

An Instigator of Christian Zionism: Napoleon Bonaparte

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France, as one of the prominent colonialist countries of the 18th and 19th centuries, had a close interest in the Middle East particularly in Palestine. Starting the invasion of Egypt and the Palestinian region, Napoleon Bonaparte maximized French interest in the region with his active colonial policies, which later on fostered French interest in the Middle East. Within the study, Napoleon's motivation and his aims in the Middle East, particularly in Egypt and, hence, Palestine, are going to be analyzed. This study aims to depict the effects and consequences of Napoleon's invasion on the Ottoman Empire and the region. The study initially argues that Napoleon Bonaparte, as a Christian leader, engraved the seeds of Christian Zionism in the region and, more importantly than that, he, by his invasion, opened a path for future Jewish Zionists to move and settle in Palestine. Although his call did not arise much attention as he was not a trustable person, he contributed a lot to Christian Zionism. Therefore, the study concentrates on the idea that Christian Zionism, as the first phase of political/Jewish Zionism, has contributed a lot for Jews to develop and keep their interest in Palestine alive. The study supports the idea that Christian Zionism is not or, in other words, should not be separated from Jewish Zionism since both contributed to each other and have nurtured each other. Therefore, the study supports the idea that Bonapart, with his call, legitimized the way for Jewish settlement and land purchase activities in Palestine in the near and far future. The study supports the idea that Bonapart, in this regard, is the instigator of the political/Jewish Zionism in Palestine. This study contributes to the literature in terms of its argument. So far, Bonapart has not studied Christian French in general within the scope of Christian Zionism, and his invasion of Egypt has not been analyzed with that perspective so far. Therefore, this study aims to give an overview of the changing French interest in the region in the late 19th century and support the idea that the French, under the reign of Napoleon Bonaparte, laid the foundations of Christian Zionism in the region.

Introduction

Palestine, as one of the rarest regions on earth, witnessed deadly battles, power struggles, massacres, and great expulsions.¹ Although there are various reasons for the interest in Palestine, the general and most widely accepted reason is its encapsulating religious significance for three divine religions. There are

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1. Kamil Jamil Asali, *Jerusalem in History*, (New York: Olive Branch Press, 1990)., Michelle U Campos. "Placing Jerusalemites in the History of Jerusalem: The Ottoman Census (Sicil-i Nüfûs) as a Historical Source ". *Ordinary Jerusalem, 1840-1940: Opening New Archives, Revisiting a Global City*. ed. Angelos Dalachaneš - Vincent Lemire (Boston: Brill, 2018), 15-28.

various reasons for this, but the most important reason that the Palestinian region has never lost its importance and sanctity is that it is sacred to three divine religions.² The religious connotations of the three holy religions in Palestine make the region an important place for the followers of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.³ The Jews consider the region a holy place given to them by God. They believe that their first temple was built by David and expanded by his son Solomon.⁴ For Christians, the region is important and holy because here, Jesus was born, went to the throne of God, and returned to earth.⁵ For Muslims, the region is no less sacred than for Judaism and Christianity, because it was the first qiblah for Muslim prayers and the place from which the Prophet Muhammad ascended to heaven.⁶

As can be seen, the Palestinian region itself and its surroundings had so many religious connotations that it is almost impossible to change the conditions and atmosphere of the region where three divine religions had the opportunity to meet.⁷ In this context, countries that have felt militarily and economically powerful at various times have sought throughout history to dominate geography and thus assert their authority in the region.⁸

The French interest and its great concern for the region should be seen in this context.⁹ As one of the most powerful colonial countries from the beginning of the 19th century until the First World War, the Franks were strongly interested in the

2. Karen Armstrong, "Sacred Space: The Holiness of Islamic Jerusalem", *Journal of Islamic Jerusalem Studies* 1/1 (1997), 5-21.

3. Julia Droeber, *The Dynamics of Coexistence in the Middle East: Negotiating Boundaries Between Christians, Muslims, Jews and Samaritans* (New York: I.B.Tauris, 2014).

4. Süleyman Kocabaş, *Türkiye ve Siyonizm* (İstanbul: Yakın Plan Yayınları, 2018); Mim Kemal Öke, *Siyonizm ve Filistin Sorunu (1880-1914)* (İstanbul: Üçdal Neşriyat, 1982).

5. Julia Droeber, *The Dynamics of Coexistence in the Middle East: Negotiating Boundaries Between Christians, Muslims, Jews and Samaritans* (New York: I.B.Tauris, 2014), 18.

6. Fadl Alrabi, "IslamicJerusalem the First Qiblah" *Journal of IslamicJerusalem Studies* 10 (2009), 1-26.

7. Droeber, *The Dynamics of Coexistence.*, Peter R. Demant, *Islam vs. Islamism: The Dilemma of the Muslim World* (Wesport, Connecticut, London: Praeger, 2006),, Mahmoud Matiz Kazmouz, "IslamicJerusalem as a Model for Multiculturalism: Preliminary Study". *Journal of Islamic Jerusalem Studies* 8 (2007), 55-76.

8. Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi. "IslamicJerusalem as a Model for Multiculturalism and Cultural Engagement". *Journal of IslamicJerusalem Studies* 9 (2008), 1-28.

9. John J McTague. "Anglo-French Negotiations over the Boundaries of Palestine, 1919-1920" *Journal of Palestine Studies* 11/2 (1982), 100-112; Mathew Burrows. "Mission Civilisatrice': French Cultural Policy in the Middle East, 1860-1914", *The Historical Journal* 29/1 (1986), 109-135.

region.¹⁰ Since it was an important place with religious connotations, the rivalry for the region never abated. The interest of powerful countries such as Britain, Russia, and France in Palestine was important because each country wanted to increase its visibility and power in Palestine by exploiting the people living there. Sometimes, the motivations were religious, sometimes national, but what was certain was that none of the countries had been so successful during the Ottoman Empire in expanding their authority in the region.¹¹

In April 1799, during the conquest of Acre, Napoleon called on the Jews of Europe to establish a Jewish state in Palestine with Jerusalem as its capital. However, he was not successful in his call; the interest of the Jews in his call was quite low. However, he wanted to attract the European Jews to his side with his call. In any case, not much came of his appeal, for Napoleon had to lift the siege of Acre and hastily return to France.¹²

French Interest Towards Palestine

Soon after Napoleon's invasion of Egypt, French interest in the region reached its new peak. Since the last quarter of the 19th century, France's interest in the region grew in parallel with the growth of its armada and colonies around the world.¹³ The Franks tried to serve as protectors of the Catholics in Palestine and were very much interested in the region.¹⁴ There are certainly various reasons and motivations for the Franks' interest in this region. The main motivation was to cut off British ties and direct communication with India, thus weakening British authority over its colonies and in India, and thus weakening British prestige and hegemony in the world by cutting ties with the financially important rich colonies in India.¹⁵ In this regard, the Franks' interest in Palestine was greatest, as the

10. Burrows, *French Cultural Policy*, 109-135; Roger Owen. "Egypt and Europe: From French Expedition to British Occupation", *The Modern Middle East: A Reader*-University of California Press. ed. Albert Hourani et al. (Berkeley and Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, 1993), 111-124.

11. Bernard Wasserstein, *The British in Palestine* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991)., Anthony John Christopher, *The British Empire at Its Zenith* (London, New York and Sydney: Routledge, 1988); Mayir Vereté, "Why Was a British Consulate Established in Jerusalem?", *The English Historical Review*, 85/335 (1970), 316-345.

12. M Shahid Alam, *Israeli Exceptionalism: The Destabilizing Logic of Zionism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

13. Burrows, *French Cultural Policy*, 109-135.

14. El-Awaisi- Yiğit, "Early Foreign Penetration", 11.

15. Ş.Tufan Buzpınar, "Suriye ve Filistin'de Avrupa Nüfuz Mücadelesinde Yeni Bir Unsur: İngiliz Misyonerleri (19. Yüzyıl)" *İslam Araştırmaları Dergisi* 10 (2003), 107-120.

region served as a hub for trade and power in the Middle East.¹⁶ Another reason for the Franks' strong interest in the region was the limitation of the Russian presence in the Mediterranean area of the Near East, especially in Palestine.¹⁷ The Russians pursued a policy of expansion toward the Near East, especially from Palestine, in order to protect the Orthodoxies in the region. The Franks did not want to expand their authority and cooperated with the Ottoman Empire, as they did after the Crimean War (1853-1856).¹⁸ Trimbur describes the French interest in the region as follows:

The motivation in Palestine was both religious and patriotic. The goal was not only to save the soul of France, but initially to resist the rise of Russian Orthodoxy. Although they were allies of France in Europe, they were rivals in the Middle East. They brought huge caravans of pilgrims to Jerusalem and received permission to build an entire neighborhood for them - what is known today as the Russian Compound. As in France, the Assumptionists played an important role here, for Father Picard, the superior general of this congregation, was appointed leader of the French pilgrimages at a meeting with the Pope on May 13, 188.¹⁹

The region had become a contested area for both European countries and Russia towards the end of 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries.²⁰ In this regard, the Ottoman Empire conducted balance policy towards the region, especially after the devastating effects of the Kavalalı uprising against the Empire, European countries by Kavalalı had the opportunity to resettle their consulates and official representatives in the region.²¹ In this regard, the Franks were among the first to invest in educational, cultural and health facilities in the province. After the re-establishment of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem (1847), a number of French Catholic institutions were founded, including the Sisters of St. Joseph in 1851, the Frères des écoles chrétiennes in 1867, and the Carmelites in 1873.²²

16. Azmi Erkan, *Osmanlıların Son Döneminde (1840-1920) Filistin'de Yabancılar ile Yahudilerin Toprak Mülkiyeti* (İstanbul: T.C. Marmara Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Basılmamış Doktora Tezi, 2015), 93; Khalid El-Awaisi, "The Origins of the Idea of Establishing a "Zionist Client-State" in IslamicJerusalem", *Journal of Al-Tamaddun* 14/1 (2019), 13-26; Nahum Sokolow, "History of Zionism 1600-1918". ed.S.M. Pinchon. Vol.2. (London: Longmans, Green and Co, 1999), 65-89.

17. Mim Kemal Öke, *Professor Arminius Vambery and Anglo-Ottoman Relations (1887-1907)*, *Turkish Studies Association Bulletin*, 9(2), (1985), 15-27.

18. Buzpınar, "Suriye ve Filistin'de Avrupa Nüfuz", 107-120., El-Awaisi- Yiğit, "Early Foreign Penetration", 13-26.

19. Dominique Trimbur, "A French Presence in Palestine- Notre-Dame de France", *Bulletin Du Centre de Recherche Français a Jerusalem* 3 (1998), 117-140.

20. El-Awaisi- Yiğit, "Early Foreign Penetration", 1-18.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.

Capitulations Granted to European Countries

In order to develop and stabilize the economy of the empire, the empire granted capitulations to countries such as Britain and France from Yavuz Sultan Selim / Kanuni Sultan Suleyman onwards.²³ In the face of these capitulations, European countries, such as France in particular, sought to expand the scope of the capitulations to aid them and provide protection in the region. Especially after the deterioration of the economic situation due to the war losses after the Crimean War (1853-1856), European countries such as Britain and France tried to increase their authority over non-Muslims due to the aid and support provided by the Ottoman Empire.²⁴

During the Crimean War, which the Russian Empire started against the Ottoman Empire in order to strengthen its authority in Palestine, France and Britain supported the Empire quite actively, but only after the defeat of the war and after both France and Britain had the opportunity to strengthen their authority in the Ottoman Empire, especially in Palestine. The support of the Ottoman Empire by France and Britain against Russia was one of the important events that shaped the political atmosphere in the region. With this support, France and Britain wanted to strengthen their authority in the region to avoid the Russian threat and power struggle in the region. In addition, capitulations were granted to European countries, starting with Suleyman the Magnificent and ending with France; the Russians also looked for ways to profit from the capitulations. Although the Ottoman Empire tried to prevent foreign influence as European countries such as France and Britain interfered in the internal politics of the Empire, the privileges of the capitulations granted to them were abused by them and they held on to these capitulations to protect the dhimmis within the Empire, which increased after the Crimean War. Therefore, edicts such as Tanzimat and Islahat were issued to prevent foreign pressure and interference in internal affairs after the Crimean War.²⁵

The capitulations granted to France in no way meant protection for the native Christian minorities. Nor were there any direct historical precedents. In fact, in 1840, France sided with Mehmet Ali in his attempt to retain control of

23. Uğur Kurtaran, "I. Mahmud Dönemi'nde Avrupalı Devletler ile Yapılan Ticaret Antlaşmaları ile Verilen İmtiyazlara Dair Değerlendirmeler" *OTAM* 41 (2017), 219-256.

24. Süleyman Kızıltoprak "II. Abdülhamid'in Mısır Sorununa Yaklaşımı ve İstanbul Konferansı", *Türkler* Vol. 13 Eds Güzel, H. C., Çiçek, K., Koca, S, (İstanbul: Yeni Türkiye Yayıncılık,2002), 57-69.

25. Fahir Armaoğlu, *19. Yüzyıl Siyasi Tarihi 1789-1914*, Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, (Ankara: İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları,1997), 220-221; Mehmet Akif Kireççi, *Decline Discourse and Self-Orientalization in the Writings of Al-Tahtawi*, Taha Husayn And Ziya Gökalp: A Comparative Study Of Modernization in Egypt and Turkey (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania, Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations Unpublished doctoral dissertation, 2007), 182.

Syria, while the Maronites fought alongside Britain against Ibrahim, Mehmet Ali's son and general in Syria.²⁶ As for France's foreign policy in the Middle East, it is not quite true that France suffered a political decline. At the end of our period (1914), it was on the verge of receiving the League of Nations mandate over Syria and Lebanon, which is certainly not a sign of total political failure. However, France had experienced a protracted decline as a world power in the nineteenth century and was, therefore, unable to impose its will in the Middle East. France always felt secondary to Britain, which largely succeeded in imposing its will and conquering the strategically most important parts of the weakening Ottoman Empire. The importance of this political context for French cultural policy first becomes clear in 1840, although France did not begin to pursue a cultural policy until 1860.²⁷ As reported this year, Egypt's Mehmet Ali was fighting for control of Syria to secure his independence from the Sultan in Constantinople. England sided with the sultan to prevent the dissolution of the empire and to avoid opening the thorny eastern question. Britain was anxious to keep Russia in the war, while Germany sought its exit. The Zionists also benefited from the rivalry between Britain and France, allies in the war, for control of Palestine; both powers were now willing to use Zionism as a cover for their ambitions in Palestine.

Overall, these disputes helped to strengthen the Zionists' lobbying power in London and Berlin.²⁸ Britain, France, and Germany vied for Jewish support to influence the attitudes of the United States and Russia toward the war. The Protestants challenged the Catholics in the Middle East, and as in the case of France, the Catholics responded forcefully. Not only did the Middle East adopt French as the most widely spoken Western language, a sign of the success of French missionaries, but French schools themselves (especially in Lebanon) were more popular than competing foreign schools, even those that offered French as part of the curriculum.

One prominent concrete sample of this is as follows: Only a few years after the foundation of French Faculte' de Me'decine, run by the Jesuits in Beirut, reported that its number of students reached 55. However, the Syrian Protestant college was the first to be founded, with only nine students. The primary idea behind founding the school was to prevent the assimilation of the Oriental Jews in the region. By that, they could gain the opportunity to develop their skills. For many Jews outside Western Europe, the chance to have an adequate education was just a dream.²⁹ On the one hand, Britain, France, and Germany solicited

26. Burrow, *Hamidian Palestine: Politics and Society in the District of Jerusalem 1872-1908*, 113.

27. *Ibid.*

28. Alam, *Israeli Exceptionalism: The Destabilizing Logic of Zionism*, 113.

29. Bernard Lazare, *Antisemitism Its History and Causes* (Paris: Britons Publishing Company, 1983); Hyan Maccoby, *Antisemitism and Modernity: Innovation and Continuity*. (New York: Routledge, 2006), Robert S Wistrich, *Laboratory for World*

Jewish support in order to influence the attitude of the United States and Russia.³⁰ On the other hand, the Protestants challenged the Catholics in the Middle East, and as in the case of France, the Catholics responded forcefully. Not only did the Middle East adopt French as the most widely spoken Western language, a sign of the success of the French missionaries, but the French schools themselves (especially in Lebanon) were also more popular than competing foreign schools in the region. Moreover, the school's curriculum was in French.

Besides that, Bonaparte was aiming to gather the attention of the Jews in the world and head them to Palestine by reawakening their interest in the region. Bonaparte invited the Jews to join his banner, offering them the "guarantee and support" of the French nation to reclaim their heritage, "to rule it and defend it against all aggressors." He was unable to fulfill his promise, as he was defeated at Acre and by the Ottoman Pasha of Acre. Nevertheless, as Bichar notes, this promise was a "strategic" one by which Bonaparte won the support of the Jews in the ongoing struggle, least from Farhi, the Jewish vizier of the Ottoman Pasha of Acre.³¹ His call was follows:

"The Rightful Heirs of Palestine

Israelites, arise! ye exiled, arise! Hasten! Now is the moment, which return for thousands of years, to claim the restoration of civic rights the population of the universe that have shamefully been withheld from thousands of years, to claim your political existence as a nation among n and the unlimited natural right to worship Jehovah in accordance with y publicly and most probably forever".³²

Although his call did not neither gather much the Jews' attention living in Europe not the Jews living under the under the Ottoman empire in the region support Bonaparte since his call did not have a reasonable ground for Ottoman Jews who were already living peacefully without devoid of any rights such like Jews living in the Europe. Therefore Ottoman Jews did not support Bonaparte in the region and did no cooperate with Bonaparte. Equally the Jews living in Europe did not responde Bonapart's call affirmative as they neither trusted Bonaparte nor saw any credible and legitimate ground and reason for their immigration to Middle East. Therefore the Jews both in Europe and in Middle East did not believe in Bonaparte and his call whose call after around 60 years

Destruction: Germans and Jews in Central Europe (Studies in Antisemitism) (London: University of Nebraska Press, 2007).

30. Ibid; McTague, Anglo-French Negotiations over the Boundaries of Palestine, 1919-1920.

31. Sharif S Regina, Non-Jewish Zionism (London: Zed Press, 1983), 50-54.

32. Popkin, Richard H. "Some Aspects of Jewish-Christian Theological Interchanges in Holland and England 1640-1700 Jew Christian Relations in the Seventeenth Century". ed. Van den Berg - E.G.E. van der Wal.3-32. (London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1988), 84.

later would be motivated by anti-semitism in Europe and pogroms in Russia. Therefore Bonaparte in this regard can be regarded to lay the foundation of Christian Zionism on the ground.

Christian Zionism

Zionism dates back to Jewish Zionism, which was initiated by Christian Zionists from Europe in Palestine to expel the Jews of Europe from Europe.³³ Although it was not officially proclaimed in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, European countries were very interested in sending the Jewish population out of Europe to places where they would not return easily.³⁴ In this respect, the Christian Zionists can be considered the forerunners of Jewish Zionism, who planted the seed of Zionism.³⁵ There were many reasons and motivations for this goal because the Jews were killed every day, especially after the cost of the war for countries like France and Britain. The government authorities borrowed money from them, and in some ways, they were the financiers of the wars.³⁶ Although the Jews were not very popular in Europe, they increased their wealth and position in Europe with the help of their financial and commercial activities after the Industrial Revolution and easy transportation. With their growing wealth, political power, and population size, they were seen as a threat to the future of Europe.³⁷ In order for this goal to be achieved, European countries such as France and Britain had to find a place where the Jews could settle, a place where they lived in exile and for which they longed. In this sense, there were two options: Either they went to the United States, which was just opening up to settlement and would offer Jews a new life without anti-Judaism, or they were sent to Palestine.

Christian Zionism was instrumental in establishing the "Jewish nation" in Western culture and linking it to Palestine. The dark side of the metaphor is the erasure of Palestine from history, for there is no place for them in the writings of the land. On the other side of the millennial preoccupation with Jerusalem is anti-Arab and anti-Islamic, stemming from their prejudices against Middle Eastern

33. Peter J. Miano, "Mainstream Christian Zionism", *Speaking the Truth: Zionism, Israel and Occupation*, ed. Michael Prior (London: Melisende, 2004), 126-47; Paul Merkley, *Christian Attitudes Towards the State of Israel* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007), 4.

34. Maccoby, *Antisemitism and Modernity: Innovation and Continuity*.

35. Pieterse, "The History of a Metaphor", 75-103.

36. Israel Bartal, *The Jews of Eastern Europe, 1772-1881* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002).

37. Lucy S Dawidowicz, "A Century of Jewish History, 1881-1981: The View from America", *The American Jewish Year Book* 82 (1982), 3-98.

people because the universal gospel is not limitless.³⁸ Christian Zionism is a specific expression of Christian apocalypticism and should be treated as part of that tradition. It is part of an extended chain reaction whose significant moments include the Reformation, the Enlightenment, Jewish emancipation, evangelicalism and imperialism of the XIX century, and evangelicalism and the hegemony of the United States of the XX century.³⁹ Another motivation for Christians to support Christian Zionism was to convert as many Jews as possible to Christianity. Although this idea did not seem to be so successful in terms of closeness to the Jews, it was still important to support the Jewish 'return' to Palestine.⁴⁰ Ottoman authority, but more attractive to Jewish settlement because European countries, especially Britain and France, knew the divinity that connected the Jews to Palestine.⁴¹

The European countries thus alluded to the Jews in two ways. While rejoicing that the Jews were leaving their country for the USA, they were at the same time trying to prepare the ground for the European Jews in Palestine.⁴² The forerunners of this group were Christian Zionists who held the idea that Christ could return to earth to fulfill his mission once the Jews had established their state.⁴³ The religious side of the coin was important because Jewish settlement in Palestine and the establishment of their own state there would bring many benefits to European countries, both by weakening Ottoman power in the Middle East and by later preparing a future satellite state that would work closely with and support European countries.⁴⁴ Above all, the benefits that Europeans would derive from the departure of the Jews would preserve their financial, political, and social cohesion, which the Jews saw as a threat.⁴⁵ They represented an important financial, social, and political place in Europe. Although the Jews were already living a decent life in Palestine under the rule of the Ottoman Empire, the Europeans were not satisfied with this. In order to settle the Jews in Palestine, they, together with the Christians and the Zionists, revived the seeds of the Jews' religious attachment to the region. Napoleon Bonaparte carried out an expedition to the region, where he actually got what he was looking for because he was able

38. Pieterse, "The History of a Metaphor", 75-103.

39. Ibid.

40. Popkin, "Some Aspects of Jewish-Christian", 3-32.

41. Ibid.

42. Ibid.

43. Eitan Bar-Yosef, "Christian Zionism and Victorian Culture." *Israel Studies* 8/2 (2003), 18-44.

44. Roberto Mazza, *Jerusalem From the Ottomans to the British*. (London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 2009)., Ali Shamshad. "The Ottoman Caliphate and British Imperialism in India" *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 54 (1993), 739-747.

45. Bartal, *The Jews of Eastern Europe, 1772-1881* trans. Chaya Naor., Victor Karady, *The Jews of Europe in the Modern Era*. trans. Tim Wilkinson. (New York: Central European University Share Company, 2004).

first to take possession of the region he wanted to conquer.⁴⁶ However, Bonaparte made many strategic mistakes before, during, and after the expedition. The first mistake he made was to conduct an expedition to Palestine, which was an important road link for Britain and its colonies in India. Therefore, Bonaparte did not plan to cooperate with the Ottomans against the British against him and cut his connection with the close troops.⁴⁷

The first mistake Bonaparte made was to choose the wrong place to cut British ties with her Indian colonies. Although the Ottoman Empire was not engaged in colonial activities at the time and lagged behind the colonial countries in terms of technology and economy, it was closely linked politically and diplomatically to the world.⁴⁸ Since France under Bonaparte did not make accurate calculations about the Ottoman Empire and Great Britain, this expedition was not initially supported by other European countries or by the Jews, although Bonaparte demanded that they be settled in Palestine and that a state be established for them.⁴⁹ Since the Jews were intelligent enough to sense the atmosphere and did not want to support Bonaparte, lest they incur the negative attitude of the British and the Ottoman Empire, who were their main customers, who lent them huge amounts of money and where they and their religious friends lived decently.⁵⁰ In this respect, Bonaparte could not win the support of the Jews and the European countries before the expedition. In this sense, the Jews, who did not live in the Ottoman Empire in the region or in Europe, responded positively to his call. However, they saw in it a great opportunity to establish in Palestine a state that they had wanted for so long.

However, this case showed the Jews that it is never too late to establish a Jewish state in Palestine and that it is possible. Although Bonaparte could not win the support of the Jews, he showed them the possibility of establishing a state in Palestine. The second big mistake Bonaparte made during the expedition was that he converted to Islam and posed as a caliph and protector of Islam.⁵¹ Although Bonaparte wanted to win over the Muslim Arabs in the region by offering them their own unity and state again, he did not succeed because the Muslim Arabs, like the Christians and Jews, were satisfied with the Ottoman policy toward Palestine. However, this ended in despair and failed to win the support of the Arab Muslims in the region. The third mistake Bonaparte made

46. Bernard W Lewis, *The Jews of Islam*. (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984).

47. El-Awaisi- Yiğit, "Early Foreign Penetration", 1-18.

48. Mazza, *Jerusalem From the Ottomans to the British*, McCarthy - Hyde, "Ottoman Imperial and Provincial Salnames." 10-20; Daniel Goffman, *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

49. Juan Cole, *Napoleon's Egypt- Invading the Middle East*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

50. Dawidowicz, "A Century of Jewish History 1881-1981", 3-98.

51. El-Awaisi- Yiğit, "Early Foreign Penetration", 1-18.

after his expedition to the region was that he did not establish relations with other countries interested in the region, such as Russia, because France was already in conflict with Russia, which it considered a threat in the Middle East.

Thus, all the conditions were in place to defeat France under Bonaparte in the region. However, apart from the defeats suffered by the expedition, there was one important success that gave the Jews hope to settle in Palestine and establish their own independent entity there. In this respect, Bonaparte and his invasive expedition can be considered as one of the main driving force for the exercise of the power of Christian Zionism in the region. Because during and after this expedition, France was able to expand its social, cultural, and health policies in the region by opening new schools, cultural centers and hospitals to prepare the region for the newly arriving Jews and to create an atmosphere for them. Sending the Jews living in Europe to Palestine, where, according to Europeans, 'the Jews belonged to' can be regarded as the motivation of Christian Zionism in the region.⁵²

Conclusion

The cultural influence of France in the Middle East was heavy. It was generally scattered throughout the region with the help of educational institutions whose aim was to settle an intellectual French background in Palestine regardless of their national and religious identities. This French policy, although not only initiated by Bonaparte, was surely actively used and extended during his time in the Palestine occupation. By that, Bonaparte utilized French academia to settle its cultural and intellectual background and network in Palestine, which also paved the way for Christian Zionists to increase their influence in the region. Within this context, Jewish Zionism cannot be thought to be different from Christian Zionism, which nourished each other and enabled both of them to invade Palestine both territorially and intellectually. However, Bonaparte was not successful against the invaders in the region; he was surely successful in settling intellectual French education in the primary schools. While Bonaparte was not successful in his campaign against it would be very misleading to distinguish Christian Zionism from Jewish Zionism because Christian Zionism laid the foundation for Jewish Zionism, which is why Herzl successfully initiated, developed, and coordinated Jewish Zionism and its movements in Palestine. European countries like Great Britain sided with the Ottoman Empire and supported the Ottoman borders and position against France. Of course, it was quite clear that the support provided to Britain stemmed from the threat.

52. Khalid El-Awaisi, "The Origins of the Idea of Establishing a 'Zionist Client-State' in Islamic Jerusalem", *Journal of Al-Tamaddun* 14/1 (2019), 13-26.

In sum, the main motivation for the Franks' interest in Palestine was religious of which was triggered by its rivals, such as Britain and Russia, who also wanted to expand their influence in the region. Although France did not have a strong influence in the politics of the region in and towards the late 19th century, French educational and health institutions approved its grave and close interest in the region. He used education to show his presence in the region. Bonaparte, in this regard, while conducting an unsuccessful invasion of the region he in this sense was successful in laying the foundation for a future Zionist Jewish state in Palestine, therefore fostering Jewish presence in the region and supporting their migration to Palestine. Bonaparte's expedition, which gave hope and raised the possibility that Palestine could be inhabitable again for Jews living in Europe, prepared the ground for the establishment of a future Zionist state in the region and laid the foundation for the anti-Judaism in Europe that would increase in the late 19th century. Theodore Herzl, the forerunner of political Zionism, took advantage of this atmosphere to gather in Palestine the Jews who were living in exile due to anti-Judaism in Europe and the pogroms in Russia and to help them open up the ground created by Bonaparte in Palestine for the establishment of a Zionist state. In the study, it is evidently supported that French interest in the Palestinian region was not limited to Bonaparte and his expedition.

On the wise, this interest was evident even before Bonaparte; his invasion attempt to the region brought its interest to the surface and made it more observable however, even after his invasion attempt to the region, he continued to found schools and health centers in the region which approved the argument of the study in that French interest in the region continued and Bonaparte's invitation of the Jews towards the region had instigated a very grave and old Jewish dream which was to migrate Palestine and settle there with buying as much land as they could. Therefore, Bonaparte, awakening the Jewish dream and supporting Jewish settlement in the region, can be said to have engraved the seeds of a political Jewish Zionism project in the region, which was one of the strongest international organizations that aimed to resettle the region with Jews. While his call, like his invasion attempt, was not successful as the Jews did not respond to his call positively, Bonaparte, in terms of instigating the resettlement of the Palestinian region with Jews, sparked the idea of resettling the region with Jews and increasing Jewish presence in the region. Bonaparte, in this regard, can be regarded as the basis of the background of political Jewish Zionism initiated by Theodore Herzl, who successfully united many Jews in the world through his political ideology and movement.

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