

Julius H. Schoeps

Pioneers of Zionism: Hess, Pinsker, Rülf

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Pioneers of Zionism: Hess, Pinsker, Rülf

Messianism, Settlement Policy, and the
Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

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*An idea is nothing other
than the concept of a perfection
which has not as yet been experienced.*

Immanuel Kant

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Introduction

Independently of one another, yet roughly at the same time, Jewish intellectuals have called for a rejection of social assimilation (better: acculturation¹) in favor of an identity-conscious Jewishness since the mid-nineteenth century. Voices all over Europe were campaigning loudly for the founding of a Jewish national center in Palestine. To be sure, there had been proposals for a Jewish State in various forms in earlier periods,² but these were mostly projects of a philanthropic nature or stemming from an enthusiastic religious fervor. As interesting as these may have been, taken separately, they never actually held any political relevance.

Change first appeared on the horizon as the idea of a nation-state was gaining popularity all over Europe³ and not only for the Italians, Germans and Irish. Influenced by these national movements, Jews were also beginning to think about the founding of their own state instead of just increasing their (often failed) attempts at assimilation. This period in which the Jewish national vision resulted in concrete political objectives began with men like Moses Montefiore (1784–1895), Karl Netter (1826–1882) and others.

After a trip to Palestine in 1827 – one of seven trips he was to take there – Montefiore, a comfortably well-off British Jew, brought to life the idea to develop the land between the River Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea commercially and to make it arable.⁴ He began to plan a series of industrial and agricultural projects within his resources. For example, he attempted to establish two agricultural colonies in Safed and Tiberias. Karl Netter founded “Mikveh Israel”, an agricultural school near Jaffa for the “Alliance Israélite Universelle”. A windmill that Montefiore had built in Jerusalem still exists today and is a reminder of the energy of the settlement attempts in Palestine at that time.

These sensational projects were supported by the positions taken by a whole series of respected Rabbis such as Elia Guttmacher (1795–1874), Yehuda Alkalai (1798–1878) and especially Hirsch Kalischer (1795–1874), who did not only support the colonization attempts, but also were convinced that the self-liberation of the Jews would precede the messianic eschaton. For example, in his writings, Hirsch Kalischer was careful to provide the proof that the salvation expected by all devout Jews would not come suddenly, but gradually and naturally. The colonization of Palestine, in his view, stood at the beginning of this process.

The key to Kalischer’s plan for colonization, set out in his work *Emunah Yesharah* (1860), was for wealthy Jews (Montefiore, Rothschild and others) to found a public holding company which would buy land in Palestine. According to the plan, the plots purchased by the company were then to be transferred to poor colonists to cultivate and develop. The purchasing price was to have been

refunded as soon as the project met with economic success. Kalischer thought that in this way, Palestine could gradually be transferred into Jewish hands.

However, just as with Guttmacher and Alkalai, Kalischer's intellectual approach was also heavily influenced by religious intent. *Drishat Zion* [Seeking Zion] or *the creation of Zion*, published in Hebrew in 1861, reads like an exegetic work and consists primarily of quotes from the Bible, Talmud, kabbalistic writings and their commentaries. In it, Kalischer argues that the Bible's messianic promise can only mean the rebirth of the Jewish nation on the ancestral soil in Palestine.

The rebirth of the Jewish nation, as it once was, would require God's help on the one hand, but would most of all require the active participation of the Jewish people. Like many of his contemporaries, Kalischer understood "active participation" to mean the actual work necessary for colonization, which he considered to have a particular importance.⁵ Therefore, the conference of prominent Jews and Rabbis he convened in the western Prussian town of Thorn in 1860 demanded measures to introduce colonization activities in Palestine, or Eretz Israel, as the land has always been called by the religiously observant.

In the 1870s, the idea of a return of the Jews to the Holy Land did not only fascinate Rabbis like Guttmacher, Alkalai and Kalischer, but also a whole group of authors, as, for example Lord Beaconsfield-Disraeli, George Eliot, and particularly Sir Laurence Oliphant, who encouraged a Jewish settlement of Palestine in his book *The Land of Gilead* (1879). Similar to Kalischer a few years earlier, he advocated a colonization company with sufficient capital which would purposefully purchase land for the Jewish proletariat from Poland, Lithuania, Romania and the Asian parts of Turkey to settle.

Oliphant's secretary Naphtali Herz Imber (1859–1909), who was his travelling companion in Palestine and had made a name for himself as a poet, wrote the poem "Tikvatenu" [Our Hope] in 1878, the first verse of which is: *Kol od balesav penimah/ Nefesh yehudi homiyah/ Ulefa' atei mizrah kadimah/ Ayin letzion tzofja* [*As long as in the heart, within/ A Jewish soul still yearns/ And onward, towards the ends of the east/ An eye still looks toward Zion*]. In 1948 this poem, in a slightly modified and revised version, was declared to be the lyrics for the Israeli national anthem (Hatikvah). Set to a melody by Samuel Cohen, the Hatikvah reminds Jews all over the world that the land between the River Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea is the historical homeland for the Jewish people.

In the second half of the nineteenth century a Jewish State remained a distant dream, yet Jewish national propositions and ideas were enjoying increasing favor. Already before Theodor Herzl's time, the Hebrew language author Peretz Smoleskin (1842–1885) of Russia propagated the rebirth of the Jewish people and the return of the Jews to the land of their forefathers in his poems and essays pub-

lished in *Ha-shahar*, the periodical he founded, (*The Dawn*, 12 vol., 1868–1884). In *Am Ha-Olam* (*The Eternal People*, 1871) he fiercely argued against all attempts at assimilation.

Looking back, the parallel efforts to comprehend and live Jewish nationalism politically seem almost more significant than the calls to agricultural colonization on a nationalistic-religious basis. These efforts were connected to the traditionally passed down Jewish consciousness as a people and incorporated religious and historical traditions, yet received their main impulses from the ideas and ideals of the Enlightenment and the emerging nation-state movements of the nineteenth century. Fichte and Herder⁶, the early pioneers of the German national movement, were particularly significant reference points.

Three authors, Moses Hess, Leon Pinsker and Isaak Rülf will be presented below to illustrate the increase in intensity of Jewish national ideas during the second half of the nineteenth century. Their programmatic writings met with considerable resonance in Europe. All three are celebrated as important thinkers of the pre-Herzl period in Zionist historiography. They are considered to be pioneers of modern political Zionism and the Jewish nation state because they reveal the path of national self-determination in their writings.

The question as to whether this can be generalized to hold true for all three of these pioneers of Zionism or if their thinking reveals some significant differences will be answered below. They were all roughly the same age. They all belonged to the first emancipation generation which can also be seen in the fact that they offered similar suggestions to answer the so-called “Jewish question”. It is, however, possible to identify and reconstruct different causes for each of these three men to have developed such a strong commitment to Jewish nationalism and to have become so publically adamant in its advocacy.

For Moses Hess, originally from Cologne, but who as a political refugee wound up in Paris, certainly hurt pride played a role, a feeling of humiliation and a lack of recognition from his peers led to a new reorientation. On the other hand, for Pinsker and Rülf, the pogroms in Eastern Europe in the 1880s must have triggered such a shock that they definitively dismissed the idea of a gradual social assimilation once and for all and became outspoken proponents of the idea of Jewish nationalism and the colonization of Palestine.

Still, the late-nineteenth century pogroms in Eastern Europe do not themselves sufficiently explain these authors’ radical change in attitude. In addition, Hess, Pinsker and Rülf had vastly different biographies in terms of family background, education and career, yet all three had internalized – subconsciously or not – certain traditions, opinions, and thought patterns from the Jewish world which served to remind them of the difficult situation of their own minority and to indicate a clear call to action. This unifies these three thinkers in retrospect.

One was a writer and philosopher, the second a doctor and the third a Rabbi, who besides providing spiritual guidance in Memel, also made a name for himself as a journalist and newspaper editor. What they did have in common, as different as their individual thought processes were and as distinctly they argued their cases, was the conviction that the Jews' emancipation and assimilation process in Western and Eastern Europe was doomed to fail. This was a conviction that no one else had ever formulated so explicitly before.

Another aspect which also requires closer inspection is the fact that Hess, as well as Pinsker and Rülf, came from Orthodox Jewish families, which was reflected in varying degrees in their theoretical proposals to solve the "Jewish question"⁷. However, the emphases given were quite distinct, and we will make an effort to show this below.

Only Pinsker and Rülf⁸ had personal contact with one another. Moses Hess apparently never met with Pinsker or Rülf in his life. No indication has ever been found in the surviving documents and correspondence that would suggest otherwise. Hess, who died in Paris in 1875, did not live to experience the devastating pogroms in Eastern Europe in the early 1880s, and therefore his frame of reference was necessarily a different one from Pinsker and Rülf's.

Other than the "Damascus affair", which left a strong impression on him, it was mainly the conclusions he drew from his studies on race which could count as sparking his radical change in thinking. *Rome and Jerusalem*, which he published in 1862, is now considered one of the most important manifestos of early Zionism, but is also the product of a proven independent thinker, who was influenced by others' ideas at most as impulses.

Hess himself later admitted – which will be gone into greater detail later –, that it was the "absurd accusation" of the Jews during the Damascus affair in 1840 which aroused his "patriotic Jewish feelings". In addition, the theories of the French author Ernest Laharanne, which will also be further explored, captivated Hess and had an important influence on his thinking.

As previously mentioned Pinsker and Rülf did not meet Hess personally in his lifetime and were also apparently unfamiliar with his book *Rome and Jerusalem*. While Pinsker and Rülf were setting out to put their works *Auto-emancipation!* (1882) and *Aruchas Bas-Ammi. Israels Heilung* (1883) to paper more or less simultaneously, they did not make a single mention of Hess's work, which had been published 20 years earlier.

Pinsker and Rülf mainly relied on the information they gained and conclusions they drew from the debates held in the circles of the Hibbat Zion (Love of Zion) movement at the beginning of the 1880s in which they personally took part. Moses Hess did not appear in these debates, although his ideas were sufficiently

discussed by the Hibbat Zion supporters. If Hess did indeed have any influence on the two younger writers, then it was rather indirectly at most.

Someone who did have personal contact with Hess and then later engaged in exchanging ideas with Pinsker and Rülf was the historian Heinrich Graetz (1817–1891), whose *Geschichte der Juden* [*History of the Jews*, 1852–1875] could be found in every bourgeois Jewish home and on the bookshelf of all those who were interested in Jewish history. At the beginning of the Zionist movement, the work was considered to be a kind of vade mecum, to be quoted at will, particularly when trying to create a theoretical bridge between the past and the present.

Heinrich Graetz not only encouraged Hess to publish his book *Rome and Jerusalem*, but also maintained a lively personal and written correspondence with him. It is not known if he called Hess's *Rome and Jerusalem* to Pinsker's and Rülf's attention. In any case, the name Hess does not appear in the letters exchanged between Graetz and Pinsker and Rülf in the early 1880s.

Notwithstanding this, Heinrich Graetz was equally interested in the ideas of Hess, Rülf and Pinsker with one small qualification. When Pinsker requested Graetz's support for his organizational efforts in establishing the Hovevei Zion movement,⁹ Graetz hesitated. Due to his convictions he was convinced that the founding and development of Hovevei Zion associations only made sense in Russia, but not in Germany or other Western countries. Graetz thought that there would be hardly anyone among the Jews living in those countries who would support Pinsker's plans for colonizing Palestine.

My following remarks are based on extensive studies I conducted more than 35 years ago during a year-long visiting professorship at the Tel Aviv University. I spent my days in the university library and the Central Zionist Archive, which at that time was still located in the basement of the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem. That is where I went through the bequests of Nathan Birnbaum, Theodor Herzl, Isaak Rülf, Armand Kaminka, Willi Bambus, Leo Motzkin, Adolf Friedemann and several other Zionist theorists and politicians of the pre-Herzl era and made handwritten excerpts.

The notes made then have lost none of their relevance. At that time I was planning to write an early history of German Zionism. Nathan M. Gelber's book *Zur Vorgeschichte des Zionismus. Judenstaatsprojekte in den Jahren 1695-1845* [*On the early history of Zionism. Projects for the Jewish State 1695-1845*], which I purchased at Pollak's used bookstore in Tel Aviv, provided an important motivation for this project. Its contents electrified me at the time.

I was fascinated by Nathan Gelber's theory that there had been a continuity in thinking of a Jewish nation state for centuries – beginning with David Alroy, going on to Abrabanel and Sabbatai Zwi, Moses Mendelssohn, Napoleon, Bernhard Behrend up to Mordechai Immanuel Noah (1785–1851), who of course is

known for having undertaken the seemingly risky venture of buying up land in the United States in order to found a Jewish nation state upon it. In 1825, he ceremoniously laid the foundation of the Jewish city “Ararat” in the town of Buffalo, which was to become the center of the Jewish State.

With the exception of a few newspaper article writers, hardly anyone before Gelber had seriously thought about dealing with the historical Jewish State projects and put them in relation with one another. At that time, I had wanted to explore Gelber’s work further and examine his theory using additional documents and sources. Other responsibilities came in the way, however, and I was no longer able to pursue the project.

Later during my professorships at the University of Duisburg and then at the University of Potsdam, I had interested students writing their Master’s theses and doctoral dissertations about this topic. However, I deeply regretted not having been able to deal with the topic in depth myself as I would have liked to. I was at that time and continue to be convinced that detailed knowledge about pre-Herzl Zionism is the key to a better understanding of modern Israeli society and its internal conflicts, as well as of certain sensitivities and mental attitudes in the Jewish Diaspora.

When I write about mental attitudes and stances I’m not only talking about national myths, messianic hopes and theological reflections which, over centuries of persecution and suffering, have found their way in the Jewish collective consciousness. I’m also talking about the diffuse feelings of angst that Jews have always suffered from and continue to plague many in Israel today. To some observers in the West, this angst seems irrational today. On the other hand, it is based on the traumatic historical experiences which have left deep wounds in Jewish sensibility and thought.

In particular, since World War II and the experiences of the Shoah, large parts of the Jewish world are completely convinced that Jews can only rely on each other, and on no one else. The facts that the Nazis’ murderous mania met with little to no resistance in many European countries and that even the militarily superior Allied forces refrained from bombing the tracks leading to the extermination camps determines the thinking of most Jews today. It is exceedingly difficult to extract oneself from this experience, which is a mental burden, even if one would want to.

Many of the at times jarring statements made by Israeli politicians, which are often not understood by non-Jews (and to be sure also not by not a few Jews) around the world, relate back to this still existent trauma of collective and individual vulnerability. A trauma, which has been confirmed time and again, generation after generation, and which has found an extreme culmination during the Shoah.

Traces of this syndrome of angst and threats can already be found in the speeches and writings of some Zionists in the pre-Herzl era. Several motives and intentions which form the basis for political strategies in modern-day Israel obviously find their origins here. The Jerusalem historian Moshe Zimmermann, author of *Die Angst vor dem Frieden. Das israelische Dilemma, Berlin 2010 / [The Fear of Peace. The Israeli Dilemma]* is for his part convinced that the insecurity in Israeli society stems not only from the historical traumata, but also from fanatical nationalism and a fatal combination of religion and politics.

A glance at the history of the Zionist movement would indeed seem to show that certain angst and threat syndromes are not just recent developments. This can be evidenced by statements made by the three protagonists examined here – Hess, Pinsker and Rülf – on different occasions. As differently as they approached the topic, all three knew about the deep-seated angst in Jewish society. However, they were also confident that Jews could rid themselves of this angst if they would only have the will to.

When considering these connections, I'm also reminded of the song “The whole world is against us”, which was a huge hit in Israel a few years ago. This song makes it clear that the Sabras, as the Jews who are born in Israel are called, no longer have any use for the angst of their forefathers, or no longer want to have any. The last stanza of the song makes this clear when it says somewhat flippantly: “If the whole world is against us / we don't care. / If the whole world is against us / then the whole world can go to hell.”¹⁰

The following elucidation is not supposed to represent the origins and development of early Zionism in a classical-historiographical way. Rather, it takes the form of a comparative study which should show how three nineteenth century Jewish intellectuals with completely different geographical, familial and professional backgrounds arrived at similar conclusions. Hess, Pinsker and Rülf were all Zionists of the pre-Herzl period, but also Zionists of different types and different stripes.

In the following examination, the question also arises as to what extent the early Zionist concepts remain an integral part of modern Israeli politics. In other words, are historically contingent worldviews and the nation-state and national-religious concepts they have generated able to have a sufficiently strong impact to have a lasting effect on the words and deeds of politicians in the here and now, perhaps even without objective adjustments or modifications?

If so, then the Israeli (Jewish) society as well as the Jewish Diaspora is faced with the immense challenge of placing the history of early Zionism with all of its pioneers and concepts in a new relation to the history of the twentieth century and the newly begun twenty-first century. This would not be able to solve the complex, multi-layered and protracted Middle East conflict, but certainly assist

in presenting important relativizations and necessary perspectives to the overall picture of the history and present status of Zionism.

To what extent the early Zionists' manifestos have had any impact on current settlement policy is one of the central questions to be explored in the present study. One thing which is known up to now is that the settlement ideologues often refer to Biblical promises in their statements, but only rarely to the protagonists of early Zionism. This is also connected to the fact that the men explored in this study have mostly faded into obscurity over the intervening decades.

It is subject to controversy if it is even possible to draw a line of continuity from the early Zionists to modern day settlement ideologues. Regardless, one thing is clear, certain thought processes can be found by Hess, Pinsker and Rülf which also play a role for the settlement ideologues of today. However, one distinction to be made is that in the pre-State era, people were searching for a safe harbor which they hoped would be suitable to take in Jews and protect them from pogroms and being stalked by their enemies, rather than thinking about what to do with land won in a war.

For the remarks below, I not only consulted the materials in archives in Jerusalem (Zionist Archives, Central Archives of the Jewish People), but in particular the pertinent literature, particularly the standard works by Theodor Zlocisti (*Moses Hess. Der Vorkämpfer des Sozialismus und Zionismus, 1812 – 1875. Eine Biographie*, Berlin 1921)[*Moses Hess. Pioneer of socialism and Zionism, 1812 - 1875. A Biography*], Nahum Sokolow (*Hibbath Zion*, Jerusalem 1934), Adolf Böhm (*Die Zionistische Bewegung, 2 Bde., 1935*) [*The Zionist movement, 2 vols.*] and Alex Bein (*Die Judenfrage. Biographie eines Weltproblems, 2 Bde., Stuttgart 1980*) [*The Jewish question. Biography of a global problem, 2 vols.*].

Other than the Zionism research works, of particular importance were also biographical studies on Moses Hess which have appeared in the last few decades, particularly the biography by Edmund Silberner (*Moses Hess. Geschichte seines Lebens*, Leiden 1966)[*Moses Hess. The history of his life*] and Shlomo Na'amán's findings (*Emanzipation und Messianismus. Leben und Werk des Moses Hess*, Frankfurt/New York 1982)[*Emancipation and Messianism. The life and work of Moses Hess*]. Today, both of these works are rightly considered to be the milestones of Moses Hess research.

Also indispensable for this study were the existing correspondence and text editions (Alter Druyanov, Edmund Silberner, Reuven Michael, Yehuda Reinharz and others). I also consulted the first volume of the three-volume overview *The Origins of Zionism*, by David Vital, which had aroused my interest as Vital had undertaken the attempt to build a bridge between pre-Zionism and the political Zionism of a Theodor Herzl.

A mention should also be made of the following profound studies and publications on special questions such as those by Yehuda Elonis (*Zionismus in Deutschland. Von den Anfängen bis 1914 (= Schriftenreihe des Instituts für Deutsche Geschichte, University of Tel Aviv, Vol. 10, Gerlingen 1987)*) [Zionism in Germany. From the beginnings to 1914. Series from the Institute of German History at the University of Tel Aviv, vol. 10], Yehuda Reinhartz (*Fatherland or Promised Land. The Dilemma of the German Jews 1893-1914*, Ann Arbor 1975), Thomas Rahe (*Frühzionismus und Judentum. Untersuchungen zu Programmatik und historischem Kontext des frühen Zionismus bis 1897*, Frankfurt a. M. 1988) [Early Zionism and Judaism. Analysis of the objectives and historical context of early Zionism until 1897], Erik Petry (*Ländliche Kolonisation in Palästina. Deutsche Juden und früher Zionismus am Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Cologne et al 2004) [Rural colonization in Palestine. German Jews and early Zionism at the end of the 19th century] and additional Zionism researchers who will be named below. I tend to agree with these authors' conclusions in the essential aspects.

It should be noted here that Ruth Leiserowitz's study (*Sabbatleuchter und Kriegerverein. Juden in der ostpreußisch-litauischen Grenzregion 1812-1942*, Osnabrück 2010) [Sabbath candlesticks and the Veteran's association. Jews in the East Prussian-Lithuanian border region 1812-1942] allowed me to have a better understanding of Isaak Rülf and his activities. This study transparently details the problems in the processes of Jewish modernization, exclusion and migration with which Isaak Rülf was confronted during his journeys in the Pale of settlement and for which he was also trying to find practicable solutions for his times.

These problems, whose role should not be underestimated in the region between Nimmersatt on the Baltic Sea and Wystiten on the current border between the Kaliningrad region, Lithuania and Poland in the nineteenth century, are also a part of this study. Rülf also made them a topic in his writings (*Meine Reise nach Kowno, Drei Tage in Jüdisch-Russland, Die russischen Juden*) [My Journey to Kovno, Three days in Jewish Russia, Russian Jews] if not in modern scientific jargon.

Finally, I am drawing support from a series of groundwork studies which I have published in essay or book form over the last 30 years. Upon re-reading some of these texts, certain passages of which had been already been published in other contexts, e.g. the section "Zionismus und Araberfrage" ["Zionism and the Arab question"] from the introduction of my *Zionism* reader published 40 years ago as well as several passages from my book *Palästinaliebe* [Love of Palestine] concerning Leon Pinsker, I decided to re-use some of them in a revised and expanded form in the present book.

I leave it to the reader so inclined to decide if this is "self-plagiarism", as it is disparagingly called in today's scientific jargon. In contrast to some critics who radically reject such a procedure, I consider it to be completely legitimate to

re-use previously published texts, in an appropriately revised form, to be sure. I cannot recognize this to be a breach against scientific etiquette.

For the present study I chose not the form of a scientific examination, but that of an essay. I am following here Michel de Montaigne (1533–1592), among others, who is known for creating the essay as a literary form and genre. Montaigne, who appeared as an enquirer and was looking for answers without ultimately finding any, served as a spiritual mentor in the background while I was writing this text.

It is particularly important to me to explain terminology and make it easy for the reader to understand. The criteria for scientific study were not completely disregarded, but the focus for the following text was placed above all on questions begging for answers. If I was able to find an answer for everything is another matter I would like to leave open for the moment. In any case, I am making the effort to express myself in not too abstract a way, but rather develop my ideas before the reader's eye, so that they are understandable, comprehensible, and sometimes thought-provoking.

The following study does not adhere to systematic criteria as would be expected in scientific research, but rather is the attempt to introduce ideas which occurred to the writer while thinking about early Zionism and its presumed connection to modern Israeli settlement policy. Long quotes are the exception and are only then included in the text when they help underscore a particular circumstance requiring precise clarification. This also applies to footnotes, which I explicitly did not exclude so that the reader can know which related sources some passages have.

Finally I would like to thank all those who have assisted me in the preliminary works to the present study or who have assisted me with their advice. In particular I would like to thank the staff of the Zionist Central Archives in Jerusalem, especially their Director Michael Heymann, who directed me to a series of at that time still un-examined letters and documents while I was conducting my research there.

When I think back to those who were especially helpful to me during my studies, then I always think of the nestor of Herzl research, my fatherly friend, Alex Bein, who passed away already years ago. I learned a lot from him. During our recurrent discussions, which we usually had in his apartment on Rehov Mitudela in Jerusalem, he was anxious to share with me his knowledge about the early history of Zionism. I therefore wish to show him not only my thanks, but also pay him my respects and appreciation posthumously.

Berlin, Summer 2013

Julius H. Schoeps

Moses Hess: Between Messianism and social utopia

Today, numerous streets and squares in Israeli towns are named after the philosopher and writer Moses Hess (1812–1875), one of the founders and framers of the modern Jewish national movement in the nineteenth century.¹¹ Dismissed as the “communist Rabbi”¹² by his detractors, he was a companion of Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels and Ferdinand Lassalle. In his 1862 work *Rome and Jerusalem*, he was one of the first to propagate a “rebirth of the Jewish people” by a “concentration in their homeland”. With this focus, he considered the “Jewish question” to be the “last national question” after the unification of Italy and the hoped for unification of Germany.

According to Hess, if unification had not been ruled out in Italy and other European countries in the past, then it was also possible to think about the creation of a unified nation state in Germany. Hess pointed out in *Rome and Jerusalem* that the “rebirth of the Jewish people”, the “resurrection of Judaea” should also be considered, if not immediately, then in the foreseeable future.

It is more than extraordinary that it was a German Jew of all people and not a representative of the barely assimilated Eastern European Jewry who was one of the first to propagate the idea of a modern Jewish national movement. This is all the more remarkable due to the fact that Moses Hess, who was born in 1812 in Bonn, belonged to the circle of “metaphysical revolutionaries” in the early 1840s, which included men such as Bruno Bauer, Ludwig Feuerbach, Arnold Ruge and particularly the young Karl Marx, and in the years before the publication of *Rome and Jerusalem* considered himself to be a true German and Rhinelaender who was rarely reminded of his Jewishness.

We know comparatively little about Hess’s childhood and youth. What is known we owe to a few sparse references from his own writings. Accordingly, Hess was raised Orthodox, but, as he later admitted, was not very happy about this. “What kind of education have I enjoyed? Born and raised in the Judengasse; beaten black and blue over the Talmud until I was 15; monsters for teachers, bad company for companions, seduced into secret sins with a weak body and a coarse soul, this is how I approached becoming a young man”.

Hess remained largely silent about the traditional education he was provided with in his years in Bonn. Only a few passing mentions of it exist. These make clear that he was anything but satisfied with his upbringing. A diary entry dated September 16, 1836 states, for example: “I heartily abhorred the Talmud, although I was still a very observant Jewish child ... I couldn’t become a layabout, so that’s

why I became a – writer. A writer? Which classes had I taken? None. Where did I study? Nowhere. What? Nothing!!!”¹³

In Hess’s *Rome and Jerusalem* there is a whole series of other passages which provide information about his childhood and youth in Bonn. He mentions that he has his grandfather, a “deeply religious” man, to thank for having been led to Judaism as a young child. His grandfather saw it as his duty to pass on what he knew about the Talmud to his grandson. “My grandfather”, he writes, “was one of those venerable scribes, who, without making it his profession, had the title and the knowledge of a Rabbi.”

According to Hess, his grandfather went out to work during the day to feed his family, and at night studied the Talmud and its commentaries. “These studies were only interrupted in the ‘nine days’ [this refers to the first nine days of the month of Av, the days of mourning the destruction of the First and the Second Temple]. He then read the saga of the expulsion of the Jews from Jerusalem to his grandchildren who had to stay awake until midnight. The snow white beard of this strict old man would become wet with tears during this reading; we children were not able to hold back our sobs and tears...”¹⁴

It wasn’t a rejection, but still something like an alienation from Judaism which began in Hess’s youth.¹⁵ As with so many members of the first emancipation generation, the values and norms of the non-Jewish society surrounding him began to replace the Jewish traditions that had been handed down. One person in whom this phenomenon can be seen clearly is the Mendelssohn friend and pupil David Friedländer¹⁶, who also expressed a reasonable doubt as to whether Talmudic Judaism was in a position to provide the necessary answers to the urgent questions of the day in his letters and writings.

Similar expressions, as we have said, can be found in Moses Hess’s writings. An increasingly distant approach to the faith of his fathers can also be discerned in Hess. In his case, though, this most likely also had something to do with the fact that he had begun to associate in circles which regarded every religion with skepticism. This does not mean that Hess completely freed himself of his Jewish roots, even if some of his remarks from the early years seem to make this impression.

Causes and justifications for his intellectual reversal

Up until the time that his book *Rome and Jerusalem* appeared, Moses Hess had not seriously attempted to come to terms with his Jewish identity and the “Jewish question”.¹⁷ The remarks he made about it in his early years are telling, but are mostly limited to side notes made in passing which can be read in his

books *Die heilige Geschichte der Menschheit* (*Holy history of mankind*, 1837) and *Die europäische Triarchie* (*The European triarchy*, 1841) as well as in numerous essays and commentaries such as “Philosophie der Tat” (*The philosophy of the act*, 1843), “Über das Geldwesen” (*On the essence of money*, 1845) and “Jugement dernier du vieux monde social” (*“Judgement Day of old world society*, 1851).¹⁸

In his debut “Holy history of mankind”, which was published anonymously with the remark “By a disciple of Spinoza”, Hess attempted to combine the young Hegelians’ philosophy of history with the philosophy of Spinoza and the Saint-Simonists. His hypothesis in doing so was that the history of mankind is characterized by periods of time in which subject and object alternately unite and separate. The contribution provided by the Jews in all this, in Hess’s opinion, is that they brought monotheism to the world and added the spiritual dimension to religious consciousness.

According to Hess’s view at the time, the Jews would only have a future as individuals, but not as a collective. In Spinoza he saw the classic example of the modern Jew, who, in the words of the Israeli political scientist Shlomo Avineri, “was the first to break through the walls of Jewish exclusivity, leave his tribe, be excommunicated by them and therefore ultimately become a citizen of the world.”¹⁹ The comments that Hess made in this connection show that, at least in the mid-1830s, he was completely convinced that the new society, “the new Jerusalem” as he called it, was located in the heart of Europe and not somewhere in the Middle East.

It is revealing that Hess refers to the sinister character of Joel Jacoby in his book, who was alternately called a “political weathervane”, a “sanctimonious convert”, an “immoral hack” or even an “agent provocateur”.²⁰ In his work *Klagen eines Juden* [*Complaints of a Jew*], Joel Jacoby denounces the reform efforts within Judaism as “a mixture of liberalism, libertinism, and aesthetic folly” and thus anticipated the position Hess would take up two decades later.

It basically seems that Hess was still of the opinion in this early phase of his life, roughly the end of the 1830s–early 1840s, that Jews should stop thinking of themselves as Jews. “The revitalizing principle of Judaism, the belief in the Messiah, is defunct and their hope for salvation, after having misunderstood the actual one, has shrunk down to a bleak abstraction”, he wrote in his book *The European triarchy*.²¹

At first, Hess saw no hope for the Jews. He did not think that much would come out of further advancing the assimilation process. He thought that the politics of civil equality was an aberration which would not answer the “Jewish question”, but rather make it even worse. He was convinced that it would lead to the downfall of Judaism. Anti-Semitism would not simply disappear, not even when the principle that the Jewish religion and the Jewish people form a unity were to

be abandoned. Yet “what can the educated Jew do,” asked Hess, “to emerge from his ‘nationality’?”²²

Hess did not consider getting baptized out of opportunism or other selfish reasons to be an appropriate way to encourage the assimilation process. This would not be in keeping with the “emancipation of the spirit” and in any case not a real solution to the problem. Mixed marriages in which the children were not allowed to be brought up in the Jewish faith were also not the answer. The only thing left was the civil union marriage²³, the entry of a non-denominational marriage, though which Hess hoped Jews would become “non-denominational citizens”²⁴ who, as long as they came from the Rhineland, would also be the ideal negotiators between the German and French character.

In this early phase of his life, Hess still believed that it would be the best thing for Jews to divest themselves of their Jewishness and gradually be absorbed by the majority society with dignity. He thought that the conditions necessary for this to happen already existed. In a country in which Jews live with non-Jews as equals and in which mixed marriages are also allowed, as examples he lists France and the United States, they could also become integrated without great difficulties straight away. Any differences, if then any would still exist, would fade over time.

As a socialist, which, like the majority of his companions in those years, is how he first and foremost thought of himself, Moses Hess dreamed of a fully emancipated society, one in which not only the Jewish people, but all people would live together as equals. He dreamed of a society in which it absolutely didn’t matter which race or religion someone belonged to. Therefore, he didn’t think the “Jewish question” was a real problem. The emancipation of the Jews, in Hess’s opinion, would go hand in hand with the emancipation of society.

What then were the reasons and causes which led Hess to rediscover Judaism? Which catalysts were responsible for changing his opinions? There is much to suggest that it was the pogroms against Jews in Damascus in 1840²⁵ which caused Hess to change his way of thinking. These pogroms were sparked by the accusations made by a Dominican priest who falsely accused the Jews of a ritual murder. At the time, the case led to a diplomatic imbroglio between the major European powers, the Ottoman Empire and their representatives in the Middle East.

Twenty years later, in the fifth letter out of *Rome and Jerusalem*, Hess recollects the bitter, painful feelings the Damascus affair evoked in European Jewry. At that time, writes Hess, it was made painfully clear to him, “that I belong to an unlucky, slandered, abandoned from the whole world, scattered over all countries yet not slain people, at the time I had already, although I was already estranged from Judaism, wanted to express my Jewish-patriotic feelings in a cry of anguish which was, however, soon stifled by the greater anguish that the European proletariat aroused in me.”²⁶

As were several other chroniclers of the events in Damascus, which provoked a substantial uproar all over Europe, Hess was appalled and arrived at the conclusion that it was no longer possible to stand on the sidelines without taking action; something must be done. If it is impossible to protect the Jews from mob attacks, then another path must be followed to find a solution to the “Jewish question”.

The commentaries that Hess submitted at the time were still of a quite general nature. For example, he explained that emancipation would not help the Jews as long as the very word “Jew” had a stigma attached to it, “ that every obscure newspaper writer or every stupid boy could successfully exploit”.²⁷ Statements such as these show that a Jewish national concept was not yet part of his agenda in the early 1840s.



Figure 1: Moses Hess.

This was only to happen two decades later, when he began studying natural sciences and anthropology during his emigration to Paris. “Here I am, after a twenty year estrangement, standing in the middle of my people”, Hess wrote in his introduction to *Rome and Jerusalem*, “and take part in their celebrations of joy and mourning, in their memories and hopes, in their spiritual struggles in their own house and with the cultured people, in whose midst they live... One idea, which

I believed to have forever smothered in my breast, is now standing alive before me: the idea of their nationality, inseparable from my patrimony, the Holy Land and the Eternal City, the birthplace of the faith in the holy unity of life and in the future fraternization of all people".²⁸

By his own admission, Hess only became aware of the connection existing between the racial studies he was conducting and the emergence of the modern nation state movement in 1859, when the Austro-Italian war began. His studies, Hess explains in *Rome and Jerusalem*, had led him to the conclusion that the demise of race dominance would usher in the rebirth of peoples, even that of the Jewish people. The liberation of Jerusalem would occur hand in hand with the liberation of Rome.

Historians have called into doubt if it was only the scientific studies which led Hess to abandon his assimilative viewpoint.²⁹ There were certainly external influences as well as personal ones which caused him to change his mind. Felix Weltsch holds that it was a "return", a true tshuvah. Something "buried" broke out in him, although the influence of a third party also played a role.³⁰

In this context, Edmund Silberner has pointed to the French Republican and Socialist Armand Levy (1827–1891). Raised Catholic with a Jewish background, he viewed the Jewish people as a race and held the opinion that Judaism should find its way back to its Jewish nationality. "My friend Armand L.", Hess remarked in *Rome and Jerusalem*, "whose grandparents were already baptized, shows a livelier interest in the well-being and woes of the members of his tribe than some circumcised Jews, and he has kept the faith in the Jewish nationality truer than our enlightened Rabbis".³¹

The immediate cause for Hess's change of heart was, as he himself admitted, a woman. "Is it a coincidence", it's written in *Rome and Jerusalem*, "that with each new direction which captivates me pulls me in its circle, an unhappy female appears in my life and gives me the courage and power to follow an unknown course?".³² Hess leaves it open as to who exactly was meant. It is only mentioned that the female in question was a woman from Frankfurt am Main. The credit goes to Edmund Silberner for having identified her to have been a certain Josephine Hirsch³³.

Setting aside these personal circumstances for the moment, it can be assumed that it was external influences, anti-Semitism in general, but also an anti-Jewish feeling in the Leftist camp,³⁴ which moved Hess to propagate the national rebirth of the Jewish people. Similar to Theodor Herzl³⁵, Bernhard Lazare³⁶ and others, who would probably have remained estranged from Judaism if it hadn't been for their experiences with anti-Semitism before and around 1900, Hess arrived at the conclusion that a successful assimilation or adaptation to the surrounding

society was only possible up to a point and that anti-Semitism was as indissoluble as the existence of the Jewish people themselves.

“The German Jew”, writes Hess in *Rome and Jerusalem*, “is, due to the anti-Semitism he is surrounded by from all sides is always inclined to shed everything Jewish about himself and disavow his race. No reform of Jewish ritual is radical enough for the educated German Jew. Even baptism does not save him from the nightmare of the German hatred of the Jews. The Germans do not hate the religion of the Jews as much as their race, they hate less their peculiar faith than their peculiar noses”.

Hess regretted that the Jews would renounce their heritage. This was the wrong way, as neither baptism nor a reform of Judaism would enable the “portals of social life” to open to German Jews. “The Jewish noses are not being reformed, no baptism will turn the black, kinky Jewish hair blonde, no comb will straighten it. The Jewish race is a primordial one which has reproduced itself despite climatic influences in its integrity. The Jewish prototype has always remained the same over centuries”.³⁷

As an interested observer of Jewish life, Hess was influenced by what he called a “beneficial reaction” by the Jews to “cosmopolitan philanthropy”³⁸. What he meant by this was the developing counter-movement to the policy of assimilation, the attempts to return to Judaism. Hess saw this in a revival of Hebrew literature and in a host of other things appearing in literature and historiography.³⁹

Hess believed to be able to recognize signs of Jewish regeneration even in contemporary Hasidism, which can be seen as one more indication that Hess was intimately familiar with the Jewish religious tradition and the conditions of Jewish life in his times. Both his published works and his letters from these years show that Hess was involved in inner-Jewish discussions. Most of all he was interested in the powers which “prepared the final recognition of a person as a social being” in Judaism and Christianity in equal measure.⁴⁰

Looking back, it is possible to determine rather exactly who had an influence on Hess’s thinking. Someone who impressed him without really influencing him was the French historian Joseph Salvador (*Paris, Rome, Jérusalem ou la question religieuse au XIXe siècle [Paris, Rome Jerusalem or the religious question in the 19th century]*, Paris 1860). Salvador, a descendant of the Marranos, was mentioned several times in Hess’s writings. However, Hess did not appear to have a high opinion of him. Hess describes him as a “dreamer” whose ideas about the “reconstruction of Palestine” were not realistic, according to Hess.

In contrast, Hess greatly admired Ernest Laharanne. Hess was fascinated by his pamphlet “Le nouvelle question d’Orient. Empires d’Egypte et d’Arabie. Reconstitution de la nationalité juive” [The new Eastern question. Empires of Egypt and Arabia. Reconstitution of the Jewish nationality], published in 1860.

This can be seen in the fact that Hess continually talks about him.⁴¹ “The writer,” he proclaims in *Rome and Jerusalem*, “has scarcely acted in the name of the French government, but certainly in the spirit of the French people, when he, not on any religious grounds, but out of purely political and humanitarian motivations, demands that the members of our tribe rebuild their old country”.⁴²

“Rom und Jerusalem”

Rome and Jerusalem, published in 1862 by Eduard Wengler in Leipzig, is, due to its composition, at first glance a bewildering publication. It consists of an introduction, 12 letters to an unnamed girlfriend, a six-paragraph long epilogue and ten notes. An excerpt from Laharanne’s “Le nouvelle question d’Orient”, translated into German, is also included.⁴³

The book, which does not follow any strict internal structure, discusses all kinds of problems from the most far-flung areas like philosophy, theology, astronomy, physiology and biology without revealing why this is happening. There are numerous digressions which do not always provide for a better understanding of the ultimate topic, the rebirth of the Jewish people.⁴⁴ Edmund Silberner is therefore correct in his observation that the book is brilliant in its presentation, yet the direction of its ideas appears unclear and disorganized.⁴⁵ Hess demands that his readers navigate an intellectual eruption rather than a logically presented narrative.

Still, the book received a great deal of attention for various reasons. On the one hand, there was the allure of originality and on the other the hypotheses which were found to be jarring. What were the writer’s intentions in making them? Contemporaries generally thought of the “Jewish question” only in terms of the debate for or against equal rights. The idea of solving the “Jewish question” in another way entirely, via a national revival, was far from usual.

Hess’s standpoint, that the solution to the Jewish problem could only be found for the entire Jewish nation rather than individually, was a head-on attack on how Jewry saw itself, which had, at least in the Western European countries, decided in favor of acculturation and assimilation. Above all it was Hess’s “Declaration of war against Reform Judaism”⁴⁶, which made the greatest sensation. Hess did not see the main danger in Orthodoxy⁴⁷ and its followers, but rather in the religious reformers of Judaism, the “new-fangled”⁴⁸, as he called them. He made them responsible for everything that had gone wrong at that time.

What Hess is criticizing in *Rome and Jerusalem* is the “nihilism” of Reform Judaism, by which Hess felt that the Reform movement traded the national character of Judaism for civil rights and conveniences. Reform Judaism seemed to

Hess, the “reflection of a social process of disintegration”⁴⁹, as he commented in an answer to a discussion of Rabbi Leopold Löw.

The Reformers were trying, Hess argued, to make a rationally tailor-made version of Christianity out of both national and universal Judaism. If there ever was a “bankrupt swindle” wrote Hess in an open letter to Abraham Geiger⁵⁰, “then it is the Reform swindle, which doesn’t have the courage to look its opponents straight in the face...”⁵¹.

In *Rome and Jerusalem*, Hess mocked the “religion reformers and religion industrialists”⁵², the “dwarfish epigones in a gigantic time”⁵³, who claimed that the Jews as the representatives of pure theism were tasked with teaching intolerant Christianity the principles of charity in the Diaspora. Further, they were to bring about a new synthesis of morals and life, which had become separated in the Christian world. Such a task, Hess was utterly convinced, could only be carried out by a politically organized nation – a nation which embodied the unity from morals and life in its own political institutions.

The insight which Hess committed to paper in *Rome and Jerusalem* is the idea of Jewish nationality – an idea that he attempted to explain or attribute with the term “race”. To be sure, a clear definition of what Hess understood by race is not to be found in his writings. In many cases he substitutes the word “race” with the words “nation” or “people”. Jews are in his somewhat abstruse and seemingly erratic terminology first the one and then the other.

Nevertheless, it is clear that Hess assumes Judaism comprises a racial identity. “A Jew”, according to Hess, “is always a part of Jewry according to his heritage, regardless if he or his forefathers were apostates”. This, Hess allows, may appear to be a paradox, but racial identity cannot be denied. “The baptized Jew also remains a Jew, regardless of how much he fights against it. Today, hardly any difference can be discerned between the enlightened and the baptized”.⁵⁴

In some of his attitudes, Hess was doubtless influenced by the racial theories of the day. Gobineau’s “An essay on the inequality of the human races” (1853–1855) was published a few years before the writing of *Rome and Jerusalem* and Hess was certainly familiar with it. However, it would be wrong to assume that Hess would have shown a preference for one particular race over any other. Each race was for him no better than the other; rather each seemed better than the other, albeit in the area allotted to it.

In this vein, he bestowed the English with a particular talent for economics and finance, the French for politics, the Germans for intellect, and the ancient Greeks – as opposed to the Jews please note – a talent for comprehending the world as a diverse spatial being. The ultimate goal that Hess envisioned was not a racial division of humanity in which one race dominates the other like the Nazis

later did, but rather the reconciliation of racial differences, equality and the harmonious cooperation of all races.

Hess thought that modern society emerged from the cultural-historical efforts of two “peoples of world history”; the Aryans and the Semites. “Aryans and Semites are two complementary, equal factors of social life who determined life historically.” In his later writing “The dynamic theory of matter”⁵⁵ he remarked that there were differences between the races, but neither inferiority nor superiority. The harmonious cooperation between all peoples was what Hess considered to be the final goal of the historical development process. This goal will be met when all peoples are liberated from foreign domination, which is the precondition for all political-social progress in his view.

The “mission” which Hess assigns to the Jews is telling. The “Jewish race”, he writes in *Rome and Jerusalem*, which has played “the greatest role in the history of the world” is called upon “to play an even greater one in the future”.⁵⁶ Hess rejected for himself personally the alternatives Judaism confronted itself with: humanity and dissolution in the assimilation process, or exclusive salvation in the Orthodox compliance of the laws. He would only consider a third alternative: he was convinced that national determination, as Hess called the national rebirth, would also encompass social and human needs.

“Future social creations will be based on the national-humanitarian essence of the Jewish social religion”⁵⁷, he writes in *Rome and Jerusalem*. For Hess, it is not possible to realize this mission in exile. This mission can only be successful when people have freed themselves from “speculation” (i.e. capitalist exploitation). The own most task for the Jews is to enable this to happen, yet this task cannot be completed without having carved out an independent state.

The connection between the demand for a nation and the social idea doubtless has its roots in the Hegelian philosophy of history. The concept of the development of humanity as an unfolding of immanent strengths is joined together by Hess with the national universalism of Jewish prophesy to form a single entity. “The divine historical plan for the development of humanity which is exposed in [*Rome and Jerusalem*]”, as the historian Wanda Kampmann describes Hess’s thought processes, “has the diversity of different peoples as its starting point, sees harmonious cooperation as its task and sets the unity of the human race as its goal”.⁵⁸

Hess thought that the dialectical development would result in the ultimate peace. In his view this peace would be achieved when the Jewish people were liberated as a people and had become independent as a people. This peace, Hess continues, would not be able to spread over the world as long as the social content of the biblical teachings have not been achieved in the social order. The “Jewish

question" is, as it says in the title of *Rome and Jerusalem*, "the last national question" that still needs to be solved.

Despite the conclusions Hess drew, he had his doubts if the establishment of an autonomous Jewish State would actually be possible. Without the active support of the great European powers, it seemed to him to be impossible to create such a state. Therefore, Hess was hoping in particular for support from France, likely also because he was living in Paris and thought that French politicians would show more understanding for his plans than others would.

Hess also thought that it was in the interests of French politics when the routes to India and China would be settled by peoples who were completely loyal to France. He therefore felt that the prospects for creating a Jewish State were not unfavorable. However, he feared that the Jews would fail to seize the right moment to ensure their place among other nations.

Similar to Hirsch Kalischer, Albert Cohn (1814–1877) and Moses Montefiore at this time, Hess also felt it desirable to begin with colonization activities on a grand scale in Palestine as soon as the political conditions allowed. To this end he wanted to found a "Society to build up the Holy Land". The society was to have been tasked with collecting donations to buy up land in Palestine and then lease it to Russian, Polish and German Jews. They would have their own police force to protect them from Bedouin attacks and to keep the peace and order. An agricultural school was to train young Jews for agricultural work in Palestine.

Hess himself was very aware of the fact that only a minority of Jews would be prepared to emigrate to Palestine. Only those who hoped for an improvement in their financial situation would move there, in Hess's view. He thought that mainly Eastern European Jews, who were living in unworthy and extremely poor material conditions, would come into consideration. From Western Europe he thought that "no contingent [from immigrants] for the new state"⁵⁹ was to be expected.

Hess's statements clearly indicate that he did not find the size of the Jewish population in Palestine to be of particular importance. He didn't think that the numbers mattered. At every point in time, he writes in *Rome and Jerusalem*, Jews scattered all over the world had always felt solidarity with the Jewish centers. No other people felt each stirring in the "intellectual nerve center of the nation"⁶⁰ up to the outermost periphery of the national organism like the Jews.

As with other later Zionist thinkers like Achad Haam, Martin Buber and Chaim Weizmann, Hess was convinced that the "Jewish question" was not a political, but rather in the main an intellectual-cultural problem. Palestine as the "intellectual nerve center of the nation" would, according to Hess, contribute to the resurrection of Jewish intellectualism and Jewish culture. Hess, however, remained silent about exactly how this "intellectual nerve center" in Palestine was supposed to look.

Nonetheless, Hess was clearly only marginally interested in the cultural aspects. He was mainly interested in the political-social problems of the new, to-be-founded state. Therefore his practical suggestions in *Rome and Jerusalem* do not only concern the establishment of Jewish colonies in Palestine, the common national ownership of land (“purchase of common land for the nation”), but also legal labor protection (“working towards legal conditions under whose protection labor can flourish”).

Among his practical suggestions, Hess also mentions the “foundation of Jewish organizations for agriculture, industry and trade along Mosaic, i.e. socialist principles”.⁶¹ He does not, however, elaborate on what he meant by organizations along “Mosaic, i.e. socialist principles”. It can only be assumed that he is here relating to the social and humanitarian “mission” of Judaism described above. Edmund Silberner takes the view that Hess was likely thinking of something like production cooperatives with state credits⁶², similar to what Louis Blanc in France and Ferdinand Lassalle in Germany were espousing at the time.

Concerning the still to be undertaken colonization, Hess was in agreement with the later views of a Theodor Herzl insofar as he, long before Herzl, vehemently held the view that the colonization must not take place through the backdoor in secret. In this context, Hess refers in particular to the fact that Jews would have to become farmers on their “native soil” in Palestine again. For this to happen, according to Hess, it would be necessary for the Jews to learn the skills needed and develop the appropriate knowledge.

In the summer of 1862, Hess published a four-part series of essays “The last national question” in the liberal-democratic newspaper *Niederrheinische Volkszeitung*, which was an attempt of self-interpretation. Just as he already had discussed at length in *Rome and Jerusalem*, here he also attempted to draw a connection between the last national question of the Jews with that of the Germans. Both, he states here, were functioning according to the same principle of nationality; therefore, “even the smallest nation, regardless if it belongs to the Germanic or the Romanic, to the Slavic or the Finnish, to the Celtic or Semitic race”, may stake its claim on a space among the civilized nations to fulfill itself under the aegis of Western civilization.⁶³

Berthold Auerbach and Heinrich Graetz

Hess was particularly close to two contemporaries – one a writer, the other an historian –, who had a noticeable impact on him and his thinking. The longer relationship was with Berthold Auerbach, the writer of the famous “Schwarzwälder

Dorfgeschichten” [Black Forest village stories], whom Hess met already in the mid 1830s during a stay in Frankfurt.

They both had a high esteem for one another, which can be seen in their correspondence from the 1830s and 1840s. They also shared common philosophical interests and were avowed admirers of Spinoza. Although they belonged to different ideological camps, Hess being a Socialist and Auerbach a Liberal Democrat, this did not prevent them from creatively collaborating in the journalistic arena.

Hess was the one who attempted to familiarize Auerbach with the idea of class struggle. Through him, Auerbach heard of a young scholar for the first time whom Hess considered to be the “epitome of philosophical genius”: “Dr. Marx, as my idol is called, is still a very young man (about 24 years old at most), who will wield the final blow to medieval religion and politics; he combines the deepest philosophical gravity and the most poignant humor; imagine Rousseau, Voltaire, Holbach, Lessing, Heine and Hegel united in a single person, and I’m saying united, not thrown together – then you have Dr. Marx”.⁶⁴

When his book *Die europäische Triarchie* (1840) was published by Otto Wigand in Leipzig, Hess had arranged for a copy to be sent to Auerbach with the request for him to help in its distribution. When Auerbach answered him and made a few suggestions, Hess was “indescribably happy”.

The level of their intimacy, even after Hess began working as editor-in-chief for the *Rheinische Zeitung* newspaper, can be seen in several letters in which Hess tells his friend in all openness what he thinks about the prevailing conditions in Germany. “Fie on this Germany! The censors have completely demoralized it... There is no longer a single healthy limb in all of the German homeland, everything is putrid, enervated, perverted.”⁶⁵

The friendship ended when Hess informed Auerbach that the articles he had written for the *Rheinische Zeitung* had not completely been met with approval by those in charge. “Concerning our newspaper and your employment, I can naturally only give you the advice that you have to join the spirit of those you want to dedicate your strength to. The paper, which simply has its leaning ... certainly cannot be untrue to itself due to the dissenting opinion of a single employee”.⁶⁶

The break became final in February 1845 when Hess told Auerbach that they had, in his opinion, outgrown one another: “My dear Auerbach! The storms of life, to use a cliché, have thrown us in opposite directions. *You would certainly no more be able to enjoy my direction*, than I would yours. Strange! At one point you grew fond of me because of this, my direction, which I have followed from the very first moment and now you are one of my antagonists – not at heart, but in spirit and action”.⁶⁷

The break was now irreconcilable, after everything had been said what there was to say. When, years later, Hess sent Auerbach his manuscript *Rome and Jeru-*

salem, asking for Auerbach's help in finding a publisher, it became clear that there could be no thought of reconciliation. In his reply, Auerbach informed Hess that he had only read half of the manuscript and strongly advised against its publication. "You are wonderful saints, you world reformers, you pass off the stages of development in your personality and momentary observation for the developmental stages of all time and the world".

At this point Auerbach, most likely remembering how Hess had snubbed him, bluntly states that they have nothing more to say to each other. Hess has gone one way, he has gone another. "I am, and I admit this readily (even though you might find it ridiculous or disgraceful), a Germanic Jew, as good a German as I believe there is, at least I would like to prove this with the full commitment of my life's energy".⁶⁸

The difference between Auerbach and Hess was Auerbach's avowal of German culture. In contrast to Hess, who was more skeptical and did not believe that Judaism could be absorbed into German culture, Auerbach was at that time confident in the contacts between Germans and Jews. Only in later years, as anti-Semitism increased and the situation of the Jews in the German empire became more and more problematic did he start to re-consider his position. His plaintive comment "I have lived and worked for naught", which he wrote in a letter to his lifelong friend Jacob Auerbach under the impact of the debates on the "Jewish question" held in German parliament in 1880, became famous.

Hess's relations to the historian Heinrich Graetz proved to be smoother than those to Berthold Auerbach.⁶⁹ The fact that Graetz and Hess got to know each other comparatively late in life could have played a role, as could have the fact that their worldview stances were much more similar. It also might have been advantageous that Graetz had a particularly fun-loving nature and it was not at all difficult for him to form friendships. For example, we know that he was even able to rouse warm feelings from Karl Marx. This was certainly no easy undertaking, as Marx was known not to let many people get close to him and was extremely suspicious concerning forming friendly relationships.

Hess came to Graetz's attention in Leipzig in the fall of 1861 at the home of Graetz's friend, Rabbi Abraham M. Goldschmidt (1812–1889), where for three evenings in a row he took part in meetings at which Hess's texts were being read by an interested audience. For those present, mainly members of the publishing association "Institute for the advancement of Israelite literature", Hess's texts were a revelation.

This is indicated by a letter that Graetz wrote to Hess upon his return to Breslau, where he was a docent at the Jewish Theological Seminary. In it, he expressed his enthusiasm about what he had read: "Still full of the impressions and the intellectual reverberations which reading your *Revival of Israel* stirred in

me, I am sitting down to write to you, the unknown to the unknown... I can't even tell you how powerfully the form and contents of your book seized me as well as the rest of the audience; it would sound like a banal compliment ... Your book must become a new ferment in the foul conditions; that is my conviction. And that's what I wanted to tell you, so that they should pursue the publication of the same more energetically".⁷⁰

In the spring of 1862 Hess accepted an invitation from Graetz and travelled to Breslau, where he remained for three months and discussed the planned printing of his work with Graetz in recurrent meetings. It was apparently acting on a suggestion from Graetz which led Hess to change the title from his originally intended *Revival of Israel to Rome and Jerusalem*. "Do you remember", Graetz wrote to Hess several years later, "how meticulously we poured over the title of your book?"⁷¹ In all likelihood there is more to thank Graetz for than just the choice of the title *Rome and Jerusalem*. It seems to be the case that it was on his intercession that the book appeared on commission from the Leipzig book dealer Eduard Wengler.

Although Graetz promoted the circulation of the book among his friends and acquaintances, sales remained limited. One year after its publication, the book had sold only 160 copies to the great disappointment of Hess and Graetz. "I don't know whose fault it is for the low sales", Graetz wrote to Hess, "Because so many people I've spoken to praise your drastic presentation, your splendid coloring, your ideas. So it's not due to the book, but perhaps the innovation of the idea. It needs to first break new ground. We shouldn't despair".⁷²

In contrast to Berthold Auerbach, the friendship with Graetz did not cool down over the years. Actually, the opposite is true. The correspondence between the two shows how highly they held each other in esteem and that there was an intense exchange of ideas between them over the decades, particularly regarding the state of the general conditions. For instance, Graetz wrote to Hess on October 15, 1862, "What do you say about our political situation? The officer's brutality rules over intelligence." Later in the letter it says our century is lacking, "the moral outrage about the ignorance and depravity of the existing order".⁷³

In the correspondence between Graetz and Hess there are repeated mentions of the general political conditions in Germany and France. Harsh judgments of people are handed out and complaints made that the Germans are not "tools" of the world spirit. Graetz asked if Hess is still raving about Lassalle, for instance, in the same breath to exclaim: "His methods are not the noblest. His attacks on [Aron] Bernstein⁷⁴ are most common".⁷⁵

It is unclear to what extent Hess shared Graetz's opinion of some contemporaries. For Graetz, men like Karl Marx and Karl Blind were indeed Democrats, but also decidedly anti-Semitic. He had the same low regard for them as he did for Hermann Schulze-Delitzsch and Rudolf Virchow. Graetz had little or absolutely

no regard for Lassalle's former lover Sophie von Hatzfeld, "The Red Countess", as she was generally called. "Do you find", he asked Hess "Countess Hatzfeld to be a pillar of virtue? To be honest, the whole thing seems to me to be hiding a lot of dirt and I don't like seeing you in that crowd".⁷⁶

Hess and Graetz were in agreement when it came to the Italian and German efforts toward unifying. Both were utterly convinced that a unified state was necessary, even though both were originally skeptical about the Germans' ability to accomplish such a unified state. "This nation", Graetz complained in a letter to Hess in the summer of 1863, "is eternally doomed to submission, to grooms, farm laborers and professors".⁷⁷

Graetz, who was an admirer of the Jewish national idea propagated by Hess, did not compose a commentary about Hess's *Rome and Jerusalem* himself, but did contribute an essay to the Viennese *Jahrbuch für Israeliten* 5624 (1863/64) under the heading "The rejuvenation of the Jewish tribe"⁷⁸ in which he lays out his view of the topic of "nationality" as introduced by Hess. As opposed to Hess, he arrives at the conclusion that the characteristics which are generally thought to make up a nation, i.e. land, a common language and culture, are only partially applicable to the Jews. The more important thing, according to Graetz, is the "common feeling of belonging", which he calls a mystery that is hidden from the researcher's eye.

A nation, continues Graetz, distinguishes itself by its "ability to rejuvenate itself". In other words: a people who have scraped by on a miserable existence are still capable of recapturing a position of influence and importance and the Jewish people are a good example of this. Graetz points to their history – and to the fact that the Jewish people had already experienced a "rejuvenation" at the end of the Babylonian exile. This process, in his opinion, could repeat itself at any time.

Such thoughts are rooted in the conviction that nations form living organisms, which are sentenced to die out after a certain time, but which carry within themselves an indestructible core from which the "resurrection and rejuvenation" can spring. In the case of the Jews, according to Graetz, an "act of salvation" will first occur, which he interpreted as an "extremely painful martyrdom". Not one person would appear as the savior, but a people, which Graetz considered to be the actual bearer of Jewish messianism.

In connection to the era of Cyrus, King of Persia, who enabled the Jews to return to their homeland from their Babylonian exile, Graetz speaks of a "mission" that the Jews have and from the "rebirth of the Jewish people." This "little bunch", he remarked, "once more created a state, once more begot heroes, heroes of the sword and of the mind, who fulfilled the great circle of humanity with their names and deeds. This little bunch poured its healthy juices into the veins of humanity."

So, Hess asks, why shouldn't a “revival of the Jewish people” be possible in the present? Graetz and Hess were in complete concord in their opinion that this would actually be possible and doable. Graetz continually pointed out in various letters he wrote to Hess that they were in agreement about the essentials in historical and historico-philosophical fundamental views.

Graetz and Hess were, without a doubt, like-minded individuals with a high degree of mutual regard. This is also the only explanation as to why Graetz commissioned Hess to prepare the French translation of the third volume of his *History of the Jews* – together with the assignment of revising the volume for the French audience. Graetz considered Hess to be the appropriate translator for this.

It was a task which held extraordinary allure for Hess; on the one hand because Graetz had shown him such active support with the publication of *Rome and Jerusalem* and he wanted to return the favor, on the other this volume would have been of particular interest to him, because it dealt not only with the Maccabean and Herodian epochs, but Graetz also discussed the origins of Christianity within it.

At first, Hess was to have appeared on the title page as an equal co-author, which he initially did not want. Graetz considered this to be dishonest and thought that it wouldn't do to remain silent about Hess's contributions. A passage discussing this state of affairs was removed at Graetz's request. “Why should we have this deliberation? Both of us”, Graetz explained, “have enough poisonous enemies in Germany. They will not shy away from burdening you with what I must carry alone and vice versa. Should we really hand Geiger, Steinschneider, Philippson and others something to ridicule on a silver platter?”.⁷⁹

The book, which really was something of a collaborative effort, was then published under the title of *Sinai et Golgatha*,⁸⁰ which was reminiscent of Hess's title *Rome and Jerusalem* which had appeared five years earlier. This was also the intention. Neither Hess nor Graetz admitted it explicitly, but both were keeping it in the back of their mind when determining the book's title. In letters written by Graetz the odd allusion can be found which point to this conclusion. “Your or our Rome and Jerusalem” he writes for example in a letter from October 1868, “is ripening toward its actualization”.⁸¹

How close the friendship was between Hess and the historian Graetz can also be seen in the fact that they planned to take a trip to Palestine together, which, however, never took place. In the spring of 1872, Graetz instead travelled with two other friends, the businessman Moses Gottschalk Lewy (1816–1833) and his nephew Ascher Levy, to Palestine. After his return he wrote to Hess, thrilled with what he had seen on his trip. In a letter dated July 5, 1872 he writes, “Climatically it is a wonderful land and truly made to be a Promised Land”.⁸²

Messianic faith, the Jewish national debate and criticism of “Rom und Jerusalem”

When Moses Hess and Heinrich Graetz dreamed of Zion and considered the reconstruction of the Jewish State to be possible and doable, their conviction was not based on the idea that the savior would be coming sometime in the near future, but rather that the Jews would have to take their destiny into their own hands. “The concern of nations”, Hess remarked with a view to contemporary Jews in one of his last editorials in the newspaper *L’Espérance*, “is your concern. Make sacrifices for your liberation, if you wish to be blessed and want to see the political salvation realized that you have been begging for in your prayers”.⁸³

Numerous expressions of this kind can be found in articles written by Hess, in his letters and most of all in his book *Rome and Jerusalem*. In it, Hess explains, “We Jews have carried around with us the belief in a messianic age since the beginning of time. This is pronounced in our historical traditions through the *Sabbath ceremony*. The Sabbath ceremony embodies the idea that has always inspired us, the idea that the future is certain to bring us a *Sabbath of history*, just as the past has brought us a *natural Sabbath*, that history as well as nature will have its age of harmonious perfection”.⁸⁴

Messianism, meaning the hope of salvation which places the coming of a savior and redeemer at the end of history, certainly played a central role in Hess’s thinking. It was, however, not a religious, but rather more or a “political” Messianism. He wasn’t thinking about salvation; rather what he had in mind was the condition of social perfection. “The messianic age”, it says in the tenth letter of his book, “is the current age, which began to germinate with Spinoza and entered into world history with the great French Revolution. With the French Revolution began the rebirth of the nations...”.⁸⁵

What had so deeply impressed Graetz and numerous other contemporaries was Hess’s absolute faith in the mission of the Jews. The task with which Hess entrusted the Jewish people, “to unify the world and mankind and to come together as brothers in the name of the eternal Creator, the All-Encompassing”, was a viewpoint that no one had ever before formulated with such clarity and explicitness. The realization Hess imparted that Judaism is not a “barren faith”, not a “passive religion”, but rather a “nationality”, a collective feeling of belonging and sense of togetherness, was found to be an exciting realization which provoked numerous profound discussions and would form the fundamental axiom of the later, Herzl-type Zionism.

Without question, Hess was one of the most important pioneers of the modern Zionist movement, but was also apparently too far ahead of his time. Most of his contemporaries had little use for his Jewish national ideas. Numerous reviews

of his book appeared⁸⁶ which ranged from critical to sympathetic concerning his proposal to create an autonomous state for the Jews. The writers of these were, however, mostly Jews themselves, who according to their position either sympathized with the idea or rejected it, so that Hess was noticed in Jewish circles, but remained unnoticed in others.

The Jewish Orthodoxy received *Rome and Jerusalem* with mixed feelings⁸⁷. When one of their number would make a comment, then it was reserved on the issue and vague. They felt that while Hess was attempting to revive a national feeling amongst the Jews, particularly among the so-called enlightened ones, he didn't realize that this feeling had never died out among the Orthodox. The return to the Holy Land would come, but not violently or forced. Were the return to come, then this day would coincide with the moment of salvation, the day on which the “one and only” would send the “savior”.⁸⁸

Harsher, even biting, criticism of Hess and his writing was made by the Reform Judaism camp. These circles were outraged that he called the Reform supporters the destroyers of Judaism. Accordingly dismissive were some of the pleas made by the Reform Rabbi Samuel Hirsch (1815–1889)⁸⁹, who had called for a radical reform of Judaism at the Rabbinical Conferences in Braunschweig (1844) and Frankfurt am Main (1845), but wasn't able to push through with his demands. Hirsch, who defined Judaism and early Christianity as “religions of freedom” in his philosophical writings,⁹⁰ did not have much use for Hess and the Jewish national ideas espoused in his book *Rome and Jerusalem*.

Rabbi Leopold Loew (1811–1875) of Szeged was similarly at a loss. He subjected Hess's book to a lengthy discussion in the weekly journal *Ben Chananja*. He found Hess's accomplishment to be original and also thought that it was suitable to win over the hearts of young people for messianic faith. At the same time, Loew made it clear that he felt that the Jewish patriotism that Hess described was fiction, a “love without the beloved object”. He pointed out that Jews not only lack the territory, but also a common language and both would be necessary requirements for a national revival of the Jewish people.

At the end of Loew's critique, he gave Hess the well-intended advice to learn more about Judaism and its teachings: “Deeper research of the sources and more precise knowledge of the present-day Jewish condition also outside of Germany would dissuade the highly gifted writer of his eccentric opinions and teach him to recant, correct and modify much of what he has apodictically stated in the book at hand”.⁹¹

Amazed and perhaps also a little annoyed that Loew accused him of having “eccentric opinions”, Hess formulated a reply in which he avoided correcting or recanting anything that he had said before. In an article entitled “My messianic faith”, Hess explained that his suggestions for reconstructing a Jewish national

identity were hardly anti-Semitic or heterodox. Rather, the opposite was true. He expected a national revival to entail a revival of a vital religion, “which makes every people a people of God”.

Then the riposte contains the remarkable sentence Hess made hoping to rebut Loew’s concerns: “The spirit of Judaism is a social-democratic one”⁹², which would have also provided readers at that time with food for thought. What Hess meant by this was that the spirit of the Judaism which he was talking about does not concentrate on the hereafter, but rather on the here and now; it also doesn’t have a “caste spirit” or “class domination” and in this way is in a position, “to create new laws according to the needs of the times and of the people”.

If Loew’s comments were critical of, but not altogether rejecting, Hess’s ideas, it was a different case for the anonymous critic also from the Reform camp who was downright derogatory in his comments about Hess and his book *Rome and Jerusalem*. These appeared in the *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums* published by Ludwig Philippson. Hess’s premises, it says here, were based on pure speculation. Hess himself is a hypocrite, because he presents himself as a traditional Jew, but he doesn’t observe the laws, enjoys non-kosher cuisine and doesn’t keep Jewish holidays.

The critic asks who exactly is this Hess, who are we dealing with? Is he a dreamer? A fantasizer? Or maybe even both? Hess’s efforts to induce patriotism in his co-religionists were acknowledged positively, but at the same time it was pointed out that Jewish people were not able to claim a “political nationality” as Jews for themselves. “Just as we have participated in all national struggles with our property and with our blood,” the critic remarks, “we prove that we are first Germans, Frenchmen, Englishmen and Americans and only after that Jews”⁹³.

As was the case with his rebuttal directed at Loew, Hess also attempted to justify himself publically against this criticism. In the *Israelit*, the organ of the Orthodox, he published a letter to Ludwig Philippson, in which he repeated his criticism of Reform Judaism and dismissed the accusations leveled against him with the explanation: “You don’t have to be Orthodox or even Jewish to support the old Jewish tradition in favor of Reform Judaism according to the reasons that I believe to have laid out quite convincingly in my writings, without making yourself guilty of any kind of hypocrisy”⁹⁴.

The majority of the discussions appearing in Jewish papers and magazines remained more or less negative in tone. One of the few exceptions was the review by the writer and friend of Heinrich Heine, Alexandre Weill (1811–1898), who admitted in a contribution appearing in *Archives israélites*⁹⁵ that Hess’s work stands out for its immense wealth of ideas, style and originality. At the same time he remarked that the national revival of Judaism could only be successful when it

has freed itself from the shackles of the Talmud and the ancient laws.⁹⁶ Then and only then could Hess's national dream come true.

In the non-Jewish circles of that time, Hess's book and the ideas laid out within were as good as ignored. The few who did pipe up had not been able to make much of it. The Berlin philosopher Karl Ludwig Michelet (1801–1893)⁹⁷, who was Hegel's successor for his professorship in Berlin, was one of the few who had actually read the book, but expressed doubts as to whether it would be possible for the Jews to return to Palestine. This was also the opinion of another contemporary, namely of Karl Heinzen, his old like-minded companion from the pre-March Revolution era, who had also gotten his hands on a copy of Hess's *Rome and Jerusalem*, but like Michelet wasn't able to make much of its ideas and proposals.

Heinzen had emigrated to the United States after the failure of the March Revolution in 1848 and published a radical paper called *Pioneer* there. He sympathized with Hess as a fellow Socialist, but admitted his doubts about Hess' nation state ideas with the ironically intended comment he published in his paper: “Moses Hess, former co-editor of the *Rheinische Zeitung* newspaper, recently published a book *Rome and Jerusalem*, in which he presents himself as an observant Jew and develops a plan to gather his people in Palestine to found a new Jewish empire. We wish him every success”.⁹⁸

It is striking that hardly anyone from the Socialist camp commented on Hess's Jewish national concept. Hess's proposal seemed so bizarre, that hardly anyone saw a reason to make a comment. Edmund Silberner has also correctly surmised that reviews from this camp would necessarily be missing, “because there was no Socialist press of any significance at that time”.⁹⁹

The leading proponents of Socialism at the time, i.e. Marx, Engels and拉萨尔, in all likelihood weren't even aware of Hess's book. There are only a few passing commentaries about *Rome and Jerusalem* from less prominent Socialists like Johann Philipp Becker, Bernhard Becker or Gustav Furthmann, which are more or less similar in tone. They make clear that they are not able to get behind Hess's Jewish national ideas and think they are wrong.

A glance at these commentaries shows that they were also partially shaped by hidden anti-Semitic feelings. This can be seen in some of the throw-away comments and “anti-Semitic taunts”¹⁰⁰, as, for example, when in Johann Philipp Becker's review he says that Herr Moses Hess is “very much in love” with his Jewish nationality. He does not appear to see that his “race” does not have the “stuff” to exist as a nation permanently. Particularly damning is the wording when talking about “Hess and members of his tribe”: “They generally like being meddlesome and pushy”.¹⁰¹

These “anti-Semitic taunts”, particularly when they came from men you wouldn't have expected it from, not only annoyed Hess, but also worried him

a great deal. For instance, Hess wrote in the fifth letter from *Rome and Jerusalem* that, “I have also had to experience how the German man [in this case referring to Nikolaus Becker (1809–1845), the poet who wrote the *Rheinlied*] not only answered my burning, fervent patriotism in an ice-cold tone, but also superfluously wrote on the back of his letter ‘You’re a Yid’ in disguised handwriting.”¹⁰²

Among the Socialists of his day, Hess was an exception in many ways, particularly since he was one of a very few who had committed themselves to the Jewish national idea and firmly believed in its realization. “It is not an accident”, writes Edmund Silberner, “that such a traditional, yet simultaneously revolutionary movement like modern Zionism found one of its first supporters exactly in a revolutionary mind like Hess”. Furthermore: “as a revolutionary Socialist he had the courage to enter the Jewish national stage in a revolutionary way”.¹⁰³

As mentioned at the beginning, the role that the synthesis of socialism and nationalism Hess propagated played in the later Zionist movement should not be underestimated. Socialist Zionists such as Nachman Syrkin, Ber Borochow or Aaron David Gordon had always denied that the Zionism they imagined and for which they were fighting was nationalism in the regular sense. The “Jewish question”, they argued, was not only a national, but simultaneously also a social question¹⁰⁴, and consequently Zionism is a movement that is defined by national as well as social elements.

When Hess died on April 6, 1875, numerous obituaries honored him as one of the pioneers of German Social Democracy. His efforts concerning a nationalistic Judaism and Zionism remained unmentioned. They were more or less forgotten. “In the books which list the names of ‘famous’ people”, a certain Abraham Coralnik wrote later, “you won’t find him”.¹⁰⁵ When he is commemorated, usually not as the author of *Rome and Jerusalem*, but as the great theorist and propagandist in the history of Socialism, as the “father of German Social Democracy”¹⁰⁶, as he was also later to be called.

Just in the last decades of the nineteenth century was Hess rediscovered as a Jewish national thinker.¹⁰⁷ Probably the first to have discovered Hess was the writer, journalist and later Rabbi Ehrenpreis (1869–1951). In a series of articles appearing in the *Jüdische Volkszeitung* newspaper in 1894, he honored Hess’s efforts for a national Judaism and Zionism. Theodor Zlocisti, who was to become Hess’s biographer, did so as well by republishing Hess’s previous rebuttal (“On my work ‘Rome and Jerusalem’”) of Immanuel Loew’s review in *Zion*, the monthly journal published by Heinrich Loewe, in 1896.¹⁰⁸

At the first Zionist Congress in Basel in 1897, which will be discussed further later, Hess was celebrated not only as the harbinger of Socialist Zionism¹⁰⁹, but also as the precursor of modern Zionism. In 1899, Max I. Bodenheimer declared in the foreword of the reissue of *Rome and Jerusalem*, “Today, after having been

almost completely forgotten over the last few decades, when we submit to the public opinion this book from the first pioneer of the modern Zionist idea in Germany, then his words sound to our ears practically like those of a future-telling prophet of ancient times”.

“Even if”, Bodenheimer continued, “the superficial conditions of nations have shifted in the almost 40 years since this book made its appearance, even if new factors have achieved importance and influence in European politics ... his description of the sad state of the Jewish nation remains just as true and apt as it was more than a generation ago”.¹¹⁰

Leon Pinsker: Auto-emancipation and self-help¹¹¹

In September 1882, a pamphlet entitled “Auto-emancipation! An appeal to his people by a Russian Jew” appeared anonymously in Berlin. In it, Jews were encouraged to emancipate themselves and re-discover their Jewish-national identity instead of making futile attempts of “amalgamating”. The anonymous author was the 60-year-old doctor and writer Leon Pinsker (1821–1891)¹¹², son of Simcha Pinsker (1801–1864) who had been a famous Haskalah writer in his lifetime, having made a name for himself as an Orientalist and earned accolades far beyond the Russian borders for his deciphering of Karaite manuscripts from Crimea.

Word soon spread as to who had written the pamphlet. For many it came as a surprise, because such a call to action could have come from just about anyone, except from Leon Pinsker. Living in the enlightened Jewish milieu of the Black Sea port of Odessa, Pinsker embodied the epitome of the assimilated Jew, still a rare type in Eastern Europe at the time. This meant one who had left the world of the Bible and Talmud behind, released himself from the traditional Jewish ties and had adapted himself to a great extent to the norms and values of the non-Jewish surrounding environment.

That Pinsker of all people made a Jewish-national avowal did not exactly fit the picture that he had presented of himself and that others had formed of him up to that point. Originally, Leon Pinsker supported the idea of assimilation. His law studies in Odessa and medical school in Moscow had led him to Western-oriented circles who supported assimilation, in this case the “Russification” of the Jews¹¹³.

Pinsker was one of the founders of the Odessa branch of the “Gesellschaft zur Verbreitung der Aufklärung unter den Juden”[Association for the promotion of enlightenment among Jews], an educational association which sought to promote raising Jews with the Russian language and Russian soul after the Western model.

He was also working on *Rasswet* [Dawn]¹¹⁴, a weekly paper founded by Josef Rabinowitz in 1860. Along with *Zion*, which Pinsker began as a co-publisher starting in 1861¹¹⁵, *Rasswet* supported civil equality, countered anti-Semitic attacks while promoting a better understanding of Judaism amongst the Russian reading public.

Rejection of “Russification”

It is no longer possible to precisely reconstruct when Pinsker lost faith in the idea of Russification. It was certainly not a sudden turnaround, but rather a gradual change taking place over more than a decade. It is quite obvious that it was due to what Pinsker experienced in his hometown which sparked this process of rethinking. During the Easter holiday in 1871, a pogrom rampaged for two days without the authorities stepping in. Pinsker was forced to stand by and watch Jewish homes being plundered and businesses robbed by the mob.

At the time, Pinsker also experienced how the Russian intelligentsia remained silent about the incident and the newspapers even defended the pogrom instigators instead of pillorying them in public. This had an absolutely devastating effect on Pinsker and other Jewish Russifiers. Eventually the pogroms of 1881 led Pinsker to make a permanent break with the Association¹¹⁶ and the idea of assimilation.

Pinsker was becoming convinced that Russification would not lead to a solution of the Jewish question, but that it was necessary to pursue a new course. The outline of an idea was crystallizing in him; not Russification, but a re-nationalization and the reclamation of territory must become the decisive alternative for the Jews. Pinsker immediately travelled abroad to convince the Jewish financial and intellectual worlds of his ideas and to encourage the initiation of supporting actions.

In March of 1882, Pinsker travelled to Vienna to try and win over Adolf Jellinek, the famous preacher and scholar who was also a friend and patron of his father, for himself and his proposals.¹¹⁷ Jellinek described the meeting in detail in a newspaper article¹¹⁸: “Before me stood a middle-aged man with a somewhat graying beard and awaited my welcome. ‘You don’t recognize me?’ he exclaimed in amazement, ‘I’m Dr. NN, the doctor from Russia that you’ve often seen in your home over the years, and it’s no wonder that you didn’t recognize a Russian Jew who’s coming from Russia. I’m perfectly aware of the fact that I look distraught and melancholy and bear the traces of great sorrow on my countenance. But you also appear to have changed. I don’t mean your outward appearance, but your spiritual personality. You are doing nothing for poor Russian Jews, and just as little for your comrades in arms in public’.

Jellinek did not react like Pinsker had expected him to. Angry about his lack of understanding, bitter about his indifference toward the situation of the Jews in Russia, Pinsker – according to Jellinek – exclaimed fiercely and loudly: “We want a fatherland, a homeland, a piece of earth where we can live like humans! We are tired of being driven like animals, being outcast by society, insulted, robbed and plundered, we no longer want to have to constantly fight back the outrage and

indignation inside of us, that the mob from the upper and the lower classes abuse and torment us in body and soul ...”.

The following comments make clear that Pinsker had meanwhile completely devoted himself to the idea of a Jewish nation and a Jewish State: “I repeat to you with all of the power of my soul, we want to be a people, to live on our own national ground, to found communal and political community structures, to show the other nations that we’re not degenerate, but on the contrary, we are an indestructible, viable tribe, gifted and talented to found a state, however small. Help us, brothers and friends, speak, act, use every means possible that you have at your disposal to procure a territory for us, where we persecuted Russian Jews can settle and live as free people”.



Figure 2: Leon Pinsker.

When he had finished his appeal, Pinsker asked Jellinek for his opinion. “Here you have my Jewish national declaration of faith, what do you think of it?” he remarked. Jellinek replied that he could not approve of Pinsker’s viewpoints and thought that Jewish nationalism was dangerous, as it would prove those anti-Semites right who “deny us any true patriotic feeling in Europe”. Jellinek continued, “Do you really think that I will concede all of your main and relative clauses, all of your premises and conclusions and raise the sky blue flag of a Jewish State and a

Jewish political nation for you? Then I would have to repudiate my entire past, all of the speeches which I have held and published for over three decades!”.¹¹⁸

The actual reason for Jellinek’s disapproving attitude was likely the fear that a spread of Jewish national ideas would endanger the civil status that Jews had achieved. This was a fear which he shared with large parts of assimilated Jewry in the West at the time. In an exchange of letters with Rabbi Isaak Rülf in Memel, Pinsker reacted to this syndrome of fear and suppression¹¹⁹ which he had repeatedly encountered in Jewish scholars and community leaders during his journey through the capitals of Europe. He wrote to Rülf on September 27, 1882: “... they listened attentively, nodded their heads, argued weakly and didn’t understand me or didn’t want to understand me”.¹²⁰

He complained bitterly that his ideas had met with a lukewarm at best response. He was met with disinterest, at times open dismissal. Particularly conspicuous in this regard were those brothers in faith Pinsker snidely refers to as “emancipation heroes”, insultingly calls “smug quietists” or dismisses as “complacent lackeys of diplomatic ignorance”. Arthur Cohen¹²¹ was the sole laudable exception among his many meetings. A Member of Parliament in London, he listened to Pinsker attentively and encouraged him to publish his ideas in a pamphlet.

“Auto-emancipation!”

What Pinsker could only partially claim to Jellinek, Cohen and others¹²² during his journey through the capitals of Europe is laid out in detail with extensive commentary in *Auto-emancipation!*¹²³, a pamphlet which appeared in September, 1882 in Berlin. The “Jewish question”, Pinsker remarks already on the first page, continues to cause tempers to flare as it always has done, without there being a solution in sight. The short introduction which is generally skipped over, makes it clear that being still under the impression of the pogroms in Russia which had just ended, Pinsker didn’t care about finding a way to treat the symptoms, but rather was only interested in finding a radical solution to the so-called “Jewish question”.

“The Jews in the Occident”, the introduction states, “have again learned to suffer the cry, ‘hep! hep!’ as their fathers in the old days. The eruption of blazing indignation over the shame to which they were subjected has turned to a rain of ashes, gradually covering the glowing soil. Shut your eyes and hide your head like an ostrich -- there is to be no lasting peace unless in the fleeting intervals of calm you apply a remedy more radical than those palliatives to which our hapless people have been turning for centuries”.¹²⁴

The explosive nature of Pinsker's hypothesis was that it hadn't been formulated from the anti-Semitic side, but from a Jew. It was a hypothesis which made a frontal attack against the prevalent Jewish self-image – a self-image that was shaped by the belief in acculturation and the continually progressing process of assimilation. Pinsker made it clear to his readers that Jews were not capable of assimilation, because they are, "in fact a heterogeneous element in the bosom of the people among whom they live, and no nation (...) can tolerate that well".¹²⁵

From this state of affairs Pinsker drew the conclusion that it would be necessary to create a fundamental means of redress, and only then can there be an end put to the "Jewish question". He was completely cognizant of the fact that the solution was not to be found in the progress of culture or even from cosmopolitanism. He considered that to be pure utopia, not corresponding to reality: "That day of the Messiah, when the 'Internationale' would disappear and the nations dissolve into a single humanity lies in the unforeseeable future. Until then, the nations must limit their desires and ideals to creating a tolerable modus vivendi".¹²⁶

What Pinsker was criticizing was the fact that the Jews did not conceive of themselves as a nation. They were therefore not recognized as equals amongst the other peoples. "The Jewish people," wrote Pinsker, "do not have their own fatherland, although many motherlands; they do not have a center, or a focus, or their own government or official representation. They are present everywhere, but nowhere at home. The nations are *never* confronted with a Jewish nation, but only with *Jews*".¹²⁷ Pinsker felt that this was an anomaly that not even the Jews themselves were aware of. They would only be recognized as equals after the need for national independence had led to a new consciousness – to the consciousness that Jews are a nation like all of the other nations.

This change in consciousness would only lead to the Jews losing the burdensome feeling of dishonor¹²⁸, other nations would not abandon their hostile attitudes and anti-Semitism would not cease to exist. Pinsker was convinced that prejudice against the Jews did not stem from religious, social or racial grounds. Rather, it was connected to a kind of fear of ghosts, because other nations were unable to deal with the fact that the Jewish people had lost the existence of their State, but continued to exist as a nation in spirit.

"The world", explains Pinsker in his pamphlet, "saw in this people the sinister figure of a dead person wandering among the living. This ghost-like apparition of a wandering corpse, a people without unity and structure, without land or other ties, who is no longer living, yet still walking among the living; this bizarre figure, practically the only one of its kind in history, without a model and without a copy, could not help but generate a peculiar, strange impression in the imaginations of the nations".¹²⁹

All of the arguments which the anti-Semites used against the Jews (e.g. the crucifixion of Jesus, the allegations of ritual murder and the poisoning of wells, the accusation of usury and exploitation), are nothing other than the attempts of a rational explanation for the fear of ghosts¹³⁰, which Pinsker calls “Judeophobia”. The instinctive aversion toward the uncanny, Wandering Jew stranger sits deep in the souls of nations. No attempt at enlightenment could change in this attitude, regardless of how well-intended.

The Jews could behave however they liked, but they would still remain strangers everywhere. Even if they were granted legal equality, they would never achieve it socially. They would always be seen as step-children and never as legitimate children of the fatherland. “To sum”, Pinsker concluded, “the Jew is for the living a corpse, for the native a foreigner, for the homesteader a vagrant, for the propertied a beggar, for the poor an exploiter and millionaire, for the patriot a man without a fatherland, for all classes a hated rival.”¹³¹

Anti-Semitism – a hereditary psychosis?

From the standpoint of modern experts in psychiatry, Pinsker’s diagnosis of Judeophobia being a kind of hereditary angst neurosis is controversial. (Pinsker: “Judeophobia is a psychosis. As a psychosis it is hereditary, and as a disease transmitted for over two thousand years it is incurable”). The psychoanalyst Rudolph M. Löwenstein, for example, states: “We don’t want to get into detail about Pinsker’s mistake concerning the direct inheritability of psychoses, it can be attributed to the psychiatric theories of his time; he is also mistaken from a psychiatric point of view when he calls Judeophobia a psychosis. A phobia is not a psychosis”.¹³² While Alexander Mitscherlich does not discuss the question as to whether anti-Semitism is of a phobic nature or not, he does accommodate Pinsker’s diagnosis to an extent when he calls anti-Semitism “an endemic pathologic phenomenon in our culture with epidemic waves of transmission and intensification of the medical condition”¹³³.

Concerning what Pinsker referred to as the hereditary nature of the psychosis he called “Judeophobia”, we should in all likelihood not take him all too literally. Pinsker was certainly not talking about heredity in the genetic sense, but rather that certain characteristics, habits and perceptions are passed down unreflectingly from one generation to the other – in the family, in what’s taught in school, but also through the connotations of words, sagas, myths and whatever else similar to this in tradition.

Pinsker did not know the medical terminology in use today. The clinical description of the illness he had in mind was that of a “collective psychopathy”¹³⁴,

when he spoke of an “anomaly in the souls of the nations”. Therefore, Alex Bein was right when he pointed out that it ultimately doesn’t matter if the fear of ghosts that Pinsker describes is inherited physically in the genes or psychologically planted through the traditions of early childhood. The only things that really count are the results and effects. Bein continues, “Looking at it this way, Pinsker’s diagnosis uncovers more truth than a purely medical expert opinion would perhaps be able to.”¹³⁵

In modern academic literature dealing with the phenomenon of anti-Semitism, there is only rarely mention made of Pinsker. When a historian does speak of him, generally it is as a predecessor of Theodor Herzl and pioneer of political Zionism, but not as an analyst of anti-Semitism. This seems to be unfair, particularly as Pinsker’s considerations have most certainly remained relevant and of interest for today.

Particularly Pinsker’s hypothesis that anti-Semitism is a “hereditary” prejudice rarely finds mention in anti-Semitism research. It has been admitted that anti-Semitism can be treated like an illness; not curable by factual information or rational arguments, but that is all. The name Leon Pinsker, who would be able to contribute valuable insights into the present, is only mentioned in one or two exceptions.

Pinsker’s Jewish national concept

What exactly did Pinsker actually suggest in his *Auto-emancipation!*? Specifically, he demanded that the Jews must first begin to develop self-respect and a consciousness of human dignity. This would be the beginning, the first step necessary to even be able to survive as a people in the future. Demands for civil and political equality would not be sufficient to raise the esteem of the other nations. “Whoever has to be stood up is known to be standing weakly,” Pinsker writes in his pamphlet. Pinsker sharply criticized the emancipatory legislation in Western European countries which seek to emancipate the people, but not the Jews.

According to Pinsker, even if the Jews were to receive all civil rights, their fellow citizens would never forget that they are Jewish. Jews may be equals under the law, or be so in the foreseeable future, but they would not be socially emancipated and recognized as equals. Emancipation, for Pinsker, is always the fruit of a rational way of thinking and enlightened self-interest, but never a spontaneous expression of public opinion. To secure the universally endangered future of the Jewish people, there is only one way out: auto-emancipation and self-help. “Help yourselves”, Pinsker calls on and challenges the Jews, “and God will help you”.¹³⁶

As Pinsker was preparing to publish his pamphlet, he was still a territorialist who was mainly looking for a safe haven for persecuted Jews to go to, but he was certainly not already a Zionist at this point. Similar to Theodor Herzl 15 years later, Pinsker was originally not concerned with the promised return to Zion, i.e. settling Jews in Palestine. In one passage of his pamphlet he states: "The goal of our present efforts should not be the *Holy Land*, but our *own land*."¹³⁷

Pinsker did not completely rule out the possibility that this could be the "old fatherland". If that were to happen, then it would be all the better. According to his vision though, a piece of land somewhere in North America or a pashalik in the Asian part of Turkey recognized by the Ottoman Porte would also be conceivable. The determining factor for Pinsker was simply the question if the land was suitable for settlement or not, "to provide a safe, undisputed, productive asylum"¹³⁸ for the Jews who had to leave their homes.

The sole condition which Pinsker attached to his proposal was that the territory chosen, wherever it should be, must be unified and geographically connected. The National Congress called for in the pamphlet, which was to be made up of Jewish dignitaries from all over the world, would be tasked with making the final selection of territory and taking care of the necessary particular.

Pinsker summarized the contents of his pamphlet in the following sentences:

The Jews are not a living nation; they are strangers everywhere and therefore they are despised. Civil and political emancipation of the Jews is not sufficient to raise them in the estimation of the peoples. The correct, the only solution would be the creation of a Jewish nationality, of a people on their own soil, the auto-emancipation of the Jews, their equal status as a nation among nations by the acquisition of their own homeland. We must not persuade ourselves that humanity and enlightenment alone can cure the malady of our people. The lack of national self-respect and self-confidence, of political initiative and of unity are the enemies of our national renaissance. So that we are not forced to wander from one exile to the other, we must have an extensive, productive refuge, a center that is our own. The present moment is more favorable than any other for this plan. The international Jewish question must have a national solution. Admittedly, our national revival can only proceed slowly. We must take the first step. Our descendants must follow us in a measured tempo, and not rush. The national revival of the Jews must be initiated by a Congress of Jewish dignitaries. No sacrifice is too great to reach the goal of securing the universally endangered future of our people. The financial execution of the undertaking does not present insurmountable difficulties the way things stand.¹³⁹

There has been much speculation as to why Pinsker wrote his pamphlet in German and then published it anonymously. Some insight is provided in his correspondence with Isaak Rülf, in which censorship and police brutality in Russia are given as the actual reasons. In a letter to the Rabbi in Memel Pinsker writes,

“Unfortunately, nothing can happen here [Russia] thanks to a suspicious government afraid of its own shadow, nothing without an energetic and careful intervention from outside”.¹⁴⁰ In another letter he writes: “Unfortunately, the censors have objected to my pamphlet up to now. And as no active initiative can be seized from here anyway, I started with Germany, whose unsuitable soil first has to be weeded and plowed”.¹⁴¹

Pinsker was completely convinced that when the time was ripe and anti-Semitism had grown unbearable for the Jews, then the Jewish national idea would increasingly find supporters in Eastern, but also in Western Europe. Until then, though, there was a lot of hard work ahead, “because there is a great struggle, a struggle for the honor of our noble, but deeply squalid people – with our own sordid brothers as our adversaries”.¹⁴²

As convincingly as Pinsker was able to present his ideas, his brothers in faith were at first not able to place them anywhere. The reviews appearing in newspapers and magazines in Germany were more or less negative. The *Israelit* welcomed the initiative to revive the idea of the Jewish nation, but spoke decisively against modern currents of political character which were not based on a religious foundation: “All of the unhappiness, all of the ridicule, all of the humiliation, all of the fear and persecution are richly compensated by the eternal happiness granted by God’s teachings and God’s commandments. That is why we want to patiently bear and yield to all of the pain that the exile causes, bear it until the moment that the all-bountiful Father calls His children scattered all over the Earth back to the so painfully missed parental home.”¹⁴³

The weekly *Israelitische Wochenschrift* also raised objections against the pamphlet’s contents, yet wished the author success in his efforts to strengthen the Jewish national consciousness, “although we don’t recognize his theories on Jewish nationality”.¹⁴⁴ Ludwig Philippson admitted in the *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums* that there was a consciousness of religious unity amongst Jews, a common heritage, and historical sense of common identity and solidarity. But he called into question the presence of a Jewish national consciousness: “Jews are meant to live within the nations and to amalgamate themselves to them through the fatherland in which they were born, through the language which is their mother tongue...”¹⁴⁵

The *Jüdische Presse* did not publish its own review of Pinsker’s writings and only mentioned *Auto-emancipation* in passing and that after some delay.¹⁴⁶ The comments by Moritz Steinschneider were completely negative, although apparently in his youth he had founded a student organization in Prague which was to promote the idea of a Jewish State in Palestine¹⁴⁷. However, in the regularly appearing *Hebräischen Bibliographie* he went so far as to say that this kind of

propaganda was more dangerous than anti-Semitism and it was therefore high time to protest against it.¹⁴⁸

Ludwig Philippson also felt compelled to criticize. The *AZJ* editor found fault in the fact that the “religious consciousness” was completely missing from the author of the anonymously written pamphlet and, “that not the slightest idea of it was present in his pamphlet” – “The man is sick and suffering from the Russian-nihilistic worldview. This lets him believe in sickness and death, but not in healing and higher goals. He believes that ‘Judeophobia’, a ‘hereditary illness’ will last forever (...) It’s no wonder that the writer speaks of ‘desperation, suicide’ and similar things. That is also an illness that can be hereditarily reproduced for a while, but then must yield to the better nature of humanity”.¹⁴⁹

Pinsker’s *Auto-emancipation!* received a much more positive response in Russia than in Germany. The likely reason for this would be that the process of assimilation had not progressed as far and the feeling of a national common identity was still unbroken amongst the Jews living there. The ideas did not cause anyone to become nervous or even hysterical in Russia. Quite the opposite was true. The magazine *Rassvet* published a Russian translation of the text already a few weeks after the pamphlet appeared in Berlin.¹⁵⁰ It appeared as a serial and received a lot of attention from the magazine’s readers, which could be seen in numerous favorable responses and commentaries.

The German language version of *Auto-emancipation!* was followed by translations into Yiddish¹⁵¹ and a host of other languages.¹⁵² Reviews appeared that were mostly critical, yet sympathetic. Distinguished writers like Yehuda Levanda, Judah Leib Levin and Judah Löb Gordon, who as a reaction to the pogroms had joined the Hovevei Zion movement, expressed their agreement and celebrated Pinsker and his writings in numerous letters, articles and poems.¹⁵³

The writer Mosche Leib Lilienblum became a close ally of Pinsker. He is the one who is supposed to have convinced Pinsker that Palestine would be the only option for the national revival of the Jewish people. Lilienblum, together with the ophthalmologist Emmanuel Mandelstamm (1839–1912) and the mathematician Hermann Schapira (1840–1989), who taught in Heidelberg, were the ones who convinced Pinsker to become the head of the Palestinophiles and Friends of Zion in Russia.

The pamphlet *Auto-emancipation!* turned Pinsker into a famous man in Russia and in its neighboring countries practically overnight. In modern Jewish history, his “Appeal to his people” represents an important step at the beginning of the modern Jewish national movement. The historian Simon Dubnow called it a “catechism for the love of Palestine”.¹⁵⁴ There can be no doubt today that his “appeal” numbers among the most important documents concerning the “Jewish question” written in the nineteenth century.

Practical steps and the colonization of Palestine

The year 1883 was shaped by a series of organizational steps.¹⁵⁵ Leon Pinsker, who had meanwhile been appointed speaker of the Hovevei Zion association in Odessa, contacted Hovevei leaders in other towns within and outside of Russia. On October 2, 1883, a branch of the Hovevei Zion movement was founded in Odessa under the name of "Serubabel". Leon Pinsker was appointed its president and Moses Lilienblum its secretary. In Warsaw in turn a branch of the Odessa Committee was established under the leadership of Saul Pinchas Rabinowitz and Israel Jasnowsky which was to combine the activities of the Hovevei Zion organizations throughout Poland of which 29 were said to exist in mid-1884.¹⁵⁶

Together with Saul P. (Sefer) Rabinowitz and Samuel Mohilever, Leon Pinsker was active in pushing ahead with the building up of the organization. Pinsker thought that the approaching celebration of the 100th anniversary of Moses Montefiore's birth was an appropriate occasion to call for a conference of all Hovevei Zion associations from all the different countries with the goal of founding an action committee to create a colonization center, and this not just anywhere in the world, but "if possible" in Palestine, in Eretz Israel, the ancestral soil.

The conference, which was held November 6–11, 1884 in Katowice,¹⁵⁷ was attended by delegates from Hovevei Zion associations from different areas of Russia, Rumania, Germany, England and France. Pinsker, who held the office of president, held a highly regarded opening speech in which he pointed out that Jews had been excluded from agricultural work and had only worked in a few professions in the cities, concentrating mainly in trade. In this way, they had landed in an extremely precarious situation.

A change for the better, continued Pinsker, would only come about when the foundation for the creation of a normal economic life had been established, by a shift in working alternatives, i.e. by colonization activities in Palestine. Pinsker called out to the delegates at the conference, "Let us today take up the plow and spade instead of the measuring tape and scales and let us become once more what we had been before we fell into the discredit of other nations".¹⁵⁸

The return of the Jews to the soil could only take place in Palestine and not in the other countries of residence in the Diaspora. "Let us return," Pinsker declared to the conference participants, "to our old mother, our land, which we have awaited with great desire". To emerge from the discredit of other nations, it is necessary to push forward with the colonization of the country. In order to achieve this, the Hovevei Zion associations should unite in the "Montefiore association to promote farming among the Jews especially the Jewish colonies in Palestine" (Hebr.: Maskareth Moshe be-Eretz ha-Kodesh). In the German version of the conference protocol all comments concerning the national renaissance were

conspicuously absent. This led to fierce arguments, as it was insinuated that the Jewish national inclination of the conference was being deliberately covered up. In particular, Saul Pinchas Rabinowitz, one of the conference organizers, complained to Pinsker after he had seen the German version of the protocol that the words “nationality” and “nation” were missing and it was devoid of all national inclinations.

Things would be different three years hence. At a conference in Druskininkai, which took place June 28–30, 1887, the Jewish national ideal was openly professed and the name “Maskareth Moshe” which had been chosen in Katowice was replaced with the more apt “Hovevei Zion”. Leon Pinsker and Moses Leib Lilienblum were the leaders of this conference, as well, and set the tone. They propagated not only a return to an understanding of Judaism as a nationality, but also the founding of agricultural colonies in Palestine.

This time Pinsker and Lilienblum received more support than they had three years earlier at the conference in Katowice. They were able to enjoy the success of now having numerous Rabbis join their ranks. Samuel Mohilever and Mordechai Eliasberg, for example, who were present in Druskininkai, and let their sympathy for the ideas of Hovevei Zion be known. Younger protagonists who had attended the congress also spoke out, such as Menachem Ussischkin and Meir Dizengoff, both of whom of course were to play an important role in the later development of Zionism.

At first, Berlin was considered for the headquarters of the movement,¹⁵⁹ but the decision was ultimately made for Odessa, because the most local groups of the Hibbat Zion and Hovevei Zion movement were located in Russia. There is documented proof of circa 70 organizations in Russia which were devoted to the colonization of Palestine in 1885.¹⁶⁰ Another factor in favor of Odessa was the fact that at the beginning of the 1880s, the settlement activities in Palestine did not have their origins in Germany, but rather mainly originated in Russia and Romania.

The first settlers, who went to Eretz Israel as so-called working pioneers (Chaluzim), were students from the University of Kharkov. Using the first letters of the words in their biblical motto “Beth Ja’akov lechu venelkha” (Isaiah, 2:5, “Come, house of Jacob, let us walk in the light”) they called themselves Biluim. With the help and support of Hovevei Zion they settled in Palestine and there, under the most difficult conditions, they founded the first colony Rishon le-Zion (the first in Zion) on June 30, 1882, one of the first agricultural settlements. Today this originally agricultural settlement has become, after Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Haifa, the fourth-largest city in Israel.

Settlement efforts were taking place in other areas of Palestine, as well. Assisted by a committee in Jassy under the leadership of Karpel Lippe and Samuel Pineles as well as the support from the English writer Laurence Oliphant, Rumanian

Jews founded the colonies Rosh Pinah near Safed and Samarin (later Sichron Jacob). Other activists, also from Russia, settled in Petach Tikvah (Hebrew for Gate of Hope), on territory which had first been attempted to settle already in the late 1870s.

From April 18–25, 1890, delegates from 26 Russian towns gathered for an official foundation assembly which established the “Society for the support of Jewish agricultural workers and craftsmen in Palestine and Syria” (the Odessa Committee). However, as it was unclear what should happen next, and how the colonies and colonization activities should progress further, the Committee accepted the proposal made by Ascher Ginsberg to make a trip to Palestine to investigate the conditions there and to report his findings later to the Committee.

His proposal was accepted, even though it was known that Ginsberg was not a supporter of the colonization activities, but was skeptical or even dismissive of their goals and held a different viewpoint on the matter. Nonetheless, it was hoped that Ginsberg’s trip to Palestine would produce a sober account of the situation as he was a neutral observer.

Ginsberg had revealed what he really thought about the colonization of Palestine in an 1890 article “Lo se haderech!” [This is not the way!]. The article, which Ginsberg wrote on the trip back from Jaffa to Odessa and published in *Hameliz* under the pseudonym of Achad Haam (“one from the people”), expressed criticism of the colonization activities of the Hovevei Zion in Palestine and instead encouraged a spiritual-cultural renaissance of Judaism. “Let us then return to that path,” Asher Ginsberg concluded his appeal to his fellow Jews, because “Lo se ha derech! This is not the way!”.¹⁶¹

Death and posthumous reputation

When Leon Pinsker died unexpectedly on December 21, 1891, his passing was universally mourned. To be sure, there had only been a few people who had read his *Auto-emancipation!* and let themselves be influenced by it. But in a few years, these few people were to form the core of the Zionist movement. Several contemporaries who had been active with him in the Hovevei Zion movement in the 1880s were present as Pinsker was buried on December 24, 1891. “The reborn Israel,” asserted one eulogist “will grant you a place in its pantheon”.¹⁶²

Numerous obituaries appeared in newspapers and magazines, for example in *Selbst-Emancipation*, which was published by Nathan Birnbaum in Vienna¹⁶³. The paper, which was named after Pinsker’s pamphlet *Auto-emancipation!*, particularly honored the importance of Pinsker’s pamphlet for the spread of the Zionist idea in Western Europe. It was also pointed out that Pinsker had been the one to

have set the wheels of a “national metamorphosis” in motion with his pamphlet. The obituary ended with the words: “Dr. Pinsker did not experience this transformation (...) He worked for future generations, glory to his memory”.¹⁶⁴

Nathan Birnbaum¹⁶⁵, who had been one of Pinsker’s most ardent supporters already during Pinsker’s lifetime, went one step further in his articles, which he published in *Selbst-Emancipation* and in the monthly journal *Serubabel*¹⁶⁶, as he explained that the attempts at acculturation and assimilation were the real causes of anti-Semitism. For example, he wrote in an editorial, “Anti-Semitism has become no less of a horrid chapter in the history of the universe through its added elements of intolerance and sense of superiority, but – and we are not afraid to say this – in light of the assimilation mania it is justified: the Jewish people, as it has represented itself up to today, has deserved anti-Semitism.”¹⁶⁷

Birnbaum, who takes the honor of having been the one to coin the term “Zionism”, had, like Pinsker, strictly rejected assimilation. The trend to adapting oneself ever more, he ranted, was “mass suicide”¹⁶⁸, a “crime”¹⁶⁹, that must be fought against. If the trust and respect of other nations is to be won, then the only thing that will help is a return to a national Judaism, a Judaism that does not, it is true, unite all, but at least most components of a national life such as religion, the Hebrew language and a common historical consciousness.

Birnbaum’s first writing appeared in 1884 under the title *Die Assimilations-sucht* [The assimilation mania]. In it, Birnbaum referenced Pinsker’s *Auto-emancipation!* and Isaak Rülf’s *Aruchas Bas-ammi*, which will be discussed below: “The re-establishment of a national center is the only hope of the Jewish people, it is the only absolute rescue, because it would mean no less than an asylum for those tired of exile and support in the moral and material sense for those remaining in exile. With the regaining of a homeland, the current hatred of Jews in its specific form would disappear from the Earth, all Jewry would be able to breath easy after long and anxious millennia of a horrible nightmare”.¹⁷⁰

Returning to the obituaries published after Leon Pinsker’s death we see that for Ascher Ginsberg (Achad Haam), Pinsker’s passing provided him with the occasion to compose an “open letter” to his “brothers in spirit”. In the letter, which was a kind of obituary and was published in *Ha Pardes* (1892–1896), an almanac published in Odessa by the writer and literary critic Joshua Chaim Rawnitzki, Ginsberg honored “Dr. Pinsker and his pamphlet”. He continued, “Although all ‘friends of Zion’ feel that Pinsker’s death represents a great loss for them, not all of them are able to comprehend the true dimension of this loss, the true relationship between the deceased and ‘love of Zion’”.¹⁷¹

Ascher Ginsberg, who had used the term “love of Zion” (*Hibbat Zion*) in his letter to mean the movement of the same name, had adopted the term, albeit in a slightly different from, from the Hebrew language writer Abraham Mapu (1808–

1867). It is unclear to what extent he was thinking of Mapu at that moment. What is undisputed is that Mapu not only first came out in support for the secularization and modernization of Eastern European Jewry in his novel *Ahavat Zion* (Love of Zion) which first appeared in 1853 and later in numerous editions and in many different languages, but also made an important contribution to the birth of the “new” idea of Zionism in Eastern Europe.

The friends of Zion were certainly familiar with the novel, which was widely read at the time in the towns in the Pale and up to today is part of the required reading in secondary schools in the State of Israel. Their bleak existence in the Russian governed Pale as well as the former glory and greatness of Jewish life on its “own soil” was presented before their eyes. Young readers, it was said, eagerly devoured the book in the way “The sorrows of young Werther” had been in German speaking countries earlier.¹⁷²

In his “open letter” Ginsberg explores the question as to why contemporaries thought so highly of Abraham Mapu and his novel, yet did not accord Pinsker after his death the significance that he would have actually deserved. According to Ginsberg, the reason for this, while not mentioning Mapu by name, is that most Zionist supporters had only been familiar with Pinsker in his lifetime as a “man of action”. Someone who stood at the top of the movement to organize the donation drives, set up the collection boxes and organize the support. He had not been recognized as a visionary initially.

It is remarkable that the Jewish world, continued Ginsberg, did not take note of the fact that Pinsker was more than an organizer who helped form the Hovevei Zion movement. No one had recognized that he was a “Jewish national” on the deepest principle, a true “friend of his people”. It is true that at first he did not have any great ties to Palestine, but then he became committed to the ancestral homeland after he had become more familiar with the viewpoints of the Zionist supporters and their activities.

The crucial thing for Ascher Ginsberg in his “open letter” was to reinforce Pinsker’s hypothesis that it wouldn’t be “emancipation” but “auto-emancipation”, i.e. the act of self-determination, which would save the Jews. The deciding factor, wrote Ginsberg, using formulations from Pinsker, was the “national resolve”, the will to help one’s self. The “recognition of this necessity”, continued Ginsberg, is the necessary precondition to combat “national indifferentism, which has been sapping our marrow and gnawing our bones for many generations”.¹⁷³

What Ginsberg was really after in his obituary was not so much the affirmation of Pinsker’s assessment of anti-Semitism being something like a “hereditary psychosis” which can be combated just to a limited extent. Rather, he was interested in the effects of anti-Semitism on the Jewish self-image, in the condition of the Jewish people in general. Ginsberg spoke of an “internal decay”, of “our

psychosis” against which all measure taken thus far had proven to be in vain. “What use would it be to us,” Ginsberg asks, “if we find a suitable land, as long as we are not suitable”?

As he already specified in detail in his essay “Lo se ha derech”! [This is not the way!], Ginsberg’s plea came down to not so much concentrating on the search for suitable territory to settle Jews on, but to first be thinking about a “spiritual national center”. The space being sought wouldn’t just be an asylum for Jewry, but a place for Judaism in itself, for “our national spirit”. Therefore, what it came down to in the first place would be to bring about a “spiritual convergence” those separated up till now by geography and mentality, and to effect a “renewed strengthening in the solidarity and common identity”¹⁷⁴ among all Jews.

In the portrait of Pinsker which appeared seven years after his death in the newspaper *Die Welt*, which has already been quoted, it was pointed out that Pinsker, for whatever reason, had failed to draw the “final consequence” from his reflections. Although he had felt the “Jewish misery” with every fiber of his being, he had, as it ruefully states, not been able to bring himself to make the demand for the founding of an own most state, or the creation of a “homeland secured under public law”¹⁷⁵. The times, the author of the memorial wrote, were obviously not yet ripe for this during Pinsker’s lifetime.

Isaak Rülf: Persecution and relief measures

Early on, Rabbi Isaak Rülf of Memel had already revealed himself to be a true follower, and even virtually a vassal of Leon Pinsker. The exchange of letters that the two carried out with each other¹⁷⁶, began immediately upon the publication of Pinsker's *Auto-emancipation!* and started with congratulations from Rülf to Pinsker on his pamphlet. Pinsker, pleased with the attention Rülf paid him, answered: "I know you, and it was to my most pleasurable gratification that with your authoritative presence a man has been won for my ideas who possesses the noble characteristic of taking on our holy mission and fighting for it".¹⁷⁷

However, of the letters which Pinsker and Rülf wrote to each other, only those of the former have survived. Rülf's letters, with a very few exceptions, have all been lost. The friendly relations which developed between the two can still be roughly reconstructed based on these letters. They begin formally, at first with the salutation of "Highly esteemed Herr Doctor", but become increasingly familiar. The two ultimately end up addressing each other with "Dearest friend" or "Beloved friend".

Isaak Rülf, born in 1831, came from a long-established Sephardic family, whose ancestors had wound up in Germany after the expulsion from Spain. They settled down in the village of Rauisch-Holzhausen near the town of Marburg. When, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Jews were forced to take on German names, the family decided on the name "Rülf". According to legend, a stream called Rülfbach which flowed through the village the family lived in served as inspiration.¹⁷⁸

After successfully completing school and working as an assistant instructor with his Talmud instructor, Isaak Rülf enrolled at the University of Marburg in 1854. In 1857, he passed his Rabbinate exam and then worked as a Rabbi in Mecklenburg-Schwerin. In 1865, the same year he presented his dissertation on the topic "Preconceptions and fundamental concepts for a new metaphysics" at the University of Rostock, he was appointed Rabbi in Memel. Along with his work as a writer and as the editor-in-chief of the daily newspaper *Memeler Dampfboot* (1872–1898), Rülf held this office for 33 years.

The name Rülf first became known to a wider public beyond Memel when he became involved in a case of attempted conversion. The Jankel Widutzky affair, named after the boy involved, did not have the dimensions of the case of Edgardo Mortara¹⁷⁹, who had been forcibly baptized against his parents' will in Bologna a few years earlier and then kidnapped by Papal officials and raised Catholic. However, this case also caused quite a stir.



Figure 3: Isaak Rülf.

The Jankel Widutzky affair was not one of the usual forced baptisms, but something like an attempted conversion. An English clergyman, obsessed by the idea of converting Jews to Christianity, had wanted to baptize the boy Jankel in Memel, which Rülf was able to prevent with a public intervention.¹⁸⁰ The consequence was that Jankel Widutzky remained Jewish and apparently later even was able to go to Rabbinical school.

Aid to destitute Jews in Russia

In January 1868, Isaak Rülf published a highly regarded “Proclamation”¹⁸¹, in which he made an appeal for aid specifically targeted at Lithuanian (Russian) and Polish Jews on the other side of the border. Rülf wrote about the “indescribable poverty” among these Jews. It was mostly due to the effects of the suppression of the Polish Uprising in 1863¹⁸² and the structural changes in the economy which led to many Jewish traders and craftsmen losing their economic foundation. Crop

failures and the attending famines and disease such as typhus and cholera had continually worsened the situation of the Jews in the border region.

One main reason for the increase in poverty Rülf saw in the destruction of the large estates, which took place in the course of the suppression the Polish Uprising. According to Rülf, this change could indeed be advantageous for the Jewish population in the countryside in the long term; however, in the short term it only exacerbated their problems. Members of the nobility and large estate owners, with whom some of the Jews in this region had enjoyed close economic cooperation, were dispossessed, hauled off to Siberia or banished into exile.

Rülf went on to mention that Jews on the other side of the border, who had until that point been living from inland trade and partially from smuggling,¹⁸³ had now lost their means of support due to the rail traffic that had been established in the meantime, the reduction of import duties and the stronger border patrols.¹⁸⁴ They are therefore dependent on outside help. “Almost everyone”, Rülf wrote, “is [by trade] an agent, wagoner and secondhand dealer, a kosher tailor and furrier, a slow cook, butcher, teacher, mohel, scholar, prayer leader, server”. Almost everyone was directly affected by the changes and no longer in a position to feed their family from their earnings.

In his “Proclamation” members of the “German-Israelite community” in Memel were called upon to support their brothers who had fallen on hard times by donating clothes, money and food, which they also did through the “Association to relieve the state of emergency of the Israelites on the neighboring border to Memel”. Rülf, who belonged to the association and was its secretary and speaker, repeatedly called attention to the difficult situation of the Jews beyond the border, especially in the border towns, where, from his point of view they were forced to lead wretched lives.

The money that Rülf and his aid organization raised through their organized donation campaigns was distributed in numerous towns and villages along the border in the Pale in Russia.¹⁸⁵ The “Gifts index” regularly appearing in the *Allgemeinen Zeitung des Judentums* newspaper show that the donations not only came from Memel, but from all over Germany. The sums collected varied greatly in size. Looking over the lists shows that the amounts donated ranged between 5 and 1,000 talers.

The names of numerous well-known personages could be found on the lists of donors; for example, that of Rabbi Abraham Geiger or of the editor Markus Lehmann. The names of businessmen and bankers also appear, like the Hirschs in Halberstadt¹⁸⁶, the Rothschilds in Paris and the Mendelssohns in Berlin. Obviously, they all felt it their duty to help the suffering Jews in Russia within the range of their possibilities.¹⁸⁷

The relief organization's account statements printed in the *AZJ* are revealing for another reason, as well. On the one hand, they show that Rülf and his colleagues were not only interested in alleviating the material suffering of the Russian-Jewish population in the Pale border region, but also that they wanted to name the structural causes which underlay this poverty. Furthermore, Rülf, as the speaker of the organization, was thinking of possible alternatives.

Instead of complaining and lamenting, Rülf thought it would make more sense to start thinking about how it would be possible to relieve the poverty of the Jews in the border region.¹⁸⁸ From his point of view, several different solutions presented themselves: firstly the “promotion of agricultural work”, secondly the “promotion of emigration” among Jews, either to America, or to Russia’s interior. The specifics of what should be done were still to be discussed and decided on.

In his evaluation of the general conditions, Rülf by and large agreed with Ludwig Philippson, the publisher of the *AZJ*. He not only printed reports that Rülf had placed in his newspaper, but also published in the fall of 1869 a “Memorandum” with suggestions of what needed to be done from his point of view.¹⁸⁹ “So where to?”, that is the question that Rülf was asking together with Philippson and others. “To the colonies!”, but “What are the colonies?”. For Rülf the places suitable for the settlement of Jews were to be found in the interior of Russia, in the areas on the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov. But could that be the solution to the problem? The question will still remain unanswered here.

Another question which Rülf was also becoming more and more interested in was that of the inner healing in the Jewish community. To the readers of his account statements he posed the question what would actually need to happen when a healthy, strong and normal organism falls sick. How can, he posed his question, such an organism get healthy again?

One answer, which Rülf already provided himself, was: “The cure is the prius”. By which he wanted to say that the disease that has befallen the organism, meaning the “national body”, is already the beginning of the cure. If the “national body” is still strong enough to endure the healing process, “then it will become healthy, where it isn’t, then it will succumb”.

Turning to the “disease of poverty”, Rülf makes a plea for a decisive strengthening in the self-healing powers. The “national body” must be put into a position where it is able to successfully fight against the morbid damages the pressure of the conditions produce. If this were to succeed, Rülf was convinced, the “national body” would be cured in the foreseeable future.¹⁹⁰

The journey to Kovno

At the end of May, 1869, “Dr. Huelf” (Dr. Help), as Isaak Rülf was lovingly called in later years playing on his activism, made a journey to Kovno (Kaunas), which was not far from Memel. Here he wanted to see for himself on-site the situation of the Litvaks in the town and those in the Pale.

He also wanted to attend a meeting of the aid committee to assist the Jews in need which had been formed there.

In his report, which he completed immediately upon his return, Rülf reveals how he is absolutely shocked by what he had seen in the city. “Brothers, what I witnessed there, I will never forget as long as I live. I can more or less describe it to you, but only with this bleak, black liquid and not with the tears..., which now still coat the page as I am writing”.¹⁹¹

The town, in which almost half of the population was Jewish¹⁹², made a devastating impression on him, despite the grand buildings he saw in the streets. Right at the beginning of his report as he comes to speak of a visit to a soup kitchen in town, he writes: “I saw 520 children who were naked, wretched, squalid, who were no longer similar to people, who with wild greed were grabbing for a plate of soup and a piece of bread, which they received here every afternoon, and which perhaps had to satisfy them until the next day”.¹⁹³

During his stay in Kovno, Rülf was requested to an audience by the Governor to discuss with him what could be done to alleviate the worst injustices. They were both in agreement that the only possible way out was most likely the resettlement of the Jewish population living in the border region to the interior of Russia, as emigration to other European countries or America was fraught with difficulties. One was that this was not permitted according to Russian state law, and another was that it would not be able to raise the means necessary for this in the foreseeable future.

In the *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*, Rülf described additional barriers facing Jews who wanted to settle in the interior of Russia.¹⁹⁴ Except for a privileged few who had permission to travel wherever they pleased, hardly anyone possessed the necessary identification papers to be able to leave the Pale. Generally speaking, it was only possible to receive a passport after paying a bribe which most people couldn't afford. This is why it came to pass that those who would have liked to have moved away had to stay where they were at the moment. Still, plans were developed as to how a resettlement to the interior of Russia could take place on a grand scale.

As problematic conditions were for the Jews in Kovno and other towns in the Pale border region, Rülf was nonetheless impressed by the diverse manifestations of Jewish life that he got to know during his stay in the area. “With only a

very few exceptions”, he remarked in his report, “every shop owner is a Jew, every craftsman is a Jew, every cabdriver, and there is an unlimited amount of these, a Jew, every transporter and cart pusher a Jew.”¹⁹⁵

Rülf was amazed by the selection of what was possible to buy in the shops despite the universally present poverty. It was possible, he wrote, not only to buy clothes and food, but also brandy and tobacco in any quality. He was particularly taken by the numerous flour and bread shops. The Jewish baker, he exclaimed, has achieved such virtuosity in the art of baking that no other baker in the world could compete with. “I have never,” admitted Rülf, “seen or eaten better looking or better tasting bread, white and black bread, as in Kovno”.¹⁹⁶

During his stay in Kovno, Rülf not only preached a sermon in the synagogue, but on May 29th also took part in a meeting of the Kovno Committee, which had been founded, similar to the Committees in Memel, Königsberg and Lyck, to introduce relevant measures to combat the injustices. “Subject to government approval”, it was decided on in the meeting to, “establish a society branching over a great part of Russia, for the purpose of the emigration of the Israelites to the interior of Russia first, and then to strive for the purchase of land and property for the agricultural workers; finally the education of the youth by founding schools of every kind – which should be pursued in all earnest”.¹⁹⁷

It was soon clear to Rülf that the resettlement of the west Russian Jews must begin as soon as possible. He was skeptical of plans to organize the emigration of the Jews to America. He did not think that the government would grant its permission for this and the necessary funds were also not available. In sum, such measures were “in every direction the same as nothing”.¹⁹⁸ Funds that it might be possible to raise were better put to use in the resettlement of Jewish families to the interior of Russia.

One of the essential preconditions necessary to be able to make an improvement in the general condition of the Jewish population in the Pale was, in Rülf’s view, the granting of freedom of movement and freedom of trade by the Russian government. For Rülf, both of these needed to apply to the Jewish population to the same degree that they applied to every other Russian subject. Tradespeople of the first guild and those who had completed government schooling had a guaranteed claim to these rights, but not the small craftsmen who made up the largest, poorest and most destitute part of the Russian-Jewish population.

Two decades later, Rülf asserted with regret that the Kovno resolutions made at the time had not been carried out. The main thing had been missing, he recalled looking back, “without which nothing in Russia and with which at that time everything, truly everything could have been accomplished – there was not enough money”. If at that time, Rülf continued, a man like Baron Hirsch had been alive and had made the necessary funds available, “then extraordinary progress

could have been made at that time in the areas of settlement, colonization and youth education.”¹⁹⁹

On his return trip to Memel, Rülf set out on a steamboat which led him past the towns located on the shores of the Memel river, where, he remarked, you could see nothing but dilapidated houses, nothing but tattered figures who begged from the passengers at the landing places. Georgenburg (Jurbarkas) for example, once a wealthy town, made an extremely depressing impression on Rülf. The wealthy had left the town, reported Rülf. The only ones who remained behind were the poor, who didn't have the financial means to move away.

Rülf breathed a sigh of relief as he crossed the border to Prussia on his trip back. When he arrived at Schmallenbergken (Smalininkai), the place where at that time the borders between Prussia, Russia and Poland met, he was filled with the feeling of once again stepping on home pastures. In contrast to the towns on the Russian side of the border, everything, he remarked, was friendly and clean. The people's faces were not drawn by poverty and hunger, but were rather characterized by self-confidence and pride. The Jews in Schmallenbergken still had problems similar to those in nearby Georgenburg, but their situation was a completely different one and could not be compared to that of the Jews in the Lithuanian-Russian towns in the border region.

The Jews living in Prussia were Prussian subjects and *citizens*. Rülf was correct here in his assessment that this was the most fundamental difference to the situation of the Russian Jews. They were no longer merely tolerated, no longer left on their own, but could rely on the fact that the authorities were prepared to bring everything “back on track”. The report ends with a eulogy of the conditions in Prussia: “Blessed be you my Prussia, blessed be your people, blessed be your civil servants, blessed be your government, that is the verily loyal wish with which I want to end my journey to Russia”.²⁰⁰

“Three days in Jewish Russia”

Thirteen years after his short trip to Kovno, at the end of July 1882, Rülf once again crossed the border into former Lithuania, which after the Third Partition of Poland in 1795, had come under Russian rule, to gather information about the situation of the Jews. This had worsened dramatically since Alexander III ascended the throne. Panslavism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism increasingly defined the general climate. Nikolai Pavlovich Ignatieff, the new Minister of the Interior, a “heartless barbarian in diplomatic dress”²⁰¹, as Rülf called him, directed his policies according to the principle, “Russia for the Russians”, and did everything to prevent “too much foreign influence” in the country.

This time Rülf visited Wilna (Vilnius) and Minsk, to see for himself the abuses which dominated the conditions there. The specific reasons for his trip were the "May laws" which restricted the lives of the Jews²⁰² as well as news of pogroms, which was now circulating in Western Europe.²⁰³ There was frustration in Berlin, Paris and London that the nationalistic-anti-Semitic underground movement Narodnaya Volya (People's Will) was not accused of the assassination of Alexander II, but, despite knowing better, the Jews were.

The pogroms began in Elizavetgrad (Yelisavetgrad, Jelissawetgrad).²⁰⁴ They then spread quickly to numerous other towns and villages and reached Odessa and Kiev shortly thereafter. All told, about 200 Jewish communities were subject to persecution in the spring and summer of 1881. During these pogroms, mainly in Southern Russia, the mob plundered Jewish homes and businesses and there were numerous rapes and murders, as well. It was said that 792 Jews were murdered just in Kiev alone.

It was generally assumed that the rage of the mob had been systematically stoked by government authorities. However, to what extent this may or may not have been in this or that case could not be proven. What is certain is that the authorities responsible for keeping the peace stood by passively and gave free rein to what was happening. Unchecked, the rioters were able to release their destructive frenzy in every direction, burn down synagogues and rob Jewish businesses and homes. The Austrian ambassador in St. Petersburg, Gustav Kálnoky, reported to Vienna about a "sinister fermentation" in the populace and that the Russian government did not step in against the mob, but showed itself to be "indecisive and weak".²⁰⁵

There can be no doubt that the riotous attacks against the Russian Jews were once again fueled by age-old prejudices. The pogroms were justified as being an eruption of "public anger" due to "exploitation by the Jews". Minister of the Interior Ignatief had composed a memorandum for the Tsar, in which he claimed:

"...the main reason for this movement [by this he means the pogroms] is to be sought in the economic situation. Over the last twenty years, the Jews have taken over trade and industry, land through purchase or lease, and thanks to their unity they were successful in being able to exploit the main population, namely the poor, which in turn provoked them to a surge of protest which was so disquietingly expressed in violence".²⁰⁶

One side-effect of the pogroms which originally received little to no attention were the conflagrations which laid waste to entire towns. A commission which the Zionist Relief Fund in London appointed years later documented which areas were affected and how many buildings had been destroyed in the fires.²⁰⁷ Just in Kovno alone almost 200 houses and just as many businesses had been set on fire. In Minsk, there were 1,600 buildings which went up in flames including 21 places

of worship as well as two Jewish schools. The pogroms and pillaging had been even worse in the South of the Tsar's empire, including in towns like Odessa.

Lithuanian Wilna had been largely spared the pogroms and fires, which Rülf attributed to various advantageous circumstances. For example, the Governor General who at that time resided in Wilna, a certain Count Eduard Ivanovich von Totleben (1818–1884), held a protecting hand over the Jews. Totleben, originally from Courland, was, according to Rülf's account, a decent and brave man who was apparently not prepared to let himself be the government's henchman. He is said to have declared, "They will make as many laws in Petersburg as they want, I won't be able to stop them; only every single riot [in his governorate] I will defeat with unrelenting severity".²⁰⁸

On his travels to "Jewish Russia", Rülf experienced in Wilna a city where there were prejudices against the Jewish population to be sure, but pogroms and arson remained absent. Just like 13 years previously, when he travelled to Kovno, Rülf marveled at the vibrant Jewish life. He received the impression that the town-scape of Wilna had been essentially formed by Jews. And he was astounded to note that the situation of the Jews here was obviously fundamentally different from that of the Jews in other Eastern European towns.

Nevertheless, Rülf was able to determine differences in mentality to the Western European Judaism of the time. Jews in Western Europe saw themselves mainly as Germans, Frenchmen or Englishmen – completely different to the Russian Jews who still defined themselves in the first place as Jews. Rülf considered this also as proof that the Jews didn't really mean much to the Russians. A process of social integration, insofar as such a thing even existed, was not taking place in the countryside, but mainly in the urban areas.

After having spent the night in the "Europäischer Hof" hotel in the "German Street" in Wilna, Rülf set out to explore the Jewish areas of the city. He was fascinated by the Wilna "Schulhof" [schoolyard], in which 30 houses of worship were located. "The Schulhof in Wilna," it's written in the travelogue he finished writing upon his return, is one of the "liveliest places in the world." Hundreds of families were living there and it was "also the central point for the pursuit of the Torah (teaching) and Avodah (worship) for the whole town".²⁰⁹

Rülf was also impressed by the numerous Jewish charity institutions located all over the city. He listed an orphanage, a shelter, a school for the poor, as well as the Hekdesh and the hospital. Mention is also made of numerous Jewish organizations, such as the "Association for shop assistants" or the "Association to support young mothers in need" and institutions whose purpose according to Jewish tradition is to foster Tzedakah or charity.

On his walks through Wilna which led him from prayer room to prayer room, Rülf bumped into a demonstration from supporters of social revolutionary ideas

who called themselves Nihilists (Nihilist Revolution Committee) which is of interest insofar as it shows who could join forces with whom in resistance against government policy. The Committee had nailed a poster to the doors to the synagogue which said in Russian, “Hebrews! They are trying to make you believe that we, the Nihilists, stirred up the mob against you. Don’t believe it; we are not your enemies. Government agents were responsible, to divert the wrath of the angry people away from the government and abandon you to the people’s rage. Now you know where to look for your enemies”.²¹⁰

Taking a back seat to descriptions of Jewish life in Wilna were political observations from Rülf. Only every now and again, when he cites what third parties have said, does Rülf mention the pogroms and arson attacks in the Pale in his travelogue. He does remark upon the clearly felt anti-Semitism encountered there and its effects, but does not relate them to the situation of the Jews in Wilna, but rather mostly to himself and the situation of the Jews in Germany. “No”, wrote Rülf, “according to our ancestry we’re not Germans, meaning from the Germanic tribe, but we’re German citizens, a thousand times better than the entire anti-Semite clique”.²¹¹

After spending two days in Wilna, Rülf took the train to travel the 170 kilometers to Minsk. Today the capital of Belarus, at that time it had a population of roughly 50,000 and was located in the Pale. According to Rülf’s accounting, at the beginning of the 1880s, two-thirds of the population of Minsk was Jewish. This still did not provide them with sufficient protection against attacks from the local non-Jews. It remained subject to debate here as well who organized or inspired hostilities against the Jewish population.

For instance, one local Rülf approached during his walk through the streets of the city did not think that the government in Petersburg was responsible for the persecution of the Jews and all of the arson attacks, but surprisingly thought that the anti-Semites in Germany were. Rülf’s street acquaintance did not expressly mention anyone’s name, but it is quite clear to whom he was referring with his remarks – namely the historian Heinrich von Treitschke from Berlin.

According to the local Rülf had spoken to, Treitschke had not only fueled anti-Semitism in the German population with his anti-Semitic slogans (“The Jews are our misfortune”) but also among the Russians. Virulent anti-Semitism as a “hit” export from Germany? Rülf appears to have sympathized with this interpretation, as it corresponded to his belief, repeatedly mentioned in his report, that the Russians by nature were good-natured, tolerant people and this was already reason enough as to why they could not be hostile toward Jews.

It may be that Rülf’s report and his assessment were correct. On the other hand, looking back it seems truly absurd to blame the pogrom-willingness in the Russian population only on the Jew-baiting by German anti-Semites. Various

studies investigating the pogroms in the 1880s clearly prove that in Russia, too, the “impossible” was possible against all logic and that anti-Jewish prejudice was in no way just a German phenomenon, but was deeply rooted in the consciousnesses and worldviews of the Russian population of the time.²¹²

As in Wilna, in Rülf’s daylong visit to Minsk he was trying to get a realistic picture of “Jewish” Minsk and of the situation of the Jews in the city. The first impression he gathered was that, in contrast to Wilna, the “Jewish-religious moment” played a comparatively secondary role. The Jews in Minsk were in his view cut from a more secular cloth.

A non-Jewish passerby, a Polish waiter, with whom Rülf began a conversation during his walk through town, concisely summarized what he thought of the town and its inhabitants. Speaking a smattering of broken German, he attempted to explain the “signature of the city” in the following words “Minsk no German, no Russ’, no Polish, only Jewish”.²¹³

Rülf was particularly concerned for those Jews in town who had lost their homes and were being quartered in barracks. Minsk, this was his impression at least, would easily overcome the “enormous conflagration”; however, he avoided accusing anyone specific of having set the fires. What did outrage him while he was writing his travelogue was the fact that the Jewish population in the Pale hardly received any help from the authorities and was more or less on its own.

It made Rülf particularly angry that the Jews were even being mocked because of what had happened to them. “It’s not enough,” he wrote in hindsight, “that a people must suffer the rawest abuses, persecution and rages – they must also put up with having all ignominy and shame attributed to them afterwards out of a shrewd malice, so that the abuses appear to have been deserved”.²¹⁴

On the lookout for a “relic, a souvenir”, Rülf took the time to enter a burned-out synagogue before he left town. In one corner he found the remains of a small Torah roll, as well as the remainder of a parchment where it was possible to still make out the words “ya’amod chai”. The synagogue attendant allowed Rülf to keep it, although according to Jewish custom a desecrated Torah roll would have to be buried. Rülf bid him farewell with the words: “Ya’amod chai! Let this all re-emerge as a new, flourishing and happy life!”²¹⁵

From “Golus” to “Cherus”: “Aruchas Bas-Ammi. Israels Heilung”

Motivated by Leon Pinsker’s pamphlet *Auto-emancipation!* a year before, in 1883 Isaak Rülf published *Aruchas Bas-Ammi. A remedy for Israel*.²¹⁶ In the foreword, he specifically referred to *Auto-emancipation!* and thanked its author, who was a

friend of his, with the following words: “My work was induced by yours; it might be simply a translation of your words into mine... Your work made an indelible impression on me. It redirected many of my opinions, goals and lines of thought so that they now run in a completely different direction”.

A fundamental difference between the two publications was that in Pinsker’s it was almost like Pinsker the doctor was appealing to his patients. Rülf’s work, on the other hand, was more similar to a sermon in structure and style, which led the historian Reuwen Michael to the opinion that *Aruchas Bas-Ammi* belongs among the “pearls of the old homiletics”²¹⁷. Even if there is a bit of truth in this assessment, it ultimately falls too short, as Rülf was not turning to his community members as a preacher, but was speaking up as a concerned contemporary, to call attention to the difficult situation of his fellow Jews.

On closer inspection, Rülf’s work is certainly not a sermon held at the pulpit, but must be understood as an appeal, or as it says in the subtitle to his *Aruchas Bas-Ammi*, as “a serious word to co-religionists and skeptics”. In this context it’s worth mentioning that “skeptics” does not refer to non-Jews, but rather, as the historian Reuwen Michael has correctly determined, to former Jews, who have waivered in their Jewish faith or lost it altogether.

Aruchas Bas-Ammi is divided up into four chapters which Rülf entitled “Golus”, “Rischus”, “Avdus” and “Cherus”. In the first chapter entitled “Golus”, he attempts to prove that the life of Jews in the Diaspora is the root of all evil: “Are we in ‘Golus’, so to say are we living in exile, in banishment, in the Diaspora, avoided, neglected, despised, persecuted, hated and harassed, or not? Deny it if you can”.²¹⁸

All of the efforts a Jewish person could make to adapt, “to amalgamate, accommodate, assimilate”, are, as Rülf remarks, doomed to fail in the end. Because, regardless of how he acts, and he could be the most self-sacrificing patriot, “the anti-Semite – and which non-Jew wouldn’t be a bit of an anti-Semite – knows where to find you...”.²¹⁹ The Jewish person, in Rülf’s view, is and remains vulnerable because the others are not prepared, and will never be prepared, to accept him as a citizen with equal rights.

In the chapter called “Rischus”, Rülf explains that the difference between Israel and the other nations, which has culminated in hate, is indeed the primal force and impetus for all historical proceedings and processes in the history of the Jewish people, yet at the same time questions Pinsker’s postulate that something like a “hereditary” hate of Jews exists: “We must be allowed to state our modest doubt that such a Judeophobia even exists (...) we do not believe (...) in an instinctive, hereditary deformity of the soul, inherent fear of Jews.”²²⁰

Rülf thought that fear of Jews had always been used as an excuse to spur on the hate of the masses against the Jews. He decisively argued the case for

letting Jews experience more justice as Jews. “The Jew,” he elaborated, “should be allowed to be just as much of a villain as a non-Jew is, I mean to say that the wickedness of a Jew should not be viewed and assessed differently than the wickedness of any other person.”²²¹

At the same time, Rülf was quite aware of the fact that anti-Semitism was deeply rooted in the spiritual and emotional life of the different nationalities. He explained that they will never stop “envying, hating, persecuting the Jews”. The non-Jews, according to Rülf, are trying to emphasize only the bad sides, “and to turn and reinterpret even that which is truly good and positive into something bad and negative”. For Rülf, this is the epitome of what “we”, the Jews, call “Rischus”.

Rischus, the hate of Jews in its different manifestations, plagued Rülf all of his life. He not only wrote about anti-Semitic prejudices such as he had gotten to know in his home in Hesse, but also participated in the anti-Semitism debate with Heinrich von Treitschke. He protested in the *AZJ* against the obsessive idea of Jews as “guys selling pants”²²², which Treitschke was said to have acknowledged with amusement.²²³

In his later years, Rülf repeatedly commented on the legend of ritual murder, which he called the, “most sordid, wretched, untruthful and inhumane accusation (which) without the slightest inkling of any kind of evidence” has been raised against the Jews forever.²²⁴ He explores the origins of this accusation in detail and finds them in early Christianity. Its effects and aftereffects admittedly cause him great worry.

In his analysis of how the local population in Xanten, Polna and Konitz deal with the ritual murder accusation²²⁵, Rülf incorporated Pinsker’s hypothesis of Judeophobia, but rather than calling it a fear of Jews, interprets it as a phenomenon of angst transference – as modern psychopathology now does, as well. In this case, Rülf attributes a kind of “cowardice” to the anti-Semites which they use to vent their angst²²⁶ by assigning behaviors to Jews that they instinctively know to be their own.

In the third chapter of *Aruchas Bas-Ammi*, entitled “Avdus”, Rülf presents the viewpoint that the Jews themselves bear a large part of the blame for their situation, believe it or not. According to Rülf, the dilemma partially arises from the fact that Jews had given up on themselves and had lost their “consciousness as a nation”. This loss, this “self-externalization” as Rülf critically remarks, is the ultimate reason why the Jews had slid into disrepute among the other nations. Rülf continues, “If we were to step in front of the world with national pride and unbroken self-esteem ... we would stand completely differently in their eyes”.

Rülf criticized the Jews for acting “minion-like”, which was what led to enemies becoming enemies in the first place. He asks, “What have we achieved with our flexibility, our mania to accommodate others, our over-zealous de-na-

tionalization?” In any case, this was not what was hoped for when the decision in favor of assimilation was made. Rülf continued, “In the eyes of our enemies and adversaries, we have proven ourselves as unworthy to think a national thought, to express a national ambition equal to other nations, to begin our own, independent national life as a distinct nation.”²²⁷

What then was left to be done? Rülf explores this question in the last chapter of his book, which he appropriately called “Cherus”, freedom. It is necessary for Jews to complete a change in course and start taking charge of re-establishing their inner and outer freedom. This to-be-re-gained freedom is for Rülf the only means to effect “a remedy for Israel”. Like Pinsker, he also makes a plea for “Auto-emancipation”, for “self-liberation” – and for having Jews become conscious of themselves again. Then and only then would they be in a position to rehabilitate themselves before the nations of the world.

A major difference between Pinsker and Rülf’s views is revealed regarding geography. While Pinsker’s main concern was securing Jews a country “of their own”, being able to offer “a safe, undisputed, productive and fertile asylum”²²⁸, Rülf did not feel that this was a sufficient solution. He thought that not just any territory, anywhere in the world came into consideration as an asylum and home for the Jewish people, but rather only “Eretz Israel”. “We must,” he wrote, “once again procure our original home, the land of our fathers and aspire to re-create the Jewish State”.

Concerning the political implementation of this enterprise, Rülf felt that the time was just ripe. His optimism is reflected in statements such as: “Our desire for freedom will wake the desire in the hearts of thousands and thousands”. Or: “My feeling is that as soon as the world sees our first, honest will to free ourselves from the yoke of Golus, Rischus and Avdus and to return to our national and territorial rights, then every person will arise to support our endeavor”.²²⁹

To those who believed that with the founding of a Jewish State may not preempt the coming of the Messiah, Rülf countered: “He [the Messiah] shouldn’t wake the people, the people should wake him. His spirit and his exaltation should be inflamed by our people’s spirit and exaltation”.²³⁰ What Rülf meant was that the Messiah wasn’t going to be the one to help, but that the Jewish people must help themselves – and then nothing would stand in the way of the Messiah’s appearing.

There was no question for Rülf that not only was it God’s will, but that Jews had a legal claim to Palestine, just as the Italians did to Italy and the Egyptians did to Egypt. “It is the land which belongs to us, not only by the rights of God, but also by the rights of the nations, ‘which we took out of the hand of the Amorite with our sword and with our bow’, that belongs to us by the rights of the conquerors.”

Rülf's ideas were met with enthusiasm in the Jewish national circles in Russia, but also in some places in the West. The above mentioned Viennese student Nathan Birnbaum, for example, wrote a letter to Rülf enclosing his pamphlet *Die Assimilationssucht* [The Assimilation mania] and assuring that he thought similarly to Rülf. Birnbaum explained that he had decided to speak up as well, although Rülf and Pinsker had already said everything necessary in their writings. He was doing this because he was convinced that the Jewish national ideas also had to be propagated in cities in the West – particularly in Vienna. He didn't consider his pamphlet *Die Assimilationssucht* to be “superfluous”, “Because there hasn't been a single thing with Jewish national ideas appearing on the Viennese book market, and it is necessary to present the reinforcements of our mission in a combined form to the Viennese readership, which is notorious for its short attention span”.²³¹

The echo to Rülf's book was altogether greater than he had been expecting. In Rülf's papers, numerous letters from well-known and less well-known contemporaries, mostly from German-speaking areas, were found, most of which expressed their sympathies with Rülf's ideas, but also some in which a certain skepticism could be heard. The situation in Germany, as some of these letter writers so succinctly put it, has been different from the situation in Russia.

Selig Freuthal, for example, editor and together with Moritz Moses²³² publisher of the weekly magazine *Der Colonist*²³³, which had the subtitle “Zeitschrift zur Beförderung unterdrückter Juden” [Magazine for the advancement of oppressed Jews] and mainly dealt with the possibilities of settling in Palestine²³⁴, told Rülf that he felt vindicated in his work by Rülf's *Aruchas Bas-Ammi*. At the same time, he also thought that it would not be easy to convince the Jews in Germany of Rülf's ideas.²³⁵

The resistance that he himself encountered moved Freuthal to step down from publishing *Der Colonist* magazine a little later. “Publishing this magazine,” he complained to Nathan Birnbaum, “has brought me into a struggle with both extreme parties, from the Orthodox I'm being excommunicated and from the other side [meaning assimilated German Jewry, A/N] ridiculed”.

“And in doing so”, Freuthal continued to complain, “I ruined the peace in my family and my relationships and what else – undermined my health. And what did I get out of all this? The bitterest disappointment. What I have accomplished and achieved has been appropriated by others...”.²³⁶ If he, Birnbaum, doesn't want to risk his “life's happiness” warns Freuthal, like he himself has done, then Birnbaum should at all costs back away from the plan of founding his own paper.

Despite the repeatedly expressed rejection, Isaak Rülf also found numerous supporters. His fellow Rabbi Heinrich Jankus expressed his approval, albeit with a certain skepticism as he asks if Rülf's ideas and plans could be so readily real-

ized: “Your premises as well as your conclusions undoubtedly contain much that is true – but how can it be translated into political action”?²³⁷

On the other hand, David Gordon, editor of *Ha-Maggid* [The Messenger/Herald], a Hebrew-language newspaper which had been published since 1856 in Lyck and was mainly geared toward readers in Russia, had no such reservations. Gordon, who revealed himself to be extremely taken with Rülf’s work promised to help advocate its promotion in Russia.²³⁸ Already in 1871 Gordon had published a series of articles in *Ha-Maggid*, in which he argued for the settlement of Palestine.

Amidst all of the enthusiasm that Rülf’s Jewish national ideas provoked, there were, however, also a number of prominent Jewish voices which ranged from skeptical to dismissive. Ludwig Philippson, for example, the publisher of the *AZJ*, was sympathetic toward Rülf and his relief work, but did not think much of his national political activities, due to fundamental considerations.

As someone who on principle stood by civil equality and the German-ness of the Jews who lived there, Philippson categorically called into question Rülf’s hypothesis that emancipation had failed and civil equality existed only on paper. Philippson had expressed the same criticism a few years earlier when Pinsker’s *Auto-emancipation!* appeared.

Philippson raised the concern that the erection of a Jewish State in Palestine would only strengthen the anti-Semites in their prejudices. “Those squealers”, he remarked, “would rant that we’re Others now more than ever and shout: shove them out over to Palestine where they belong”. Additionally, he couldn’t really imagine how a “Jewish” nation state could be constructed in Palestine with one and a half million Polish-Russian Jews.

A further objection from Philippson deserves particular regard in this connection, as he mentioned a topic that was only marginally or not at all perceived as problematic by Pinsker, Rülf and all of the other visionaries of settling the Holy Land and erecting a Jewish nation state in Palestine. “And what”, Philippson asked, “does the author propose to do with the Turks, Christians, Arabs, Bedouin, etc. who are now living in this country”? This question is, however, not explored further. The objection raised is left hanging in the air.

Philippson did indeed feel that it was necessary to strengthen the “national consciousness” of the Jews; however, he did not think much of the settlement ambitions. For him, the mission that he felt the Jews had here on earth was more important. He saw or interpreted this mission in a different sense than did Hess, Pinsker and Rülf.

“We are called upon”, Philippson explained in the *AZJ* from October 9, 1883, “to bear the creed of the One and Only and to proclaim it throughout all time ... To strengthen us, to steady us, to keep us straight and true in this, this is all our task... Far-reaching political and social goals were never our concern. Destiny has

stood us on this standpoint, and no words, turns of phrase or assertions will distance us from it".²³⁹

In contrast, there was a sharply negative discussion of *Aruchas Bas-Ammi* that appeared in the *Israelitische Wochenschrift* weekly. "Utopias, nothing but utopias", it's written there dismissively. The "Jewish question" cannot be solved by appropriating the anti-Semite's demand of "Off with the Jews to Palestine!". Rülf's plan is too fanciful and impossible to fulfill under the present conditions. There is no sure-fire remedy against anti-Semitism and so the Jews would be well advised to stick to their "task of blessing the world" by spreading "civilization and humanity" among all peoples.²⁴⁰

Of all those who responded to Rülf and his work, Leon Pinsker had the most open-minded reaction. A significant role was certainly played by the fact that he saw a like-minded and gifted comrade-in-arms in Rülf. The publication of Rülf's *Aruchas Bas-Ammi*, Pinsker explained, represents, "an occurrence of great consequences". "What I am able to only present in coarse and raw strokes, you have been able to show as a painter with perfection. What I injured, you have healed, what I forgot, you have emphasized, what I neglected, you have honored. Thank you, my heartfelt thanks to you for your noble word".²⁴¹

The high degree to which Pinsker valued Rülf as a co-agitator can be seen in their correspondence. Pinsker described Rülf as the "first German Jew,... who has courageously championed our cause"²⁴². However, Rülf was by no means as confident as Pinsker had assumed. "If we will live to see what we have striven for," he wrote to Pinsker in December 1884, "is more than doubtful, but the idea invigorates and no one can deny that we powerfully shook the slumbering national consciousness".

Further in this letter, in which Rülf not only takes stock, but also reveals a considerable amount about his own motivations as to why he has avowed himself to Jewish nationalism: "...I'll explain it again to you..., that I just had wanted to rattle the indifferent, give the aspiring a goal and show those who are separated by opinion and inclination a point of unity. You know that when the Jews davenen the *shmoneh esreh* (the eighteen; the Amidah), they supposedly turn to face *misrah* (the East; Jerusalem). Go into any house you want, everyone has a particular *misrah*. I wanted to show the Jews just once, where *misrah* is".²⁴³

From Katowice to Basel

The Memel Rabbi Isaak Rülf was undoubtedly a scholar, but also a man of action, as Reuwen Michael has already described.²⁴⁴ "People think of me", Rülf wrote in one of his letters to Pinsker, "as a good, docile, complaisant person, with a

strongly idealistic bent, even somewhat quixotic. Yet actually I am a cool, calm intellectual, whose heart never controls his head, who considers everything 10 times over again, who strives to only carry out what had been found good with steely determination and in doing so someone who above all attaches no importance to the word ‘impossible’”.²⁴⁵

Rülf was not present at the first delegate conference from Hovevi Zion. It took place from November 6–10, 1884 on the premises of the Concordia Loge in Katowice²⁴⁶ and was attended by 35 people – Samuel Mohilever, Moritz Moses, Saul P. Rabbinowitsch, Leon Schalit and Leon Pinsker among them²⁴⁷. He sent a telegram, in which he expressed his solidarity with the delegates (with a “brotherly greeting”) and requested that a Manifesto he had composed be read during the conference.

What Rülf wrote down in this Manifesto has not survived. We can, however, assume that this text he authored would not have been so very different from his other deliberations, which can be referred to in *Aruchas Bas-Ammi*. It appears that Rülf did not mince his words in the Manifesto and chose very loud and clear terms.

This conclusion can be drawn from a letter that Pinsker wrote to Rülf after having returned from the conference in Katowice and in which he explicitly expresses his regret that Rülf had not been able to attend personally. “The Manifesto”, wrote Pinsker “was heard to great acclaim. However, we do not think it advisable to publish a printed version of it. It could cause bad blood in certain camps...”.²⁴⁸

When in the mid-1880s Poles and Jews began to be deported out of Prussia, Rülf spoke out in several applicational advertisements in the *AZJ*. He also sent a series of petitions to the authorities, including four personal petitions to Bismarck, who even replied and promised that the deportations would be carried out using a sense of proportion and would try to spare as much as possible those people who were “of undeniable use” to the state.²⁴⁹

The pogroms and the Prussian deportation policy were indeed the reasons why Rülf increased his commitment to establishing Jewish national associations which were directed at raising Jewish self-awareness and organizing as much relief aid as possible for the refugees from Russia and those deported from Prussia. Local chapters of Hovevi Zion were founded, for example, in Katowice, Heidelberg and Breslau.²⁵⁰ Other groups which had similar goals called themselves Ahavat Zion, Esra, B’nai B’rith or Atid.

Rülf’s guiding hand could be recognized in the background in many cases. This could be seen by the fact that either he or his activities were invoked during the founding of these groups, or that he was appealed to for his advice as to what could be done to fight against the pervading anti-Semitism or to help the streams of refugees coming across the border to Prussia from Russia.²⁵¹ The letters in

Rülf's estate clearly show that he had an influence on the ideological-political persuasion of these newly founded groups in the early 1880s that is not to be underestimated.

For example, in the association Kadimah, a student group in Vienna founded by the often-mentioned Nathan Birnbaum, above all Isaak Rülf was the celebrated role model, along with Peretz Smolenskin and Leon Pinsker. He was closely connected to the group and regularly sent messages and greetings when he received invitations to festive events in which he assured the Kadimahers of his solidarity.²⁵² "From the moment that I got to know the group [Kadimah]", it says, for example in one of Rülf's letters, "I have shown them my full sympathy... I don't know the people who make up the group personally, but I know its leanings and these I like, because they mesh with my own views".²⁵³

The level of trust that many younger people placed in Rülf and his activities is striking. For instance, Willy Bambus (1862–1904) a Berlin activist, asked Rülf for his support where possible for the "Schutzverband gegen agrarische Übergriffe" [Protection society against agricultural attacks] which was being founded in Berlin as a response to the anti-Semitic agitation from the "Bund der Landwirte" [Farmer's federation]. He wrote, "This could happen in two ways from your end, first in that you place the new group in your newspaper *Dampfboot*, second in that you allow us to place your worthy signature under the appeal...".²⁵⁴

As on the initiative of the Berlin organization "Jung-Israel" [Young Israel], whose working language was Russian, a "Kongress der Zionisten aller Länder" [Congress of Zionists from all countries] was to be convened. Willy Bambus, the organization's secretary, complained in a circular he sent out that it was not organized and there was no common work program. The preparation meeting in which seven representatives of Zionist groups participated took place on September 3, 1893 in Nathan Birnbaum's apartment in Vienna. Rülf was not present at this meeting, but his presence was duly felt, as it was proposed to include his name on the official invitation to the planned congress.²⁵⁵

In the ten years between 1884 and 1895 Rülf was working not only politically, but also as a journalist and writer. In 1890, he published a series of articles in the Orthodox organ *Der Israelit und Jeschurun* [The Isralite and Jeshurun], which concerned a topic he had already dealt with at the end of the 1850s²⁵⁶, namely anti-Semitism in Hesse. The "anti-Semitic leprosy", he wrote here, could die out over time, but it is not curable. He continues to say that the anti-Semitic movement is indeed directed against the Jews, but in his view it is ultimately a political movement aiming at the "overthrow of the entire social order, state order and way of life".²⁵⁷

In this decade Rülf also explored topics such as "Das Erbrecht als Erbübel im Hinblick auf die zukünftige Entwicklung der menschlichen Gesellschaft" [Legacy law as a basic evil with a view to the future development of human society] (1893).

Mostly he was working on his five-volume “epic work” (Reuwen Michael) *System einer neuen Metaphysik* [System of a new metaphysics].²⁵⁸ The work, which was somewhat exaggeratedly called “epoch making”²⁵⁹ in Zionist circles, dealt with political and social questions and their philosophical dimensions.²⁶⁰ The volumes of Rülf’s main work bear the titles *Wissenschaft des Weltgedankens* [The science of world thoughts] (1888)²⁶¹, *Wissenschaft der Gedankenwelt* [The science of the intellectual world] (1888), *Wissenschaft der Kraftseinheit* [The science of the unity of power] (1893), *Wissenschaft der Geisteseinheit* [The science of the unity of mind] (1897) and *Wissenschaft der Gotteseinheit* [The science of the unity of God] (1903, posthumous).

After the publication of Herzl’s *Judenstaat* [The Jewish State], Rülf joined the Zionist movement around Theodor Herzl. In March of 1897, he, along with Herzl, Bambus, Bodenheimer, Kokesch, Pineles and Belkowsky, was called upon to be a member of an organizational commission which was to carry out the preparations for a General Zionist Congress. Zionists of all persuasion and from every country were to have the opportunity to meet together, get to know each other and discuss their standpoints here.

A pre-conference which took place on March 6th and 7th, 1897 in Vienna, however, did not generate the results that they had originally hoped for. The differences in opinion among the conference participants were so great that they were not able to be readily reconciled. Herzl and his supporters wanted a “World Congress of Zionists”; other participants just wanted a “Conference of Palestine Organizations”. This ignited a fierce controversy as to whether it made any sense to discuss the “Jewish question” in public, anyway.

When it became known that Herzl had urged to have the conference take place in Munich, there were strong protests. Rabbis like Hermann Naftali Adler, the Chief Rabbi of the Ashkenazi community in London, as well as Moritz Güdemann, the Chief Rabbi in Vienna, criticized this proposal. The executive board of the German Rabbinical Association, led by Siegmund Maybaum (1843–1910), issued a statement in June, 1897 in which it said: “The aspirations of so-called Zionists to found a Jewish nation state in Palestine, contradict the messianic promise of Judaism as it is written in the Holy Scripture and in later religious sources.”²⁶²

Rülf replied with two opinion pieces in the newspaper *Die Welt*, in which he attempted to refute the accusations made by the opposition. One commentary is called “Erklärung gegen Erklärung” [Statement against statement], the other “Deutsche Rabbiner” [German Rabbis]. They [the representatives of the Rabbinical Society] are the ones, he stated, who “primarily bring our people into discredit all over the world. They deny their heritage, force their way into a society which rebuffs them exactly because of their intrusiveness and presume a nationality for themselves that they are not entitled to”.

To the objection that the Zionists had neither the order nor the mandate to organize a congress in Munich, Rülf replied that the order had not come from the protesting Rabbis: "No, certainly not from you! The truth is, no one gave them [the Zionists] an order or a mandate. They are following only their convictions, their hearts, their irresistible empathy with their suffering brothers, the urgent desire to help and advise them: they are following the inextinguishable love for the Holy Land, the ancestral homeland and the powerful feeling of Jewish nationalism which simply does not want to be suppressed".²⁶³

In the second article, which appeared two weeks later also in the newspaper founded by Theodor Herzl *Die Welt*, Rülf explained how absurd in particular the accusation was that Zionism (Rülf: "For my part I much prefer to say nationality consciousness") had harmed the Jewish faith. "I have exactly the opposite opinion and conviction", Rülf declared. "It [Zionism] has not harmed faith at all".

The line of continuity that Rülf drew historically is revealing. He didn't call the delegate's conference held in Katowice in November 1884 a Hovevei Zion conference, i.e. from the friends of Zion, but rather the First Zionist Congress. As evidence for this he points to the participants at the time, to Leon Pinsker, and also to the Rabbis Jizchak Elchanan Spector, Samuel Mohilewer and Israel Hildesheimer, whom he calls "Heroes of faith and knowledge". This forgotten conference deserves to be remembered, according to Rülf, because it was then that the principle was formulated for the first time: "Reclaim our land, reclaim our people, reclaim our state", which still applies today.²⁶⁴

Rülf did not take part in the Zionist Congress in Basel that was convened by Theodor Herzl at the end of August 1897. It was attended by 196 delegates from 16 different countries. The reasons why he was not present in Basel are unknown. Perhaps he was indisposed by an illness; perhaps he had some other commitment which he could not postpone which prevented him from coming to Basel.

Rülf himself regretted that he was unable to attend the congress. This was also certainly the reason why he sent an address expressing his solidarity, which, however, was not read aloud.²⁶⁵ The great number of congratulatory letters and expressions of support – there were 550 telegrams, dispatches and letters arriving in Basel – presumably led those responsible for organizing the congress to only read a few selected telegrams and letters to the delegates. The letter from Rülf was not among them.

In Basel, despite the fact that he was not personally present, Rülf was, together with Max Bodenheimer (1865–1940), a lawyer from Cologne, elected to the action committee (A.C.) In the Action Committee, which had 15 members in all, Rülf and Bodenheimer represented the German state organization. How much Rülf and his connections were being relied upon can be clearly seen in the fact that, together with Bodenheimer, he was called to the Central Committee

of the “Zionistischen Vereinigung für Deutschland” [Zionist union for Germany], founded in the fall of 1897 in Frankfurt am Main. The other members were David Wolffsohn, Fabius Schach, Hermann Schapira and Lipman Prins.²⁶⁶

Rülf also took part in the Second Zionist Congress, which took place a year later again in Basel, and was attended by over 400 delegates. Along with Moses Gaster, the London Chief Rabbi Marcus Ehrenpreis, Rabbinowitsch and others, he was selected for a committee which was to deal with cultural issues, questions of literature and education. The committee wasn't a central one, but it was a panel which was considered to be important due to the duties it has been allocated.

As the Congress, at which Rülf and Bodenheimer were confirmed as the representatives of Germany in the Action Committee, was nearing its end, Rülf used the opportunity and stepped up to the podium (“greeted with lively applause”) to thank Theodor Herzl, Max Nordau, Moses Gaster, Max E. Mandelstamm and the rest of the delegates (“frenzied applause and clapping”) for their dedication at the Congress. “Keep the peace and be united”, he called out to the delegates. “Our one and only united God, He will preside over our work and lead it to [a] good destination”.²⁶⁷ Herzl, the next speaker, closed the Congress with the words: “We have set out wandering. The moral wandering of the Jews has begun. Where will it lead us? Let us hope to better days”.

In the following years, Rülf – who had meanwhile retired²⁶⁸ and moved from Memel to Bonn – was invited to speak on numerous different occasions. Martin Buber, for instance, then still a student in Leipzig, not only asked Theodor Herzl²⁶⁹, but also Rülf to come to Leipzig and give a lecture to a group of Zionists. “It is here”, he wrote to Rülf in early 1899, “that several young people, a small group of Leipzig Jews in whose hearts the old longing hasn't died, have been able to rally around the banner of the Zionist idea”.

“We have accomplished all that our weak powers would allow,” the letter continues, “but this is only a small beginning. The ground is fertile and awaits the seed. We are convinced that the notorious indifference of Leipzig Jews does not reach into the depths of their hearts, that the fire of the national feeling also continues to glow in them under the ashes and will come to life as soon as men appear who can inflame it. Seeking and finding such men and winning them for our cause is our next and most important task”.

Buber concluded his letter:

“The first person we decided to turn to is you, most esteemed Herr Doktor. Your name is here among the German Zionists by far the most popular and, from the pamphlets that we sell, your *Aruchas Bas-Ammi* has generated the most enthusiastic impact along with *Auto-emancipation!* and the Congress speeches. At first we didn't dare contact you. But after we read the

report in the *Welt* on your speech in Frankfurt yesterday²⁷⁰, we became more confident. And so now we're asking you: Come to Leipzig and talk about Zionism. You in particular [Isaak Rülf] would be able to advance our actions very, very much. We know what a sacrifice this would be for you, and that we still make this request of you we do to serve as an implementation of the idea that is burning in all of us".²⁷¹

Whenever anyone asked him to give a lecture, Rülf was on the spot, Max Bodenheimer later remarked. He accepted Buber's invitation just like he did numerous others. On April 5, 1899 in Leipzig he gave an enthusiastically applauded lecture on "The importance of the national idea in Judaism" to around 500 people.²⁷² And on July 20, 1902 he spoke at a large "Mass Meeting" in Manchester, where the local Zionist organizations chose the Comedy Theater as the venue for his speech.²⁷³

Even in retirement, Rülf continued to be committed to the movement and was considered to be one of the truest followers of Theodor Herzl. He might not have stood in the active vanguard, but always accepted when duty called. He agreed to be elected to the expanded action committee, and was a member of the cultural committee, whose work, however, was increasingly beset with a heavy burden resulting from the existing tensions between the Orthodox Rabbis and the secular culture lovers. Rülf did not, however, let himself be pulled in to these disputes.

Instead, he also wrote cultural-political articles for the papers the *Welt* and also the *Israelitische Rundschau* (Israeli Review), later called the *Jüdische Rundschau* (Jewish Review), in which he published the story "Sundel, der Roßarzt" (Sundel, the army veterinarian)²⁷⁴ as a serial and also seized on topics such as "The two poets at the Fifth Zionist Congress".²⁷⁵ In this article, in which Rülf defended Max Nordau and Israel Zangwill against the attacks that had been made against them, Rülf called Nordau "one of the best German poets and most intellectual authors of our times, who will sustain his position next to Börne, Heine and Berth[old] Auerbach".

However, Rülf did not want to get involved in answering the question which of the two, Nordau or Zangwill, was the more important author. As a typical member of the educated classes of his day, he was able to elude a clear answer by invoking a quote from Goethe, who famously dismissed the controversy of who was the greater poet, he or Schiller with the quip, "They ought rather to rejoice that two such fellows as we are in existence."

Rülf was yanked away from his political and writing activities extremely suddenly when he was fatally injured in a traffic accident. As the news spread, there was general mourning. At his funeral, which took place at the Jewish cemetery in Bonn-Castell, Max Bodenheimer held the eulogy on behalf of Herzl²⁷⁶, and he took care to emphasize and to show particular appreciation for all of Rülf's services to Zionism.

Rülf, Bodenheimer remarked in his eulogy, was along with Hess and Pinsker, the first to have promoted something like a Zionist program. He closed his eulogy with the empathetic words: “His name was our banner and we could not honor it better or greater than we Zionists renewing our oath to our great mission at his grave: ‘Our rights wither when we forget yours, Jerusalem!’”²⁷⁷

Memorial services and commemorations for Isaak Rülf took place in different towns in Germany, as well as abroad. In Cologne, for example, there was a commemoration ceremony held in the Wiener Hof, where Bodenheimer spoke and David Wolffsohn read passages out of Rülf’s *Aruchas Bas-Ammi*.²⁷⁸ In Bucharest as well, where a Rülf Group was founded in April 1901²⁷⁹, his achievements were honored in a memorial service. According to an article in the *Welt*, after the speeches, the Rabbi followed by reciting the funeral prayer El male rachamim, and then those gathered all sang the hymn of the movement, composed by Leo Feld “Dort wo die Zeder schlank die Wolken küsst” [There where the cedar slender kisses the clouds].²⁸⁰

Herzl did not write an obituary for Rülf himself, but if he were to have done so, it would have been certain to have sounded like the letter that he had written a year earlier, on January 6, 1901 and sent to the American Zionist leader Richard Gottheil in New York. Herzl wrote that Rülf was about to celebrate his 70th birthday²⁸¹. “We are the ones”, and it sounds almost like the anticipation of a future obituary, “who owe it to this man to commemorate him for his indefatigable, fearless work that he constantly developed for our idea”.²⁸²

Special mention should be made of the obituary written by the author Dagobert von Gerhardt-Amyntor (1831–1910) who celebrated Rülf in the *Berliner Tageblatt* as an important thinker (“A star in the sky of truth-seeking intellectual art has been extinguished”)²⁸³, but also deserving mention are those written by Max Bodenheimer and Heinrich Loewe. Particularly the latter’s obituary merits attention; it especially honored Rülf’s achievements for Zionism in the *Israelitische Rundschau*.²⁸⁴

Bodenheimer and Loewe, just as Gerhardt-Amyntor, were deeply saddened and lamented the death of the “beloved Old Master”. With him, they wrote almost word-for-word in their obituaries, one of the best has passed, one of the men who, in unwavering belief in the future of his people, gave them everything that a man could possibly give. “His name, his impact and his works”, Bodenheimer wrote in his obituary in the *Welt*, “are inseparably connected to the history of the rejuvenation of the nation”.²⁸⁵

Epilogue, or: the attempt at a conclusion

Without the groundbreaking work of early Zionists such as Moses Hess, Leon Pinsker and Isaak Rülf, as well as of activists such as Max Bodenheimer, Nathan Birnbaum, Gustav G. Cohen, it is by no means certain that Theodor Herzl would have found as many Jews in either the East or the West willing to listen to him about his project of a “Jewish State” as he in fact did. However, it stands out that the names of Hess, Pinsker and Rülf, whose contributions to the Zionist movement are undisputed, had mostly vanished into obscurity at the time that Herzl appeared on the political stage.

This general obscurity could be the reason why Herzl did not think of his predecessors when he began to write *The Jewish State [Der Judenstaat]*.²⁸⁶ For instance, it remains subject to debate if Herzl was not in fact aware of the previously mentioned series of articles about Moses Hess that Marcus Ehrenpreis published in 1893 in the *Jüdische Volkszeitung*. There has, however, been no proof that this actually was the case up to now.

Still, it doesn't seem very convincing when Herzl maintains in his diaries that he would have taken the writings of his intellectual predecessors into account before writing *The Jewish State [Der Judenstaat]* had he been aware of them. His statements to this effect seem to be at least subconsciously an attempt to justify a previous omission. There can be no doubt that when Herzl began writing *The Jewish State [Der Judenstaat]* he had at least heard of Pinsker and Rülf in some sort of context, if not of Hess.

To be able to shed more light on the subject, the question needs to be explored if and at what point in time Herzl had been confronted with his predecessors' writings. Was it at some point during the writing of *The Jewish State* or was it already beforehand? He had at least been aware of the name Pinsker before he set about bringing his thoughts to paper. It seems that it was Narcisse Leven (1833–1915), the president of the “Alliance Israélite Universelle”, who first drew Herzl's attention to the doctor from Odessa and his Hovevei Zion activities in 1895.

Herzl's diary contains the following entry for September 20, 1895: “I don't want to be an inventor. The more people who share my all-purpose idea, the better it is for me.” Then he continues: “Pinsger(!) is unfortunately already dead. His writings are supposed to be remarkable. I'll read them as soon as I have time”.²⁸⁷

However, Herzl only found the time to read Pinsker's pamphlet several months later, after he had already issued the printing license for *The Jewish State [Der Judenstaat]*. “Today read the pamphlet *Auto-emancipation*” he commented on February 10, 1896. “Uncanny consensus in the critical, great similarity in the

constructive part. It's a pity that I didn't read it before the printing license for mine came out. But also good that I hadn't. – I might have not have written my work otherwise".²⁸⁸



Figure 4: Frontpage of
Theodor Herzls
“Judenstaat”,
published in 1896.

The situation was similar in the case of Moses Hess. Michail Berkowicz, the Hebrew translator of *The Jewish State* [*Der Judenstaat*], was apparently the first person to mention Hess's name to Herzl. According to Herzl's statements, this was in April 1896, two months after he had gotten his hands on Pinsker's pamphlet and read it. With Hess as well, Herzl did not immediately get around to reading him. We now know that Herzl had packed a copy of *Rome and Jerusalem*

to take along with him on his trip to Palestine in 1898, but because he was busy with other things at the time, was only able to briefly glance through it.

It was only two years later, when he took along a copy of Hess's work on a trip to Salzkammergut in April of 1901, did he have the chance to study it closely. Herzl's comment afterwards is telling as it proves that he really hadn't heard of Hess or of the existence of his book before writing *The Jewish State*. Surviving notes show that he was deeply impressed by the book and regretted not having read it earlier.

"So," Herzl's diary entry reads, "I was captivated and elated by him [Moses Hess]. What a high, noble spirit. Everything that we tried he had already written. The only nuisance is the Hegelian in his terminology. The Spinozan-Jewish and national - wonderful. Judaism hasn't produced a greater mind since Spinoza than this forgotten, faded Moses Hess!".²⁸⁹ Herzl ended his diary entry with the toast of the fraternal orders "Fiducit!", with which he wanted to express his enthusiasm as well as his approval for Hess's text.

Hess's *Rome and Jerusalem*, Pinsker's *Auto-emancipation!* and Rülf's *Aruchas Bas-Ammi* were being rediscovered beginning in the mid-1890s. As mentioned before, the name of Hess as well as those of Pinsker and of Rülf were brought up repeatedly during the transactions at the Zionist Congress in Basel, although in different contexts. However, it wasn't Herzl who drew attention to his predecessors and their works, but rather delegates, mostly coming from the Hovevei Zion movement. They pointed out that even before Herzl's appearance there had been activists who had provided the Jewish national cause with visionary ideas and spirit.

One of these delegates who considered himself to be an early Zionist was the Swiss lawyer and Social Democrat David Farbstein (1868–1953), who had enjoyed an "observant, but not fanatical upbringing"²⁹⁰ in his childhood. He summarized his work in the Zionist movement with the words, "We were Zionists before Herzl". Farbstein, a pioneer of Swiss Zionism, was an ardent devotee of Moses Hess, whom he not only admired as a Social Democrat but who also served as his role model as a Zionist.

At the Congress in Basel, Farbstein presented a widely esteemed report on economic issues,²⁹¹ in which he alluded to Hess's *Rome and Jerusalem* while discussing the economic causes of anti-Semitism and advocated a restructuring in Jewish professional lives. He thought that such a restructuring was not only necessary, but even a matter of extreme urgency as it would remove an essential foundation of anti-Semitism in his view. The Jewish people, according to Farbstein, would only have a chance of survival if a "trading, shopkeeping, small trade people" turned into a "people working in agriculture and industry".²⁹²

David Farbstein founded a local Zionist group in Zurich after the Congress in Basel. He was also the co-founder of a Zionist student association in Zurich, which called itself Hessiana to honor Moses Hess. In the years following, other student fraternities with the name Hessiana, in honor of Moses Hess, “the first theoretical Zionist of the modern era”,²⁹³ were founded in other towns; for example, in Mährisch-Ostrau, what is now Ostrava in the Czech Republic.

Theodor Herzl and his predecessors

Alex Bein felt that what was new and innovative in Herzl and his idea of a Jewish State was that he had analyzed the “Jewish question” more consistently and comprehensively than his predecessors.²⁹⁴ This might be the case in some particular aspects, but it would be an exaggeration to conclude that Herzl had developed completely new perspectives. His ideas were ultimately not that different from those of his predecessors. The relevant passages in Hess, Pinsker and Rülf demonstrate their firm conviction that the “Jewish question” could not be solved via emancipation and assimilation, but that additional new paths must be taken to go further. On the other hand, Hess, Pinsker and Rülf also all seem to be a bit perplexed when it comes to giving the “Jewish question” a decisive answer. The suggestions they make were not very specific, but rather were kept in quite general terms.

Hess, as well as Rülf (less so Pinsker), assumed that the Jews in their current precarious situation did not have the time to wait for the Messiah, but that they were on their own. The Messiah would perhaps appear at some time, but the Jewish people should not wait for his coming, but take their fate into their own hands. This, the way of auto-emancipation and self-determination, was the only way which would lead to finally reaching an answer to the “Jewish question”.

The three pioneers were completely aware of the fact that the crucial thing was to “raise [the Jewish people] in the esteem of the nations”, as Leon Pinsker put it. How exactly they wanted to achieve this goal, however, remained undefined and vague. The State to be founded or the territory to be settled, in Palestine or somewhere else in the world, was at first more of a somewhat blurry vision than of an actual plan.

Additionally, Hess’s opinions differ a bit in perspective from those of the other two. Hess had his eye on the Jewish population throughout Europe and thought in categories of class and racial struggle, while Pinsker and Rülf began with the situation of the Jews in Eastern Europe and the “Jewish poverty” there, and they were thinking of ways of what could be done to help these conditions directly.

Herzl, on the other hand, was in part thinking in different categories than all of his predecessors. In any case, he was more pragmatic about the targeted goals set. He was also firmly convinced that emancipation was a project doomed to fail. In his view, the individual integration into the surrounding society would continue to be possible in Germany, France or England, but not the integration of the Jewish people as a collective. In this way, the conclusions he drew were more consistent and his suggestions more stringent than those of his predecessors.

According to Herzl's analysis set out in *The Jewish State. Proposal for a modern solution for the Jewish question* (1896), "Jewish poverty" which expressed itself differently according to place, social class and intellectual status, could only be eliminated politically; specifically when the Jewish people would come to found their own state in accordance with the international powers. "I consider the Jewish question" Herzl wrote in his book, "to be neither a social nor a religious question, even if it sometimes has this and that tinge. It is a national question. We are a nation, *one nation*".²⁹⁵

In an article entitled "Zionism" which he published in the *North American Review* in 1899, Herzl once again discussed this particular problem and tried his best to find an answer to the question of what "a people" is and what a nation consists of. The criteria which he based the notion of a people or a nation upon²⁹⁶ led him to a conclusion that is shared by parts of modern nationalism research today. It is the view that a nation is an historical group of people with recognizable shared characteristics (language, religion, customs, history and so on), but who are also often bound together by having a common enemy. This last point should not be underestimated.

Applied to the Jews in Europe, this means that the actual enemy was the rampant anti-Semitism. Herzl attributed a specific function to this anti-Semitism, namely that it was impetus and engine to the realization of the Jewish State. Herzl was voicing opinions here that were quite similar to those already expressed several years before by Nathan Birnbaum in his paper *Selbst-Emanzipation*. Birnbaum even went so far as to claim that if anti-Semitism wouldn't exist, it would have to be invented.

But what exactly did Theodor Herzl imagine his "Jewish State" to be? Was it just a vague vision of a dream, a utopia like those many being proposed in the years around 1900? A look at the title and at the suggestions he made show that he was obviously very serious about his proposal and that it was quite important to him not to be seen as some dreamer of fantasies with unrealistic ideas.

Herzl made sure that not only his name appeared on the front page, but also that his academic title "Dr. utriusque", doctor of civil and canon law, be included. In this way he clearly wanted to make it plain that this was not some hysterical

thought experiment of a Viennese journalist and stage author, but a proposal by a serious lawyer, who actually knew what he was talking about.

Two-thirds of his book dealt with technical specifics of his project, primarily with the economic and social prerequisites which were to mold the Jewish State into a highly civilized industrial model state. The fact that he had thought out his plan down to the final details lent a very authentic character to Herzl's vision.

More important to Herzl than the technical specifics which formed the basis for his project, was the fact that a mature idea stood behind his plan, and not some fantasy construction. "No one is strong or rich enough", he says in the introduction to *The Jewish State [Der Judenstaat]*, "to move a nation from one location to another. Only an idea can do that. The idea of a State has this kind of power." He continues: "The Jews have never stopped dreaming this majestic dream in all the nights of their history, 'Next year in Jerusalem!' is our ancient phrase. The thing to do now is to show how this dream can be turned into a reality for the light of day".^{297 8}



Figure 5: Theodor Herzl.

One noticeable distinction between Herzl and his predecessors is that he has taken into consideration the relationship between the State and religion for the proposed Jewish State, albeit in a particularly harmonious way. In his utopian novel *Old New Land [Altneuland]* published in 1902 which depicts future Palestine in the year 1920, the founding principles in the newly created society are cosmopolitanism and tolerance. “Zion is only Zion”, when tolerance reigns. There are no conflicts. The Arabs also have their place in Herzl’s *Old New Land [Altneuland]*. “What we have”, explains one of the novel’s protagonists, “we owe to the work performed by others before us. Our motto must be now and forevermore: You are my brother.”

The impression is made in the novel that the return of the Jews to Palestine could not create any kind of tension with the Arab population. *Old New Land [Altneuland]*, in Herzl’s visionary sketch, stretches past Beirut and Damascus, but the Arabs are enthusiastic members of the new society, a society in which it doesn’t matter if God “is worshiped in a temple, mosque, art museum or in a concert by the philharmonic”. Problems between the immigrants and locals don’t exist. When one of the novel’s characters says to an Arab: “You are really curious, you Mohammadians! Don’t you view these Jews as intruders?” he receives the reply, “Christian, how strangely you speak! Would you view someone as a robber who doesn’t take anything from you, but rather brings you something? The Jews have made us rich. Why should we be angry at them? They live with us like brothers. Why shouldn’t we love them?”²⁹

Eretz Israel: the Promised Land

As we know, the harmony between the Arabs and Jews that we so romantically encounter in Herzl’s novel *Old New Land [Altneuland]* has remained a pious hope until today. The (re-) settlement of the Ottoman province and later British Mandate of Palestine has not occurred without conflict. On the contrary, it has generated serious problems which the Jewish settlement of the West Bank, which Israel has occupied since the Six Day War in 1967, has not lessened.

The Jewish settlers in the West Bank today – often motivated by religion – are without question significantly different from those Zionist pioneers who propagated the return to Jewish soil, liberation through labor and the creation of an egalitarian and free society before the founding of the State. Still, Israel’s founding generation did not function in a vacuum, but within the context of a movement in which it was important to be able to invoke historical and national myths.

Whoever wishes to somehow understand the motivation behind current settlement policy in the State of Israel, or better: the motivation of the modern set-

tlers in the West Bank, cannot avoid making a comprehensive study of religious tradition and the historical roots of the Jewish State. This leads us once again to the pioneers of the Zionist movement and the question of how much ideology, pragmatism or religion shaped each of their ideas about the return to Eretz Israel.

Why did Hess, Pinsker, Rülf and other early Zionists push so vehemently for the colonization and settlement of Palestine? Was this a commitment based on a rational conviction? Or was this more of the traditional responsibility for their brothers in faith that they felt they had to fulfill? In any case, it is certain that they were primarily concerned with securing rights for the Jewish people and to create a safe asylum for them – in Palestine or somewhere else if necessary.

The writings of Hess, Pinsker and Rülf show – to varying degrees –, that they felt the return of the Jews to their native soil to be both necessary and desirable for many reasons. They had a dream of a more just world, a world in which Jews could walk through life with their heads held high. The creation of settlement societies and support of the Halutzim, the working class pioneers who set out to establish a series of agricultural colonies in Palestine in the early 1880s, were therefore considered to be even a moral duty.

Other early Zionists, such as the largely forgotten Adam Rosenberg (1858–1928), who set out to Palestine as early as 1891 for the New York Hovevei (Shavai) Zion association in order to buy land he felt would be suitable for colonization²⁹⁹, were steadfast in their conviction that there could be a more just world for Jews in the future. This did not have to remain an impossible dream. It would, however, be necessary for Jews to pick up the shovels and plough the fields for themselves. Only then, when the Jewish people showed that they were ready and able to do this, could the land be cultivated.

We can also assume that certain biblical promises played a role in the early Zionists' thinking, even when this was not always consciously expressed. Hess, Pinsker and Rülf certainly knew about the ties binding the Jews to the Holy Land, even if they did not want to have God's command to Abraham taken literally "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you." (Genesis 12:1).

There are around 50 known places in the Bible which all talk about promises of land. According to them, God had promised the Jews Canaan as their "ever-lasting covenant" ("To you I will give the land of Canaan as the portion you will inherit" Psalms 105:11). This is also proclaimed in the first book of Genesis where it says that God appeared to Abraham and said to him: "Look around from where you are, to the north and south, to the east and west. All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever. Go, walk through the length and breadth of the land, for I am giving it to you" (Genesis 13:14–17)

Hess, Pinsker and Rülf, as well as Theodor Herzl, had obviously adhered to the idea that according to the Jewish sense of identity, the history of the Jewish people is a history of salvation. If they were also thinking of themselves while writing their programmatic works, perhaps even dreaming of actively contributing to beginning the completion of Jewish history so that the salvation expected in Judaism could take place, must remain a matter of speculation.

In Herzl's case, we know that he saw himself not as the Messiah, but still as someone who could indeed take on the role of liberator, be it on the side of his people or of history. The mission that he believed he must accomplish was met with wide approval and so some contemporaries were convinced that the Messiah had indeed appeared in his person. An example of this could be seen in his appearance at the Congress in Basel in 1897.³⁰⁰

There, when Herzl approached the podium for the first time, he was met with boundless enthusiasm. People were applauding, stomping their feet and waving handkerchiefs in the air and shouting out "Yechi Hamelech! Long live the king!". A sense of the excitement can be felt in some eyewitness reports, for example, from the writer Mordechai Ben Ami, "It is no longer the elegant Dr. Herzl from Vienna, it is a royal descendant of David arisen from the grave who appears before us, shrouded in the greatness and beauty of fantasy and legend".³⁰¹

Mayer Ebner from Czernowitz, another participant at the Congress, was so overwhelmed by Herzl's appearance that even in later years he never was able to shake the idea that the Messiah himself had personally appeared before him: "When I saw him in his perfect beauty, when I looked into his eyes which seemed to hide a mystical secret, then I felt it in my soul: It is HIM, the most longed for, the deeply loved, the Lord's anointed, the Messiah".³⁰²

The idea of repossessing Eretz Israel, the land of the fathers, through settlement was and is without question a central part of Zionist ideology. Yet to what extent have rational political ideas and to what extent has religious self-consciousness played and continue to play a role? Since the 1970s up to today, new settler groups like Gush Emunim (Bloc of the faithful), with their spiritual fathers the Rabbi Abraham Kook (1865–1935) and his son Zvi Yehuda HaCohen Kook (1891–1982), see themselves as the true religious-Zionist revival movements.³⁰³ Israeli society on the whole displays a curious indifference toward this phenomenon.

The new settlers see the founding of Israel as a part of a holy plan, of a salvation process which specifically includes the occupation and settlement of all of Eretz Israel. Their convictions are based on Messianism, the sacredness of the people of Israel, the sacredness of the land and the sacredness of the Torah. The Rabbi and politician Yehuda Amital, himself more of a moderate, characterized this now completed transformation in the following words: "This Zionism isn't

trying to solve the problems of the Jews by founding a Jewish State, rather it is an instrument in the hands of God who is preparing the people of Israel for their salvation".³⁰⁴

Is it possible for the religious settlers of today in their ideas and goals to also relate back to the Zionist pioneers extensively described in this book? At least the programmatic works by Hess and Pinsker do not have that kind of explicitly religious ideas of salvation. Biblical references to their own ideas of Jewish self-determination and the national emancipation of the Jewish people are made only indirectly.

Moses Hess, for example, talks about the Holy Land and the return to the ancestral soil, but in *Rome and Jerusalem* his main view is that colonization should not take place out of mere enthusiasm for an idea, but that there must be a clear need for it. This need is not religious, but socio-economic. It is necessary for the Jewish people to realize this. According to Hess, only then would they be ready to emigrate to the land of their fathers.

There are no biblical references to be found in Pinsker's *Auto-emancipation!*. With just a few exceptions, he does not talk about the Holy Land or a return to the land of the fathers. The only time he uses the term Holy Land he wants to change it into "own land" which shows that he primarily thought in secular categories and was not looking to make a direct connection to traditional Judaism in the choice of his terminology.

This is similarly reflected in Pinsker's opening speech held at the Hovevi Zion delegate's conference in Katowice im November 1884. Here as well, he invokes religious connotations only indirectly. He does speak of the "Jewish people", from their "sacred power" and the "sacred duty" to cultivate the "holy" earth, but goes no further than that. Pinsker talks about "supporting the Jewish colonies in Palestine", but does not talk about if and to what extent an historical claim to the land on which "Jewish colonies" should be built could be derived.³⁰⁵

In contrast to Hess and Pinsker, Isaak Rülf did try to establish a direct connection between the Holy Land and the State to be founded on the territory of Palestine. Rülf writes in *Aruchas Bas-Ammi*, "We may no longer let ourselves be counted as intruding, homeland-less people unfit to hold any rights or to make contracts with. We must aspire, in whatever form and by whatever means, *to regain our original homeland, the land of our fathers and re-create the Jewish State*".³⁰⁶

In another passage, Rülf repeats Pinsker's formula that only the Holy Land can be the Jewish people's "own land". For the Rabbi from Memel, only Palestine could be considered for the creation of a Jewish State, because, according to his reasoning, just as Italy belongs to the Italians, Egypt to the Egyptians, Palestine

belongs to the Jews: “It is ‘the land that which the Lord sware unto your fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon the earth’” (Deuteronomy 11:21).

As Rülf writes in the final chapter of *Aruchas Bas-Ammi* entitled “Cherus”, “It is the land which belongs to us, not only by the rights of God, but also by the rights of the nations ... It is the land where our fathers and mothers lived, stayed, changed and made an impact, where our prophets lived and taught, where our holy sites stood, from where God’s teaching and God’s word come ...”³⁰⁷.

The question if whether the Jewish people could derive a legitimate claim to the Holy Land was answered with a resounding “yes” by Rülf and most of the early Zionists. Their arguments were mostly based on political and social considerations. They were thinking of the bloody pogroms in the East and the palpable collective rejection in the West. They were dreaming of a free society, one in which Jews could live as equals among equals.

To give these dreams shape, to reinforce the Jewish people’s right to the land between the River Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea, they occasionally used biblical images and visions, just as Theodor Herzl did a few years later at the Second Zionist Congress in 1898. “If there is any legitimate claim to a piece of land on this earth at all”, he exclaimed to the delegate’s prolonged shouts and applause, “then all people who believe in the Bible must recognize the right of the Jews”.³⁰⁸

The term Eretz Israel, which had become a permanent fixture in the Zionist vocabulary, underwent a change in meaning at the time. Increasingly, it was now no longer used to mean the Holy Land, the ancestral soil praised in prayer, but rather the Promised Land. This is a significant difference and shows that Palestine was more than a territory to be settled for the early Zionists in the period pre-, post- and of Herzl.

The term in its new meaning was not only a promise, but was also understood as a hope that by re-settling Palestine, messianic salvation would be that much closer. This was probably the real reason for many Eastern European Jews as to why they followed Herzl’s call and joined the Zionist movement.

At the same time, it is striking that most of the settlers, then as well as now, have developed no precise idea of the borders of the land they feel at one with and that they settled in the past or hope to in the future. Generally, they refer to Numbers (34:1-12) and Ezekiel (47:13-20) for the settlement; accordingly no person, but God lay down the borders of Israel. The territory concerned lies between the Euphrates and the Nile. These are “promised” borders, but they are not borders that could be given legitimacy by international law today.

Still, up to now at least those Israelis belonging to the national-religious camp feel that the territories occupied in the Six Day War are not territories conquered in war, but liberated land (Judea and Samaria). With their settlement, God’s will is being done and the process of messianic salvation begun. There-

fore, the religious settler ideologies in particular categorically reject giving up the conquered territory, as that would contradict the will of God in their view. Today’s settlement movement clearly embodies an old messianic dream awaiting its historical fulfillment.

Assuming that the settlement movement has religious roots at its core, then the question arises if the modern settlement activities in “Judea and Samaria” aren’t really a “revival movement of classical Zionism”.³⁰⁹ This hypothesis is supported by the fact that the settlement projects around Jerusalem and in the West Bank, which have generated massive criticism worldwide, have historical role models and might be able to call upon ideas set out in the early Zionist movement. However, this hypothesis still requires a historically comprehensive, exacting examination.

Zionism and the “Arab question”

Only a very few observers doubt that every new Jewish settlement in the West Bank adds more “fuel to the fire” to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and aggravates the already difficult peace negotiations. Still, it’s worth taking a look back – and the question may be raised to what extent the Jewish-Arab conflict could have already been out of control even before the founding of the State of Israel in 1948.

It has long been argued that the early Zionists did not place any real importance in the “Arab question”. However, as historians have discovered in the meantime, this view is only partially correct.³¹⁰ Theodor Herzl barely concerned himself with the matter, or not even at all. However, in his circle and in the first generation of settlers, there were indeed men who had recognized and articulated the fact that the settlement of the land could be problematic.

One of those who warned of possible mistakes in the settlement of Palestine early on, and who predicted that the ignorance about the other inhabitants of the land would cause problems, was the already mentioned philosopher and journalist Asher Ginsberg. He went by the name of Achad Haam, “one of the people”. Hovevei Zion had sent him to Palestine twice in 1890 and 1893. He published two essays afterward in *Hameliz*, in which he pointed out that every person who wished to buy land and property there could do so to their heart’s desire, but they should also be aware that there were Arabs who were living on said land.

In one of the essays, Ginsberg commented that the local large property owners and the farmers living in Palestine were not particularly interested in selling their land to newcomers. In his report “Die Wahrheit aus Palästina” [The truth from Palestine], he made the perspicuous observation: “We here abroad

tend to believe that the Arabs are all wild, on the same level as animals and don't understand what's going on around them. This is, however, a big mistake."

Ginsberg continued:

"The Arabs have like all Semites a sharp intellect and are very shrewd. In all of the towns in Syria and Palestine there are many Arab traders who know how to exploit the masses and cheat their customers just like in Europe. The Arabs and particularly the city dwellers see through what we're doing here in the country and why, but remain silent and don't let anything on because they don't now see any danger for their future in what we're doing. They are just trying to exploit us as well, to use the new guests as much as they can and laugh in their sleeves about it afterwards (...) However, if the time will come when the life of our people will be so far developed that the rural [Arab-Palestinian] population feels less restricted, then they will also not easily give up their place to us".³¹¹

Asher Ginsberg proved to be much more prescient about the "Arab question" in Palestine than the three Zionist pioneers presented here. A perusal of the writings and published opinions of Moses Hess shows, for example, that the Arabs didn't play any special role at all in his thinking. This also holds true for Pinsker and Rülf, from whom no relevant statements have survived. Like Hess, they would have been of the opinion – even if they never admitted it explicitly – that the Arabs wouldn't have any objections to a Jewish settlement of Palestine and would accept it happening.

There is no doubt that the early Zionist pioneers left opportunities to possibly come to an arrangement with the Arabs living in Palestine unused. Growing disagreements would perhaps have been avoided and some of the problems which seem insurmountable in the Israeli-Arab-Palestinian conflict today could have possibly been eliminated already before 1948 or 1967.

However, the Zionist leadership, most of who came from Central Europe, lived in the illusory belief that they were acting in a political vacuum, which is unfortunately too often overlooked in the current debates. It never occurred to most of them that Muslims could also be living in Palestine along with Jews and Christians. A statement Amos Elon claimed Max Nordau made to Herzl is telling; "There are Arabs in Palestine! I didn't know that! Then we are committing an injustice!"³¹²

This story may not be true, but it does basically characterize the attitude of the Zionist leadership at the time, who thought that Palestine was an empty country which was waiting to be settled and cultivated by Jewish settlers. The possibility that a local opposition could exist was completely ignored in this thought process. This problem is barely mentioned in the writings and letters of

Hess, Kalischer, Pinsker, Rülf, Herzl and others, and what there is essentially only alludes to it, hardly making a point or offering possible solutions.

When the Palestinian Arabs are mentioned, their historical claim or right to live in Palestine is not. Not without good reason have well-known critics of Zionism, including Nahum Goldmann, one of the great men in modern Jewish history, pointed out that it was, “one of the biggest historical mistakes in thinking in Zionism that the Arab aspect was not seriously taken into consideration by the founding of the Jewish homeland”³¹³. By and large this lack of foresight reflected the spirit of the times. Herzl and his friends had no idea in developing their early Zionist claims that Palestinian Arabs could be the victims of their targeted policies. Their attitude toward the Palestinian Arabs was clear insofar as they did not take the interests of the local population into consideration in their deliberations, but only thought about the Jewish-Zionist perspective.

Their way of thinking was ultimately conform with the widespread idea in Europe at the time that colonialism was a necessary step to bring the people of Asia and Africa closer to the “achievements of European civilization”. As it says in Herzl’s *The Jewish State [Der Judenstaat]*, “We would be a part of the rampart against Asia there [Palestine] for Europe; we would serve as the outposts of culture against barbarianism”.³¹⁴

This kind of statement, similar to ones found again and again in the writings, diaries and speeches of other leading Zionists, clearly reflects an indifferent and ignorant approach by Zionist ideology toward the Arab question in Palestine at the time. Amos Elon was therefore correct in his estimation of the leading early Zionists as being a “mixture of naiveté, wishful thinking, patriarchal benevolence and ignorance”³¹⁵.

Before World War I, there were only a few voices which warned of disregarding the Arabs, thinking of them as simpleminded, or treating them like barbarians. Suggestions of compromise from men like Asher Ginsberg or the teacher and writer Yizchak Epstein fell on deaf ears. Completely consumed by the intent of becoming established in an inhabitable and foreign climate, the first Zionists considered the Arab question not to be as important and seemed to hope that the problem would go away by itself if they just ignored it.

Instead of thinking of ways that they could be able to come to an understanding with the local Arab population, people wanted to listen to men like Israel Zangwill, who categorically demanded: “Give a country without a nation to a nation without a country”.³¹⁶ The few attempts at Arab-Zionist reconciliation taken before World War I were doomed to fail, not so much because the Arabs were suspicious of an understanding, but because the Zionist leadership underestimated the developing Arab national movement and were also not prepared to meet the demands of the Palestinian Arabs in any way, shape or form.³¹⁷

Due to the simple fact that the need for a compromise was not recognized, any kind of understanding receded into the distance. The idea presented by Max I. Bodenheimer at the Sixth Zionist Congress, that Jewish colonization in Palestine would lead to cultural and economic prosperity for the Arabs³¹⁸, was therefore wishful thinking, or better – an illusion. The actual developments ran rather in the opposite direction; a resolution had already been passed at the Fifth Congress in 1901 so that no Arab workers would be employed by Jewish businesses.

This resolution, which originally stemmed from the slogan popularized by David Gordon, the pioneer and theoretician of the Jewish worker's movement, "Avoda Ivrit" (Jewish labor), aimed at the creation of a separate economic sector for the new immigrants. Those more far-sighted, such as the German Jewish sociologist Arthur Ruppин³¹⁹, considered one of the "fathers of the settler's movement", recognized where this step would lead and warned of the direction taken. Still, such reservations when expressed were not listened to.

Those willing to compromise, who wanted talks with the Arabs, remained in the minority. Others prevailed who were more influential, for example Menachem Ussischkin, a former Hibbat Zion activist who had already attended the 1st Congress in Basel in 1897. Ussischkin, who in the following years would become one of the speakers of the revisionist camp, was of the opinion that in order to create a Jewish State in Palestine, it would be necessary, "for all of the land in Palestine or at least the greatest part of it [to become] Jewish property". To achieve this goal, one of the prerequisites would be to "replace Arab workers with Jews" in the factories and businesses.³²⁰

For Arthur Ruppин and some of his contemporaries who had displayed an interest in a real compromise with the Arabs, it was a painful realization to have to observe that Zionist policy was now developing in different direction. Ruppин wrote of disappointment as well as the growing concern about the increasing number of conflicts and level of tension in his diary. "The most difficult thing", he wrote on March 11, 1920, "seems to me to be the Arab question. I have recurring nightmares that without a friendly understanding with the Arabs, all of our work in Palestine is built on sand, and on the other hand we aren't even sure if and how such an understanding would be possible."³²¹

At Arthur Ruppин's initiative, the association Brit Shalom (peace alliance) was founded in 1925³²², whose members included leading Jewish intellectuals and professors at the Hebrew University including Martin Buber, Hugo Bergmann, Hans Kohn, Gershom Scholem and Ernst Simon. The aim of Brit Shalom was to "investigate the problem of Jewish-Arab relations and contemplate measures to improve relations between the two nations".³²³ Proposals were worked out which specified the economic and cultural cooperation down to the last detail.

According to the ideas of Brit Shalom, the Arab population should be inherently equal to the Jews in their national and civil rights. Ruppin was thinking of a bi-national State at this point, a State in which, “Jews and Arabs could live side by side as two equal nations”. At the 16th Zionist Congress in 1929 in Zurich, Ruppin came out against the Jews’ having the sole claim to power in Palestine. “We want to avoid the mistake,” he explained, “that has reigned in Europe for a century and which led to the catastrophe of the World War, that in one State only one nationality can rule [...] We want to fight against the chauvinism that we abhor in other nations in ourselves, as well”.³²⁴

The idea of a bi-national State was never able to prevail against the majority in the Zionist movement and against the hostile attitude of the Arabs. The historian Aaron Cohen was therefore correct when he asserted that the ideas, “were little more than pious hopes which could not be translated into practical politics”.³²⁵ In particular, the Zionist Revisionists, who did not want to make any compromise whatsoever, were not prepared to stray from their proclaimed policy of power and strength.

The stated aims for the Zionist Revisionists as formulated in 1925 were, as “the condition of being a minority [...] is the basic evil of the Jewish situation. Political, economic and spiritual Jewish misery can only be alleviated in a State with our own ruling class [...] Being the majority is the fundamental requirement, the highest priority for every Zionist action. Being the majority and the Jewish State are identical for us. All of our work and all of our efforts must be directed toward creating this our own State as soon as possible”.³²⁶

Despite the promises made at the Zionist Congresses in 1921, 1925 and 1929, that the Jewish immigrants wanted to live with their Arab fellow citizens in peace, the historical development shows that it was not possible to come to an understanding with the Palestinian Arabs. If this was due primarily to the inflexible attitude of the Yishuv politicians responsible, the lack of a willingness to enter into negotiations on the side of the Arab leaders or to a mutual resistance, requires further analysis.

What is clear is that the British Mandate authorities bear a large portion of the guilt and responsibility for the increasingly worsening conflict. They established a series of enquiry committees in the 1920s and 30s, yet for various reasons did not understand how to reach reconciliation between the parties’ interests. At the same time, as time went on, the Yishuv politicians as well as the Arab leaders were demonstrating less and less willingness to accept proposals for compromise. They had obviously already become too divided.

For the Yishuv political leaders, the “Arab question” became less and less important and was negligible after the Nazis came to power in Germany. The Zionist movement received a surprising, but also decisive impetus from the Jew

baiting which had been unleashed throughout Central Europe. A previously unknown sense of togetherness and solidarity developed amongst the Jews all over the world. The illegal immigration of Jews to Palestine was promoted against the resistance of the British Mandate administration. The land that Jews from all over the world had only been vaguely dreaming about had suddenly become a real place of asylum.

A peaceful rapprochement between Arabs and Jews like Arthur Ruppin and his friends had imagined became even more unlikely under these circumstances. The Zionist leadership in Yishuv could no longer be willing to take Arab and British opposition to an accelerated Jewish immigration into consideration due to the pressure of the daily reports of horrors from Europe. For the next few years, all attention was focused on creating living space and an intact infrastructure for the growing number of newcomers – particularly through new settlements and enlarging towns and cities. The Arab population in Palestine found themselves in a defensive position for which they were neither directly nor indirectly responsible.

The (non-)resolution of a dilemma

The three protagonists of pre-Herzl Zionism introduced here, Moses Hess, Leon Pinsker and Isaak Rülf, could not have predicted the intensity that would develop in the, at their time, only partially emerging conflict with the Arab population. We can therefore only speculate how Hess, Pinsker and Rülf would have acted in the “Arab questions” if they had been alive. Perhaps they would have spoken out in favor of arming the Yishuv and supported the founding of organizations such as HaShomer (the guard), who acted according to the motto “Judea had fallen in blood and fire and in blood and fire it will rise again”, and who took over guarding the settlements in Galilee before World War I.

That “foreign” territories would be purposefully appropriated by means of force would seem inconceivable to the three great minds presented here. The closest they come to this would be some formulations found in Isaak Rülf’s writings from which it could be deduced that, were he faced with the choice, he would have encouraged an active occupation of the land. A passage from *Arucha Bas-Ammi* seems to support this view, as he explains, “It is the land which belongs to us, not only by the rights of God, but also by the rights of the nations.”

We can only speculate how Hess, Pinsker and Rülf would view the situation today. Maybe they would accept further settlement activities. But maybe they would be actively trying to reach an agreement with the Arab population and

therefore refrain from building more settlements. These must remain theoretical conjectures.

Regardless of how we evaluate the developments up to now: 130 years after the beginning of Zionist settlement, a comprehensive and permanent resolution to the conflict between (Jewish) Israelis and Arab Palestinians is now more distant than ever. If despite this we still would like to contemplate what could actually be done to mitigate the conflict, we cannot avoid focusing on three inextricably intertwined essential aspects: firstly, the lack of an exactly drawn border between the State of Israel and its neighboring countries; secondly, Israel's proactive settlement policy; and thirdly, the refusal to recognize the Jewish State in the Arab world.

Concerning the borderline, in the Middle East we're talking about lines randomly drawn by the Entente at a conference table. In both the secret British-French Sykes-Picot Agreement in 1916³²⁷, as well as at the San Remo conference in April 1920, the primary goal was clearly demarcating the spheres of interest between Great Britain and France in the region. Great Britain received Palestine on both sides of the River Jordan as well as Iraq. France got Syria and quickly installed the Christian-dominated Lebanon on it, cementing the division of Syria which led to continual conflict in the region up to today.

The Palestine Mandate, which was conferred on Great Britain at the San Remo conference, proved to contain contradictions and even a few flaws in its construction as we now know today. The conflict between the Jewish immigrants and the local Arab population was not mitigated by the tasks set out in the Mandate, but rather became downright institutionalized.

The Mandate's conditions did take into the consideration the Balfour Declaration which had promised in 1917 the "establishment of a national home for the Jewish people", yet did not contain any protective measures for the Arabs residing in Palestine. Ever increasing tensions were therefore bound to occur.

To curb the now periodically erupting conflicts between Jews and Arabs, in June 1922, before the Mandate itself came into effect, the British government divided the Mandate area into two parts. One was the area west of the River Jordan where the "Jewish national home" should be, and the other was the Emirate Transjordan east of the River Jordan. However, the borders between the two territories were not precisely determined. This did not happen later, either, when members of diverse commissions (the Peel commission and the Woodhead commission) racked their brains about how to solve the Arab-Jewish problem territorially.

A practicable political solution seemed to first appear on the horizon only after World War II, when on November 29, 1947 the United Nations General Assembly voted in favor of dividing Palestine into a Jewish and an Arab State. The Jewish population accepted the partition plan, but the Arabs rejected it. The

reasons for this rejection are the same ones that Arab politicians continue to express today, and have at their core the denial of the legitimacy of a Jewish State in the Middle East.

When on May 14, 1948, the modern State of Israel was founded, there immediately followed a military attack from several Arab states, in the wake of which the Israeli army was, however, able to win the advantage after fierce combat. A further result of the military operation was that 750,000 Palestinians lost their homes.

Israel was at the time able to expand its territory in part beyond the borders of the original UN partition plan, and take over numerous towns and villages that Arabs had been living in. The Armistice Agreements that were ultimately reached were fragile, yet put an end to the direct military clashes for the moment.

The demarcation line set out in the Armistice Agreements (the Green Line) was in force until the beginning of June 1967, i.e. until Israel saw no other choice but to execute a preventative strike against its three neighboring countries (Egypt, Syria, and Jordan). These had, supported by Lebanon, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the Soviet Union, called up their armies and were preparing for a final armed attack on the Jewish State.

In the following six days, (the Six Day War), the Israeli military was able to capture the entire Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank including East Jerusalem and the Syrian Golan Heights. This did not solve the conflict, however, but simply postponed a solution. The tension between Israel and its Arab neighbors continued for years afterwards.

It was only through the negotiations of the US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger that the covert and open conflicts which had continued since 1967 came to an end, at least in part. The negotiations, which took place in 1978 based on Resolution 242 of the UN Security Council (which demands the exchange of land for peace without requiring that Israel return all areas captured in war), at least led to a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel (the Camp David Accords). The government in Jerusalem considered the treaty to be a great success at the time, even though it did not prove to be very durable, for this represented the first time that Israel had been legally recognized by an Arab country.

In the agreement that Israel and Egypt concluded at the time, the most controversial questions (the status of Jerusalem, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights) were left aside, but at least there was agreement that the Gaza Strip and the West Bank would receive a five year autonomy status. The borderline between Israel and Egypt was demarcated, diplomatic relations were begun between Cairo and Jerusalem, and Israel committed itself to recognizing the “legitimate rights of the Palestinians”.

In the meantime, however, the settlement of the West Bank had become a hotly debated topic in Israel. Two diametrically opposite positions stood and stand to this day in Israeli society. The hawks (i.e. the supporters of a hardline position) in Israel are not prepared to vacate the occupied territories due to security and ideological concerns. The doves (the moderates), on the other hand, have supported and continue to support, with the preservation of certain security interests, a wide pull-out from the occupied territories if this would enable an agreement for a peaceful co-existence for Palestinians and Jewish Israelis.

The stances of both political camps hardened starting in 1977 when Israeli's hawks took over the government and began to set a distinctively different tone in their policies. The visions of a Greater Israel began to appear in various party programs and campaign platforms. Likud politicians spoke of the indivisibility of the country and declared that there would be no other sovereign power in the land between the River Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea than the Jewish one.

In the political discourse over the last decades, terms such as "Eretz Israel" and "Eretz Israel Ha Shlema" (the whole land of Israel) have become common. These terms and their use in politics show that the demand to hold on to the occupied territories definitely enjoys support in society. Joint regulations as to how the occupied territories will be dealt with in the future are further impaired by the terminology used. Misinterpretations are bound to occur.

Concerning settlement policy and its practical implementation, the right wing parties (including Likud), which have dominated the government in Jerusalem since 1977, have developed a series of strategies to maintain the status quo. Almost no Israeli government since 1967 has been prepared to give up all of the occupied territories.³²⁸ Most of them were and remain only willing to accept smaller corrections.

The supporters of an accelerated settlement policy do so often to pursue two goals at the same time. On the one hand, they believe that the systematic construction of settlements can provide those parts of the Jewish population who are unable to afford a comfortable apartment in the Israel mainland with affordable housing. On the other, they want to entrench the Jewish claim to the biblical areas of Judea and Samaria in the West Bank through directed settlement.

The primarily ideologically motivated settlers are not concerned about criticism from fellow Israelis or abroad because they – and here they have something in common with the views held by the early Zionists of this book – view the settlement of the biblical land as an historical mission enjoined upon the Jewish people. They are convinced if they settle the land, then they will have come a little closer to salvation.

This kind of thinking, although at times eschatological, can be found in a particularly compact form in the platform and program of Gush Emunim (bloc of

the faithful). This extraparliamentary group was founded in 1974 and feels called upon to promote more Jewish settlement of the West Bank.³²⁹ For the supporters of this basically fundamentalist-religious movement, the occupation of Eretz Israel and the expanding sovereignty to the areas west of the River Jordan is a duty ordained by God which should not only be followed, but fulfilled.

This duty is the equivalent of a religious commandment and is seen by the settlers as the basis for the national revival of the Jewish people. According to the views of Gush Emunim ideologists, this revival movement will also “cure” all of the other problems facing the Jewish people. Here as well, we find a wording which is spontaneously reminiscent of Isaak Rülf and *Aruchas Bas Ammi*, in which a “remedy for Israel” is propagated.

To what extent the settlement projects in the West Bank over the last decades are legally permissible is highly controversial. The UN Security Council, for example, has called the construction of settlements illegal in numerous resolutions. Right-wing Israeli politicians, on the other hand, have taken the position that the West Bank and the Gaza Strip have never been a part of a sovereign state since the end of the Ottoman Empire, so that there are no obstacles to “Jewish” settlement of these areas.

Since the 1970s, the Palestinian reply to the Jewish settlement of the West Bank – and of the Gaza Strip for a long time – has been massive protests, political demonstrations, but also terrorism in various forms. Devastating acts of terrorism have been directed by no means only against Israel, but also against Jewish people and civil Jewish organizations all over the world.

For a time, the Oslo peace process seemed to offer incipient stages toward a solution to the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. A series of accords (Oslo I, Oslo II, Wye I, Wye II, Camp David II) reflected the efforts made in the early 1990s to find a serious compromise solution. At least there was one success in that both sides agreed to recognize the other. Israel’s Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin accepted the PLO as the official representative of the Palestinians for Israel. The PLO for their part agreed to eliminate those passages in their charter which contained the goal of the destruction of Israel.

However, the negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians quickly stalled once again, as no agreement could ultimately be reached on contested issues of Jerusalem, the refugee problem, border demarcation and the status of the Jewish settlements. Both sides subsequently blamed the other for the collapse of the lengthy negotiations.

The rapprochement process begun in Oslo in 1993 met its final demise with the second Intifada (2000–2005). An alternative peace plan by the Middle East quartet (the United Nations, the United States of America, the European Union and Russia) did not change anything. The plan for action presented by the

quartet in 2002, generally referred to as the Road Map, was intended to establish a gradual peaceful co-existence between Israel and an independent Palestinian state through negotiations and ratified agreements, yet it raised concerns from the very beginning.

This was mainly relating to the fact that the plan was based on having the Palestinian leadership recognize the right of the State of Israel to exist, and that Israel agree to a two state solution. This would entail that Israel refrain from building more settlements. Israel agreed to the proposal with reservations and modifications, but the Palestinian politicians did not think it possible to accept the previous status quo of settlements in the West Bank and the annexation of East Jerusalem.

The dilemma, which is obviously becoming increasingly difficult to solve, is that by now there are around 300,000 Jewish Israelis living in about 200 settlements and 150 so-called outposts in the occupied territories. Finding a solution to this problem that is mutually acceptable for both sides equally, the Palestinians as well as the Israelis, appears to be almost impossible in the present circumstances.

What can still be done in this situation? Is there even a chance left to reach an agreement? If so, then it seems that the first step necessary would be for both sides to curtail some of their ideological convictions and maximal demands. The Israelis, for example, would not be able to continue to deny the Palestinians' national claims in reality. The Palestinians would, for their part, have to bring themselves to actually recognize the State of Israel's right to exist, which has proven difficult for them up to now.

This last point would, however, mean that the Palestinian politicians could not just pay lip service to the general idea, but would have to commit themselves to ensuring that there would be no more terror attacks on Jewish individuals and civil institutions in Israel or abroad in the future.

The real obstacle standing in the way of an agreement being reached is the fact that both sides, the Israelis as well as the Palestinians, vehemently insist that they are owed the historical right to the land. There are many people convinced on both sides that they have a legitimate claim to all of the land between the River Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea, or "the land between the river and the sea" as the area is called by the Palestinians.

Finding a compromise which would be fair to the claims of both sides is extremely difficult for this reason. The bi-national state project proposed by Arthur Ruppин, Martin Buber and the members of Brit Shalom in the 1920s does not appear to be a realistic option any more, in light of all the experiences made in the meantime.

A general set formula which both sides could agree upon does not appear to be in sight at the present time. The sole realistic option now seems to be the founding of an independent Palestinian State in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Approval for the founding of such a state would, however, require that not only the borderlines be defined in a mutually acceptable way and recognized by international law, but also that Israel's security needs be considered. There the concern remains that the Arab world is still prepared to invade the country at the first best opportunity and push its Jewish inhabitants into the sea.

Whichever compromise formula that is discussed in the future: Israel will likely no longer agree to solution which would require it to unconditionally give up the settlements established over the last decades in the municipal area of Jerusalem. The continued existence of residential quarters such as Gilo (1971), Neve Ya'acov (1972), East Talpiot (1973), Pisgat Ze'ev (1985), Har Homa (1991) or Ramat Shlomo (1994) is no longer questioned by the majority of Israelis. These residential neighborhoods are now seen as Jewish areas in the no longer divisible Jerusalem.

If we, however, continue to think about the option of an independent Palestinian State, then this doesn't only mean demarcating the borderline. The future status of Jerusalem must also be determined. It would also be a matter of contention that a majority of the settlements in the West Bank would have to be abandoned, similar to how in 2005 Ariel Sharon withdrew from 21 Israeli settlements in the Gaza Strip. It remains open if this fact could in any case be conveyed to Israeli politics and Israeli society.

The Israeli settlements in the West Bank, some of which have become real cities, such as Maale Adummim (1975) or Modi'in Illit (1994), are seen as illegal according to international law by the international community. This did not, however, put a stop to further Israeli settlement activities. Maale Adummim, which is seven kilometers or about four and a half miles from Jerusalem, has grown in the meantime to around 35,000 inhabitants. Modi'in Illit, whose population consists mostly of ultra-Orthodox Jews, has grown to about 50,000.

Opponents of the settlements, for example, the Israeli peace organization Shalom Achshav (Peace Now), invoke the Hague Conventions concerning war on land and the Geneva Conventions. In the Hague regulation concerning war on land it famously states, "private property cannot be confiscated [by and occupying power]". Peace Now activists take this to mean that the settlements in the West Bank were constructed illegally.

In contrast, the military administration and the Israeli courts after them start from the premise that the cases called into question do not involve private property, but land in state ownership for which there is only limited private right of

use. Therefore, it is argued, the construction of houses and settlements is permitted on this land.

In the last few years, there were a series of motions from Palestinian Arabs pending in the Israeli Supreme Court which aimed at reversing the dispossession of their property. The decisions passed down – with a few exceptions – rejected the motions, usually with the same justification concerning Israel's security needs.

If the settlements built in the last decades aren't to be evacuated or dismantled (with the explicit exception of settlements like Maale Adumim or Modi'in Illit, which would go to Israel in a possible peace agreement), then the only conceivable alternative is to let them continue to remain, if under different framework conditions.

This would mean that settlements such as Kiryat Arba³³⁰ on the Eastern outskirts of Hebron would no longer be under Israeli protection, but would be subject to Palestinian sovereignty. This again would mean that the inhabitants of these settlements be faced with a difficult personal decision: namely, if they should leave or stay under conditions yet to be defined, and possibly as citizens not of a Jewish, but of a Palestinian State. This is a theoretically imaginable solution, but one which would be not very realistic in practice.

Furthermore, taking into consideration the fact that the Arab neighboring countries (Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan) have made no effort at all in the last decades to dissolve their Palestinian refugee camps and integrate these inhabitants into their surrounding societies, makes Israel's unwillingness to compromise easier to explain, particularly as the standpoint can be taken that many Jews in the Middle East and North Africa (in Yemen, Syria, Iraq and the Maghreb) have had to endure a similar fate of being displaced or a refugee at the same time. This fact is generally ignored or only insufficiently discussed in the international debates in particular.

Those radical “proposals” of a population transfer, i.e. those which aim to create ethnically homogenous areas are, of course, unacceptable. “Ethnic cleansings” are banned under international law and are correctly considered today to be a crime against humanity. Such extremist demands continue to be made on occasion, but are rejected by most Israeli politicians.

Radical resettlement projects, like those undertaken after the end of World War II, e.g. the expulsion of 160,000 Turks from Bulgaria, the banishment 120,000 Slovaks from Hungary into Czechoslovakia or the displacement of millions of Germans out of the Sudetenland in Czechoslovakia, – with the approval of Great Britain, the Soviet Union and the United States it should be noted –, are no longer a viable option today.

Still, in order to reach a realistic and sustainable compromise solution which could be accepted by the Israeli majority society – this is naturally also a problem for the Palestinian-Arab population group under different auspices –, then some fundamental things must be discussed.

For example, the question must be answered if the goals held by Herzl-type Zionism would even be able play a role today similar to that which it played in the times before the founding of the State in 1948. In particular, the close connection between religion and State which has increasingly grown into a burden for Israeli internal and foreign policy in the last few years must undergo an intensive re-thinking and re-evaluation.

Does it make sense to re-invoke the founding fathers of Zionism and a re-evaluation of their ideas in this context? They knew the Orthodox Judaism of their time well, yet only partly identified with it. They probably would also not be able to imagine that ultra-Orthodox Judaism would one day play such an influential role as it does in Israel today.

Certain political decisions are now being made invoking the Torah, which is actually an unimaginable trend for an enlightened democracy. Concerning modern-day Israel, the “religious-ultra-Orthodox-nationalist assault” (Amnon Rubinstein), if continued to be left to its own devices, could develop into a general threat to the democratic structure of the State.

Surveys conducted by the Tami Steinmetz Center for Peace Studies at the University of Tel Aviv verify the fears expressed by Amnon Rubinstein and Gershon Gorenberg, (who considers himself to be a leftist Zionist among the Orthodox), that sooner or later the Jewish State could be in danger of developing into a Jewish ethnocracy.³³¹ This is most likely if Israel continues to bow to the pressure of religious-Orthodox circles and neglects its duty, “to preserve the rules of democracy and guarantee complete equality to all of its inhabitants, including the right of its Arab population to also have a say in decisions concerning their future”.³³²

Naturally, there are many more prominent Israelis who think like the legal scholar and politician Amnon Rubinstein, who is considered a “dove” in Israel. Several historians and sociologists who had become known as the “post-Zionists”, – including Avi Shlaim, Tom Segev and Shlomo Sand –, have sparked a controversial debate³³³ with their demand that Israel must re-evaluate its historical self-image. Traditional Zionism no longer provides suitable answers to the pressing questions of today, in their view.

The “new historians”, as they are also known, not only doubt that the Arabs are following a coordinated plan to destroy Israel, but also hold the view that Herzl-type Zionism cannot revive the gridlocked peace process.³³⁴ If that is really the case, then it would indeed be urgently necessary to embark on new, unconventional ways of solving the conflict.

However, this seems easier said than done. The State of Israel, which defines itself explicitly as the “Jewish” state or as the “State of Jews”, is not a secular state in the classical sense. In Israel, the synagogue and state or religion and state have never been separate from one another in the way they are in countries such as France or the United States. Only a minority of mostly secular and liberal thinkers in the population support a strict separation between religion and politics in Israel today.

In order to excogitate the problem from a deeper historical perspective, it might be advised to consider Moses Mendelssohn’s *Jerusalem, or on religious power and Judaism* published in 1783. The worldly-wise “Berlin Socrates” had already at the end of the 18th century pointed out the fundamental contradiction existing between religion and state, and the fact that it was important for people to be aware of this.

The politics of a country, Mendelssohn wrote in his epoch-making essay, may in no way be restricted by religious teachings. On the other hand, according to Mendelssohn, the state is required to assume a neutral position in questions of religious denomination. For Mendelssohn, it was unacceptable when the church, or the synagogue in our case, presumes the state’s authority for itself³³⁵, as is happening now in Israel.

However, Mendelssohn’s warnings come from another time and were made in a different context. They apply to the present day and the Jewish State understandably only to a limited extent, yet in my opinion they have still retained some relevance. The Torah and the Halacha determine more in Israeli politics today that people would like to admit. This can be seen, for example, where the country understands itself to be the “Jewish” State and believes it must sanction things like the construction of settlements on religious grounds.

This fact makes it clear that we’re not only dealing with a national-ethnic or territorial problem, but with a conflict which is religiously charged on both sides. From this standpoint, the Israelis and Palestinians are facing each other in this conflict not only as two opponents defined as nations. Also fundamentalist Jews (Gush Emunim and others) and Islamic zealots (Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and Hezbollah) are clashing, and all of whom deeply mistrust the politics of peace and of territorial compromise.

Just how complicated the situation has become can be seen in the fact that there is not only common mistrust on both sides, but also that nobody knows how to get out of the position that they have gotten themselves into. The majority of Israelis is in favor of an agreement with the Palestinians, but is also scared of taking such a step. The conflict is considered unresolvable, but at the same time no one wants to live with the uncomfortable feeling of being both a democracy and an occupying force.

That Herzl's Zionism is not able to provide answers suitable to the urgent problems of today is becoming more and more obvious. With the founding of the State of Israel in 1948, the original goal set, the creation of a "home secured under public law" (Basel Program, 1897) was completely fulfilled. In a way, this meant that Herzl-type Zionism had made itself redundant.

The land of sanctuary for persecuted Jews as Herzl and the early Zionists had had in mind, and as was ultimately established, has become a completely normal country like every other. One of its main problems is that it stands apart internationally, is not recognized by all countries and is considered to be a "foreign body" particularly in the region. Diplomatic relations, fragile though they may be, only exist with the neighboring countries of Egypt and Jordan up to today. Lebanon and Syria, both of the other neighboring countries, have not been able to bring themselves to recognize the State of Israel up to now and refuse to establish diplomatic relations.

It seems illusory to think that this attitude will change in the foreseeable future. In radical Palestinian circles and in most Arab states apparently only one "solution" comes into consideration, according to which Israel must cease to exist as a "Jewish" State. This is a formulation that the majority of Jews in Israel cannot accept, because the Jewish identity of the State of Israel does not and cannot be subject to negotiation.

An additional, equally difficult to overcome dilemma arises from the so-called Law of Return, ratified by Israel's parliament, the Knesset, on July 5, 1950. This law, which allows all Jews worldwide to immigrate to Israel and reside there, is understandably vexing and problematic for Palestinian Arabs insofar as the right to return to their former homes is not permitted. Palestinians who fled or were expelled and their descendants are not allowed to return to the homes they left in 1948 in Haifa, Ramla, Jaffa and elsewhere. This is also connected to changes in demographics.

We are no longer dealing with about 750,000 refugees as there were in 1949. Today, it's estimated that five to six million people of Palestinian descent are currently living in refugee camps in the Palestinian territories as well as in camps that have existed for decades in the surrounding Arab countries. Their return to their original home towns and villages would radically reverse the population proportions and also de facto usher in the end of the Jewish State. This is, however, an unrealistic scenario that Israel not only will not embark upon but also cannot.

Israel is heavily criticized by the international community for its stance in this question. This criticism does not, however, take into consideration that Israel alone is not responsible for the current situation, but that the Palestinians, as well as the international community as a whole, are also accountable. In the past, the international community and the United Nations could have done sig-

nificantly more to defuse the conflict in a balanced way if they had actually been willing to do so.

As paradoxical as it sounds, the Law of Return passed by the Knesset contains another aspect which itself has a certain internal logic that the Palestinian Arabs can appeal to. Although it's not explicitly stated, the right to self-determination is recognized in the Law of Return. They also have, both theoretically and literally, the right to return – not to Israel, but to Palestine, i.e. to an independent country still to be founded as it was stipulated in the United Nations' partition resolution of 1947.

The vote taken by the General Assembly of the United Nations on November 28, 2012, in which Palestine was de facto recognized as a state by 138 member states, shows that Israel has been pushed more and more into the fringe over the last few years and the sympathies of the international community now clearly lie more on the side of the Palestinians. This means that in a concrete, existentially threatening emergency, Israel cannot at present count on the support of most of the United Nations member states, with the exception of the United States and a few European countries such as the Czech Republic.

Concerning the already stalled peace process in the Middle East, the one-sided partisanship in the United Nations for the Palestinians has only made it more difficult. Israel will not be able to accept this decision as it is; it neither sets the borderline of the Palestinian state, nor does it specifically mention Israel's right to exist, just indirectly at most. The upgraded status of the Palestinian delegation at the United Nations as an observer state will likely have as a consequence that at future negotiations the mutual mistrust will be felt even more strongly at the negotiating table.

Regardless of how Jerusalem and Ramallah feel about a two-state solution, the question for the State of Israel is how the Jewish portion of the Israeli population plans to deal with the Arab citizens of their country, who after all make up 20% of the total population, in the future. Are those Palestinians who live in "mainland Israel" and therefore have an Israeli passport to be recognized as equals, or are they to be treated as second-class citizens? At present, the impression is being created that the rights of the Arab citizens in Israel are not exactly being strengthened, but rather gradually being struck down and undermined.

One cause for concern is the fact that Arab citizens are being discriminated against compared to Jewish citizens in several fundamental matters. This is not only seen in how the country's budget tends to be fitted more to the advantage of the Jewish portion of the population, but also in the allocation or non-allocation of certain government grants.

A particularly clear example of this can be observed when dealing with government spending and investment in social housing or in the infrastructure in

Arab communities. The political scientist and Zionism expert Shlomo Avineri is right when he criticizes that the investments in this sector are “as good as nil”³³⁶ at the moment.

Sooner or later the Jewish State will have to come up with a satisfactory answer to the question of how it wants to in fact think of itself in the future: as a country primarily for Jews, or as a country for all citizens, regardless if they are Jewish, Muslim or Christian. The latter would also mean that care must be taken so that the Arab citizens in Israel, their religion and their culture, receive the deference and respect that they deserve.

If the principle of equality is in fact accepted, then no one would be allowed to continue to be discriminated against or receive preferential treatment – as is unfortunately now often the case – when it comes to awarding jobs, buying property, building schools or the establishment of institutions for the public good. To what extent a re-thinking of and new strategies for action are possible in this matter has generated widely differing opinions. It is a problem that must be resolved by internal policy, but also in specific cases by the courts. Here, Israel is faced with difficult decisions.

Regardless of this, Israel – just like other countries as well – will have to get used to having its politics increasingly measured against norms set by the international community. In Jerusalem, the time has come to realize that, for example, the continued settlement activities in the West Bank are seen as an insurmountable obstacle to the peace process and an unchecked further construction will cause even sympathetic European countries to distance themselves from Israel.

No one can seriously deny that some international criticism of Israeli politics is of an unreflected nature, including clearly recognizable anti-Semitic attacks. This alone, however, cannot be a reason for Israel to isolate itself from the rest of the world and more or less close its eyes to the reality before it.

To restart the process of détente, there has to be a counterpart who is willing and able to make painful compromises. However, at this time it is difficult to make out a politician on the Palestinian side who is able to make a compromise. Up to now, whoever has spoken up has either made radical demands or refused a dialogue.

The majority of the Palestinian-Arab politicians in the Middle East, particularly those belonging to the Hamas, reject any compromise in negotiations with the government in Jerusalem. For them, the Jewish State has not only remained a foreign body in the region, but also represents, as they claim, a “danger to world peace”. Consistent with this view, they demand that the Jewish State be erased from the map. The Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has been making a name for himself by standing at the forefront of those hostile to Israel for years.

There are a few politicians on the Palestinian side who are willing to make compromises, but as soon as they signal a greater willingness to negotiate with Jerusalem in public, they see that they have little support amongst the people. They are quickly called “traitors to their country” and it is not rare that they must fear for their career and even for their lives.

Conversely, it seems a shame and in a certain sense short-sighted as well that, in particular, the center-right Israeli government led by Benjamin Netanyahu has never felt the need to attempt to make a concession to Abbas and his Fatah with a policy of small steps. With his often seemingly uncompromising style and the continued settlement policy in the West Bank, Benjamin Netanyahu has established a politics of power that further restricts the room for maneuvering of willing Palestinian politicians.

Already in the 1990s, it was clear that Israeli politicians who also strongly supported a policy of compromise were living dangerously and could pay for their efforts to end the conflict even with their lives. As former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was perfidiously assassinated on November 4, 1995 in Tel Aviv, after being arrested his assassin accused Rabin of “national treason” and justified his actions by saying that the Oslo Accords backed by Rabin did not represent progress but rather a threat to the existence of the State of Israel.

The assassination, which took place during a rally held under the motto “Yes to peace, no to violence”, caused general dismay because the assassin wasn’t a Palestinian terrorist, but rather someone from their own ranks. Still today, many Israelis don’t want to accept the assassination of Rabin and are convinced that the real background behind the act has not yet come to light. The hypothesis of a fanatic solitary assassin is highly controversial. Conversely, some Israelis do not rule out the possibility that in the assassination there were others pulling the strings in the background and that Rabin could have become the “victim of a conspiracy”³³⁷.

Regardless if these theories are accurate or not, the assassination was definitely a shock which was felt far beyond the borders of Israel. The after-effects can be felt up to today. A similarly shocking experience, although of a different kind, was the loss of Ariel Sharon 10 years later. When he fell into a stroke-induced coma in January 2006 and withdrew from politics, it was also felt as a grave loss. With him, a second politician next to Rabin in whom many Israelis had placed great hopes was gone.

Sharon, who in his later years as a politician had improved his image by developing a more pragmatic and flexible style toward the Palestinians, represented a certain change in politics when he pushed through the evacuation of the Gaza Strip in 2005 over the strong resistance among his own supporters. It was the second time that Israel had proven that it not only can build settlements, but

also take them down. In 1982, in the hopes of the peace process in the offing with Egypt, the town of Yamit in the Northeast of the Sinai peninsula was evacuated.

However, Sharon's decision to withdraw from the Gaza Strip – until August 2005 there were around 8,600 Jewish Israelis living there in 21 settlements –, has remained a controversial matter, because what was intended to be disengagement, did not bring about any peace or quiet. On the contrary.

With the withdraw of the Israelis out of the Gaza Strip, the area between Gaza City and Khan Yunis, along the Mediterranean coast has developed into a stronghold for Arab-Islamic fundamentalism since 2005. Hamas achieved the absolute majority in Gaza in the parliamentary elections in early 2006, which raised the potential for conflict and generated further tensions. The people living near the Gaza Strip on the Israeli side in kibbutzim, villages and towns necessarily felt this to be a personal threat.

The Israeli government saw themselves forced by the danger presented by the Hamas regime to declare the Gaza Strip “enemy territory” in September 2007. The embargo imposed was effective, as it was able to create a certain pressure which led Hamas to temporarily back down. However, this did not put an end to the almost daily spontaneous missile attacks which have taken place since then. Israel was forced to take military action to protect its population. The result was that missile and mortar attacks from the Hamas were retaliated by counterattacks from the Israeli air force in rapid succession.

Much less understood internationally has been the measure Israel has undertaken since the Second Intifada to erect a protective wall (Operation Defensive Shield) between the West Bank and the Israeli mainland. Today, segments of a meters-high cement wall alternating with insuperable barbed wire fence cut through Palestinian villages, olive groves and fields, separating families and often impeding access to hospitals and public facilities.

The Israelis view the construction of the wall and the defensive barriers as absolutely necessary. They argue that because of the wall, terror attacks against Israel's civil population can be much more successfully prevented than before. The Palestinians, on the other hand, view this measure as a provocation directed against them and without any justification whose sole purpose is to allow the Israelis to maintain control over them.

Most of the global public reacted similarly to the Palestinians, and judged the building of the wall to mainly serve to further restrict the Palestinians' space. Statements were made to the effect that it was a policy aimed at bringing the Palestinian population fully under control under the “pretext” of security needs.

Nonetheless, the wall has unquestionably provided the Jewish population of the State of Israel with more safety against Palestinian terrorism. Thinking about the fact that in March 2002 alone 99 Israeli civilians were killed in a total of 17

suicide terrorist attacks, then it is certainly possible to understand the building of the protective structure as a defense measure, particularly as the number of attacks has significantly decreased since the time the wall was built.

On the other hand, the criticism weighs heavily that the wall and protective structures built have created an inner-Israeli problem that promotes a tendency towards isolation and ultimately leads to a self-ghettoization. The expectation of some Israelis that it would be possible to create an effective “protective umbrella” is in any case illusory, as there continue to be terrorist attacks, although admittedly in much smaller numbers.

The ceasefire with Hamas brokered by Egypt in June 2006 did not last long on the border to Gaza. The Palestinian missile attacks continued and the Israeli military reacted accordingly with tough countermeasures. Efforts made to stop the increasing spiral of violence were once again met with partial success in June 2010 when there was a easing in the embargo measures and the Israeli military authorities allowed for various goods for civil use to be imported by land into the Gaza Strip. However, this did not lead to any real de-escalation in the conflict.

The concessions made by Israel not only did not result in the conflict being defused, but tended rather to inflame the situation. The permitted easing of the embargo led, for example, to an increase in the smuggling of Iranian and North Korean produced missiles into the Gaza Strip through Egypt, apparently with the approval of the local authorities. With these missiles, whose launching pads are usually hidden in residential areas, the fight against Israel was continued and the path of terrorism was perfected.

Radical groups like the Teheran-supported al-Quds Brigades of Islamic Jihad, the Nasser Salah al-din Brigades of the Popular Resistance Committee which formed in 2000, or the Abu Ali Mustapha Brigades, an extension of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), have never left a doubt that they are at war with Israel and are willing to continue the fight “down to the last drop of blood”. Discerning commentators have already spoken from the virtually suicidal attitude of the Palestinians.

These groups would never consider giving up the fight against the “Zionist” enemy, although at the same time it is becoming increasingly unclear what they are specifically trying to achieve by launching missiles from the rooftops of their own hospitals and schools onto Israeli towns and villages and thus initiating bomb attacks. Do they want to actually provoke military counterattacks from Israel? Or are they simply using terrorism for terrorism’s sake?

The Palestinians’ belief, that they will force Israel to its knees with terrorist attacks and constant pressure, is illusory. Israel, which consistently refers to its “right to self-defense” according to Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, will

continue to take all measures necessary to protect its population in the future. The country will not shy away from further military actions to achieve this.

There have been repeated ceasefire agreements in the last few years, as well. This happened less due to a realization of the necessity, but rather due to international pressure, either through negotiations by the United States or the European Union. The agreements made had, generally speaking, a relatively short lifespan. Then the missiles would rain down again, busses would explode, and Palestinian suicide bombers would blow themselves up in crowded markets in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. Israel then struck back and answered with massive military counter-attacks.

It is a dangerous mistake to believe that a truce (ceasefire) is the same thing as a contractually stipulated armistice. As stated in Article 36 of the Hague Convention of 1907, “An armistice suspends military operations by mutual agreement between the belligerent parties”. A ceasefire does not have to be a mutual agreement, but can occur unilaterally. As a rule, a ceasefire serves a specific purpose, usually to retrieve casualties, treat the injured or exchange prisoners.

In any case, concluded agreements often remain fragile, as seen by the fact that the military exchange between Hamas and the Israeli army continues to start all over again and again even after certain negotiation efforts and agreements have been reached. The civil populations on both sides are the ones to suffer, as a normal everyday life is made practically impossible for them.

A change will first be possible when the participants in this long-lasting conflict realize that there can be no real victors here in the long run, but only losers. The damages on both sides have been increasing to a frightening degree over the last few years be it in human casualties, destroyed infrastructure, eradicated means of providing care, aggression and not least the level of general stress.

How could at least an outline of a way out of this dilemma be found? First it would seem expedient to overcome the existing mental barriers and to analyze the real causes of the conflict without prejudice. Only then, when the willingness to do so actually exists, can there be possible progress in agreements to end the latent state of war. From the ceasefire, the armistice desired by so many could be attained as a preliminary step leading to a possible peace settlement.

One of the essential preconditions for a reduction of violence is undoubtedly that both sides stop heaping upon the other accusations of guilt and making martial threats of extermination, i.e. of “pushing all of the Jews into the sea” or of wanting to “bomb Hamas (and all of its rival terrorist groups in the Gaza Strip) back to the Middle Ages”.

What the Israelis and Palestinians are currently presenting on the international political stage seems to be not only a conflict between two groups of people enmeshed in deep hostility and enmity toward one another. It is clear that this is

a deep-rooted syndrome of angst which must be worked though. On both sides the acute fear, or better a feeling of insecurity and mistrust, prevails that the other side, whenever they would have the opportunity, would break the ceasefire and precipitate an exchange of hostilities once again.

If the fear each side has of the other, which appears today in various forms, is not taken seriously by both the conflicting parties, there is little likelihood of reaching a conciliation for the differing interests. If, however, this conciliation is no longer possible, then it is to be feared that further hostilities will result and the Middle East will not find peace in the foreseeable future.

Excerpted Passages from the Works of Moses Hess, Leon Pinsker and Isaak Rülf

Moses Hess: “Rom und Jerusalem” (1862)*

* Aus: M[oses] Hess, *Rom und Jerusalem. Die letzte Nationalitätenfrage. Briefe und Noten*, Leipzig 1862, III–VIII, XII, 27, 54– 55, 109–112.

[...] With the end of the hostility of Christianity toward culture, its hostility toward Judaism will also end; with the liberation of the Eternal City on the banks of the Tiber, begins the liberation of the Eternal City on the Moriah; with the renaissance of Italy heralds the rise of Judah. – Jerusalem's orphaned children will also be able to participate in the great regeneration of nations, in the awakening from the death-like hibernation of the Middle Ages with its nightmares.

The nation's spring began with the French Revolution. The year 1789 marks the spring equinox for historical nations. The resurrection of the dead is no longer strange in a time when Greece and Rome are being regenerated, Poland resuscitated, and Hungary preparing itself for the final battle. Simultaneously, there is a rising of all suppressed nations, who although alternately abused, attacked and exploited by Asian barbarism and European civilization, from stupid fanaticism and refined calculation, will challenge the barbaric and civilized arrogance of the ruling nations and their right to rule in the name of a higher right.

The Jewish nation undoubtedly belongs among the nations believed to be dead, who, conscious of their historic mission will fight for their national rights. The Jewish nation has not for nothing defied the storms of world history for two thousand years, and in spite of having been tossed by the currents to all corners of the earth, has always kept its gaze directed toward Jerusalem and continues to do so. With the certain racial instinct of its cultural-historical mission, to unite the world and humanity in brotherhood in the name of the Eternal Creator, the One and Only, this people has conserved its nationality in its religion and both are inseparable in the inalienable ancestral homeland. – No modern people, struggling for their homeland can deny the Jewish people theirs, without carrying the most deadly contradiction inside, making themselves go mad and committing moral suicide.

As timely as the neutral observer sees the question of Jewish nationalism, so inappropriate it must seem to the cultured German Jew, where the liberal as well as the reactionary anti-Semite point to the difference between the Jewish and the German race as an excuse for their anti-Semitism. It is in Germany, where the Jewish nationality seems to be the final argument for denying political and civil

rights, which are made dependent on completely different things rather than the fulfillment of all political and civil duties. It is in Germany, where the Jews, from the time of Mendelssohn, despite their vital contributions to German culture and customs, despite the disavowal of their national culture and traditions, despite all their efforts to Germanize themselves, have striven in vain for political and civil equality with their German brothers!

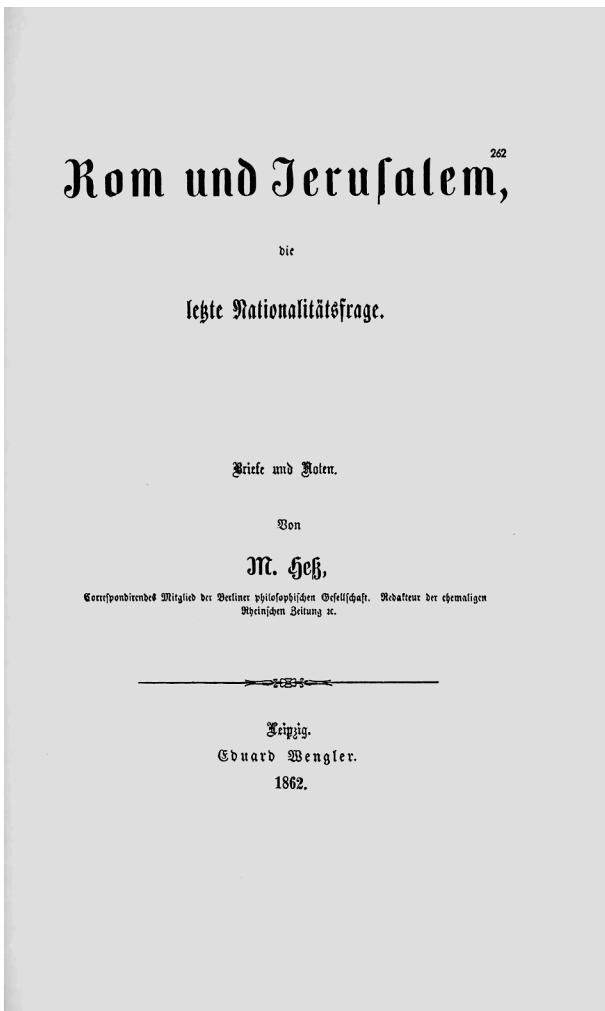


Figure 6: Frontpage of Moses Hess' „Rom und Jerusalem – die letzte Nationalitätsfrage”, published in 1862.

What a brother could not obtain from a brother, what a man could not obtain a man, a people will from a people, a nation from a nation. – No nation can be

indifferent to whether a nation is an ally or an enemy in the last European war of liberation.

The voices which are heard today from all around the world, shouting for the national revival of Israel, are justified first by Jewish tradition, in the national character of Judaism; and finally, in the general history of the development of humanity and its result: in the current situation of the world [...]

The general history of the development of social life and its results, the national movements of today, will be considered here to throw light on the by no means completed historical mission of Judaism, to indicate who the present world situation demands the establishment of Jewish colonies on the Suez canal and on the banks of the River Jordan, and finally, to illustrate the still rather neglected fact that behind the questions of nationality and freedom which currently are moving the world a still much deeper race question lies which cannot be brushed away by general, philanthropic turns of phrase. This is as old as history itself and must first be solved before further work can be done on a definitive solution to political and social problems. [...]

As long as the Jew endeavors to deny his nationality, because he is unable to deny his own individual existence, as long as he is unwilling to acknowledge that he belongs to that unfortunate and persecuted people, his false position must become more intolerable each day. Why the illusion? – The European nations have always considered the existence of the Jews in their midst as an anomaly. We shall always remain strangers among the nations. They may tolerate us and even grant us emancipation, but they will never respect us as long as we place the principle *ubi bene ibi patria* [where it is good, there is the homeland] above our own great national memories. – Though religious fanaticism may cease to operate as a factor in the hatred against the Jews in civilized countries, yet in spite of enlightenment and emancipation, the Jew in exile who denies his nationality will never earn the respect of the nations among whom he dwells. He may become a naturalized citizen, but he will never be able to be relieved of the solidarity of his nation. [...]

Every liberation from a politico-social slavery is at the same time a liberation of the spirit and serves as a means of fertilizing the national genius. There are two epochs in Jewish law: the first, after the liberation from Egypt; the second, after the liberation from the Babylonian imprisonment. The third is yet to come, with the redemption from the third exile. The significance of the second legislative epoch is more misunderstood by our reformers (who have no conception of the creative genius of the Jewish nation), than by our Rabbis, who place the lawmakers of this period even higher than Moses, for they say: Ezra would have deserved that the Torah be given to Israel through him, had not Moses preceded him. – In the form in which we have it today, the Torah was handed down to us directly

from the second epoch. These same men, living at the same time, utilizing the same traditions, and in the same spirit, collected both the written and the oral law, which they handed down to later generations. Nothing justifies attributing a holier origin to written law than the oral. On the contrary, since the restoration, the lively development of the law passed from mouth to mouth has been considered to be a holier work than the static standing at the written. The reason for this is quite evident. The national legislative genius would have been extinguished, if there had been no living development of the law. It was to this occupation that Judaism owed its national Renaissance after the Babylonian exile, as well as its existence in the Diaspora: due to this there were later heroic fighters against Greek and Roman national enemies. And, finally, it is to this oral development of the law that Judaism owes its existence during the two thousand years of exile; and to it the Jewish people will also owe its future national regeneration.

The long reluctance to write down the oral continuation of the law was justified. Had they kept on teaching and developing the law orally only in the schools, Judaism would never have been threatened with the loss of its national legislative genius. But they had to write it down, in order to avoid a still greater danger, namely, its being entirely forgotten, especially in the Diaspora. Today, we have no reason to fear the latter danger. But we can escape the former only if we set up the spirit of criticism against barren formalism and dissolving rationalism and revive in our hearts and souls the holy, patriotic spirit of our lawmakers, prophets and sages. We have to restudy our history, which has been grossly neglected by our rationalists, and rekindle in the hearts of our young generation the spirit which was the source of wisdom and inspiration to our lawmakers and prophets. If we once again draw our inspiration from the deep well of Judaism, then our great minds will regain the authority among the Jewish people which they forfeited from the moment when, prompted by other motives than patriotism, they estranged themselves from Judaism and attempted to reform the Jewish law. We will then again become participants in the holy spirit, which has the right to develop and form the Jewish law according to the needs of the people. And then, when the third exile will finally have come to an end, the restoration of the Jewish State will find us ready for it in the right way. [...]

The objections of progressive Jews to the restoration of the Jewish State have their ultimate grounds, not in that spiritual education which does not shrink from the difficulties lying in the path of a great work, nor calculates beforehand the amount of sacrifice required in the realization of the same, but they rest in the moral and intellectual narrow-mindedness with is unable to rise to a high humanitarian standpoint, from which one can view the depth of the misfortune of the people as well as the means of their salvation. – The Jewish religion has actually been more of a misfortune than a religion for the last two thousand

years, as already Heine and with him all the enlightened Jews correctly felt. But this misfortune cannot be avoided through enlightenment or conversion, regardless of what the progressive Jews say to themselves. Every Jew is, whether or not he wants to be, united in solidarity with the entire nation; and only when the Jewish people will be freed from the burden which it has borne so heroically for thousands of years, will the burden of Judaism be removed from the shoulders of these progressive Jews, who will ultimately form only a tiny minority. – We will all then carry the [yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven] until the end.

At the first intoxicating height of the enlightenment movement, people could easily be fascinated by the illusion to alienate the entire Jewish people from their national culture by a tendency toward humanitarianism in general, in which Judaism with each individual life was destined to be absorbed. Today, even the most superficial rationalist can no longer have such a philanthropic illusion. Though lacking a deeper conception of life, of Nature and history, the historical movement among our contemporary Jews has accomplished its purpose of opening the eyes of the rationalists; for even in the Occident, where the Jews are closely united to the general culture by a thousand bonds, the Enlightenment was nothing against the ancient Jewish culture. Even today, the great majority of Occidental Jews pay homage to their ancient religion. Neither emancipation nor Christian proselytism, which counted on material advantages and religious indifference, has succeeded in estranging the majority of Jews from their traditions. On the contrary, recently, even among those who were formerly estranged from Judaism as a humanistic ideal, there has been sympathy for the ancient Jewish way of life, a sympathy which is growing stronger every day. The leveling tendencies of the assimilationists have remained and will always remain without influence on those Jews who constitute the great Jewish masses.

The masses are never moved to progress by mere abstract conceptions; the springs of action lie far deeper than even the socialist revolutionaries think. With the Jews, more than with other nations which are being oppressed on their own soil, all political and social progress must necessarily be preceded by national independence. A common, native soil is the first requirement for healthier working conditions. The social man, just as the social plant and animal, needs for his growth and development a wide, free soil; without it, he sinks to the status of a parasite, which feeds at the expense of others' work. The parasitic way of existence, living through the exploitation of people, has played an important role in the history of human development up to now and is by no means restricted to the Jews. As long as science and industry were not sufficiently developed, the land in the possession of any nation was never large enough to maintain the entire population; and the nations were therefore forced, either to make war one upon the other and thus acquire slaves, or to divide their own population into ruling

and serving classes. But the social animal kingdom which lives on the mutual exploitation among people, is coming to an end since modern science and industry have dominated the world.

The civilized nations are preparing for a common exploitation of Nature, by means of labor based on scientific achievements, which no longer needs social parasites, and will therefore not allow them to emerge. They are preparing themselves for this new era (not to be confused with the Prussian) through struggles for a free national soil, by the abolishment of every race or class rule from without and within, by the free association of all means of production, in which the antagonism between capitalist speculators and productive labor will simultaneously disappear along with the contrast between philosophical speculation and scientific work. – I well know that also in Judaism there exists the deeply felt need for healthy working conditions, based on the exploitation of Nature through man. I know of the great efforts which are being exerted to train our younger Jewish generations to be useful laborers. But I also know that the Jews in exile, at least the majority of them, cannot devote themselves successfully to productive labor; in the first place because they lack the most necessary condition, an ancestral soil; and secondly, because they cannot assimilate or mix with the peoples they are scattered among without betraying their national religion and tradition. Those commendable efforts to improve working conditions for the Jews will therefore ultimately be fruitless, as they indirectly lead to the destruction of Jewish tradition, just as the endeavors of the Reform movement, which lead directly to the same result. Judaism cannot be regenerated in exile, it can at most be brought to apostasy through reforms and philanthropic efforts. And no Reformer and no tyrant will succeed in this. – The Jewish people will participate in the great historical movement of modern humanity only after they have a Jewish homeland. As long as the great Jewish masses remain in their position as exceptions, the relatively few Jews who have done everything for naught to escape this false position of the Jewish people as individuals, will also be more painfully affected by this than the masses, who feel unfortunate, but not degraded. Therefore, no Jew, regardless of being Orthodox or not, cannot refrain from working to raise all of Jewry. – Every Jew, even the baptized, is responsible in solidarity for the regeneration of Israel. [...]

Leon Pinsker: “Autoemancipation!” (1882)*

* Aus: Leon Pinsker, *Autoemancipation! Mahnruf an seine Stammesgenossen von einem russischen Judne*, Berlin 1936, 16f.

[...] Although all of the nations of the Earth were not able to destroy our existence, they are still able to have suffocated within us the feeling of our national sovereignty.

With fatalistic indifference we observe how we are denied a level of recognition in some countries which would not be easily denied to a Zulu. In the Diaspora we maintain our individual lives, prove our powers of resistance, but have lost the common band our national consciousness. By seeking to maintain our material existence, we were only too often forced to ignore our moral dignity. We did not notice that these unworthy tactics forced upon us only lowered us more in the eyes of our opponents, only exposed us more to humiliating contempt and an unprotected existence which have finally become our ominous heritage. No place for us was found in the great, wide world. So that we could lay our weary head to rest somewhere, we requested just a tiny spot, and so we gradually reduced our self-dignity with our reduced demands, which were made indistinguishable in both a stranger's eyes and in our own. We were the plaything that the nations tossed around to each other. We were equally amusing caught or thrown out. This evil game was enjoyed even more, the more flexible and yielding our national consciousness became in the hands of the players.

Under these circumstances, how could there be any talk of a national consciousness, a free, active development of our national power or of our native genius?

By the way, our enemies did not fail to profit from the latter, in itself not always untrue, but in actuality completely irrelevant characteristic in order to prove our inferiority. You would think that they would have geniuses growing on trees. These pathetic people! They accuse the eagle who once soared into the heavens and saw Divinity that it does not fly high enough in the air after they have cut off his wings. But even with our wings cut off we remain on the same level with the great historical peoples. Grant us once the great fortune of independence, let us take our destiny into our own hands, give us a piece of land like the Serbs and Romanians, grant us the advantage of a free national existence and then dare to judge us and accuse us of lacking genius! For now we are still living under the pressure of the evil that you have put upon us. *What we lack is not genius, but self-awareness and the consciousness of human dignity, which you have stolen from us.*

When we are abused, robbed, plundered, dishonored, then we do not dare to defend ourselves, and what's worse, we almost think that it's all right. When our face is slapped, we cool the burning cheek with cold water, and when we are bloodily wounded, we put a bandage on it. When we are thrown out of the house that we have built ourselves, we humiliatingly beg for mercy, and if we're not able to soften the heart of our

oppressor, then we move on and try to find - another exile. If we hear an idle spectator on the road calling to us: "You poor Jewish devils, you really are to be pitied", we are deeply touched and when a Jew is told that he is a credit to his people, this people is foolish enough to be proud. We have sunk so low that we are almost jubilant when, as in the Occident, a tiny fraction of our people are equal to the non-Jews. Whoever has to be stood up, is known to be standing weakly. If no notice is taken of our ancestry and we are looked upon as the others born in the country, we are grateful – up to the point of absolute self-denial. For the modest position we are allowed, for the pot that we can use in peace, we convince ourselves and the others that we're no longer Jews at all, but full-blooded sons of that fatherland. Conceited delusion! You may prove yourselves to be the greatest patriots, but you will still be reminded of your Semitic background at every opportunity. This fateful *memento mori* will not prevent you, however, from accepting the extended hospitality, until you are tossed out across the border one fine morning, until the cursed mob reminds you that you are nothing more than vagrants and parasites without protection of the law.

But even humane treatment does not count as proof that our presence is welcomed and not in reality cursed.

What a pitiful figure we make! We don't count as a nation among the other nations and have no voice in the councils of the nations, even when it's about things that concern us. Our fatherland – a strange land, our unity – the Diaspora, our solidarity – general hostility, our weapon - humility, our defense - escape, our originality - assimilation, our future – the next day. What a miserable role for a people which once had its Maccabees!

Is it any wonder, that a people, which let itself be kicked around for dear life's sake and then has learned to kiss these feet, should have fallen into the deepest contempt?

The tragedy in our history is that we can neither live nor die. We can't die, regardless of the blows of our enemies, and we don't want to by our own hand, through apostasy or self-destruction. But we can't live either, our enemies have seen to that. To start a new life as a nation, to live like all the other nations – we don't want that, either, thanks to those over-zealous patriots who find it necessary to sacrifice every independent national life for their – completely self-understood by the way – civil loyalty. These patriotic fanatics deny their own most

essence for the sake of the next best nationality, be it of higher or lower standing. But they're not fooling anyone. They do not see just how grateful people are for Jewish companionship.

Thus we've been living in disgrace for eighteen centuries and there hasn't been a single serious attempt to shake it off! How well we know the history of the suffering of our people and we are truly the last ones who would want to make our ancestors responsible for it. The worry about individual self-preservation necessarily suppressed every national thought, every common national movement.

When the non-Jewish peoples, thanks to our Diaspora, wanted a strike in every single one of us to hit the entire Jewish nation, we were sufficiently resistant not to succumb, but also too helpless to rise up and carry on an active struggle with our own fists. Under the pressure of all of the hostile nations on the Earth, over the course of our long exile we have lost all self-confidence, every sense of initiative.

Moreover, the belief in the Messiah, the belief that divine intervention will lead to our political resurrection, and the religious assumption that we must patiently bear the punishment meted out to us by God caused us to abandon every thought of our national liberation, of our unity and independence. We abandoned in practice every idea of our own homeland. The more we had to worry about our material progress, the more eagerly we did this. In this way we continued to sink lower and lower. Those *who didn't have their own country* became those *who had forgotten their own country*. Isn't it finally time for us to admit how disgraceful this is for all of us?

Fortunately, things right now are a bit different. The events of the last few years in enlightened Germany, in Romania, in Hungary, but particularly in Russia have resulted in what the much bloodier persecution in the Middle Ages could not. The national consciousness, which at that time only existed in a latent state of a sterile martyrdom, awoke before our eyes in the masses of Russian and Romanian Jews in the form of an irresistible push towards Palestine. As mistaken as the results of this push has proven to be, it corroborates the correct instinct of the people, who have realized that they need a homeland.

The hard trials they have withstood have now invoked a reaction which means something other than the fatalistically borne punishment from God. The principles of modern culture have not passed by the unenlightened masses of Russian Jews either without leaving a trace. Without abandoning Judaism and its beliefs, they are deeply outraged by unjust abuse which could only occur without being punished because the Jewish population is a foreign one to the Russian government. And the other European governments – how are they supposed to take care of citizens of an empire in whose internal affairs no one has a right to interfere?

Today, since some of our brethren in a small part of the world can catch their breath and are better able to empathize with the suffering of their brothers; today, since a number of subjected and oppressed nationalities have been allowed to regain their independence, we, too, must not sit with our hands in our laps for a moment, we must not allow that we will also be damned in the future to play the hopeless role of the “wandering Jew”.

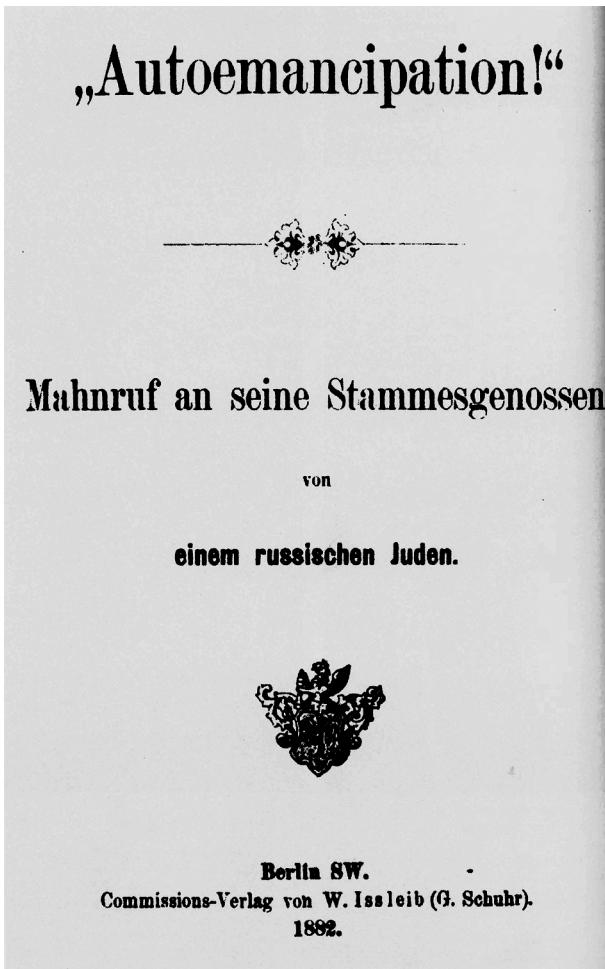


Figure 7: Frontpage of Leon Pinskers "Autoemancipation!", published in 1882.

Yes, it is a hopeless role leading to despair.

When a single individual has the misfortune to find himself in a position where he is despised and rejected by society, no one is surprised if he commits

suicide. But where is the deadly weapon which could perform a mercy killing of the Jewish national organism, whose limbs are scattered all over the Earth? And whose hand would use it? The less possible and desirable this is, the more we must bear the responsibility to devote all the moral strength left in us to re-establish ourselves so that we can finally assume a more bearable and dignified place in the circle of nations.

If our assumptions and our standpoint are correct, if the prejudice of mankind against us is based on hereditary, ineradicable, anthropological and social principles, then we must leave the slow progress of humanity alone and learn to accept that as long as we do not have our own homeland like the other nations, then we must abandon the noble hope once and for all that we will be seen as equals. We must come to the conclusion that before the great idea of human brotherhood can unite all peoples of the Earth, many millennia could pass, and until then a people which is both everywhere and nowhere at home, will be seen as a foreign body by the national organism everywhere. The time has come for a sober and dispassionate realization of our true situation. With unbiased eyes, without our minds already being made up, we must look into the mirror of nations and recognize the tragicomic figure of our nation, with whose distorted countenance and maimed limbs help to make history without even managing its own little national history properly. We must finally reconcile ourselves once and for all with the idea that the other nations, due to an internal natural antagonism, will always reject us. We must not shut our eyes to this force of nature, which functions like every other elementary force; we must acknowledge it. We may not complain about it. On the contrary it is our duty to pull ourselves together, to rise and make sure that we do not remain the eternal Cinderella, the anvil which all other people strike.

We are no more justified in making other nations *responsible* for our national misfortune as we are in leaving our national fortune only in their hands. On the unforeseeable long way to perfect practical humanity, if such a thing should ever be reached, the human race finds itself – and we along with it – barely reaching the first stage. Therefore, we should abandon the illusion that our Diaspora fulfills a divine mission, a mission in which no one believes, a voluntary service we, to be honest, would love to give up if we could only eliminate the pejorative term “Jew” from the world at the same time.

Not in illusory self-delusions, but in the re-creation of our own, united national band must we seek our honor, our salvation. Up to now, we were not considered to be a serious company by the world and we therefore have also not received any genuine credit.

If the national aspirations of other people who have come together before our eyes had their inherent justification, can there be any question that the Jews have this right as well? They contribute more to interna-

tional culture than the others; they have rendered a greater service to humanity; they have a past, a history, a common undiluted ancestry, an indestructible vigor, an unshakable faith and an unprecedented history of suffering; they have been sinned against more than any other nation. Is that still not enough to make them capable and worthy of having their own homeland?

The struggle of the Jews for national-political unity and sovereignty doesn't only have the inherent justification like the struggles of every other oppressed people, it would also have to find approval from those people to whom we are, fairly or not, unwelcome. This struggle must become a factor that becomes irresistible imposed on current international politics and will certainly have a great future. [...]

Isaak Rülf: “Aruchas Bas-Ammi. Israels Heilung” (1883)*

* Aus: Isaak Rülf, *Aruchas Bas-Ammi. Israels Heilung. Ein ernstes Wort an Glaubens- und Nicht-glaubensgenossen*, Frankfurt/M 1883, 48–52, 63–65, 67–68, 71–73, 83–84.

[...] The Jew has never fallen behind the educational level or standard knowledge of his day. As far as this has produced within him even the smallest seed of sensibility and consciousness of his undignified position, his eternal and endless suffering must burn twice as deeply into his soul, especially as he cannot discover the goal and purpose of this even in the most distant future. He, the individual among the masses, the weak among the strong, the supposed stranger among the natives, the stateless among the patriotic; he whose very name, whose very nationality provokes taunts and disdain, he who doesn't dare admit being Jew without blushing in shame.

The Jew has a right to complain and accuse his fate, because who may dare claim to prove that he has deserved it, before all of the other nations? This fate is inevitable by nature. The Jewish people, as a people ripped from their roots, from their mother earth, withered and dried out, have long ceased being a living organism like other peoples. Only single grafts – our enemies say parasites – remain and have, grafted on to alien, different peoples, maintained life and sustainability. The Jewish nation only lives on in its individuals, in the spiritual consciousness of each individual – a united whole no longer exists. In the aspirations of the nations to consolidate, which have become particularly energetic in modern times, to join together what is unique and to draw a sharp division to the other nations, often in an irreconcilable, antagonistic way, the Jew alone remains as belonging to all and therefore to none, divorced and shunned by all, without being able to re-discover the lost unity within during this divorce and division – a lost lamb unable to return to the herd, a lost sentry unable to find his convoy, everywhere with the same kind and yet forever alone, settled everywhere and yet nowhere at home, taunted, despised, shunned and hated by all as a foreign object and individually abandoned to the violence of the crude masses.

It is a tragic, unpredictable and inevitable fate which necessarily befalls the Israelite in the Diaspora, without the support of a nation with power and rights, cut loose from native soil. It has an inevitable impact on the relationship of the Israelite to the nations as well as relating to himself. If the Jews' ability to adapt easily in order to achieve all of the necessary material gains was actually useful for something, this ability caused incalculable damage to the value and essence of their inner characteristics. This ability to adapt led to an obsession with it; the obsession to adapt to foreign ways has allowed one's own features and characteristics to become blurred and almost completely forgotten. All of the traditional

originality of the fathers, all traces of many of the admirable traditional virtues have become lost.

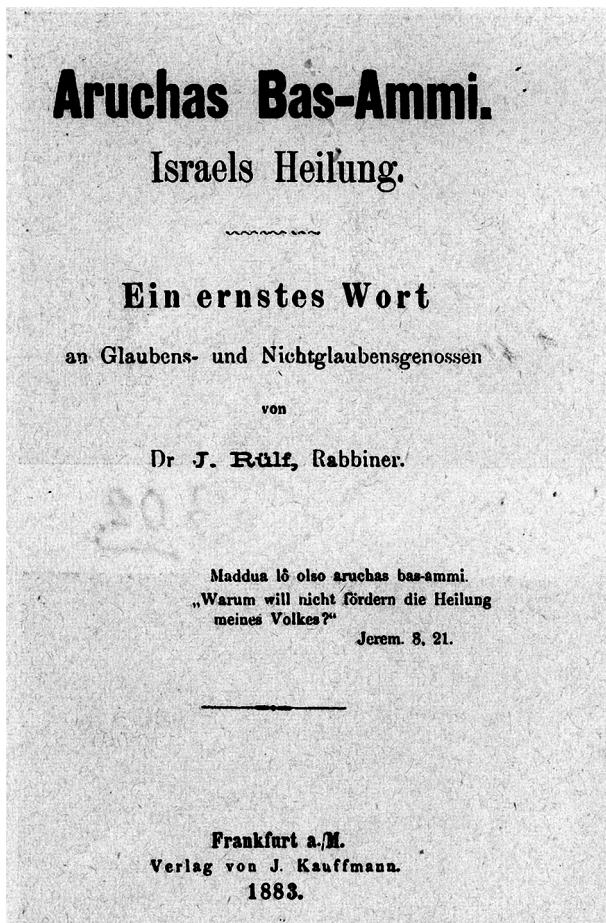


Figure 8: Frontpage of Isaak Rülf's "Aruchas Bas-Ammi. Israels Heilung", published in 1883.

What is to be lamented most is the fact that Jews have almost completely lost their national consciousness. Lost not randomly, due to the force of unfortunate circumstances, no, with a clearly stated will the attempt was made to destroy this consciousness. First the memory of the old, common homeland, the native soil which had always provided power and energy to the national consciousness, was forcibly smothered, all desire to re-own this land, to live there, stay there and work there killed; all of our desires and prayers which proclaimed this aspiration demoted to lies and sacrilege; regardless whether practicing Orthodox or modern secular – the re-creation of the Jewish nation and state seems equally undesirable

and ridiculous to both groups. This national consciousness was divested out of pure wantonness. Amalgamation, assimilation, accommodation is the solution; there should be nothing left to remind us of our old homeland, of national life and nationhood. The Jew should completely dissolve in the state and the nation in which he lives; he should be more German than the Germans, more Roman than the Romans, more Slavic than the Slavs; maybe even participate in the swindle of pan-Germanism, pan-Romanism, pan-Slavism with all of their depravity and excesses. And what has he achieved with this? Nowhere was he able to have the German, the Roman, the Slav see him as an equal. [...]

Cultivate unity and community and the “Year of salvation has come.” The precedent to all salvation and liberation, indeed a good part of liberation itself is, however, that the nations see us as equals and treat us and deal with us as having equal rights. Hasn’t this state been demanded and sought as the only true state of emancipation for decades? Live in unity, be united in community, act in unanimity and you will constantly get closer to this goal. In any case, others will start viewing us still as strangers, at least no longer as vagrants, still of a different race, at least as equals, still not as natives, at least as having equal rights.

The first step toward emancipation is having equal rights. Blessings and good tidings to all those men who have fought for these, those who have directed and used all of their rich efforts and lives toward achieving this equality and civil rights for our people. Yet this has achieved no more than the first step of emancipation. Firstly, this good fortune could only be enjoyed by a tiny fraction living among the civilized nations, much less was this – never completely implemented, only on paper, in practice often utterly annulled equality – able to extinguish hate and hatefulnes, contempt and disrespect, disgrace and dishonor that has always been heaped on our nation, and least of all could the inferiority of our social standing, the antipathy towards us in people’s hearts be overcome.

If, under the present conditions it could come to pass that all prejudices against the Jews could be done away with, must strongly be called into doubt. The nations all oppose and feud with each other, try to diminish and suppress each other; they simply know how to get along with each other – they arrange their mutual relations through contracts, respect the rights of guests and the rights of men and view each other as equals with equal rights in personal interactions. Only regarding the Jews there are no contracts, no rights of guests or human rights, no equality and no equal rights – there are only legal exceptions or lawlessness. There are no contracts with Jews because they do not have any corporation rights among the nations, and as they have none of the necessary preconditions, would not be able to have any; for the same reason they also stand outside of the sphere of human rights and guest rights; no one wants to grant them these as they are themselves unable to grant them to anyone; they are put up with and

tolerated, perhaps because it would be impossible not to out of a sense of fairness and humanity, but people want to get rid of them, preferably today rather than tomorrow. Go on and ask yourselves, you Jews, if you, even if you wanted to move out of the freest, most progressive cultured state, if you would be held back for a minute, or if you would be let go with unabashed joy?

But we can't move out – move where? We will have to make sure the modus vivendi between us and the rest of humanity is as amicable as possible. If they can't love us, at least they should have to respect us; that is only possible when, from the part of both the individual and the whole, everything occurs to earn the world's respect.

What should and must occur other than personal good conduct in order to achieve this respect and therefore a somewhat bearable position of suitable honor and rights? There are even diverse different suggestions concerning this which have been made within the Jewish nation which say: organization against organization; polemic against polemic; agitation against agitation.

Organization! Absolutely, a solid, well-linked-into-the-tiniest-details regulated organization, but not regarding our enemies, only regarding ourselves. Organization, to express the idea of national unity, to strengthen the Jewish national consciousness, to provide mutual support most effectively, to be able to provide the means of preservation against all future disasters, all of the preparation materials needed for complete emancipation.[...]

If you are a Jew, be one completely – that is the ultimate word of emancipation and salvation. Be a Jew with your heart and soul, with property and blood, with head and heart, with national pride and the quest to re-establish your own state in the land of your fathers.

If you are a Jew, be one completely – not only for yourself, but for all the world. You don't need to want to be anything other than a Jew before the world and no one may deny you honor and dignity, citizenship and civil rights because of it. As a Jew, you have brought the world a God and "two stone tablets, written with the finger of God". The stone tablets have gotten lost, but the writings have become inscribed on the "heart's plaque" as the ten fundamental instructions for all faiths and all morality, for all rights and all justice, all state and social order. – God made you a Jew, "as a beacon of the nations, to bring his help to the ends of the earth." God scattered you as a Jew among all peoples and transplanted you with the mission of suffering, in the long and slow development of culture among the nations, to serve all as the target and diversion for eruptions of inhumanity and injustice, natural coarseness and hard-heartedness so that the world does not sink into self-destruction. The world, particularly the unruly Western world with its fury and audacity, might have fallen prey to its complete destruction in the eternal war of all against all were it not for the Jews' courage

for martyrdom and patience for suffering, “offering their backs to those who beat, their cheeks to those who slap” without answering violence with violence, like the others would be bound to do. – God transplanted you as a Jew among the nations as an example and a role model, through thought and deed to promote the connection and brotherhood among humanity – light and love, order and action, truth and justice. [...]

Since a century of Enlightenment and the huge progress of humanity, the relationships between the other nations and the Jews have become fundamentally better, and it may be speculated that after the desired still further progress in the culture and brotherhood among people, most prejudices against the Jews will finally disappear. Until this condition appears everywhere; however, that the Jew loses his exceptional status everywhere, God only knows how many centuries will pass. What should happen in the meantime? The current conditions are unbearable for every Jewish heart filled with national honor and pride now and evermore. The Jew is also no longer what he was, as he still considered his condition to be an inevitable act of God, as punishment for his sins and the sins of his fathers. He made a very vital contribution to the cultural progress of humanity, learned to see himself as a person and feel like one, too, sees himself in his national consciousness as well as in human rights equal to all other people and nations and feels every injury to justice and privilege as a scandal and disgrace done unto him. In this state of affairs we cannot wait for eons until the general human progress completes the emancipation and salvation of our people – rather we must do everything we can to rehabilitate ourselves in the eyes of the others and eliminate our exceptional status.

There is only one radical solution for this. We may no longer let ourselves be counted as intruding, homeland-less, people unfit for rights or to make contracts with. We must aspire, in whatever form and by whatever means, *to regain our original homeland, the land of our fathers and re-create the Jewish State.*

Strong words, some will think, said carelessly and without thinking things through. I can say in all good conscious that this is not the case; that I have indeed thought about these words long and hard before I said them. I also used to be one of those who believed that the Jew just needs to connect to the innermost of his fellow citizens, the Jew just needs to fulfill his civic duties willingly and sincerely, and he would gladly and unreservedly be granted all human rights in the not too distant future. Through yearlong, public and devoted political activity, through an exact insight into cultural development and state of culture and above all through the way in which Jews have been treated recently has taught us, I have had to become convinced that we will never reach our goal by following this path alone. First we must be able to identify ourselves as a nation to the other nations before the individual member from us may hope to attain honors. The majestas

populi (majesty of the nature of man) alone is what grants the individual honor and dignity. Having again become a nation, an empire, we will see ourselves in a completely different light and be seen in a completely different light. The honor of the individual is rooted in his national honor. As long as we do not see our nation restored in all of its honor and dignity, we may never hope to receive all personal honors like everyone else.[...]

If we want to rehabilitate ourselves in our own eyes and in others', then we much try with all of our might to re-acquire our old ancestral homeland and establish and set up the Jewish State. There is no other way. Otherwise, we will never be seen by other nations as their equals, never be able to shed the odium, as intruders without a home of our own, unable to compete in obtaining property and rights, position and authority, und every emancipation on paper will not be able to change a thing. Don't think that a Jewish colony or even a state in America or Australia could serve the same purpose. Such a thing would be seen by the other nations as a curiosity at most, but not as weigh in as a legitimate state and national power.

To achieve this quality of standing and authority in our own as well as in others' eyes, we must begin again where the ties of our nation's history were ripped, or better yet, where our nation's fate was violently cut in two. The Holy Land can really and truly become our own land. "The earth is the Lord's and the world and all that fills it"; He has already completely parceled it out and allotted every nation its own certain, fixed and permanent residence – "Italy for the Italians, Egypt for the Egyptians and Palestine for the Jews." It is "the land that which the Lord sware unto your fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon the earth." Deuteronomy 11:21. It is the land which belongs to us, not only by the rights of God, but also by the rights of the nations, "which I took out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow" Genesis 48:22, that belongs to us by the rights of the conquerors. It is the land where our fathers and mothers lived, stayed, changed and made an impact, where our prophets lived and taught, where our holy sites stood, from where God's teaching and God's word comes to all other nations; it is the land where the idea of God itself, the "light of the nations" first dawned, the bible, the elementary book of all people came into being and can be understood and applied in all of its parts and nuances here and here only. Here and here only must we direct our gaze, when it comes to founding our own, indisputable and unchallenged homeland.

Notes

Introduction

1 The term “acculturation” refers to the adoption of a language, a culture and the acceptance of social conventions while retaining a specific religious identity. See: Ruth Gay, *The Jews of Germany. A Historical Portrait*, New Haven 1992, 202.

2 See N. M. Gelber, *Zur Vorgeschichte des Zionismus. Judenstaatsprojekte 1695-1845*, Vienna 1927, 13 ff.

3 Critical thereof see: Ernest Galliner, *Nationalismus und Moderne*, Hamburg 1995; as well as Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, New York 1983; Eric Hobsbawm/ Terence Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition*, New York 1983.

4 On this topic see in particular: Abigail Green, *Moses Montefiore: Jewish Liberator, Imperial Hero*, Cambridge, Mass. 2010.

5 On Hirsch Kalischer see: Jay Ticker, *The Centrality of Sacrifice as an answer to Reform in the Thought of Zvi Hirsch Kalischer*, New York 1975, 1 ff.

6 See: “Das kollektive Bewusstsein, J. G. Herders Volksgeschichtlehre und der Zionismus”, in: Julius H. Schoeps, Über Juden und Deutsche. Historisch-politische Betrachtungen (= Deutsch-jüdische Geschichte durch drei Jahrhunderte, Vol. 4), Hildesheim et al. 2010. 129–149.

7 On the term and terminology “Jewish question” see: Alex Bein, *Die Judenfrage. Biographie eines Weltproblems*, Vol. 1, Stuttgart 1980, 1 ff.

8 See “Korrespondenz rund um die Kattowitzer Konferenz”, in: Julius H. Schoeps (ed.), *Palästinaliebe. Leon Pinsker, der Antisemitismus und die Anfänge der nationaljüdischen Bewegung in Deutschland* (= Deutsch-jüdische Geschichte durch drei Jahrhunderte, Vol. 9), Hildesheim 2012, 101–208.

9 Heinrich Graetz to Leon Pinsker, January 23, 1885, ibid, 175 f.

10 La Ohavim et Ha Aviv [collection of Hebrew songs], Tel Aviv 1981, 32.

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11 See: Julius H. Schoeps, “Weggefährte von Marx und Lassalle. Zur nationaljüdischen Konzeption von Moses Hess”, in: Über Juden und Deutsche, 237–244.

12 The expression “communist Rabbi” was apparently thought up by Arnold Ruge (*Zwei Jahre in Paris*, Vol. I., Leipzig 1846, 31).

13 Wolfgang Mönke, “Neue Quellen zur Hess-Forschung. Mit Auszügen aus einem Tagebuch”, in *Manuskripten und Briefen aus der Korrespondenz Marx, Engels, Weitling, Ewerbeck u.a.*, Berlin 1964, 39.

14 Moses Hess, *Rom und Jerusalem, die letzte Nationalitätenfrage. Briefe und Noten* [fourth letter], Leipzig 1862, 19f.

15 See: Na'aman, *Emanzipation und Messianismus*, 39 ff.

16 See: Julius H. Schoeps, *David Friedländer. Freund und Schüler Moses Mendelssohns*, Hildesheim 2012, 157 ff.

17 See Felix Weltsch, “‘Rom und Jerusalem’ – Nach 100 Jahren”, in: *BLBI*, 5th Vol., 1964, 237 ff.

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- 18** Edmund Silberner compiled a list of Hess' publications: *The works of Moses Hess: An inventory of his signed and anonymous publications, manuscripts and correspondence*, Leiden 1958.
- 19** Shlomo Avineri, *Profile des Zionismus. Die geistigen Ursprünge des Staates Israel. 17 Porträts*, Gütersloh 1998, 56.
- 20** See: Julius H. Schoeps, *A. Bernstein in seiner Zeit. Bürgerliche Aufklärung und liberales Freiheitsdenken*, Hildesheim 2011, 166.
- 21** Moses Hess, *Die europäische Triarchie*, Leipzig [Otto Wigand], Leipzig 1841, 112.
- 22** Ibid., 139.
- 23** Obligatory civil marriage was introduced in Prussia on January 23, 1874 after a law passed in the Landtag parliament.
- 24** Na'aman, *Emanzipation und Messianismus*, 315.
- 25** See here: Jonathan Frankel, *The Damascus Affair: "Ritual Murder", Politics, and the Jews in 1840*, Oxford 1997; as well as Ronald Florence, *Blood Libel: The Damascus Affair of 1840*, Madison 2004; Paul Gensler, *Die Damaskusaffäre. Judeophobie in einer anonymen Damaszener Chronik*, Munich 2011.
- 26** Hess, *Rom und Jerusalem*, 23.
- 27** Silberner, *Moses Hess*, 60 ff.
- 28** Hess, *Rom und Jerusalem*, 1.
- 29** Na'aman takes up an opposing view to Silberner in that he disputes that Hess has a "Jewish experience" (*Emanzipation und Messianismus*, 34). He is convinced that it was an intellectual process which led Hess to undergo a revolutionary transformation toward Judaism.
- 30** Weltsch, "Rom und Jerusalem", 237 ff.
- 31** Hess, *Rom und Jerusalem*, 49.
- 32** Ibid., 2.
- 33** More on this in Edmund Silberner (ed.), *Moses Hess. Briefwechsel*, s'Gravenhage 1959, 374, note 1.
- 34** Edmund Silberner has written a fundamental work about the different appearances of "socialist" anti-Semitism (*Sozialisten zur Judenfrage. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Sozialismus vom Anfang des 19. Jahrhunderts bis 1914*, Berlin 1962). A continuation of Silberner's work is found in newer research, particularly in Hans-Hellmuth Knüller (*Die Juden und die deutsche Linke in der Weimarer Republik*, Düsseldorf 1971, 129–136), who warns of the "myth that denies every trace of anti-Semitism in the working classes", and speaks of the "phenomenon of proletarian anti-Semitism". In this context see also Rosemarie Leuschen-Seppel (*Sozialdemokratie und Antisemitismus im Kaiserreich. Die Auseinandersetzungen mit den konservativen und völkischen Strömungen des Antisemitismus 1871-1914*, Bonn 1978), who has shown anti-Semitic clichés present in the worker's movement in the German empire. Paul W. Massing (*Vorgeschichte des politischen Antisemitismus*, Frankfurt a. M. 1959) and the historian Reinhard Rürup ("Sozialismus und 'Judenfrage' in Deutschland vor 1914", in: *Jahrbuch des Instituts für Deutsche Geschichte*, supplement 2 [= Juden und jüdische Aspekte in der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung 1848-1918], Tel Aviv 1977, 203 ff) have taken the opposite standpoint. They are of the opinion that modern anti-Semitism is clearly contradicted by socialist theory and can only be interpreted as a crisis phenomenon in a bourgeois capitalist society. On this controversial topic see: Julius H. Schoeps, "Sozialismus und Judenfrage", in: *Das Parlament* No. 10/1977.
- 35** See Theodor Herzl. *Briefe und Tagebücher*, 7 Vols., Alex Bein, Hermann Greive, Julius H. Schoeps, Moshe Schaerf, Johannes Wachten, (eds.), Berlin 1983 – 1996 and Julius H. Schoeps, *Theodor Herzl 1860-1904. Wenn Ihr wollt, ist es kein Märchen. Eine Bild-Text-Monographie*, Vienna 1995.

36 Bernhard Lazare (1863–1903), author and anarchist, influenced by anti-Semitism and the Dreyfus trial in France in 1897, announced his support of Zionism. See: Hans Kohn, “Bernhard Lazare und der Dreyfus-Prozess”, in: *Der Jude*, Vol.8, booklet 5/6, 1924, 291–295; Edmund Silberner, “Lazare und der Zionismus” (Heb.), in: *Shivat Zion*, Vol. 2/3 (1953), 328–363, as well as Michael R. Marrus, *The Politics of Assimilation. A Study of the French Jewish Community at the Time of the Dreyfus Affair*, Oxford 1971, 164–195.

37 Hess, *Rom und Jerusalem*, [fourth letter], 14.

38 Hess, *Rom und Jerusalem*, [sixth letter], 34.

39 From the field of literature, Hess names (*ibid*, 246 ff.) authors such as Leopold Kompert, Alexander Weil, A. Bernstein, and particularly Ludwig Wihl, who “have with great success begun to describe Jewish life faithfully and endearingly”. Hess praises the historian Heinrich Graetz for his epoch-making *Geschichte des Judentums* [History of Judaism]. Graetz’ relationship to Hess will be discussed in further detail.

40 Hans Liebeschütz, “Judentum und deutsche Umwelt im Zeitalter der Restauration”, in: *Das Judentum in der Deutschen Umwelt 1800-1850. Studien zur Frühgeschichte der Emanzipation*, Hans Liebeschütz and Arnold Paucker (eds.) (= Schriftenreihe Wissenschaftlicher Abhandlungen des LBI, Vol. 35), Tübingen 1977, 28.

41 Heinrich Loewe (“Ernest Laharanne über die Lösung der Orientalischen Frage und die Wiederherstellung eines jüdischen Gemeinwesens”, in: *Zion*, Nr. 2/ 1897, 43–48) had already made a comparative text study of *Rom und Jerusalem* and the writings of Laharanne.

42 Hess, *Rom und Jerusalem*, 95.

43 *Ibid*, 96 ff.

44 Heinrich Graetz strongly influenced Hess in the development of *Rom und Jerusalem* (see Silberner, *Moses Hess*, 391 f.). It can practically be called a Hess-Graetz co-production. One thing is certain, Hess changed the original title *Wiedergeburt Israels* [The Revival of Israel] to *Rom und Jerusalem* after extensive consultation with Graetz.

45 Silberner, *Moses Hess*, 392 f.

46 Shlomo Na’aman, “Moses Hess: Zwischen Messianismus und Emanzipation”, in: *Jahrbuch des Instituts für Deutsche Geschichte, Beiheft 2: Juden und jüdische Aspekte in der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung 1848-1918*, Tel Aviv 1977, 26.

47 For information on Hess’ attitude to the different branches of Orthodoxy see: Zlocisti, *Moses Hess*, 302 and Silberner, *Moses Hess*, 425 f.

48 Hess, *Rom und Jerusalem*, 60.

49 Moses Hess, “Mein Messiasglaube, Erwiderung an [Leopold] Löw” [Ben-Chananja, 1862], in: Hess, *Jüdische Schriften*, 5.

50 In the *Jüdische Zeitschrift für Wissenschaft und Leben*, Abraham Geiger published an article entitled “Alte Romantik, neue Reaktion”, which alludes to Hess and his work: “even if a practically complete outsider who has gone bankrupt from socialism and all other kinds of swindles now wants to make it in nationalism and, along with the question of establishing Czech, Montenegrin, Szekler et al nationalities, now wants to encourage the establishment of the Jewish nationality, the Orthodoxy, the Conservatives, i.e. the reaction delicately and carefully withdraws” (*JZWL*, Vol.1, 1862, 252).

51 A letter to Dr. Abraham Geiger, Rabbi at the Synagogue community in Breslau, Cologne 1863, in: *Moses Hess. Jüdische Schriften*, ed. and with an introduction by Theodor Zlocisti, Berlin 1905, 10.

52 Hess, *Rom und Jerusalem*, 63.

53 *Ibid*.

54 Ibid., 49.

55 Moses Hess, *Dynamische Stofflehre. I. Kosmischer Theil. Allgemeine Bewegungserscheinungen und ewiger Kreislauf des kosmischen Lebens. Mit Portrait des Verfassers, nebst Himmelskarten, Abbildungen unsrer Planeten, Kometen und Nebelflecken*, Paris 1877.

56 Hess, *Rom und Jerusalem*, 17.

57 Ibid., 52.

58 Wanda Kampmann, *Deutsche und Juden. Studien zur Geschichte des deutschen Judentums*, Heidelberg 1963, 380.

59 Moses Hess, "Mein Messiasglaube, Erwiderung an [Leopold] Löw" [Ben-Chananja, 1862], in: Hess, *Jüdische Schriften*, 7.

60 *Rom und Jerusalem*, 116.

61 Ibid.

62 Silberner, *Moses Hess*, 417.

63 See: Shlomo Na'aman, "Die Selbstdeutung von 'Rom und Jerusalem' durch Moses Hess. Seine Artikelserie in der Niederrheinischen Volks-Zeitung", in: *Jahrbuch des Instituts für Deutsche Geschichte*, Walter Grab (ed.), Vol. XI/1982, 173 ff.

64 Moses Hess to Berthold Auerbach, September 2, 1841, in: Hess, *Briefwechsel*, 80.

65 Moses Hess to Berthold Auerbach, May 27, 1842, in: ibid, 95.

66 Moses Hess to Berthold Auerbach, July 27, 1842, in: ibid, 97.

67 Moses Hess to Berthold Auerbach, February, 1845, in: ibid, 111.

68 Berthold Auerbach to Moses Hess, April 8, 1861, in: ibid, 375 f.

69 See: Reuwen Michael, "Graetz und Hess", in: *YBLBI*, Vol. IX, 1964, 90–121.

70 The letters from Heinrich Graetz to Moses Hess, first edited by Edmund Silberner (= Estratto dagli Annali dell'Istituto G. Feltrinelli), 4 Vol., 1961, 361 ff.) were republished several years later by Reuwen Michael ("Heinrich Graetz. Tagebuch und Briefe" [= Schriftenreihe *LBI*, Vol. 34], Tübingen 1977, 232).

71 Heinrich Graetz to Moses Hess, July 31, 1866, in: *Graetz. Tagebuch und Briefe*, 524.

72 Heinrich Graetz to Moses Hess, September 26, 1863, in: ibid, 240.

73 Ibid., 237.

74 In a 1863 speech "Die Feste, die Presse und der Frankfurter Abgeordnetentag", Lassalle called Bernstein "simultaneously the most disgusting and the funniest phenomenon of our time". See: Julius H. Schoeps, *A. Bernstein in seiner Zeit. Bürgerliche Aufklärung und liberales Freiheitsdenken* (= Deutsch-jüdische Geschichte durch drei Jahrhunderte, Vol. 5), Hildesheim 2011, 272 f.

75 Heinrich Graetz to Moses Hess, March 4, 1864, in: *Graetz. Tagebuch und Briefe*, 243.

76 Heinrich Graetz to Moses Hess, May 14, 1865, in: ibid, 253.

77 Heinrich Greatz to Moses Hess, July 10, 1863, in: ibid, 239.

78 *Jahrbuch für Israeliten*, Vol. X, 5624 (1863/64), J. Wertheimer and L. Kompert (eds.), Vienna 1864, 1–13.

79 Heinrich Graetz to Moses Hess, February 26, 1867, in: *Graetz. Tagebuch und Briefe*, 282.

80 The complete title of the book is: *Sinai et Golgotha ou les Origines du Judaïsme et Christianisme, suivi d'un examen critique des évangiles anciens et modernes, par H. Graetz, traduit et mis en ordre par Maurice Hess*, Paris [Michel Lévy Frères] 1867.

81 Heinrich Graetz to Moses Hess, October 16, 1868, in: *Graetz. Tagebuch und Briefe*, 293.

82 Heinrich Graetz to Moses Hess, July 5, 1872, in: ibid, 322.

83 [anonymous] "L'émancipation israélites", in: *L'Espérance*, March 5, 1860.

84 Hess, *Rom und Jerusalem*, 80.

85 Hess, *Rom und Jerusalem*, 85.

- 86** See: Zlocisti, *Moses Hess*, 306 ff. and Silberner, *Moses Hess*, 427 ff.
- 87** See: Silberner, *Moses Hess*, 432 f.
- 88** IS, September 17, 1862, 297 f.
- 89** See: Gershon Greenberg, “The Reformers’ first attack upon Hess’ ‘Rome and Jerusalem’. An unpublished Manuscript of Samuel Hirsch”, in: *JSS*, Vol. XXV, Nr. 3/4, 1973, 175–197.
- 90** See: Christian Wiese, “Von Dessau nach Philadelphia: Samuel Hirsch als Philosoph, Apologet und radikaler Reformer”, in: *Jüdische Bildung und Kultur in Sachsen-Anhalt von der Aufklärung bis zum Nationalsozialismus*, Guiseppe Veltri and Christian Wiese (eds.), Berlin 2009, 363–410.
- 91** Ben Chanaja, Vol. V, 1862, No. 26, 225f., 249 f., 250 ff., 259 f.
- 92** Ibid., Vol. V, 1862, No. 24–26, 289 f., 297 f., 305 f., also Moses Hess, *Briefwechsel*, 397–405.
- 93** “Zerstreute Bemerkungen”, in: *AZJ*, No. 45, November 4, 1862.
- 94** Hess to Ludwig Philippson, November 1862, in: Hess, *Briefwechsel*, 415.
- 95** In his *Souvenirs intimes de Henri Heine*, Paris 1883, 84, Alexandre Weill reports meeting Hess at Heine’s.
- 96** *Archives israélites*, Vol.23, 1862, 622–626.
- 97** See: Nathan Rotenstreich, “Moses Hess und Karl Ludwig Michelet. On the Occasion of the Centenary of ‘Rom und Jerusalem’”, in: *YBLB*, Vol. VII/ 1962, 283 ff.
- 98** *Der Pionier*, October 22, 1862.
- 99** Silberner, *Moses Hess*, 441.
- 100** Ibid., 652.
- 101** J. Ph. Becker, “Warnung für Warnung”, in: *Nordstern*, September 16, 1865.
- 102** Hess, *Rom und Jerusalem*, 25.
- 103** Silberner, *Moses Hess*, 656 f.
- 104** See: Walter Laqueur, *Der Weg zum Staat Israel. Geschichte des Zionismus*, Vienna 1975, 297 ff.
- 105** A. Coralnik, “Moses Hess”, in: *Die Welt* (= DW), April 7, 1905.
- 106** Hess found his final resting place at the Jewish cemetery in (Cologne) Deutz, as per his wishes. The inscription “Vater der deutschen Sozialdemokratie” [Father of German Social Democracy] was engraved on his grave at the instigation of the Cologne Social Democrats in 1903. In 1961, Moses Hess’ remains were transported to Israel and buried in the cemetery of the Kvutzat Kinneret. The original manuscript of *Rome and Jerusalem* also found its way to Israel and is now kept in the Schocken Institute for Jewish Research in Jerusalem.
- 107** See: M.E., “Moses Hess. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der zionistischen Bewegung”, in: *JVZ*, Nr. 10, 12, 13, 15/ 1894. The authorship of the honor is also corroborated in a letter that he wrote to Nathan Birnbaum on March 1, 1894 (CZA Jerusalem, A 188/17/2).
- 108** *Zion. Monatsschrift für die nationalen Interessen des Jüdischen Volkes*, Vol.2,1896, 7.
- 109** Protocol of the 1st Zionist Congress in Basel, August 29–31, 1897, Prague 1911,110 ff.
- 110** Introduction by Dr. Bodenheimer. “Zur Neuausgabe des Hess’schen Werkes”, in: *DW*, Nr. 43/1899, 14.

Leon Pinsker: Auto-emancipation and self-help

- 111** The following is a revised and expanded version of my text “Leon Pinsker und die These vom Antisemitismus als ‘kollektive Psychopathologie’ [Leon Pinsker and the hypothesis of anti-Semitism as a ‘collective psychopathology’]”, originally appearing in my book, *Palästinaliebe*.

Leon Pinsker, der Antisemitismus und die Anfänge der nationaljüdischen Bewegung in Deutschland [Love of Palestine. Leon Pinsker, anti-Semitism and the origins of the Jewish national movement in Germany], first edition, Berlin 2005, Hildesheim 2012, pp. 21–34.

112 A biography of Leon (Jehuda Leib) Pinsker's life and work has not yet appeared. From Alter Druyanov's biography in Hebrew (*Pinsker u-smano*, Jerusalem 5713/1953), only the chapters covering the period up until the writing of *Auto-emancipation!* have survived. The most detailed descriptions of Pinsker's life and work are likely found in the versions by B. Netanyahu (*Leon Pinsker. Road to Freedom*, New York 1944, 7–73) and David Vital (*The Origins of Zionism*, Oxford 1975, 122 ff.). Alex Bein (*Die Judenfrage. Biographie eines Weltproblems*, Vol. 2, Stuttgart 1980, 272 ff.) describes the state of research in detail.

113 "Russification" was the motto in Jewish circles, "Russianization" that of the government. See: S[imon] M. Dubnow, *Die neueste Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes (1789-1914)*, Vol. 2, Berlin 1920, 431 f.

114 For more information about the Odessa weekly *Rasswet*, which promoted an assimilation standpoint, see Moshe Perlmann, "Rasswet 1860–61. The Origins of the Russian Jewish Press", in: *JSS*, Vol. XXIV/ 1962, 162–182.

115 Emanuel Soloweitschik (dec. 1875), a doctor in Odessa, later a military doctor in St. Petersburg, served as co-editor.

116 See: Kol Kitvai *M. L. Lilienblum* (Heb.), Vol. IV, Warsaw 1913, 182.

117 See: N[athan] M[ichael] Gelber, "Leo Pinskers Begegnung mit Adolf Jellinek", in: *Aus zwei Jahrhunderten. Beiträge zur neueren Geschichte der Juden*, Vienna and Leipzig 1924, 193–201.

118 The article ("Ein Zwiegespräch", in: *Die Neuzeit*, No. 13/ 14/15/ 1882) does not mention Pinsker by name. Jellinek first implies in a discussion of *Auto-emancipation* that the author is identical to the Russian doctor in his article.

119 Unfortunately, with just two exceptions (Alter Druyanov), *Ketavim le toldot Chibbat Zion ve Yishuv Eretz Israel*, Vol. 1 Odessa 1919, No. 165 and 212) – only Pinsker's letters to Rülf have survived (CZA, Rülf's estate A 1/ VI/ 1/ 24). There is a total of 17 letters, which were written between 1882 and 1885. A Hebrew translation of the letters has been published (Mordechai Joeli, *J. L. Pinsker*, Tel Aviv 1960, 139–158) and some letters have appeared in a rather poor English translation (Netanyahu, Leon Pinsker, 124–142). The author has edited the letters in the original language with critical commentary ("Briefe Leon Pinskers an Isaak Rülf. Zur Vorgeschichte der jüdischen Nationalbewegung", in: *ZRGG* 3/1982). A reprinting appeared in: "Korrespondenzen rund um die Kattowitzer Konferenz" [Leon Pinsker, Selig Freuthal, Heinrich Graetz, Esriel Hildesheimer, Isaak Rülf, Moritz Moses, Sigismund Simmel], in: Schoeps, *Palästinaliebe*, 101 ff.

120 Ibid., 103.

121 Arthur Cohen (1830–1914), a well-known lawyer, member of the Privy Council, and Member of Parliament since 1880.

122 In Paris, the Chief Rabbi Zadoc Kahn (1839–1905) wanted to introduce Pinsker to Baron Edmond de Rothschild (1845–1905), the head of the Paris bank. The meeting never took place, however. Pinsker's letter to Rülf on September 27, 1882 talks about his attempts to get into contact with Laurence Oliphant (1829–1888) and Edward Cazalett (1827–1883), both of whom had developed plans for the colonization of Palestine.

123 The original edition (*Auto-emancipation! Mahnruf an seine Stammesgenossen von einem russischen Juden*, Kommissions-Verlag W. Issleib (G. Schuhr), Berlin 1882) will be referenced here. Later editions underwent editorial revisions, which have at times even led to textual inaccuracies. Omissions were also made, as well as italicized passages which did not appear in the original.

124 The remarks preceded the actual text and do not have a page number.

125 Ibid., 1.

126 Ibid.

127 Ibid., 2.

128 An injured sense of honor was a strong incentive for many Jews in the 19th century; see the excursus in Alex Bein, *Die Judenfrage*, Vol. 2, 274 ff.77.

129 *Auto-emancipation!*, 4.

130 The Jews-as-ghosts was something already seen by Heinrich Heine. In *Memoiren des Herrn von Schnabelewopski* (Ch. XIV) he speaks of them as a “national ghost”. In *Reisebilder* he sees the Jewish people as a “national mummy, wandering over the face of the earth, wrapped in their ancient alphabet rags, a hardened piece of world history, a ghost, that secures its existence by exchanging money and trading in old pants”. In his book *Über Religion und Philosophie in Deutschland*, published in 1835, he says: “Like a ghost guarding a treasure that’s been entrusted to him, so this murdered people sat, this national ghost in their dark ghettos where they preserved the Hebrew bible ...”. The author is indebted to Alex Bein (*Die Judenfrage*, Vol. 2, 247) for his mention of Heine in this context.

131 *Auto-emancipation!*, 11.

132 Rudolph M. Lowenstein, *Psychoanalyse des Antisemitismus* Frankfurt a. M. 1968, 12.

133 Alexander Mitscherlich, “Die Vorurteilskrankheit”, in: *Psyche. Eine Zeitschrift für psychologische und medizinische Menschenkunde*, Vol. XVI/1962/63, 241.

134 At the 4th Congress of the German society for psychotherapy and depth psychology in Wiesbaden on May 5, 1962, a resolution was passed during a symposium on “The psychological and social prerequisites for anti-Semitism” which included the statement: “Anti-Semitism is a social disease. It belongs in this context to the pathological, irrational solidification of prejudices” (*Psyche*, Vol. XVI/1962/63, 310).

135 Bein, *Die Judenfrage*, Vol. 2, 277.

136 *Auto-emancipation!*, 36.

137 Ibid., 22.

138 Ibid., 23.

139 Ibid., 36.

140 Pinsker to Rülf, September 27, 1882 (Schoeps, *Palästinaliebe*, 103–105).

141 Pinsker to Rülf, October 13/25, 1882 (ibid, 108 f.).

142 Pinsker to Rülf, October 6, 1882 (ibid, 105–107).

143 “Die Wiederbelebung des jüdischen Nationalitäts-Gedankens”, in: *DIS*, No. 41/1882.

144 M. Friedberg, in: *IW* 1882, literature supplement, 175, 179–180.

145 “Eine alte Frage”, in: *AZJ*, No. 39–41/ 1882.

146 *JP*, No. 14/1884.

147 J. B. Saphir, *Der Zionismus. Eine populär-wissenschaftliche Darlegung des Wesens und der Geschichte der zionistischen Bewegung*, Brno 1903, 50.

148 *Hamaskir. Hebräische Bibliographie*, revised by M[oritz] Steinschneider and Julius Benzian, Vol. 21/1882, 123.

149 “Eine alte Frage”, in: *AJZ*, No. 39–42, October 17, 1882.

150 “Avtoemancipatsiya! Priziv russkago evreya k svoim edino-verstsara” Perevel A[kim] Fleks-er-[Violinsky] (in: *Rassvet; organ russkikh evreev Ezhenedelnoe izdanie*, St. Petersburg 1882, No. 41–46, 12–24, X–13, 25 – XI).

151 *A S'gulah zu de jidische Zores von dem Sefer “Autoemancipation”*, translated by Sch. Abramowitz [Mendele Mocher Sforim], Odessa 1884.

152 There have been 80 editions of Pinsker's work appearing in 21 languages up to now: German (13 editions), Hebrew (12), English (11), Russian (9), Yiddish (6), Spanish (4), Polish (4), French (3), Italian, Bulgarian, Dutch, Hungarian, Romanian (2 each) and Danish, Greek, Ladino, Serbo-Croatian, Portuguese, Persian, Czech, Swedish (1 edition each). See: Hela Avrahami, "The Editions of Yehuda Leib Pinsker's Autoemancipation", in: *Zionism. Studies in the History of the Zionist Movement and of the Jews in Palestine*, Vol. 3, Daniel Carpi (ed.), Tel Aviv, 1973, 548–557.

153 See: Pesach Goldring, *Zur Vorgeschichte des Zionismus*, PhD dissertation, Frankfurt 1925, 41 ff. and Vidal, *The Origins of Zionism*, 135 ff.

154 Dubnow, *Die neueste Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes*, Vol. 3, 190.

155 See: M. Glücksohn, "Das Werk der Chowewe-Zion. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte achtundzwanzigjähriger Palästinaarbeit", in: *DW*, No. 41, October 17, 1910, 1088–1099; as well as N. S., "Das Programm und die Grundsätze der Chowewe Zion", in: *DW*, No. 2, January 12, 1912, 43–45.

156 Vital, *The Origins of Zionism*, 142 f.

157 A German version of the conference protocol appears in Druyanov, *Ketawim le-toldot Chibbat Zion we-Jischuw Eretz Israel*, Vol. 1, 275–295. There is another German version which was written by Saul Pinchas Rabinowitz that appears in: Schoeps, *Palästinaliebe*, 63–100.

158 Ibid., 71.

159 See: Nahum Sokolow, *Hibbath Zion (The Love for Zion). Stating Principles and Activities of the Pre-Herzl-Palestinophile (Hovevey-Zion = Lovers of Zion) Movement in Religion, Literature and Life about 1840-1896. A compendium of Literary Records concerning the origin of Hibbath Zion, with a series of Biographical Sketches of the Leaders, and Historical Studies outlining a Philosophy of the Jewish National Revival in contemporary Zionism*, Jerusalem 1934, 252 ff.; "Autoemanzipation und Selbsthilfe. Die Anfänge der nationaljüdischen Bewegung in Deutschland (1882-1897)", in: Julius H. Schoeps, *Die missglückte Emanzipation. Wege und Irrwege deutsch-jüdischer Geschichte (= Deutsch-jüdische Geschichte durch drei Jahrhunderte*, Vol. 1), Hildesheim 2010, 273 ff.

160 The number of local chapters of the Hibbat Zion in Russia was estimated to be between 80–140 with a total of circa 140,000 members at the end of the 1880's. The organization raised between 40,000 and 50,000 rubles a year. This amount was enough to secure the living expenses of around 15 families in Palestine for a year. See: Steven J. Zipperstein, *Elusive Prophet. Ahad Ha'am and the Origins of Zionism*, Berkeley/Los Angeles 1993, 23.

161 A German translation of the text appears in: Achad Ha'am, *Am Scheidewege*, Vol. 1, Berlin 1925, 41 ff.

162 Dr. Leon Pinsker, in: *DW*, No. 1/1898, 6.

163 *Selbst-Emancipation* appeared every two weeks starting on February 1, 1886 under the editorship of Nathan Birnbaum with the subtitle "Journal for the national, social and political interests of the Jewish people". On January 23, 1895 the *Jüdische Volkszeitung*, as *Selbst-Emancipation* was called after 1894, ceased publication. See: Josef Meisl, "Selbst-Emancipation", in: *Vom Sinn des Judentums. Ein Sammelband zu Ehren Nathan Birnbaums*, A. E., Kaplan and Max Landau (eds.), Frankfurt am Main 1925, 19–33.

164 See: obituary [presumably written by Nathan Birnbaum], in: *Selbst-Emanzipation*, Vol. 5, No. 11, January 5, 1892.

165 See: Michael Kühntopf-Gentz, "Israel geht vor Zion". Nathan Birnbaum und die Palästinafrage", in: *ZRGG*, Vol. 44/1992, 118–139.

166 The first issue of the paper *Serubabel. Organ für die Interessen des jüdischen Volkes* appeared on September 29, 1886. Willy Bambus, Albert Katz, Isaak Turoff and Ferdinand Wolff served as editors. However, the paper ceased publication a short time later.

167 *Selbst-Emancipation*, No. 7/1885.

168 Ibid., No. 1/1886.

169 Ibid., No. 2/1886.

170 *Die Assimilationssucht. Ein Wort an die sogenannten Deutschen, Slaven, Magyaren u. mosaischer Confession von einem Studenten jüdischer Nationalität*, Vienna [Verlag der Buchhandlung D. Löwy] 1884, 14 f.

171 Achad Haam, *Am Scheidewege. Gesammelte Aufsätze*, Vol. 1, Berlin 1925, 163–182, here 164.

172 See: Verena Dohrn, “Abraham Mapus ‘Zionsliebe’. Die Geburt einer neuen Zionsidee in Osteuropa”, in: Heiko Haumann (ed.), *Der Traum von Israel. Die Ursprünge des modernen Zionismus*, Weinheim 1998, 108–139.

173 Ibid., 167.

174 Ibid., 173.

175 Dr. Leon Pinsker, in: *DW*, No. 1/1898, 6.

Isaak Rülf: Persecution and relief measures

176 The correspondence appears in: Schoeps, *Palästinaliebe*, 101–208 ff.

177 Leon Pinsker to Isaak Rülf, September 25, 1882, in: Schoeps, *ibid.*, 102.

178 See: Shlomo [Friedrich] Rülf, *Ströme im dürren Land. Erinnerungen*, Stuttgart 1964, 22.

179 Compare to: “Der Fall Edgardo Mortara. Die Reaktionen in Deutschland auf die vom Vatikan veranlasste Entführung und Zwangstaufe eines jüdischen Kindes in den fünfziger Jahren des 19. Jahrhunderts”, in: Julius H. Schoeps, “Über Juden und Deutsche. Historisch-Politische Be trachtungen” (= *Deutsch-jüdische Geschichte durch drei Jahrhunderte*, Vol. 4), Hildesheim 2010, 73–82.

180 Isaak Rülf, *Jankel Widutzky, der den Händen der Judenbekehrungs-Mission entzogene Knabe. Keine Mortara, aber doch eine characteristische Geschichte*, Memel [1867].

181 Isaak Rülf, appeal “Mitbrüder!”, in: *AZJ*, No. 6, February 4, 1868.

182 See: Nathan M. Gelber, *Die Juden und der polnische Aufstand 1863*, Vienna/Leipzig 1923.

183 On the phenomenon of smuggling see Ruth Leiserowitz, *Sabbatleuchter und Kriegerverein. Juden in der ostpreußisch-litauischen Grenzregion 1812–1942*, Osnabrück 2010, 121 ff.

184 On the conditions at the Prussian-Russian border see Ruth Leiserowitz, “Entwicklungen an der preußischen Peripherie. Eine Grenze aus jüdischer Perspektive”, in: Michal Küpper, Barbara Rösch, Ulrike Schneider, Helen Thein (eds.), *Makom. Ort und Räume im Judentum. Essays* (= *Haskala. Wissenschaftliche Abhandlungen*, Vol. 35), Hildesheim et al 2007. 65–73.

185 Over a time period of just one and a half years the association was able to collect 630,000 marks which were distributed among 230 Jewish communities in Lithuania.

186 The author is indebted to Jutta Dick, the director of the Mendelssohn Akademie Halberstadt, who indicated to him that the Süsskind Hirsch listed on the list of donors was the businessman Sigismund Hirsch (1831–1877).

187 Statement of accounts, in: *AZJ*, April 28, 1868, supplement.

188 For more on the general state of the Jews in the Pale border region see the numerous reports and articles from the Russian empire or the Prussian-Russian border area which appeared at regular intervals in the *AZJ* (“Die Auswanderung von Juden aus den westrussischen Provinzen”).

189 Ludwig Philippson, “Memorandum über die Auswanderung von Juden aus den westrussischen Provinzen”, in: *AZJ*, No. 43, October 26, 1869.

190 Second statement of accounts, in: *AZJ*, No. 32, July 20, 1868, supplement.

191 Dr. Rülf, *Meine Reise nach Kowno um die Uebersiedlung nothleidender Glaubensgenossen aus den Grenzbezirken nach dem Innern Russlands zu ordnen sowie die in der dortigen Synagoge gehaltene Predigt* [My trip to Kovno to organize the resettlement of suffering fellow believers from the Pale into the interior of Russia as well as the sermon held in the local synagogue], Memel [1869], 4.

192 In 1864, of the 55,113 inhabitants of Kovno (Kaunas), 16,513 were Jewish, making up 30% of the population at the time. In 1897, the number had already risen to 25,428 out of 70,920 inhabitants, making up 41% of the population. See: Aliza Cohen-Mishlin et al, *Synagogues in Lithuania*, Vol. 1: A – M, Vilnius 2010, 108.

193 Rülf, *Meine Reise nach Kowno*, 4.

194 Starting in early August 1869, a series of articles appeared in the *AZJ* (I–XIX, No. 31, 33–42, 45/1869), entitled “Die Auswanderung von Juden in den westrussischen Provinzen”. Rülf provided the editor’s texts and news from himself and from others for this series, as well as for a series of articles entitled “The West Russian Jews” which began appearing in the *AZJ* on January 4, 1870.

195 Rülf, *Meine Reise nach Kowno*, 12.

196 Ibid., 13.

197 See: “Die Kownoer Beschlüsse”, in: *AZJ*, No. 24/1869, 469; as well as Dr. J. Rülf, *Die russischen Juden. Ihre Leidensgeschichte und unsere Rettungsversuche*, Memel 1892, 14 ff.

198 Rülf, *Meine Reise nach Kowno*, 24.

199 Rülf, *Die russischen Juden*, 19.

200 Ibid., 28.

201 Ibid., 25.

202 The laws introduced by Ignatieff on May 3, 1882 prohibited the Jews from settling in the countryside, limited their living, property and mortgage rights and forced them to keep their businesses closed on Christian holidays and Sundays.

203 For example see: “Die Juden-Verfolgungen in Russland”. Two reports from the *Times* correspondent (articles from January 11th and 15th, 1882), Berlin [Louis Gerschel Verlagsbuchhandlung] 1882.

204 The pogrom was said to have been sparked by a fight in a restaurant on April 27, 1881. The fight escalated and was taken to the streets. Numerous Jews were victims of the attacking mob and there was systematic destruction of Jewish businesses and warehouses.

205 See N. M. Gelber, “Aktenstücke zur Geschichte der Judenpogrome in Russland im Jahre 1881”, in: *Menorah*, Vol. 5, January 1927, 8 f.

206 Quote from Shmuel Ettinger, in: Haim Hillel Ben-Sasson (ed.), *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes*, Vol. 3, Munich 1980, 196 f.

207 *Die Judenpogrome in Russland*, commissioned by the committee established to investigate the pogroms by the Zionist Relief Fund (Zionistischer Hilfsfond) in London, Vol. I, Cologne and Leipzig 1910, 23.

208 Rülf, *Die russischen Juden*, 29.

209 Dr. J. Rülf, *Drei Tage in Jüdisch-Russland. Ein Cultur- und Sittenbild*, Frankfurt a. M 1882, 9.

210 Ibid., 74.

211 Ibid., 82.

212 See A. Linden [Leo Motzkin], “Prototyp des Pogroms in den achtziger Jahren”, in: *Die Judenpogrome in Russland*, 12 ff.

213 Rülf, *Drei Tage in Jüdisch-Russland*, 104.

214 Ibid., 121.

215 Ibid., 125 f.

- 216** Dr. I. Rülf, *Aruchas Bas-Ammi. Israels Heilung. Ein ernstes Wort an Glaubens- und Nicht-glaubensgenossen*, Frankfurt a. M. 1883.
- 217** Reuwen Michael, "Israels Heilung. Isaak Rülf und die Anfänge des Zionismus in Deutschland", in: *BLBI*, No. 21–24/1963, 126–147, here 130.
- 218** Rülf, *Aruchas Bas-Ammi*, 6.
- 219** Ibid., 7.
- 220** Ibid., 21.
- 221** Ibid., 28 and 31.
- 222** "Auch eine Kleinigkeit in Sachen Treitschke et compe", in: *AZJ*, No. 7, February 17, 1880, 108.
- 223** *Der "Berliner Antisemitismusstreit". Kommentierte Quellenedition*, revised by Karsten Krieger, part I, 413, note 250.
- 224** See I. Rülf, "Die neuzeitlichen Blutbeschuldigungen", in: *DW*, No. 16/1900, 2–3.
- 225** See "Ritualmordbeschuldigung und Blutaberglaube. Die Affäre Buschhoff im nieder-rheinischen Xanten", in: Schoeps, *Die missglückte Emanzipation*, 203–230.
- 226** See Sigrun Anselm, "Angst und Angstprojektion in der Phantasie vom jüdischen Ritualmord", in: Rainer Erb (ed.), *Die Legende vom Ritualmord. Zur Geschichte der Blutbeschuldigung gegen Juden*, Berlin 1993, 253 ff.
- 227** Rülf, *Aruchas Bas-Ammi*, 57.
- 228** Schoeps, *Palästinaliebe*, 55.
- 229** Rülf, *Aruchas Bas-Ammi*, 74.
- 230** Ibid., 81.
- 231** Nathan Birnbaum to Isaak Rülf, January 22, 1884 (Rülf collection, CZA, A 1/VI–1).
- 232** Moritz Moses (died 1903), businessman in Kattowitz, member of the Hibbat Zion movement, attendee of four Zionist Congresses.
- 233** See Moritz Moses to Max Bodenheimer, June 12, 1897 (Bodenheimer collection, CZA A 15/VII/1).
- 234** "Der Colonist" was the first German language newspaper which supported the colonization of Palestine. See Julius H. Schoeps, "Autoemanzipation und Selbsthilfe. Die Anfänge der national-jüdischen Bewegung in Deutschland", in: Schoeps, *Die missglückte Emanzipation*, 285.
- 235** Selig Freuthal to Isaak Rülf, November 4, 1883 (Rülf collection, CZA A1/VI, 1/ 25).
- 236** Selig Freuthal to Nathan Birnbaum, December 29, 1884, (Birnbaum collection CZA, A 188).
- 237** Heinrich Jankus to Isaak Rülf, September 24, 1883 (Rülf collection, CZA A1/V–4/21).
- 238** David Gordon to Isaak Rülf, December 11, 1883 (Rülf collection, CZA, A 1/VI–1).
- 239** "Israels Heilung", in: *AZJ*, No. 41/1883, 662–666.
- 240** *Jüdisches Litteratur-Blatt* [supplement to the *Israelitische Wochenschrift*], September 1, 1883, 139.
- 241** Leon Pinsker to Isaak Rülf, August 2, 1883, in: Schoeps, *Palästinaliebe*, 113.
- 242** Leon Pinsker to Isaak Rülf, January 30, 1884, in: ibid, 123.
- 243** Isaak Rülf to Leon Pinsker, December 16, 1884, in: ibid, 150.
- 244** Michael, *Israels Heilung*, 145.
- 245** Isaak Rülf to Leon Pinsker, February 16, 1885, in: *Palästinaliebe*, 180–181, here 180.
- 246** See previously unpublished excerpt from the protocol of the meeting in the Concordia Loge, Kattowitz, September 24, 1884, in: *Theodor Herzl. Jahrbuch*, Tulo Nussenblatt, (ed.), Vienna 1937, 200f.
- 247** Compare the "Protokolle der Delegiertenversammlung der Chowewe Zion, 6.- 10. November 1884" [Protocol of the Hibbat Zion delegate conference November 6–10, 1884], in: Schoeps, *Palästinaliebe*, 65–100.

- 248** Leon Pinsker to Isaak Rülf, November 16/28 1884, in: Schoeps, *Palästinaliebe*, 141.
- 249** See Helmut Neubach, *Die Ausweisungen von Polen und Juden aus Preussen 1885/86. Ein Beitrag zu Bismarcks Polenpolitik und zur Geschichte des deutsch-polnischen Verhältnisses* (= Marburger Ostforschungen, Vol. 27), Wiesbaden 1967, 146 f.
- 250** See Mordechai Eliav, "Zur Vorgeschichte der jüdischen Nationalbewegung", in *BLBI* 48/1969, 282–284, 299.
- 251** See Schoeps, *Autoemanzipation und Selbsthilfe*, 284 ff.
- 252** "Moderne Erben der Makkabäer. Die Anfänge der Wiener Kadimah (1882-1897)", in: Schoeps, *Die missglückte Emanzipation*, 309 ff.
- 253** Isaak Rülf to the academic organization Kadimah, January 22, 1888 (CZA, Z 1/1).
- 254** Willi Bambus to Isaak Rülf, March 11, 1896 (CZA, Rülf collection A 1/ VI-1).
- 255** See M. Ehrenpreis, "Vor Herzl und mit Herzl. Zur Vorgeschichte des Baseler Kongresses", in: Nussenblatt, *Theodor Herzl*, 183–202, here 192.
- 256** See: *Zur Verteidigung der Juden hier und überall mit besonderer Berücksichtigung auf ihre Stellung und Beaufsichtigung in Kurhessen*, Marburg 1858.
- 257** See I. Rülf, *Entstehung und Bedeutung des Antisemitismus in Hessen*, [separate printing] Mainz 1890.
- 258** The journalist and popular author A. Bernstein did not think much of Rülf's philosophical efforts. When Rülf told him in 1872 during a meeting in Berlin of his plan to "develop a system of a new metaphysics", Bernstein strongly urged him to drop the plan, at the same time admitting: "I am completely incompetent in philosophical things. Nature has withheld any philosophical aptitude from me. I don't have the least understanding for our school philosophy. All of these philosophical systems, and please consider this my ignorance and excuse it, seem to me to be the products of crazy minds. You should never go deeper into the water than you can see the ground; even that is sometimes too far and much too dangerous". See Isaak Rülf, "Eine Begegnung mit A. Bernstein", in: Julius H. Schoeps (ed.), *A. Bernstein in seiner Zeit. Briefe und Materialien* (= *Haskala*, Vol. 43), Hildesheim et al 2010, 293.
- 259** Anonymous, "Dr. J. J. Rülf", in: *DW*, No. 19, October 8, 1897, 7.
- 260** See Thomas Rahe, "Die politische und soziale Theorie bei Isaak Rülf. Das Erbrecht als Erbübel im Hinblick auf die zukünftige Entwicklung der menschlichen Gesellschaft", in: *BLBI*, 79/1988, 75 ff.
- 261** A review appeared in the *AZJ* No. 48/ 1889, 753 in which the author expressed his amazement that Eduard von Hartmann (1842–1906), known for his anti-Semitic diatribes, yet sympathetic to Zionism, spoke positively of Rülf's logic.
- 262** *AZJ*, No.24, June 11, 1897.
- 263** I. Rülf, "Erklärung gegen Erklärung", in: *DW*, No. 4, June 25 1897.
- 264** I. Rülf, "Deutsche Rabbiner", in: *DW*, No. 9, July 30, 1897.
- 265** See *Protokoll des I. Zionistenkongresses in Basel vom 29. bis 31. August 1897*, republished by the Jewish national academic-technical union Barissia, Prague 1911, 130.
- 266** *Protokoll des III. Delegirtentages der deutschen Zionisten am 31. Oktober 1897 zu Frankfurt a.M.*(CZA, A 15/VII/34). See here also Henriette Hanna Bodenheimer (ed.), *Der Durchbruch des politischen Zionismus in Köln 1890-1900. Eine Dokumentation. Briefe, Protokolle, Flugblätter, Reden*, Cologne 1978, 228.
- 267** *Stenograph. Protokoll der Verhandlungen des II. Zionisten-Kongresses gehalten zu Basel vom 29. bis 31. August 1898*, Vienna 1898, 240 f.
- 268** Mention of Rülf's retirement, in: *AZJ*, supplement "Der Gemeindebote" No. 48/, 1897, 2 and of his retirement party in Memel, in: *AZJ*, supplement "Der Gemeindebote", No. 15/1898, 2.

269 Martin Buber made this request of Theodor Herzl on January 6, 1899 (*Martin Buber. Briefwechsel aus sieben Jahrzehnten*, Grete Schaefer (ed.), Vol.1: 1897–1918, Heidelberg 1972, 146). Due to time considerations, Herzl did not feel that he was in the position to come to Leipzig, which he informed Buber of on January 6, 1899 (Theodor Herzl. *Briefe und Tagebücher*, Vol. 5: *Briefe Anfang Dezember 1898 – Mitte August 1900*, revised by Barbara Schäfer, Frankfurt a. M. et al 1991, 44).

270 Accordingly Rülf gave a lecture to the local group of the Frankfurt “Zionist Union for Germany” on December 13th in the banquet hall of the Alemania. About 500 people were present, including many non-local sympathizers, particularly students from the nearby university towns Giessen, Marburg, Bonn and Heidelberg. In his lecture, Rülf implored those present “to awaken the national sensibility, the national consciousness of the Jews and to strengthen and further develop it wherever it is present”. It is the “holy duty” of the Jews to counteract the “contemptible assimilation attempts of our namesakes”. See *DW*, No. 52/1898, 7.

271 This previously unpublished letter from Martin Buber to Isaak Rülf from January 1, 1899 can be found in the Rülf collection (CZA A 1/VI–1).

272 *DW*, No. 16, April 21, 1899, 12.

273 *DW*, No. 27, July 4, 1902.

274 I. Rülf, “Bilder aus dem russischen Reichsghetto. Sundel, der Roßarzt”, in: *IR/JR*, No. 19–21, 24–26, 28–34, 36, 39, 41–44, 48–51/1902.

275 *IR*, No. 10, March 7, 1902.

276 Theodor Herzl to Max Bodenheimer, September 20, 1903, in: Herzl, *Briefe und Tagebücher*, Vol. 7: *Briefe. 1903 - Juli 1904* [Addenda to Vols. 1–6], 630.

277 *DW*, No. 40, October 2, 1902, 11–12.

278 *DW*, No. 41, September 22, 1902.

279 *DW*, No. 28, July 11, 1902.

280 *DW*, No. 46, November 14, 1902.

281 There were celebrations in Bonn, Petrikau, Jassy, Memel and other towns for Rülf’s 70th birthday. He expressed his thanks for the numerous congratulatory cards and letters in an announcement appearing in the *Welt*: “Noble children of Zion! Thank you so much for all of the professions of love and support of my person on the occasion of my 70th birthday. I am yours and will remain so until the end of my life.” See *DW*, No. 8, February 22, 1901.

282 Theodor Herzl. *Briefe und Tagebücher*, Vol. 6: *Briefe 1900-1902*, revised by Barbara Schäfer, Frankfurt a. M. et al 1993, 137.

283 Dagobert von Gerhardt-Amyntor, “Am Grabe Rülf’s”, in: *Berliner Tageblatt*, No. 49, September 27, 1902.

284 Heinrich Loewe, “Der Zionismus in Trauer”, *Israelitische Rundschau*, No. 39, September 24, 1902.

285 “Rabbiner Dr. Isaak Rülf”, in: *DW*, No. 39, September 26, 1902.

Epilogue, or: the attempt at a conclusion

286 Alex Bein, *Theodor Herzl. Biographie*, Vienna 1934, 203 f.

287 Diary entry from September 20, 1895, in: Herzl. *Briefe und Tagebücher*, Vol. 2: *Zionistisches Tagebuch 1895-1899*, 251.

288 Diary entry from February 10, 1896, in: Herzl. *Briefe und Tagebücher*, Vol. 3: *Zionistisches Tagebuch 1895-1899*, 300.

- 289** Diary entry from May 2, 1901, in: *ibid*, 240.
- 290** David Farbstein, “Aus meinem Leben”, in: *Schweizerischer Israelitischer Gemeindebund 1904-1954. Festschrift in honor of its 50th anniversary*, Basel 1954, 197.
- 291** See Hanna Zweig-Strauss, *Jüdischer Sozialist – sozialistischer Jude*, Zurich 2002, 46 f.
- 292** *Protokoll des I. Zionistenkongresses in Basel vom 29. bis 31. August 1897*, 110 ff., here 112.
- 293** *DW*, No. 2, January 9, 1903.
- 294** See Alex Bein, Introduction, in: Herzl. *Briefe und Tagebücher*, Vol. 3: *Zionistisches Tagebuch 1895-1899*, 19.
- 295** Theodor Herzl, *Gesammelte zionistische Werke*, Vol. 1: *Zionistische Schriften*, Tel Aviv 1934, 25 f.
- 296** *Ibid.*, 371 ff.
- 297** *Ibid.*, 31.
- 298** Herzl, *Zionistische Schriften*, Vol. 5, 248.
- 299** See Israel Klausner, “Adam Rosenberg. One of the Earliest American Zionists”, in: *Herzl Yearbook*, Vol. 1/1958, 232–287.
- 300** See Julius H. Schoeps, “Der ‘jüdische’ Dandy. Die Selbstinszenierung des Theodor Herzl”, in: *Das Leben als Kunstwerk. Der Dandy als kulturhistorisches Phänomen im 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert*, Joachim H. Knoll, Anna D. Ludewig, Julius H. Schoeps (eds.), Berlin 2013.
- 301** Bein, *Theodor Herzl*, 34.
- 302** *Warum gingen wir zum Zionistenkongreß*, Berlin 1922, 32.
- 303** See Steffen Hagemann, *Die Siedlerbewegung: Fundamentalismus in Israel*, Schwalbach/Ts. 2010, 164 ff.
- 304** Quoted out of Rubinstein, *Geschichte des Zionismus*, 154.
- 305** See Schoeps, *Palästinaliebe*, 73.
- 306** Rülf, *Aruchas Bas—Ammi*, 72.
- 307** *Ibid.*, 84.
- 308** *Stenographisches Protokoll der Verhandlungen des II. Zionisten-Kongresses gehalten zu Basel vom 28. bis 31. August 1898*, Vienna 1898, 7.
- 309** See Hagemann, *Die Siedlerbewegung*, 96 ff.
- 310** See Yosef Gorny, *Zionism and the Arabs. A Study of Ideology*, Oxford 1987, 26 ff.
- 311** Achad Haam, *Am Scheidewege. Gesammelte Aufsätze*, Vol. 1, Berlin 1925, 87 f.
- 312** Amos Elon, *Die Israelis. Gründer und Söhne*, Vienna et al 1972, 175.
- 313** Nachum Goldmann, *Staatsmann ohne Staat. Autobiographie*, Cologne/Berlin 1970, 387.
- 314** Herzl, *Zionistische Schriften*, Vol. 1, 45.
- 315** Elon, *Die Israelis*, 183.
- 316** Alan R. Taylor, *Prelude to Israel. An Analysis of Zionist Diplomacy 1897-1947*, New York 1959, 33.
- 317** See here Judith Klein, *Der deutsche Zionismus und die Araber Palästinas. Eine Untersuchung der deutsch-zionistischen Publikationen 1917-1938*, Frankfurt/New York 1982.
- 318** “Don’t forget”, Bodenheimer argued, “that the development of one Jewish village in Palestine brings with it the development of ten Fellahin villages nearby and that the work of Jewish intelligence and industriousness will result in an increase in the Mohammedan population which would even continue to grow with a greater Jewish emigration.” (*Stenographisches Protokoll der Verhandlungen des VII. Zionisten-Kongresses*, Berlin 1905, 149). This opinion, which was based on a fatal misjudgment, had already appeared in Herzl’s novel *Altneuland*.
- 319** “Architekt des Aufbaus. Zum Leben und Werk des Soziologen Arthur Ruppin”, in: Schoeps, *Über Juden und Deutsche*, 141 ff.

- 320** M[enachem] Ussischkin, *Unser Programm*, Vienna, Leipzig o. D., 11 and 23.
- 321** Arthur Ruppin, *Briefe, Tagebücher, Erinnerungen*, Shlomo Krolik, (ed.), with an afterword by Alex Bein, Königstein/Ts. 1985, 309.
- 322** See here the dissertation by Dieter Wichmann which the author supervised at the University of Duisburg: *Der Traum vom Frieden. Das binationale Konzept des Britsch Schalom zur Lösung des jüdisch-arabischen Konfliktes in der Zeit von 1925-1933*, Schwalbach/Ts. 1998.
- 323** Hugo Bergmann, “Britsch Schalom”, in: *Parteien und Strömungen im Zionismus in Selbstdarstellungen*, published by the Academic-technical union Barissia, Prague 1931, 10.
- 324** *Stenographisches Protokoll der Verhandlungen des XVI. Zionist-Kongresses in Zürich*, London 1929, 46.
- 325** Aaron Cohen, *Israel and the Arab World*, London 1970, 247.
- 326** Ernst Hamburger, *Staatszionismus. Sein Weg und sein Ziel*, Berlin 1935, 15.
- 327** See Helmuth K. G. Rönnefarth, Heinrich Euler, *Konferenzen und Verträge. Vertrags-Ploetz, part II, Vol. 4: Neueste Zeit 1914–1959*, 2nd revised edition, Würzburg 1959, 14–17.
- 328** Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak made a remarkable exception to this with his proposals during the Camp David negotiations in late summer 2000. According to later statements made by then-US President Bill Clinton, who had made extensive efforts in the negotiations, a compromise failed to be reached due to the rigid stance taken by PLO head Yasser Arafat. See Efraim Karsh, *Arafat's War. The Man and His Battle for Israeli Conquest*. New York, 2003, 171.
- 329** See Hagemann, *Die Siedlerbewegung*, 96 ff.
- 330** See Niels Metzger, “Die unbirrten Siedler von Kiryat Arba”, in: *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (= SZ), September 20, 2011.
- 331** See Gershom Gorenberg, *The Unmaking of Israel*, Frankfurt/New York 2012, 221 ff.
- 332** Amnon Rubinstein, *Geschichte des Zionismus. Von Theodor Herzl bis heute*, Munich 2001, 329.
- 333** See Barbara Schäfer, *Der Historikerstreit in Israel. Die “neuen” Historiker zwischen Wissenschaft und Öffentlichkeit*, Frankfurt am Main/New York 2000.
- 334** About the opinions expressed by the post-Zionists see Rubinstein, *Geschichte des Zionismus*, 238 ff.
- 335** See Moses Mendelssohn. *Gesammelte Schriften. Jubiläumsausgabe* (= JubA), Vol. 8, Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt 1977, 99–204.
- 336** Shlomo Avineri, “Ein jüdischer Staat aller seiner Bürger”, in: *Haaretz*, October 6, 2012.
- 337** Lea Rabin, *Rabin: his life, our legacy*, Munich 1997, 10 .

List of abbreviations

AZ	Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums [General paper of Jewry], 1837–1922
BLBI	Bulletin of the Leo Baeck Institute
CZA	Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem
DW	Die Welt [The World]
IS	Der Israelit. Central-Organ für das orthodoxe Judentum [The Israelite. The central organ for Orthodox Judaism], 1860 ff.
IW	Israelitische Wochenschrift für die religiösen und sozialen Interessen des Judenthums [Israelite weekly for the religious and social interests of Jewry], 1870–1894
JBIdfG	Jahrbuch des Instituts für deutsche Geschichte [Yearbook of the Institute for German history], University of Tel Aviv
JR	Jüdische Rundschau. Organ der Zionistischen Vereinigung für Deutschland [Jewish Review. Organ of the Zionist Union for Germany]
JSS	Jewish Social Studies
JubA	Moses Mendelssohn, Gesammelte Schriften.Jubiläumsausgabe [Moses Mendelssohn, collected writings anniversary edition], Berlin 1929 ff.
JVZ	Jüdische Volkszeitung, successor to Selbst-Emancipation after it ceased publication
JZWL	Jüdische Zeitschrift für Wissenschaft und Leben [Jewish journal for science and life]
MGWJ	Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums [Monthly journal for the history and science of Judaism]
StaBi	Staatsbibliothek [State library]
SZ	Süddeutsche Zeitung
SE	Selbst-Emancipation. Zeitschrift für die nationalen, sozialen und politischen Interessen des jüdischen Stammes [Self-Emancipation. Journal for the national, social, and political interests of the Jewish people], 1886–1893
YBLBI	Yearbook Leo Baeck Institute, 1956 ff.
ZRGG	Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte [Journal for religious and intellectual history]

Glossary

Acculturation, term for the process of adapting to a cultural and social environment with the expectation of a synthesis

Ahavath Zion, Heb.: love of Zion; name of a pro-colonization association founded in Vienna in 1882, essentially corresponded with the aims of the→ Hibbat Zion associations

Aliyah, pl. Aliyot, Heb.: ascent; a term taken from the pilgrimages up to Mt. Zion, Jerusalem and the Palestinian highlands to denote the immigration of Jews to Palestine

Alliance Israélite Universelle, an international aid organization founded in Paris in 1860 which established schools and trade training centers including an agricultural school

Aruchas Bas-Ammi, Heb.: help for my people

Atid, Heb.: future

Avdus, Heb.: slavery, serfdom, servitude

Avodah, Heb.: service, especially the sacrifice service in the Temple in Jerusalem; here meaning work

Beth, Heb.: house

Bilu, pl. Biluim, acronym of “Beth Ya’akov lekhu venelkha”, Heb.: “Come, house of Jacob, let us go (walk in the light)” (Isaiah 2:5), a student organization founded in January 1881 whose members’ goal was to settle in Palestine

B’nai B’rith, Heb.: sons of the covenant; union of Jewish fraternal lodges which has committed itself to unite Jews to advocate higher goals for humanity, to support science and the arts, to alleviate the suffering of the poor and to help the victims of persecution.

British Mandate, the legal administration of Palestine granted to Great Britain after World War I by the Allies, later confirmed by the League of Nations

Cherus, Heb.: freedom

Davnен, a term used by Ashkenazi Jews meaning to pray

Drishat Zion, Heb.: yearning for Zion

Eretz Israel (Yisroel), Heb.: the land of Israel (Yisroel = Israel in German-Ashkenazi pronunciation), biblical term for biblical Canaan

Eretz Israel Ha Shlema, Heb.: the whole land of Israel; a political demand made by Jewish and Christian groups who presuppose Jewish sovereignty and indivisibility of the area called Eretz Israel between the Mediterranean Sea and the River Jordan

Goy, pl. Goyim, Heb.: non-Jew

Golus, Heb.: exile, dispersion, diaspora

Gush Emunim, Heb.: bloc of the faithful; a political-religious revival movement which was founded in 1974 as an offshoot of the National Religious Party in the West Bank

Halacha, pl. Halachot, Heb.: to go, walk; the codex of laws for the Jews

Halukka, Heb.: distribution; support for needy and religious Jews who live in Yishuv

Halutz, pl. Halutzim, Heb.: pioneer in building up Palestine

Hamas, Arab.: enthusiasm; a Sunni Islamist Palestinian organization which seeks to eradicate the State of Israel through terrorism and wants to erect an Islamic theocratic state in Palestine

Hashomer, Heb.: the guard; an organization founded in 1909 to guard agricultural settlements in Palestine

Hashomer Hatzair, Heb.: the youth guard; a left-wing socialist Zionist youth movement founded in Eastern Europe in 1913 which combined Zionist ideology with revolutionary tendencies

- Hasidim, Hasidism**, Heb.: the pious; a mystical religious movement founded in the 18th century which was spread over large parts of Eastern Europe
- Hatikvah**, Heb.: the hope; anthem of the Zionist movement and the national anthem of the State of Israel, written by Naphtali Imber
- Hazzan, pl. Hazzanim** (Yid. Chasn), Heb.: cantor or prayer leader in the synagogue
- Hezbollah**, Arab.: party of God; Islamic paramilitary organization created in 1982 by uniting different Shiite groups
- Hibbat Zion**, Heb.: love of Zion; Zionist movement in Eastern Europe, its members called themselves →Hovevei Zion
- Hovevei Zion**, Heb.: lovers of Zion; supporters of Zionism in Eastern Europe, members of the →Hibbat Zion movement, founded in the aftermath of the pogroms in 1881/1882 in Russia, committed to the colonization of Palestine
- Jewish Agency**, agency of the World Zionist Organization, established according to Article 4 of the Palestine Mandate and recognized as representing the Jews, today functions as a link between the Jews in Israel and in the Diaspora
- Jihad**, Arab.: struggle, fight. Often translated as “holy war”, basic duty in the Islamic faith and in the religious sense refers to the duty of all Muslims to improve themselves and do good for society
- Intifada**, Arab.: uprising, the *first Intifada* began as a “war of stones” in 1987 and was characterized by civil disobedience. The *second Intifada* began in September 2000 and was sparked by the proposed visit by the then-opposition leader Ariel Sharon to the Temple Mount. The second Intifada led to war-like conflicts in the area under Palestinian Authority control as well as a heavy wave of terrorism on Israeli state territory. It lasted until 2005.
- Likud**, Heb.: coalition; a party alliance which in 1965 combined the Herut (Heb.: freedom) party (founded in 1948) and the Liberal Party
- Maghreb**, Arab.: west; term for North Africa, in the Middle Ages also for Spain
- Melamed, pl. Melamdim**, Heb.: teacher
- Mikveh Israel**, Hebr.: Israel's hope, first Jewish agricultural school founded in 1870 by Charles Netter working for→Alliance Israélite Universelle
- Mitzvah, pl. Mitzvot**, Heb.: command in Judaism; there are 613 mitzvot listed in the Talmud, usually refers to a deed done to please God
- Mizrah**, Hebr.: East, acronym for Merkaz Ruhani, meaning religious center
- Mohel, pl. Mohalim**, Heb.: circumciser
- Oslo Peace Process**, refers to the series of negotiations (Oslo I, Oslo II, Wye I, Wye II, Camp David II) between the Palestinians and Israel to solve the Middle East conflict
- Pale**, an area in Russia between the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea Jews were assigned to beginning in 1791. Jews could step outside of the Pale only with special permission.
- Pardes, ha-**, Heb.: the orchard; PaRDes, acronym for the classical interpretation of texts in Torah study
- Petach Tikva**, Heb.: gate of hope, well-known town near Tel Aviv
- PLO**: Palestine Liberation Organization, umbrella organization of different nationalist factions, was founded on May 28, 1964 at the constitutive meeting of the Palestinian National Council (PNC) in Jerusalem at the initiative of the then Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser; strongest faction is the Fatah
- Pogrom**, Russ.: destruction; riots, massacres and plundering directed against the Jewish population
- Revisionist Zionism**, faction within the Zionist movement founded in 1925 by Ze'ev Jabotinsky

Rischus, Yid.: hatred of Jews

Road Map, refers to the peace plan worked out by the Middle East quartet (the UN, the USA, the EU and Russia) and presented in September 2002

Shalom Achshav, Heb.: Peace Now; a non-governmental movement which emerged in 1978 in Israel with the aim of convincing the public and the Israeli government of the necessity of a just peace with the Palestinians, in particular in an exchange for a territorial agreement according to the “land for peace” formula

Shamesh, Shamoshin, Heb.: servant

Shemoneh Esrei, Heb.: the eighteen prayer

Shoah, Heb.: downfall, destruction, catastrophe

Shochet, Heb.: trained ritual butcher

Sofer, pl. Soferim, Heb.: scribe

Talmud, Heb.: instruction, learning, study; basic text of the →Halacha, comprises the Mishna and the Gemara as they were taught in the great Yeshivot in the first few centuries C.E.

There are two versions of the Talmud, the Jerusalem Talmud and the Babylonian Talmud

Territorialism, term for the branch of Zionism that did not insist on establishing a state in Palestine, but rather preferred an expedient settlement of a territory, wherever it was possible and practical to help poverty-stricken and persecuted Jews

Torah, Heb.: law, instruction; term used for the five books of Moses

Tshuvah, Heb.: return, remorse

Tsores, Yid.: troubles, aggravation, problems

UN: United Nations, headquarters of this organization, which is rooted in the Hague Conventions peace conference and the League of Nations, are located in New York. The UN Charter entered into force on October 24, 1945 and obliges signatory states to settle conflicts amongst themselves.

Yishuv, Heb.: settlement; term for the Jewish population in Palestine before the founding of the State of Israel in 1948

Zion, hill in Jerusalem, term for Jerusalem or the entire Holy Land

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