel. The head of the Stern gang during the same period was current Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir. The two groups comprise the Likud bloc today.

Rabbi Kook was not only the patron of much of what became the leadership of Israel today. He was also the patron of the Temple Mount project. In 1921, Kook formed the Yeshiva Torat Cohanim in Jerusalem, which had one central purpose: Destroy the Islamic holy sites at Haram al-Sharif in order to rebuild "Solomon's Temple."

The founding document of Kook's 1921 yeshiva reads in part: "In this epoch of national awakening, in the face of the

temporal and material elements that have taken hold of the [Zionist] movement, an establishment such as this is of paramount importance. . . . The main pillar of our present revivalism is based on a deep-seated hope of old to see once more the priest and Levites performing their sacerdotal rites. God's message concerning the rebuilding of the Temple and the renovation of the sacerdotal rites will certainly be fulfilled very shortly."

Kook's son, Rabbi Zvi Kook, later became the teacher and patron of Rabbi Shlomo Aviner, the founder of Ateret Cohanim. Kook's nephew, Hillel Kook (a.k.a. Peter Bergson) later became the Irgun's chief gun-runner in the United States during the 1948 Israeli war of independence against British colonial authority.

'From the Nile to the Euphrates'

During 1940, most of the leaders of the terrorist Irgun, then run by Vladimir Jabotinsky, were incarcerated in British jails in Palestine. Jabotinsky acceded to British demands that the Irgun agree to a non-aggression pact with the British Army, and the leading cadres of the organization were released. Shortly thereafter, Menachem Begin, a longtime associate of Hillel Kook, took over the Irgun. Meanwhile, Avraham Stern, another senior Irgun leader, chose to reject the truce and to form a new terrorist organization, the National Military Organization in Israel, or Lehi.

The Lehi, also known as the Stern gang, was formed so that the Irgun could continue its bombings under a different cover. Stern was a student of Rabbi Abraham Kook, and had worked closely with Begin and Hillel Kook in Poland.

The founding document of the Lehi, which Stern authored and called the Principles of Organization, had three main programmatic demands. The first was not only that the Jewish people had a religious right to "Zion," but that "Zion" comprised all the land from the Nile River in Egypt to the Euphrates River in Iraq. This fantastic claim, which purports to be based on Genesis 15:18, is covertly embraced by many Israeli leaders today. Stern's second demand was that all Arabs living in this vast region be expelled. Here we see the origin of the current policy of expelling all Palestinians from Israel. The third demand was that the "Temple of Solomon" had to be rebuilt at Haram al-Sharif.

The Stern organization's operations side was led from its inception by Yitzhak Shamir. Upon Stern's death in 1942, Shamir took control of the organization, and led it through the 1948 independence war. The Stern gang's propaganda division was run by Geula Cohen, one of the most vocal supporters of the Temple Mount project within the Israeli Knesset today. Yet another figure in the Stern gang was Stanley Goldfoot, who had been implicated in the assassination of United Nations official Count Folke Bernadotte in 1948. Goldfoot is currently the head of the Temple Mount Foundation in Israel, and a key controller of such police agents provocateurs as Gershon Solomon.