

Introduction

In this chapter we wish to argue that Zionism is a Jewish consciousness arising from material conditions of Jewish life in Diaspora subject to uneven development of capitalism. This consciousness corresponds to the class interest and aspirations of the Jewish bourgeoisie in the transitional phase of capitalism in the metropolis from its stage of competition to the stage of monopoly: the need for a Jewish State to intervene on its behalf in the face of monopolistic competition.

The rise of Zionism coincides with the rise of capitalist settler-colonialism that emerged from the process of monopoly formation in the late nineteenth century, specifically from the displacement effects of capital combination, swallowing small capital and hence, undermining the material conditions of the petty bourgeoisie as a social class.

Capitalist settler-colonialism, as in the case of Rhodesia, for example, is distinguished here from pre-capitalist settler and non-settler colonialism during mercantilism (as was the case in white settler America and Australia). Capitalist settler colonialism is seen as one of three forms of foreign domination that emerged subject to the logic of capitalist accumulation on a world scale. The other forms are colonialism, featuring the age of competitive capitalism and neo-colonialism, featuring the age of monopoly. Settler-colonialism is a form featuring the transitional phase in-between the two stages of capitalism.

That Israel constitutes a settler-colonial social formation is not the subject of our debate but its starting point. This essentially settler-colonial character is the necessary context for understanding Zionism