

# A Leftist Whitewash Of Fascist Jabotinsky

by Paolo Raimondi and Steven Meyer

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## **La destra sionista: Biografia di Vladimir Jabotinsky (The Zionist Right: A Biography of Vladimir Jabotinsky)**

by Paolo di Motoli

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The main goal of Paolo di Motoli's book, published in 2001, was to re-establish, from the left, a certain credibility for the so-called "Revisionist Zionism" of the late Vladimir Jabotinsky, which supports the creation of an ultra-nationalist state of Israel continuously at war with its neighbors.

That the re-evaluation is coming from the radical left is emphasized by the fact that a well-known Italian television journalist, Gad Lerner, has written the introduction to the book, saying that he appreciates di Motoli's attempt to clean up the characterization of Jabotinsky as a fascist. Lerner, after many years of activity in the extreme-left proto-terrorist Lotta Continua group, became a widely recognized television anchorman in Italy, initially directly participating with the lead mouthpiece for Dick Cheney's neo-conservatives in Italy, Giuliano Ferrara. Ferrara himself had been a violent leader of the communist squads in Turin in the 1970s and 1980s. Later on, Lerner assumed a "left"-leaning neo-conservative profile.

The di Motoli book doesn't succeed in turning history completely upside down, however. Although he attempts to clean up Jabotinsky and his Revisionist Zionists, every time he mentions the protagonist, a bit of nasty truth comes out.

The interest which certain groupings have in re-establishing some historical credibility for Jabotinsky, is directly linked to the recent decisions of the Sharon-Netanyahu group in Israel to move forward openly with Jabotinsky's policy—that of the "Wall" and ethnic cleansing. Such an attempt at rehabilitation from the "left" is even more notable from this standpoint: Although it gives the operation more political weight, it also shows the nature of Synarchism in the processes leading to dictatorships and fascism, as Synarchism ably works to use both the left and the right to reach its goal of power.

## **Who Was Vladimir Jabotinsky?**

Vladimir Jabotinsky was run as a British-French synarchist agent of the most vile type for most of his life. He was a philosophical fascist whose early writings were influenced by Thomas Hobbes, and his controllers used him primarily for two main purposes: to turn Jews away from a universal humanist outlook, and to destabilize the Mideast.

Arrested in Odessa in 1902 by the Okhrana, the Czar's secret police, Jabotinsky was kept in jail for seven weeks while the secret police ostensibly reviewed his Italian writings to see if they were seditious. According to his own testimony, he was recruited to the Zionist cause by fellow prisoners who gave nightly jail lectures on Zionism.

Russian Zionism was then run by Sergei Zubatov, the Moscow head of the Okhrana (secret police), who was a devotee of the British Fabian Society. Zubatov personally fabricated both trade union organizations and Russian Zionism by arresting political activists and then recruiting them in prison to his controlled organizations. Once out of prison, these police agents and their organizations were legitimized through various means run by Zubatov. (See Marjorie Mazel Hecht, "Sergei Zubatov's 'Police Socialism' in Russia, and the Creation of Zionism," *EIR*, Aug. 16, 2002.)

It has been documented that some of the pogroms against Jews were run by Zubatov's non-Jewish agents to build interest and membership in his Zionist movement. In 1902, the first legal Zionist Congress ever held in Russia took place in Minsk, under his auspices.

Both the police-run trade unions and Zionists were created to counter the industrialization and political modernization of Russia by Count Sergei Witte, the Russian Minister of Finance. Jabotinsky's Hobbesian philosophy and demand for a return to Zion was an explicit attack on the 18th-Century Jewish philosopher Moses Mendelssohn's philosophical writings and outlook, which had been transmitted to Eastern Europe and Russia through Mendelssohn's *Haskalah* movement and had been embodied in the Yiddish Renaissance. Russian Jews who had been influenced by these two currents tended to be supporters of Witte's programs or members of the socialist Bund.

Zubatov's Zionism was an attempt to parochialize the Jews and remove them as a political force from Russia. Zubatov's Russian Zionists, and Jabotinsky's Polish youth movement, Betar, served as police informants, largely against the Bund.

In 1914, Jabotinsky left Russia. London and Paris became his base of operations for the rest of his life. As Lyndon LaRouche has emphasized, Jabotinsky's Revisionist Zionist movement was a synarchist political lever which could be pulled at any time to destabilize the Middle East. Its fascist nature made Mussolini's Italy a natural ally, and Italian Foreign Ministry documents prove the case.

Gad Lerner's introductory apology for Jabotinsky has Lerner "sleeping in the same bed" with Synarchist Jacques



*A certain left-wing current is attempting the impossible task of cleaning up the fascist image of the late Vladimir Jabotinsky, whom Israel's David Ben Gurion had aptly branded "Vlad Hitler."*

Soustelle, who was safehoused in Italy by suspected Gladio members in the early 1960s. In 1967, Soustelle wrote *The Long March of Israel*, a propaganda piece designed to legitimize Jabotinsky's protégé Menachem Begin, whom Soustelle personally helped to bring to power as the first Likud Prime Minister of Israel. Soustelle fawns over Jabotinsky in complete disregard for the historical record:

"Far from being a reactionary, Jabotinsky, like Herzl, wanted the nation to be balanced as a state. . . . His [Jabotinsky's] ideas were already much closer to modern ones than to the doctrinaire socialism of the early twentieth century. But the Histadrut [Israel's main trade union organization] and the Mapai [precursor of Israel's Labor Party] never forgave him for his often caustic opposition to their monopoly. . . . His Mapai adversaries willingly took another short step and accused him of fascism. The adjective has never been less aptly applied than to Jabotinsky [emphasis added]. He was "an old-fashioned liberal," as he loved to call himself, profoundly democratic and respectful of human beings."

## The Early Years

Born in Odessa in 1880 to a middle-class family, Jabotinsky, after a period of travel to various European cities, attended the Odessa gymnasium, or high school. Russian anti-Semitism was very much in evidence there, as seen, for example, in the quota system regarding Jewish students: For every ten Gentiles, one Jew was admitted to the school. Jabotinsky had a facility for languages and literature, which led him to become a skilled author, journalist, and translator. Interesting in this regard, is his relationship with the Russian radical Maxim Gorky, who distributed Jabotinsky's poem, "Poor

Charlotte," which was about Charlotte Corday, who assassinated the Jacobin Marat during the French Revolution.

This is the same Gorky, probably himself an Okhrana agent, who would later frequent the island of Capri and the international intellectual groups who meet there. At the beginning of the 1900s, Capri was the factory of both right and left ideologies, a veritable Synarchist center where Gorky, Lenin, and Filippo Tommaso Marinetti (the founder of the profascist Futurist movement), along with Alex Munthe, Aldous Huxley, and others, had discussions in the shadows of the villa of the Roman Emperor Tiberius, regarding the future of an existentialist society where God is dead, and man is only a Darwinist animal with no love for humanity.

In 1898, Jabotinsky went to Rome as a student, and he remained in Italy for three years while studying law and history with socialist professors such as Antonio Labriola and Enrico Ferri (then a socialist parliamentarian) and liberal professors such as Maffeo Pantaleoni, an economist who defended the idea of "marginal utility," and the entourage of Benedetto Croce. In studying Italian history, Jabotinsky was fascinated by Giuseppe Mazzini and Giuseppe Garibaldi. This period in Italy left a very deep impression on him.

Upon returning to Russia in 1902, when the country had been swept by pogroms against Jews, he visited—as a journalist—some of the cities devastated by the racist and anti-Semitic fury. In contact with Zionist circles, Jabotinsky immediately developed a nationalist and messianic orientation. He became a well-known journalist in Russia, and a fiery Zionist speaker. He developed the conviction that it was necessary to uproot the Jewish Diaspora and implant it in Palestine under the protection of either a European power or the Ottoman Empire. "Mine is the task of he who must build a new temple for his supreme God whose name is the Jewish people," he wrote.

After initially holding out some hope for the "Young Turks" who in 1908 had taken power and transformed Turkey into a constitutional monarchy, Jabotinsky developed a very close relationship with the British Empire—a relationship he would keep throughout his lifetime. With the support of Baron Edmond de Rothschild, he thought of creating a Jewish Legion which could fight in the ranks of the Crown's army, in order to gain British support for his idea of a Jewish state in Palestine.

In 1921, Jabotinsky became part of the executive of the Zionist Congress, and he immediately clashed with David Ben Gurion, including over the question of self-defense. Ben Gurion wanted a central role for the Haganah, an defense force under Jewish command, while Jabotinsky advocated an official Jewish Legion recognized by the British and under British command.

## Alliance with the Devil

Jabotinsky wrote his first letter to "il Duce" Mussolini in an attempt to dissuade him from the idea of making Italy the

center of the pan-Arab movement, laying out reasons which included the fact that Mediterranean commerce was controlled by Jews, not by Arabs. Also, he said, pan-Arabism would have led to the expulsion of foreigners from the states involved. Jabotinsky offered his support for spreading the Italian language in the Jewish schools throughout the Mediterranean.

In a speech to the 12th Zionist Congress, Jabotinsky cited Mazzini, who had said, “We will make Italy, even if it means an alliance with the devil.” Jabotinsky’s such alliance was made in August 1921 with the rabid anti-Semite Simon Petlura, the Ukrainian dictator. The agreement was to support the Ukrainian armies against the Bolsheviks, in exchange for the creation of Jewish Legions which would defend the Jewish population. The fact that the Ukrainian nationalists carried out horrendous massacres—including of many Jews—while retreating from the Bolsheviks, did not seem to create any moral problems for him. Between 1917 and 1920, these nationalist armies massacred about 40,000 Jews. For this reason, on March 18, 1923, the Investigative Commission of the Zionist Action Committee forced Jabotinsky out of the Committee and out of the Zionist organization as a whole.

Another reason for Jabotinsky’s expulsion came from his theories regarding actions against the Arab population of Palestine. He said that the Arabs are very attached to the land on which they now live; therefore, the solution is to guarantee the protection of the Jewish population by building an “Iron Wall.” “The only difference there could be,” he said, “is between those who want an ‘iron wall’ built with Jewish bayonets and those who want it built with British bayonets. As long as the Arabs hold out the hope of getting rid of us, nothing in the world, neither soft words nor seductive promises will be able to force them to abandon those hopes, because they are not an amorphous mass, but a living people.”

### **Jabotinsky’s Youth Movement: Betar**

Jabotinsky thought that the Jewish population was pervaded by passiveness, without an active, “warrior” youth generation. Thus, toward the end of 1923, in Riga, Latvia, he decided to create a youth movement, mostly of students, which he called Betar (a Hebrew acronym of “Association Joseph Trumpeldor,” the co-founder of the Jewish Legion, who was killed in Palestine), which on the eve of World War II had over 80,000 members, including 40,000 in Poland.

Betar fostered a personality cult around its founder. The discipline of a Betarist was based on seven rules, among which is to be found, “obey the rules of Betar and the orders of its leaders, as man listens to the voice of his conscience, since the Betar code is the aspiration of one’s life.” The badge of the Betar militants depicted the border between Palestine and East Bank of the Jordan, behind a forearm holding a rifle whose bayonet was branded with the motto *Rak Kakh* (the only way). This badge was later picked up by the militants of the extremist Revisionist-inspired organization of Irgun

Tzvai Leumi.

On April 25, 1925, Jabotinsky founded the Alliance of Zionist Revisionists, with the goal of the creation of a Jewish state, and the corresponding necessity of settling a Jewish majority in Palestine. Although Jabotinsky had the support of most of the group’s adherents, a second current formed among the Revisionists, led by Meir Grossmann, who staked out positions more amenable to potential agreements with the Zionist Congress. Jabotinsky, however, could count on a much more radical and battle-trained grouping, that created by the poet of Russian origin Abba Ahimeir, who, together with Uri Zvi Greenberg and Yehoshua Yevin, had formed a faction called Brit Habirionim, which means association of brigands or bandits. This was the name of the Zealots who had fought the ancient Romans (and the Hebrews, who were hostile to their revolt) in the First Century A.D.

In the ranks of Brit Habirionim, there was also a militant named Ben Zion Netanyahu, father of Benjamin Netanyahu, the former Prime Minister, now Finance Minister of Israel.

Ahimeir, who was a follower of the ideas of the pro-Nazi philosopher Oswald Spengler, considered the Diaspora a sort of decadent civilization, which required a political and cultural revolution similar to the one carried out in Russia in 1917, but different in that it should be a *fascist* revolution distinguishable by its cult of Heroism, its cultural originality, and its loyalty to the Leader. He wanted to achieve the national idea through force, by creating a warrior state willing to extend its borders. The enemies he wanted to defeat were democracy, the Arabs, the British, and the left.

In this philosophy, political murder was a positive act. Speaking to an assembly of Jewish students from Palestine, Ahimeir said: “You are wimps, not students. None among you are capable of assassinating someone the way those German students killed Rathenau . . . assassination will be considered an act of heroism and a positive action.”

### **A Fascism of ‘Water and Fire’**

Ahimeir was a great admirer of Mussolini, and in 1928 he published a regular column, “Chronicles of a Fascist” in the newspaper *Doar hayom*. Ahimeir worked for the transformation of Jabotinsky’s party into an authoritarian organization, and he approved of the Nazi phenomenon in Germany, except that its anti-Semitism had to be rejected, while the anti-Marxism was to be extolled. Jabotinsky continuously refused to expel this faction of the party, saying that in order to create a Jewish state both “water and fire” are needed, and Ahimeir was the fire.

In Palestine, clashes of the Jabotinskyites with the followers of Ben Gurion became a daily occurrence. Jabotinsky had developed the idea of the state and its components along the lines of the corporate state of Mussolini. Thus, he also opposed the idea of strikes generated by class tensions, to instead develop the idea of national work and national interest, meaning that conflicts would have to be resolved by a system of

national arbitration based on a Corporatist House of Professions.

On Aug. 15, 1929, three hundred members of Betar marched through Jerusalem towards the Wailing Wall shouting: “The Wall is ours,” in a situation set up for violence by the British colonial forces who ruled Palestine. The clash left 133 Jews and 120 Arabs dead. As a direct consequence, the Orthodox Jewish (non-Zionist) community in Hebron was destroyed by the fury of the local Arab population.

The tensions with Ben Gurion’s large socialist union, Histadrut, became more and more explosive, involving street clashes with members of Betar, who worked to break the strikes. Ben Gurion called Jabotinsky “Vladimir Hitler,” and the union’s propaganda compared the Betar members to Hitler’s Germany. In 1934, Jabotinsky created a new union for the “national worker” called the National Labor Organization. In this climate, a leader of the Mapai Socialist party, Haim Arlozoroff, was assassinated. A secret investigation carried out by the Mapai confirmed the role of Brit Habirionim in the assassination. In fact, three Betarist friends of Ahimeir (who was also arrested for inciting the assassination) were arrested, but later released.

In 1933, to eliminate the tensions and differences which were very strong in the Revisionist party, Jabotinsky stripped the party’s executive of authority, and personally took total control, with his “Lodz Declaration.” The next year, there were contacts between Ben Gurion and Jabotinsky to negotiate an agreement and avoid a civil war. One of the strongest opponents of these meetings was Menachem Begin, then a member of the Betar leadership. Begin himself later founded the Herut party in 1948, which was largely inspired by Jabotinsky.

Jabotinsky, who was dissatisfied with the British policy, had for some time been looking for support from other nations, starting with Mussolini’s Italy. There were new preparations for a meetings with *il Duce*, which apparently never took place. An agreement was established though, which called for the participation of 162 Betarists in the Navy School of Civitavecchia in Italy between 1934 and 1938, the which school was controlled by the Fascist Italian state through the Navy and Foreign Ministries. Also in the 1930s, Betarist paramilitaries were organized on the island of Kerso (which was then Italian). In 1939, when Mussolini adopted Hitler’s anti-Semitism and enacted racial laws, the contacts with the Italian Fascists—at least officially—were interrupted.

## From Terrorism to State Terrorism

In addition to the clashes with the Histadrut in Palestine, there were also clashes between the Revisionists and the Haganah (the Mapai-connected defense group), and in 1931, Irgun Zvai Leumi, Jabotinsky’s national military organization, was created. In 1933, he was named to the oversight Committee of Irgun and later, during a meeting in Paris, he

accepted full authority over the organization, and he began to block others’ initiatives to find points of agreement with Haganah.

These tensions led to a split: One part of the group allied with Haganah, while the majority joined a much more radical Irgun led by David Raziel and Avraham Stern, which tended towards terrorist-style actions. The oath of a member of this organization was as follows: “I solemnly swear my full obedience to Irgun and its leader, to its goals and ends, and I am ready for any sacrifice, including that of my life, to always put Irgun above my own parents, my own brothers, my own sisters, my own family, until the creation of Israel or death takes me from its ranks.”

One of the most resolute men in the “Stern group” in the area of Tel Aviv, was Itzhak Yzernitzky, or Shamir, who was considered by the British to be a very dangerous terrorist, and who later became Prime Minister of Israel. This movement promoted a territorial pan-Judaism which foresaw an Israel stretching from the Euphrates to Egypt, with a rigorous purification of the national Jewish character through the expulsion of foreigners, the desire to create a Jewish imperial-style power which could dominate the Mediterranean, the exaltation of national greatness with the construction of the Third Temple, and the use of acts of terrorism.

These individuals gradually became more and more radical, even exceeding Jabotinsky in certain situations. At the same time, the Stern group began to create a secret cell within Irgun.

Jabotinsky never publicly distanced himself from the spread of terrorism. While he was in New York to organize a Betarist training camp, Jabotinsky died of heart problems on Aug. 4, 1940.

In September 1940, Stern’s group split from Irgun and he created his National Military Organization, inspired to terrorism by the Russian Group “People’s Will” which had assassinated Czar Alexander II. Stern then identified himself with the leader of the Masada Zealots, who had ordered collective suicide in order to avoid surrender to the Romans in 73 A.D. It is widely documented that representatives of Stern in Damascus made contact with the Nazi intelligence service command to establish military collaboration against the British. The “Eighteen principles of the Rebirth” in Stern’s program included the exaltation of the biological unity of the Jewish people and the purity of their blood. After Stern’s death at the hands of the British, the hard-liners, led by Shamir, created the Lehi group, which was more oriented towards individual terrorist acts.

## Jabotinsky’s ‘Blood and Soil’

The study of the culture that shaped Jabotinsky is important in order to understand what he wanted to transmit through his political activity. In 1911, he wrote a little book entitled *Tarass Chevtchenko’s Jubilee*, in which he praised the ultra-

nationalist ideas of this Ukrainian poet, who had combined a battle against Russification, with “slurs of barbarian ferocity against the Poles, the Jews, and other neighbors,” as Jabotinsky himself described it. But this declared anti-Semitism did not stop Jabotinsky; rather, it pushed him to say that, if you want to create a nation, then you have to be ready to fight against the others, your neighbors. Jabotinsky developed through his readings of Nietzsche, Spencer, and Stirner—those who had theorized the builder of societies and nations as the beast-man. Through Antonio Labriola, he came to Benedetto Croce and Georges Sorel, who also had a strong influence on the education of Mussolini.

A significant influence also came from Thomas Hobbes, and in particular Hobbes’s *Homo Homini Lupus* (Man a Wolf to Man) which led Jabotinsky to claim that, “In today’s morals there is no room for the infantile humanism of the Bible”: “Intelligent was the philosopher who said *Homo Homini Lupus*, that worse than the wolf is the human being’s [behavior] toward one another, and much time will be needed to repair this difficulty; culture and negative experience are not enough. Stupid is the man who trusts his neighbor and believes in justice, since justice exists only for those who have the strength to defend it. Many are scandalized by what I say, but the only way to have a place in this war between wolves is to keep guard with a stick in your hands.”

The Englishman Thomas Buckle, who held that the characteristics of each nation are determined by its territory and climate, was also an influence. Jabotinsky wrote: “The Jewish nation was created by fragments of other people in Eretz Israel [the land of Israel], we were not constituted on her soil. . . . All that is Jewish in us was given to us by Eretz Israel. . . . All the rest in us is not Jewish. Thus, an uninterrupted development of our Jewish characteristics is possible only on the same soil and in the same milieu where these characteristics were born. A different climate, different flora, or different mountains would deform the body and spirit that were created by the climate, the flora, the mountains of Eretz Israel. For the body and spirit of the race, there is only one specific combination of natural factors.”

In a 1904 piece, “Letter on Autonomy,” Jabotinsky wrote: “The sentiment of national identity is situated in the blood of man, in his physical and racial characteristics, and only in these.” For this reason, he emphasized that blood comes before education. “The preservation of national character is possible only if the purity of the race is preserved, and for this we need a territory of our own in which our race is a decisive majority.”

In his 1913 work entitled “Race,” Jabotinsky repeated these concepts to say that race also conditions one’s psyche, which then produces literature, culture, religion, tradition, behavior, economy, philosophy, and law. And the land is essential; without land a race cannot survive. The question might arise as to whether Adolf Hitler may actually have

elaborated his own paranoiac ideas based also on Jabotinsky’s blood and soil writings! Di Motoli attempts to soften the impact of these ravings, saying that Jabotinsky did not have the Nazi concept of a dominant race.

### **Authoritarianism and the Machine Nation**

These “reflections” clearly led Jabotinsky to reject the Jewish Diaspora as obscured and corrupted in spirit. It led him to claim that the propensity to commerce is one of the characteristics of the Jewish race, which placed it naturally in the middle class and thus outside of the proletariat, which is in the process of extinction because of the advance of machines. This thesis is presented in his essay “Robot and Workman.”

Like Marinetti, the Futurists, and other admirers of Fascism, Jabotinsky was fascinated by the “machine” and its synchronized movements. The Nation becomes the “machine” to which one is completely dedicated, and individual rights are sacrificed on the altar of the machine in movement. The Betar youth movement was to be the laboratory for the construction of a machine-nation through discipline, order, and tradition.

In this process, the use of violence and war were obvious and inevitable outlets. “To think that the Arabs will willingly consent to the realization of Zionism in exchange for the economic and cultural advantages which we can give them is infantile and has its roots in a contemptible Arabophilia towards them.” Therefore, he wrote: “For the Palestinian Arabs as individuals: everything. For the Palestinian Arabs as a community: nothing.”

In the realization of Jabotinsky’s plan, the party had to be authoritarian:

“Betarist discipline is at the base of Betar. The goal of this is to become a global organism capable, upon a signal from the center, of carrying out the same action in the same moment with all of its tens of thousands of hands, in all of the cities and countries of the world. Our adversaries hold this not worthy of free men, that this means becoming a machine. I exhort you not to be ashamed, to answer with pride: yes, a machine.”

In conclusion, di Motoli places Jabotinsky among the legitimate children of Theodor Herzl, as the “representative of the most unmovable Zionism, difficult to pair with liberalism, but also not classifiable as Fascist . . . simply the less utopian variant of Zionism.” Jabotinsky is not the “black beast” as the Israeli left has portrayed him for years, along the lines of the thinking of Ben Gurion, but rather, di Motoli writes, “one of the fathers of Israel.” For his part, the leftist Gad Lerner, in his introduction to the book, welcomes di Motoli’s “revisionism” of Jabotinsky the fascist.

This closes the loop: The Sharons and Netanyahus of today can therefore not only refer to Jabotinsky’s ideas, but also can carry out policies of war and ethnic cleansing in his name; and they also have the approval of certain international so-called liberal groups of the left.