

A Just Zionism: On the Morality of the Jewish State

Chaim Gans



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The legitimacy of the Zionist project--establishing a Jewish homeland in Palestine--has been questioned since its inception. In recent years, the voices challenging the legitimacy of the State of Israel have become even louder. Chaim Gans examines these doubts and presents an in-depth, evenhanded philosophical analysis of the justice of Zionism.

Today, alongside a violent Middle East where many refuse to accept Israel's existence, there are two academically respectable arguments for the injustice of Zionism. One claim is that the very return of the Jews to Palestine was unjust. The second argument is that Zionism is an exclusivist ethnocultural nationalism out of step with current visions of multicultural nationhood. While many therefore claim that Zionism is in principle an unjust political philosophy, Gans seeks out a more nuanced ground to explain why Zionism, despite its manifest flaws, could in principle be just. Its flaws stem from the current situation, where exigencies have distorted its implementation, and from historical forces that have ended up favoring an extreme form of Jewish hegemony. For Gans, the justice of Zionism and of Israel are not black-and-white propositions. Rather, they are projects in need of repair, which can be achieved by reconceptualizing the Jews' relationship with the Palestinian population and by adhering to a significantly more limited version of Jewish hegemony.

Ultimately, *A Just Zionism* offers a concrete, historically and geographically rooted investigation of the limits of contemporary nationalism in one of the world's most fraught cases.

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