Becoming Hebrew

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The Creation of a Jewish National Culture in Ottoman Palestine

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To the memory of my father, Irving Saposnik, who gave me much of what has made this book possible

And to my wife, Sara, and our daughters, Hallel and Neta, for giving it meaning and adding much splendor along the way

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This book has been in the making for longer than I often care to remember. The debts I have incurred to so many people along the way, I care very much not to forget.

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There are many complex issues that shape our choices for particular courses of study and a complicated array of psychological, emotional, and intellectual factors that come together to shape the arguments we construct and the pictures we paint of the past. If some of what I argue in the text pertains to efforts by Zionist activists in Palestine to find a new language of myth and to construct a poetics of meaning—an effort, in some sense, to give voice to the magical in an often mechanical and disenchanted world—I surely owe much of that conception to my wife, Sara, and to two of the manifestations of the magical that she has added to my life, our daughters, Hallel and Neta. It is to them and to the memory of my father that I dedicate this book.

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Introduction

To Become a Nation of "Jewish Culture"

"If the Jews wish to become a nation of 'Jewish culture,'" Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, one of Jerusalem's leading Zionists, wrote in 1904, "they must first become truly a nation."[1] Throughout the subsequent decade he and other Zionist activists in Palestine (with the help of some from without) undertook to effect the transformation of what they perceived to be a dispersed and divided mass into the seeds of a modern nation. This book is a study of the ways in which they set about to do so.

The question of culture in Zionist history has become the focus of a growing corpus of scholarly work in recent years. Much of this literature, however, has left three principal lacunae. The first of these is chronological. In most examinations of cultural development in the Jewish Yishuv (prestate community) in Palestine, the twilight years of Ottoman rule in that land have been largely overlooked, and their cultural importance vastly underestimated. Instead, much of the historiography on the Yishuv has assumed that the generation that came of age under the British mandate was, as its own self-image proclaimed, the first Hebrew generation—the first to establish the cultural practices and the mannerisms, rituals, and modes of daily life that came to characterize the Hebrew culture of the Yishuv and, later, the state of Israel. The years preceding the First World War have consequently been treated as little more than a prelude to later developments.[2] Although a number of important studies have offered close looks at particular incidents or aspects of cultural activity in

Jewish Palestine during the late Ottoman period[3] and notwithstanding important work on Zionist political and organizational activities there at the time, there has been little effort to subject the complex of foundation-laying historical processes that took place during these years to sustained and integrated scrutiny. As a result, the manner in which diverse cultural projects were interwoven to generate the basis for a new Hebrew national culture in Palestine has suffered from a damaging historiographical myopia, and historical research has not yet offered a synthetic and comprehensive picture of the nation-making laboratory that late Ottoman Zionist Palestine in many senses was.

Though less glaring, the relationship between Zionist culture in Palestine and traditional Jewish cultures in the Diaspora (as well as in Palestine itself) has also suffered from a degree of nearsightedness. This, it seems, is the twin heir to Zionism's own ideological assertion of its revolutionary nature on the one hand and a broader conceptual elusiveness that has plagued the study of nationalism generally insofar as questions of secularization and innovation are contrasted with the persisting influence of traditional ideas and practices. In some of the now classic literature, nationalism is understood as something that arose phoenixlike out of the ashes of traditional religious societies some time around the late eighteenth century, with virtually no relationship to anything that had gone before—owing everything, as Ernest Gellner puts it, "to a decisive and unutterably profound break in human history."[4] The historiography of the Yishuv tends to combine these influences in an implicit acceptance of this dichotomy, most evident in the images, myths, and ideas that have been chosen as objects of investigation.[5]

This being said, a recent and very important new trend in the historiography of nationalism has begun to recognize its deeper, if ambivalent, embeddedness not only in a variety of religious heritages but also in what (even in the industrializing and modern world) was a persistent power of religious beliefs, customs, rituals, and institutions.[6] Moreover, some work on Zionism has also taken a number of initial steps toward understanding the intricate relationship between the Zionist revolutionary impulse and its roots in traditional Jewish ideas, sources, and praxis.[7] In this book I have attempted to join and reinforce these two complementary trends and to recapture a sense of the complex interweaving of traditional and revolutionary tropes, imagery, and practices that characterized the culture of the Yishuv as it took its initial steps.

The third and perhaps the most important gap for the way in which this book has been conceived is found in the way in which culture has often been conceived in the literature on Zionism. Studies that have purported to examine Zionist "culture" have often framed their understanding of it in rather constricted terms, in which culture becomes virtually indistinguishable from—

and seems to be reduced to—ideology or discourse. The cultural history of Zionism and of the Yishuv has consequently differed little from the history of their ideas. This too is heir to a similar tendency in some of the historiography of nationalism generally, which has often tended to focus on the "fundamental change [that] was taking place in modes of apprehending the world, which ... made it possible to 'think' the nation."[8] To be sure, the reshaping of modes of thought—indeed, of overarching cosmologies—is without a doubt central in the emergence of the modern nation and in explaining the history-making power that it acquired throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This is certainly true in the Zionist case as well, and this book examines the very deliberate refiguration of modes of thought and mentalities that was so important a focus in the cultural work undertaken in the Yishuv. However, while it may indeed be crucial to be "alive to the *metaphoricity* of the peoples of imagined communities,"[9] it is no less important to recall that the people who compose those communities are not themselves metaphors at all and that they have very real lives in which the nation is encountered in concrete experiences. However complex, ambivalent, and disjunctive those experiences may be, it is through them that the nation has been able to play a defining role in the lives of those real people. The nation and the experience of it, in other words—however "imagined" and metaphorical they may be in many senses—are also rooted in observable cultural practices and in social processes that are very tangible and public and make up very concrete human lives.

This book attempts to unearth some of the processes—and the important role the actions of very self-conscious human actors played in them—that were calculated to create just such a culture of everyday life and to construct a bridge over the chasm separating vision, image, and discourse from praxis and concrete behaviors. It does so by examining the work of a self-selected coterie of intellectuals and nationalist activists who, whatever differences there were between them (and they were sometimes very deep indeed) shared an image of themselves as the nation's vanguard, burdened with the task of creating (or resuscitating) a Hebrew nation in Palestine.

This group constituted, of course, only a small subsection of Palestine's Jewish community, and as Israel Bartal has pointed out, the full story of the emergence of the Hebrew national culture in Palestine (and later Israel) must be understood as a complex interaction between their self-conscious efforts to direct and channel its development according to a set (or competing sets) of ideological assumptions on the one hand and "spontaneous," nonideological social, demographic, and other processes on the other hand.[10] Indeed, some important work examining these more "spontaneous" factors in the nationalization of Jewish Palestine has already been undertaken.[11]

Without discounting the importance of the nonactivist and even non-Zionist immigrants and natives in Palestine, however, this book is based on the understanding that the Zionist nationalizing elites were nevertheless primarily responsible for giving form to the Zionist culture that would come to characterize the Yishuv (and later Israel), and it is their project that stands at the center of the story I have chosen to tell. Toward that end, I have attempted to step beyond both the history of ideas and an examination of the ideology, discourses, and imagination that motivated Zionist cultural activity in Palestine to think about the implementation of those ideas and the ways in which imagination and discourse were translated (or transformed) into concrete institutions, customs, rituals, and the makings of an entirely unprecedented kind of Jewish life. While it owes a profound debt to the important insights that studies of Zionist myths have offered in the context of intellectual history or literary studies, this book also seeks to serve as a reminder that this kind of an understanding of myths essentially as texts or as speech acts runs the risk of "uproot[ing] them from the act of recitation that had bound them to ritual action."[12] What myth says, as Paul Ricoeur writes, ritual performs,[13] and while the creation of a Jewish nation in Palestine was, of course, in part about envisioning and saying, it was also very much about performing and giving concrete, visible form to those new visions and mythologies of the nation. This nexus between vision and praxis, idea and implementation, remains insufficiently explored in the literature on Zionism.[14]

One way to understand the Zionist cultural project, as I argue in the following pages, is as an attempt to effect a return to myth—this was part of its reaction to the rationalist tradition of Haskalah (Jewish Enlightenment), at least as many Zionists understood that legacy—and to place a reconstituted mythology back into a ritual-liturgical context. It was in the process of translating idea, image, and discourse into action—practice, performance, and the institutions for assembling and disseminating them—that new shape was given to the actual lives of the individuals who composed the Yishuv and to the new collective they created and which, in turn, re-created them. By recapturing the cords that bound discourse, language, and image to the daily lives of real people, I hope to have shed new light on this reciprocal, multidirectional process of reconstitution.

As a corrective to the first of the gaps I have identified—the chronological one—and to refocus some of the historical view in such a way as to bring these critical years into the sharper relief they deserve, I begin the book roughly at the turn of the twentieth century (in its first three years), when a number of important events marked what would prove to be critical turning points in the demographic, institutional, economic, linguistic, political, and other condi-

tions in the Yishuv. These coalesced to make the subsequent decade or so not a mere prelude, as it has previously been viewed, but rather the formative period in which the infrastructure of a new national entity and a new national culture was laid. It is rare that history offers the historian so neat a starting point, and one (to top it off) that happens to coincide with the turn of a century. In the case of Zionist work in Palestine, however, a number of important events that took place just around then lend this periodization a compelling force. The year 1899 saw the formal establishment of the Jewish Colonial Trust—the Zionist bank, which, according to the plan suggested by Theodor Herzl both in his *Der Judenstadt* (1896) and in the Zionist congresses he would subsequently convene (beginning in 1897), was to be one of the principal engines by which the foundations of the envisioned state of the Jews would be laid. When the bank in fact became operational in 1902–1903, particularly with the establishment of its local Palestinian subsidiary, the Anglo-Palestine Company, it represented the first involvement of the Zionist Organization (ZO) Herzl had established in actual work in Palestine.[15]

If the bank raised hopes and expectations, however, the transfer of many of the Yishuv's agricultural colonies from the direct protectorship and administration of the Rothschild family and its local representatives, after two decades of intensive involvement, into the hands of the Jewish Colonization Association in 1900 raised tremendous anxiety.[16] The economic and general angst that this change in administration produced among some of the colonies' residents helped create a sense that a chapter had come to a close in the Yishuv's history, concluding on a note of despair, recurrent expressions of a sense of malaise, and an atmosphere of crisis and failure.

This crisis in the Yishuv, moreover, was exacerbated by the onset of a sense of catastrophe in the Jewish world, compounded by bitter strife within Zionism. The Kishinev pogrom in the spring of 1903 sparked a new wave of anti-Jewish violence while (partly in response to the pogrom) the Uganda controversy that summer threatened to rend apart both the Zionist Organization itself and the budding umbrella organizations that were just then being established in Palestine (see chapter 2). Within the Yishuv, the bitter polemic over the territorial alternative had a uniquely sharp flavor of its own since this was both the site of the great expectations for national rebirth and, paradoxically, one of the principal centers of support for the East African night shelter.[17] The painful strife surrounding Uganda, which touched on issues at the very heart of the Zionist enterprise, was exacerbated in Palestine by the existence of two competing Zionist organizations there, each of which came to be associated, in the minds of at least some contemporaries, with one of the camps in the Uganda controversy and the personal struggle between

Herzl and Russian Zionist leader Menahem Ussishkin within the Zionist Organization.

Some of the background to this disquiet was based, ironically, in efforts to bring the Yishuv together under a unified organizational and ideological umbrella—efforts that soon proved to be a factor in stimulating additional discord while also spurring further mobilization toward greater unity. The first attempt to effect organizational harmony with a distinctly Zionist character was the establishment in 1902 of the Va'ad ha-Agudot ha-Tzioniot ha-Me'uhadot be-Eretz Yisra'el [Committee of United Zionist Federations in Palestine].[18] Notwithstanding its ambitious name, that committee failed to achieve the accord it desired due to both the problems of transportation and communication in early twentieth-century Palestine, which helped to exclude the more distant settlements in the Galilee, and the establishment one year later of a competing organization, the Palestine Federation (Ha-Histadrut ha-Eretz Yisre'elit), which was first assembled by Menahem Ussishkin in the summer of 1903. The great fanfare with which this latter assembly was convened would not suffice to sustain it under the strain of ideological and interpersonal conflicts and rivalries, and Ussishkin's initiative soon fizzled, leaving in its wake, however, a patently usable legacy.

If these initiatives seem to point to an incipient transformation that was taking place in the Yishuv in the first years of the twentieth century, 1903 seems in many ways to have been the moment of quickening, and it is here that the full thrust of this book picks up the thread. By then, settlement work and efforts of various kinds to found a new national Jewish existence in Palestine had been under way for some two decades. The centerpiece and principal cornerstone of these projects was the network of Jewish agricultural colonies that had been set up during the closing decades of the nineteenth century. A few initial cultural steps had already been taken, including early efforts to transform Hebrew into a language of daily speech, the beginnings of a modern Hebrew journalism, some early amateur theatrical undertakings, and a new model of "Hebrew" schooling in certain colonies. These remained largely haphazard, however, with little sense that a Yishuv-wide culture was in the making or, at times, that much of a connection existed between one part of the country and another. Such an overarching organizational and cultural framework was further hampered by the demographic decline, economic recession, and severe loss of morale that had set in during the closing years of the nineteenth century (part of the background for the transfer of the Rothschild colonies to the Jewish Colonization Association) and carried over into the first years of the twentieth.

1903 would prove to be a year of fledgling growth. Although the convening that summer of the "Great Assembly" in the colony of Zichron Ya'akov as the launching pad for the "Palestine Federation" was a short-lived and spurious success, the Hebrew Teachers' Association, whose founding conference was held at the same event, enjoyed much greater longevity and soon emerged as a preeminent nationalizing force. The pogroms and the Uganda controversy together also helped to spark a new wave of immigration that began to trickle into Palestine late in the year and continued until the outbreak of war in 1914 (this would be known in popular discourse and in the historiography as the "second Aliya"). Eastern European immigrants, whose numbers grew following the pogrom in Gomel and the failed 1905 revolution in Russia, met a growing wave of immigration from Yemen,[19] which peaked with Shmuel Yavne'eli's mission on behalf of the Palestine office in 1910–1911 (see chapters 5 and 8)—the first such active drive for immigration ever undertaken by the Zionist Organization. Both of these waves had an important formative impact not only on the Yishuv's demographic profile but also on its organizational, cultural, and communal-national life. Among the immigrants who arrived during these years were a number of very young men and women who would soon emerge as contenders for leadership positions in the Yishuv and compete with the more-established core of Zionist activists there. This competition too helped to shape the emerging national culture, which was in some measure a combined product of these disparate (and often mutually hostile) social groups and their frequently clashing ideologies and visions of national culture.

The book's end point is the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, which brought many of the dramatic developments that had been unfolding in Palestine to a temporary halt. While the radically changed conditions in Palestine that came on the heels of the war—with the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the Balfour Declaration and British mandate, and a host of other developments in the Jewish world, both in Europe and on the world political stage—would mean very new directions for cultural development in the Yishuv, these would be based on the critical foundations laid during the prewar years.

Historical development—particularly in revolutionary periods and in the case of revolutionary movements—is by its nature a dialectical interplay between the new and the cords that bind it to enduring residues of the past. If much of the scholarship on Zionist culture has stressed the impulse toward revolutionary innovation—and often taken it too much at its word—I have attempted to reassert that facet of innovation that is inherently a response to the established and the traditional. Even when it takes the form of revolt and rejection

(and perhaps especially in such cases), it is a response that incorporates more of that tradition than it may at times like to admit. Where this dialectic is framed in terms of the religious and the secular, moreover, secularization—by defining itself in reference to religious tradition—often becomes a way of preserving and re-articulating precisely what it seeks to destroy.[20] By focusing on this dialectical relationship between innovation and its inherent re-articulation of lingering traditions, I hope also to have reinstated the "living, intimate, infinitely repeated opposition between the instant of time and that time which flows only slowly."[21]

In spite of the revolutionary tenor of a great deal of the cultural discourse that took place in the Yishuv, in other words, the culture that was emerging there by the outbreak of the First World War did not constitute the unambiguous break with the Jewish past that some of its authors wished to believe. There was an inherent paradox or tension in their cultural undertaking. A radically new departure, a fierce rebellion against Jewish history itself, the new nation—and the new Jews who constituted it—were at the same time conceived as the authentic expression of Judaism's true essence and its purportedly vanished life force. Even as it pronounced two thousand years of Jewish history and its cultural production to be all but worthless, Zionism and the culture it envisioned also claimed to represent a loyalty to Judaism and its integrity that was somehow more organically authentic than any other actual or conceivable response to the crises of Jewish modernity.

That the Yishuv's culture should have been marked by this paradox was a reflection of the twin pillars that constituted it. Zionism, after all, was on the one hand a European nationalist movement and had from its earliest days taken many of its ideological cues from the nationalist movements in whose wake (and under whose influence) it had emerged. Much of the style, aesthetics, language, and pageantry adopted in the effort to nationalize the Yishuv would have been familiar—at least in outline form—in many contemporary European nationalist contexts. Yet, notwithstanding the extensive commonality in nationalism's "invention of tradition," nationalist traditions were not, in the end, interchangeable. Traditions, even where invented, must make use of some raw material. And however ambivalent Zionists in Palestine may have been with regard to the Jewish religious heritage, they also used it—or various manifestations and interpretations of it—extensively as a rich cultural quarry for the construction of precisely that national culture which they conceived as a rebellion against that tradition. Their transfigurations of traditional Jewish motifs, symbols, customs, and practices were far more complex and nuanced than the arbitrary and mechanical manipulation that has often been understood as the engine of invention driving nationalist and other modern move-

ments. Most Zionist cultural activists during these formative years had been immersed their entire lives in Jewish texts, traditions, liturgy, and languages. These were the structures, the intellectual molds, and the paradigms of thought that had shaped their world—even, at times, when they were in full revolt against them and sought to disavow them. Thus, while Zionism adopted many of the modes of modern European nationalism, these were given form by the contemporaneous effort to create a counterexegesis, a rereading of Jewish texts and the Jewish past, which emerged at once in opposition to Jewish tradition and yet very much from within it and whose goal it was to redefine Jewish community and Jewishness itself.

If traditional Jewish society was an "exegetical community"[22]—a society whose very contours and boundaries were determined and defined by a particular exegetical tradition—the Zionist cultural project in Palestine was founded upon an attempt to undo (or rather to redo) this tradition in order to give radically new shape to Jewish community. Although conceived as a revolutionary endeavor, then, it did not erase the "complex dialectic between authoritative texts and exegetical imagination that characterizes rabbinic Judaism"[23] (although it did seek to recast the source of authority in that relationship). At times this was due to a conscious choice not to eliminate that dialectic, while at others that tension continued to reverberate in spite of the wishes of those who might have sought to oust it. The national liturgy created in the Yishuv, in other words, was often constructed in direct response—conscious and explicit at times, unconscious and implicit at others—to that very dialectic that had characterized the rabbinic tradition out of which the creators of the national culture emerged. More than this, as a type of response, it was often an attempt to commandeer that dialectical dynamic and to reclaim possession over it so as to reshape it in ways that Zionists deemed fit for the urgent project of reconstructing "the Jew" and Jewish life. The Zionist cultural project in Palestine can consequently be understood in some of its cardinal elements as an additional voice in a long-standing, ongoing dialogue between community, text, interpretation, ideology, and identity.

A central effort of Zionism's cultural activity was adopted directly from traditional midrashic activity, which was "chiefly concerned with the creation of meaning."[24] Great energies were spent by Palestine's Zionists on a radical transformation of meaning that was undertaken not only by seizing Jewish texts and discourses but by appropriating traditional Jewish celebrations, rituals, and customs as well and subjecting them all to thoroughgoing reevaluation and renovation. If in traditional midrashic activity "meaning is not discovered in the text, but attributed to it,"[25] for Zionist cultural activists the new realities of the early twentieth century seemed to mandate an infusion of

radically new meanings into text and life alike as a means to effect the revolutionary change they sought in the structures of Jewish society and of Jewishness itself.

Zionist exegeses, then, were at once a continuation in some sense of rabbinic traditions and a dramatically sharp break from the discourses and paradigms that defined them. Even while old language was rejected as having become ostensibly meaningless, the new meanings generated by Zionists in Palestine were often hewn out of the very stones left lying in the rubble of the traditional Jewish world. The revolutionary impact that the Zionist project seems indeed to have had on Jewish life ought not to obscure the fact that this dramatic effect was at times brought about through very subtle turns—a change in the use of a word or in the understanding of a traditional Jewish holiday and its rituals—that could have sweeping consequences.

In this simultaneously continuous and disjunctive dialogue with their ostensibly superseded tradition, Zionism's cultural activists were perhaps less unlike their non-Jewish European counterparts than might appear. Recent studies of the emergence of nationalism have provided a much needed fine-tuning to the once regnant notions regarding the construction of national cultures. As a corollary to the idea that the modern nation appeared on the stage of history virtually by deus ex machina, the cultures of those nations have at times been portrayed essentially as inventions ex nihilo—an approach that largely eliminates the possibility of meaningful historical explanation of or insight into the reasons for and causes of particular cultural developments. Ernest Gellner has argued, for example, that the "cultural shreds and patches used by nationalism are often arbitrary historical inventions. Any old shred would have served as well."[26] Eric Hobsbawm echoes and reinforces this picture by maintaining that in the modern era generally, many "political institutions, ideological movements and groups—not least in nationalism—were so unprecedented that even historic continuity had to be invented."[27] While he acknowledges "the use of ancient materials to construct invented traditions," these traditions themselves, he writes, are of a completely "novel type."[28] In the case of Zionism in particular, Hobsbawm has argued (elsewhere) that there is "no historical continuity whatever between Jewish proto-nationalism and modern Zionism."[29]

As some important recent work has argued, however, the transition to modern nationalism—and its relationship to the languages, pageantry, liturgy, and imagery of older traditions and religiosities—was in fact somewhat less incisive and considerably more nuanced than has previously been appreciated. After all, as one study of religion and the modern nation advises, before 1914 "even Europeans who had received a secular education were so well acquainted

with biblical stories that they were able to imagine political leadership in biblical terms."[30] For many European Jews (and among them most of those who raised the banner of Zionist culture) immersion in biblical and rabbinic literature was an integral part of their early education and of the language and imagery that would continue to color their activity. A process of secularization had, of course, taken place in some deeply meaningful sense, and it was continuing apace. There can be no doubt that, as Hobsbawm argues, nationalism's call for a defense of tradition could have arisen only where that tradition was besieged, if not already collapsed. "Where the old ways are alive," he writes, they "need be neither revived nor invented."[31]

Indeed, few had a more acute sense than did most Zionists that the "old ways" had come crashing down. The ancient Jewish "spiritual strongholds," poet Hayim Nahman Bialik explained somewhere between lament and celebration, "stood not firm on the day of wrath; by the decree of history they are crumbled and razed to the foundations and our people is left standing empty-handed upon their ruins." Bialik would surely have concurred with Hobsbawm that this collapse had been the precondition for the kind of new cultural creativity in which he himself was a veritable icon. "Amid the ruins of those hallowed structures," he added, however, there are "many sound and beautiful stones that can and ought to be foundation stones of our new edifice."[32]

In his study of what he has called the "sacred sources of national identity," Anthony D. Smith laments the fact that the "length of time spans involved, and the paucity and gaps in our historical records, make it almost impossible to establish anything like a general causal-historical sequence that could demonstrate how certain 'religious' beliefs, rituals, and motifs were transformed into particular 'national' ideologies and identities over a range of cases."[33] Indeed, such direct causality is difficult to chart clearly in any study of cultural evolution, whether that culture is the product of self-conscious production or of less deliberate developments. Smith's difficulty in this regard, however, is in part the result of the magisterial scope of his study, in which he attempts to follow the trails of such "sacred sources" in an imposingly broad range of national movements. Striking out on a more limited path, this book examines one such movement at a relatively brief (if dynamic and formative) historical moment in the hope that such an approach will allow if not a sweeping theoretical recasting of nationalism, then a window that might offer meaningful insights into the workings of the interrelationships between a traditional religiosity and the new sacralities of a modern nationalism.

Further complicating this intricate mesh of continuity and rupture that went into the making of Zionist sensibilities is the fact that even where rupture itself is concerned, Zionism's break was not only with traditional Judaism.

Although this break has often been the focus of attention, the other Zionist revolt—against those very processes of secularization that had engulfed the Jewish world in the preceding century and against Haskalah in particular—has, to be sure, been taken for granted but examined only cursorily. Of course, this revolt also owed its very being to the object from which it sought release. Notwithstanding the lingering impact of *maskilic* thinking in a great deal of early Zionism, Zionism's longing for a return to Jewish myth was a rejection of what activists saw as the rationalist Judaism of the Haskalah. More than this, if the efforts by some previous maskilic-oriented trends to supplant mythology in a reconfigured Judaism was integrally bound with their move away from a connection to the Holy Land, Zionism's revolt against these is to be found (among other places) in its return to a mythical ritual planted firmly in a specifically Jewish land. Zionism's revolution, in other words, was also a secularized revolt against the processes of Jewish secularization just as much as it was a revolt against traditional religiosity. Its paradoxical claim to be both a revolutionary new departure in Jewish history and, at the same time, the only true representation of Jewishness in the modern world stemmed directly from this dual nature of its revolt.

Although in many ways an outgrowth of the specifics of the Jewish situation in Europe—and of particular understandings of it—this paradox too was not unlike similar paradoxes found in other nationalist movements. The very birth of the modern nation, as one important study has shown, grew "simultaneously out of, and in opposition to, Christian systems of belief." The nation was the product of an ambitious attempt by its architects "to address one of the great problems of modernity: how to keep [the] community from tearing itself apart without surrendering moral authority to priests."[34] To create the civic harmony they sought, the nation's engineers set out to furnish their community with a common language, beliefs, and customs—in short, a shared national culture. This too was the motivation of the would-be creators of the new Jewish nation in Palestine, who faced similar dilemmas and fears of total communal disintegration. For while they spoke in the name of a Jewish nation, Zionism's cultural activists were haunted by a profound sense that whatever shards of Jewish religious and traditional culture remained, Jews were entirely lacking in virtually all of the characteristics of modern nationhood. Their project, consequently, was a total—and a totalizing—one. And it is in part this nature of their undertaking that informs my own conceptualization of culture in this book and the way I have sought to study it historically.

Culture—especially, perhaps, in the sense in which I am employing it here—is a notoriously slippery term, and there is without doubt some validity in the hesitancy that exists in some quarters to turn to it as a means of shed-

ding light on human societies and their histories. The danger of obfuscation does bedevil the study of culture, and I approach it not without awareness of the objection that "religious beliefs, rituals, knowledge, moral values, the arts, rhetorical genres, and so on should be separated out from each other rather than bound together into a single bundle labeled culture."[35] To be sure, in order not to lose sight of the contradictions and disjunctions that inhere in people's lives, it is essential to deconstruct the complexes of "culture." In order not to be left with mere informational debris, on the other hand, that *de*-construction must be followed up by an act of *re*-construction whose task it is "to trace how these symbols and practices mutually sustain each other as an integrated whole."[36] It would be at great cost that culture would be rejected as a subject of historical inquiry and as a powerful force in history. Religious belief, ritual, the arts (to name a few) are all, to be sure, discrete aspects of human life. They are also usually interrelated, however, by a range of common conceptual paradigms, aesthetic sensibilities, and a more or less clearly articulated metaphysic or cosmology. To ignore these interconnections would be to forego a deeper understanding of the worldviews and mentalities that often underlie people's religious beliefs, values, the art they create, the clothing they don, the languages they speak and how they speak them, and the ways in which they imagine and present themselves. In this vein, the following chapters first dismantle terms, concepts, and ideas that informed the construction of the Yishuv's culture and then reconstruct the ways in which they were used as elements in the construction of a new whole. The conscious effort that took place in the Yishuv to generate and redesign both the component parts and the whole makes this effort at cultural reconstruction both possible and enticing.

This book, then, is an attempt to understand the construction of a new Hebrew national culture in the Jewish Yishuv in Palestine, based on the assumption that it is indeed possible for the historian to meaningfully (if within limitations) study "the way ordinary people made sense of the world ... [and] to uncover their cosmology, to show how they organized reality in their minds and expressed it in their behavior."[37] By highlighting the Zionist effort to produce a national cosmology that would re-shape thinking and behavior alike, I hope this book will contribute to a thickening and a layering of our understanding of what culture was in the Yishuv and what it meant to those activists who used the term unhesitatingly as a pivotal concept for the revolution they were trying to effect in Jewish life. More than this, since this was the case of a culture that was being very deliberately and self-consciously constructed, the Yishuv's cultural development offers a singular opportunity to examine cultural change and to go beyond actions and their meanings, even beyond their network of interconnections, into the very heart of a process by which that

mesh changed over time, through the primary engine of human agency. This book seeks a cultural history that goes beyond descriptions of "being" for which it at times settles by looking at the history of Jewish Palestine's national culture as a multifaceted process of cultural "becoming."[38] Notwithstanding its contradictions, oppositions, and divergences—those that persisted and those that first emerged in the process—a distinct culture was very plainly in the process of "becoming" and, by the outbreak of the First World War, was already charting a perceptible course toward increasing hegemony in the Jewish Yishuv in Palestine.

Before attempting to understand how this came about, however, a few words on why it was undertaken in the first place.

The fundamental impetus for Zionism's effort to bring about this radical transformation of Jewish life had sprung from a prevailing notion that Jewish life was anomalous, flawed, and even diseased. The Jewish people, as some conventional wisdom would have it, was "without any true culture, and especially without any culture of its own."[39] During the century or so prior to the emergence of modern Zionism, moreover, the groundwork had been laid for the reception of such critiques within Jewish discourse, after having originated in the non-Jewish world. The dramatic changes in Europe's political and economic structures and in its regnant philosophies and ideologies brought with them a veritable revolution in the position that Jews held in European societies and in the manner in which Jews and Judaism were perceived. This was accompanied by internal transformations in the structures of traditional Jewish society and by the emergence of a spectrum of new ideologies and worldviews based in changing understandings of Judaism itself.[40]

Beginning with the very earliest Jewish responses to the enlightenment and the promise of emancipation, much of European Jewish history can be understood as a succession of divergent attempts at a reconstitution of Jewish society and culture. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, the drive for reconstitution was given added force and urgency by the now ubiquitous anxiety regarding the threat of social and racial degeneration, in which the Jews were heavily implicated, and in whose context they were assumed to suffer from a wide range of particularly acute physical, mental, and nervous disorders. By the twilight of the century, then, the traditional culture of European Jewry, along with its social structures, had been under sustained attack—from without and now from within—for a good century and a half.

Nowhere in the Jewish context was the imagery of Jewish decline more strident than in Zionist thinking, where literary, social, and cultural critics produced a virtually endless litany of warnings regarding the potentially ter-

minal nature of the Jewish disease. While their bleak diagnoses emerged to some degree in response to the rise of modern anti-Semitism and to the new waves of anti-Jewish violence that erupted in the early 1880s and then again in the spring of 1903, many of Zionism's leading diagnosticians pointed primarily inward. Traditional Jewish culture, many of them argued, was in its very essence a reflection of the Jews' own loss of vital life force.

In one 1903 speech—which sparked a decade-long literary controversy—Hebrew writer Shai Hurwitz proposed that, given their state of decline and crisis, Judaism and the Jewish people had neither prospects nor the right for continued existence.[41] In his address to the sixth Zionist Congress, Israel Zangwill gave this notion graphic and rather pungent illustration. One might admit, he conceded, that at the time of the destruction of the Second Temple, Rabbi Yohanan Ben Zakkai had saved Judaism by transferring its center to the city of Yavneh and establishing what would become rabbinic Judaism. "Perhaps," however, Zangwill conjectured, if Ben-Zakkai "could have foreseen the eighteen centuries of tragedy of which even [the pogrom in] Kishineff is not the end...he would have preferred to die in Jerusalem with the Jewish patriots than escape alive to the Roman camp in his coffin." More than anything else, he continued, that coffin "was an ominous symbol of the living death that was to be his people's future...even as the decaying meat by which Ben Zakkai simulated the odor of the corpse has proved symbolic of the ill-odor in which his luckless people were to live henceforth in lands not their own."[42]

It was an all but universal Zionist axiom that at the very foundation of the Jewish disease was the condition of *galut* (exile)—an existential and psychical state that penetrated more deeply than the mere fact that Jews lived, as Zangwill had said, in "lands not their own." Like the individual spirit, which cannot endure without a body, as author Micha Yosef Berdichevsky wrote, so a nation's culture "cannot exist without a territorial, land-based national foundation, without a tangible social-historical well from which the spirit and the body can draw."[43] If a sense that the nation was on its deathbed had attended the very birth of modern nationalism,[44] a widespread image of the Jews as perhaps the most gravely diseased and dying of all lent this trope particular force in Zionism.

It was this assessment that led Zionism, like earlier Jewish responses to the crises of modernity, on the path of attempting to reconstitute Jewish culture and the meaning of being Jewish in the modern world. And given the severity of its diagnosis of Jewish disease, its prescription for a remedy envisioned sweeping change. The Zionist call for a physical relocation of the Jews from Europe to Palestine was but the first step in a fundamental spiritual, mental, and cultural transformation. Only through an urgently needed and

radical transfiguration of every aspect of the Jews' being—from the language they spoke to the holidays they celebrated (and the ways in which they celebrated them), to the art they created, the songs they sang, the clothing they wore, and the very shape and comportment of their body—would the Jews become a modern nation; and only by becoming one would they be able to save themselves from their disease and, ultimately, from themselves.

According to its own self-understanding, then, Zionism claimed to speak in the name of a nation that either did not yet exist or existed no longer, teetering as it was on the brink of national death.[45] To Zionism's activists in Palestine, generating culture therefore meant generating the nation itself. Anxious and urgent complaints that "we do not yet have a real Hebrew nation in our Hebrew land"[46] relentlessly clung to virtually every cultural undertaking, acting at once as a spur to action and as a source of near despair. Determined "to nationalize Israel,"[47] the Yishuv's activists considered themselves to be "in the thick of creation . . . transporting stones for the new building."[48] The nation they would create was, consequently, both eminently new and uneasily heir to traditional Jewish discourses and cultures, albeit in very fractured and collapsed form. Its culture was a mélange, composed of elements taken from a wide range of sources. In addition to the broken building blocks of the Jewish world (themselves subject, of course, to conflicting uses and understandings), ideas and aesthetic sensibilities adopted from European nationalist and labor ideologies mingled with romantic imagery of Arab and Bedouin culture and with the imprint of an unprecedented kind of contact with the language and daily lives of Palestine's Arabs, as well as with Jewish ethnic diversity.

At times in competition and at others in synthesis, these sources of inspiration and influence informed discrete cultural projects undertaken in the Yishuv, the underlying infrastructure of shared imagery and impulses that would serve to bring them together into an overarching cultural endeavor, and the ways in which that developing culture would respond to changing historical circumstances. Political events, economic fluctuations, and wars interacted with perceptions, ideas, worldviews, and individual motivations, all mutually affecting one another and ultimately helping to generate the sets of symbols, beliefs and values, rituals, customs, holidays (restyled or entirely novel), music, and art that were all imagined to be rooted in the physical and cultural soil of Palestine and that together made up the culture of the Jewish Yishuv.

In the absence of state or governmental mechanisms to solidify and disseminate these elements of culture, a range of institutional structures was created in the Yishuv to function in their stead. Throughout the years covered in this

book, the Yishuv saw the growth—and, after 1908, a veritable explosion—of educational institutions (from kindergartens to the seeds of higher education), community centers, a national museum, music academies, health organizations, professional associations, journals, publishing houses, libraries, and more—all designed to clothe ideas and images in the form of concrete institutions and practices. Although they were often the products of individual initiative and reflected a broad spectrum of outlooks and cultural priorities, both the institutional frameworks and the guiding symbolism of these disparate undertakings were made to be intricately interwoven and ultimately coalesced to form the cultural underpinnings of the budding national entity. A new public space was created that served as the basis for an unprecedented Jewish life in Palestine, with far-reaching ramifications for the very meaning of Jewishness in the modern world. And a new national Jew who had been envisaged by Zionist thinkers in Europe seemed to be materializing in Palestine, at once engendered by and engendering the national culture.

The transformation was conspicuous enough to be plainly visible to contemporaries. When Ahad Ha'am (pen name of Asher Ginsberg), remembered as the father of "spiritual" or "cultural" Zionism and the champion of the "spiritual center" in Palestine, returned from a visit there in 1912, his earlier skepticism was replaced by a new (admittedly cautious) optimism. He could now write that "the road to the ultimate goal remains long, but even the simple eye can already see it on the distant horizon."[49] Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, another pessimist, who in 1903 had cautioned that the Jews were a people toward whom "the angel of national death has already turned his terrible gaze,"[50] would by 1914 be celebrating the fact that, as he wrote, "there is today a Hebrew nation" in Palestine.[51]

Not all, of course, were quite as pleased with the transformations engendered by Zionist activity, and in spite of its advancing hegemony, Zionist culture continued to face opposition from without and conflicts and contradictions from within. The country's ultraorthodox community, particularly its center in Jerusalem, was frequently incensed by the advance of a more or less secular Hebrew culture, and even such seemingly innocent acts as the 1903 establishment of a Hebrew kindergarten in Jerusalem could invoke the wrath of the city's Ashkenazi rabbis, who went so far as to proclaim a ban on it. Arab opposition to Zionist activity also increased and intensified in response to the accelerating pace of change that Zionism was bringing about in the Palestinian landscape. Although the Arabs' opposition focused chiefly on Jewish immigration and land purchases, the advance and impact of Zionist culture in Palestine also found echoes in a changing perception of the Jew in the Arab world and among the Arabs of Palestine in particular—and contributed to the

rapidly deteriorating relations between the two groups. By the outbreak of the First World War, the clash between Jews and Arabs in Palestine would reach the level of a full-fledged (if still small-scale) national conflict. Both the religious conflicts with the ultraorthodox and the national conflict with the Arabs would in turn have their own profound impact on the Zionist activity that had generated them and on the future directions in which Zionist culture developed, down to the present day.

The prewar decade—or decade and a half—was very much a time frame that was on the cusp: on the brink of a new international order in which Palestine's status would be dramatically altered and in which the conflict between Jews and Arabs there would quickly take on a central position; on the threshold of the emergence of a new national entity (or two); and at the inception of a new generation of Jewish youth in Palestine, which was both the product and the bearer of a new culture. Palestine's youth would in turn seek to give new form to the cultural undertaking begun by their parents and to shape it in their own image—one that was often markedly different from that envisioned by their parents' generation in eastern Europe. The generational transition, consequently, also marked a critical transition in discourse—from one that was in constant dialogue with Jewish tradition and sought to recast exegesis as a means of reshaping community, to one for which recasting often ended up meaning casting out. This evolution of discourse and praxis—the changing language of the Yishuv's public sphere—spawned tensions in the very fabric of the cultural project, and the Yishuv's youth now also became the targets of sometimes bitter criticism, often voiced by precisely those for whom the emergence of a young new Hebrew had been the highest goal. A growing unease in the relationship between the Yishuv and the Jewish Diaspora consequently became another salient manifestation of these cultural growing pains and elicited a host of (often still lingering) questions regarding center and periphery in the Jewish world, as cultural and demographic foci were shifting both conceptually and geographically.

These strains and ideological uncertainties, and the discord they fomented in Palestine, mark the first section (chapters 2–4) of the book. The discordant and even acrimonious climate in the Yishuv over the implications of the territorial question for Zionism in Palestine, and a consequent impulse to work toward cultural and social homogenization served as the twin axes of Zionist cultural work during these years.

The second section (chapters 5 and 6) is marked by the combined impact of demographic change that was beginning to be felt, the founding and initial maturation of some important cultural institutions, and a degree of resolution

of some of the deeper ideological rifts. The Zionist Movement's rejection of the Uganda scheme and of any other territorial possibilities outside of Palestine at the Seventh Zionist Congress in 1905 set the backdrop for developments in Palestine in subsequent years. Indeed, beyond the greater clarity that it afforded Zionist ideology itself, this decision led to an unprecedented devotion of Zionist resources to Palestine and to an exponential intensification of involvement by the Zionist Organization in the development of the Yishuv. Perhaps the earliest and clearest manifestation of this new approach was the ZO's part in the establishment of the Bezalel art museum and school in 1906. The founding of the "Palestine office" in 1908—the first full-fledged official Zionist representation in that land—gave this process a fuller and more official seal and became an important vehicle for ever-increasing Zionist involvement in all aspects of activity (and life) in Palestine. The very existence of these new Zionist institutions opened up new possibilities for the creation of culture and helped to evoke new themes around which cultural activity revolved.

By 1906, moreover, the wave of immigration that had begun to trickle in in late 1903 began to take on a tenuous group identity (or identities) and to assert itself as a new national voice and a distinct force in the nationalization project. Increasingly influential groups of young immigrants formed their own, usually labor-oriented, associations and proclaimed themselves—often in explicit opposition to the more veteran residents and activists—as a new vanguard of Zionist activity and of the nation itself. Their self-assertion as the authentic voice of the nascent nation in Palestine, however, happened to coincide with the coming of age of the Yishuv's first native-born generation and it therefore did not go unchallenged. This generation of young men and women raised in the early "New Yishuv" colonies[52] also produced several vocal activists and organizations whose cultural predispositions and visions often differed sharply from those of the Labor-Zionist immigrants. They voiced a competing claim for the title of "native" and the position of vanguard, which the recently arrived immigrant upstarts, as they appeared to them, seemed to have usurped. It was a competition not only over power and leadership in the nation-to-be but also over what it meant to belong to or to represent that nation and to be a native of its land, and ultimately over how that nation was to be shaped.

The Young Turk revolution in the summer of 1908—with the fresh possibilities it seemed at first to offer and the new challenges it posed to Zionist activity—provides the setting for the final section of the book (chapters 7–10). During this period a sense began to emerge that the Jewish community of Palestine was becoming an identifiable national entity and that the foundations for a national culture that was decidedly its own were already in place. This changing self-awareness, accompanied by shifting perceptions of the

Yishuv from without (by Palestine's Arabs, the Orthodox community, and Jewish communities abroad) transformed the relations between disparate groups within the Yishuv, as well as their dealings with others. By the end of this period, cut off unexpectedly by the outbreak of a world war, the Yishuv was clearly a budding national entity, boasting a unique Hebrew culture and a wide range of distinctive cultural expressions that would in later years become central pieces in a sweeping transformation of Jewishness in the modern world. The following chapters are an attempt to understand how that happened.

2

Babels and Assemblies

*Zionism in the Demographic and Cultural
Patchwork of Palestine*

Looking back at the Jewish Yishuv of Palestine near the turn of the
twentieth century, Hebrew educator David Yudilovitz likened its
population to "the human material at the time of the building of the
Tower of Babel."[1] A veteran Hovev Zion [Lover of Zion][2] and long-
time nationalist activist and teacher in the agricultural colony of
Rishon Le-Tzion (established in 1882), Yudilovitz, who had immi-
grated to Palestine with the celebrated BILU[3] in 1882, was part of a
small circle in the Yishuv that was devoted to transforming this
mélange into what they hoped would be a unified and homogenous
national whole. The ultimate goal of their activity was the creation of
a national culture that would effectively reshape Palestine's Jewish
community and, along with it, the very meaning of being Jewish in the
modern world. By the outbreak of the First World War, after little
more than a decade of particularly intense activity, the foundations
and infrastructure of just such a culture had been created and were
fixed in place. It was a culture that was in many senses both a re-
action against and a direct outgrowth of a number of salient fac-
tors in Jewish life around the turn of the century, including a profound
sense of crisis in the Yishuv itself and throughout the Jewish world.
For those Jews who pinned their hopes for a reconstitution of Jew-
ishness on a transfer of the geographical center of gravity in Jew-
ish life to Palestine, the diversity—or disunity, as many saw it—of
Palestine's Jewish community stood out as a leading source of
dissatisfaction.

While the sense of crisis and despair that characterized the Yishuv in these early years of the twentieth century is a well-documented and familiar feature of both memoirs and historical works, its centrality as a focal point for nationalist attentions has not been fully appreciated, and the manner in which it became part of the engine of cultural work has consequently not been probed. In fact, the national culture that the Yishuv's activists would conceive and whose infrastructure they would then lay during the prewar decade was envisaged in large measure as a homogenizing corrective to this ethnic, cultural, and linguistic heterogeneity.

The final two decades of the nineteenth century had, of course, already brought substantial change to the small Jewish Yishuv. Between the early 1880s, when Jewish emigration from eastern Europe began to become a mass phenomenon, and the turn of the twentieth century, successive waves of immigration (known collectively in Zionist historiography as "the first Aliya") combined with certain modernizing tendencies among some of the more veteran residents of Jewish Palestine to plant the first seeds of a modern Jewish nationalism in Palestine's soil. Although early stirrings of Jewish nationalist thought and even some early trickles of immigration to Palestine came earlier, an important impetus for this influx of Jews from eastern Europe and for the broader wave of emigration of which it was a part was provided by the pogroms that swept through Russia beginning in 1881. This was also the birth of Hibbat Zion [Love of Zion], which combined nationalist tendencies and a longing for a Jewish cultural renaissance with the already prevalent ideas of productivization and a Jewish return to the land. While a significant number of the immigrants who arrived during the years after 1881 were virtually indistinguishable from those traditional Jews who had made their way to Palestine for primarily religious reasons in earlier decades, the new ideas of Hibbat Zion—mingled at times with the influence of eastern Europe's social and political revolutionary ferment—were also brought to the shores of Jaffa by a sufficiently significant number of immigrants to begin to change the Yishuv's cultural, religious, intellectual, ideological, occupational, and political profile. By the turn of the century, not only had the Yishuv doubled in size—from approximately 26,000–30,000 Jews who resided in Palestine prior to the first Aliya, to some 55,000[4]—but the new immigrants, as well as the new ideas they brought with them, had begun to have a discernible impact: Twenty-eight new Jewish agricultural colonies had been established throughout Palestine, and these were now home to some 5,000 Jews. In them, moreover—and in the cities as well, among which Jaffa was now emerging as a new center of modern Jewish life[5]—initial steps had been taken toward the creation of cultural and educational institutions of a dramatically new kind.[6]

A small network of schools based on the budding national idea, in which Hebrew was becoming an ever-more central pedagogical vehicle, now peppered the country and provided for the education of a generation of Palestine-born Jewish colonists who, with the advent of the twentieth century, were beginning to come of age. Outside the schools, Hebrew was just beginning to be spoken as a language of daily use in what were assuredly limited but growing circles, and attempts were being made to incorporate the language into many realms of cultural creativity—from children's poetry to amateur theater, to a Hebrew-language literature and journalism. In the words of one study of the literature that grew out of this period in the Yishuv, these subtle yet dramatic changes in the physical, linguistic, and mental landscape reflected the initial steps toward "inventing a land [and] inventing a people."[7] Indeed, the demographic, economic, ideological, and cultural transformations that began as the nineteenth century waned soon became the foundations for the cultural (and other) undertakings that would all but revolutionize the Yishuv, the physical and cultural landscape of Palestine, and much of Jewish life itself in the subsequent decade and a half until the outbreak of the First World War. The beginnings, however, were rocky and slow. And the prospects, as the century was rounding the corner, seemed gloomy indeed.

Late Ottoman Palestine was divided into a number of distinct administrative regions, among which the traditionalist pre-1881 Jewish community, known by the new settlers and the historiographical literature alike as the "Old Yishuv," constituted some six to seven percent of the overall population of the country,[8] and was concentrated in the four "holy" cities of Jerusalem, Safed, Tiberias, and Hebron. The economic structure of the Old Yishuv was based largely on the financial support of the Jewish Diaspora, distributed in Palestine through a system known as *haluka* (literally, "distribution" or "dispensation").

No single community organization represented Palestine's Jews, who were divided by much more than the Ottoman administrative boundaries. One of the most palpable rifts was that which divided Jews of differing ethnicity and country of origin. This was immediately perceptible—literally audible—in the multilingual sounds that rang through the land, where one might hear Yiddish, Russian, Rumanian, and Ladino, along with Arabic and the official Turkish intermingled even in a single conversation. Limited use of Hebrew helped at times to facilitate communication between the distinct Jewish groups.[9] This ethnic-linguistic multiplicity was reflected, moreover, in the organizational structures that served to administer the religious, economic, and social life of the disparate groups that constituted the Yishuv. Each of

these was represented by a distinct *kolel*, or community organization, in which affiliation—and, perhaps far more importantly, distribution of haluka funds—was determined by country of origin.

Organizational diffusion and cultural diversity were further accentuated by the physical distances and geographical variations and barriers that separated one part of Palestine from another. A resident of the "Judean" colony of Petah Tikva, for example, with its proximity to Jaffa and its international seaport on one side and to Jerusalem on the other, was likely to reside in a world markedly different from that inhabited by a northern Galilean in the comparatively isolated colony of Rosh Pina. The country's technological underdevelopment accentuated these differences by making these distances larger than its actual physical dimensions might have suggested.

The Ottoman Empire's political position in the international arena (and in particular the intense involvement of foreign consulates and representatives in the Holy Land), acted as another divisive factor that left a deep imprint on the Jewish community. Many of the Jews who immigrated to Palestine chose to remain under the protective auspices of the consulates that represented their countries of origin rather than become Ottoman subjects—a possibility facilitated and to some degree encouraged by the system of "capitulations" that afforded these foreign consulates tremendous powers.[10] In addition to the fragmentation of political loyalties and the multiplicity of legal systems that resulted from this, the international presence in Palestine was manifested in a wide range of nongovernmental institutions funded and operated by organizations based in various European countries. These included an imposing number of Jewish and non-Jewish philanthropies, as well as the churches, missions, hospitals, educational institutions, and research centers that they established. One of the most influential of these in its impact on the Jewish community was the French-Jewish Alliance Israélite Universelle, established in Paris in 1860. The Alliance was very active in education throughout the Ottoman Empire and provided its students in Palestine and elsewhere with an education that was oriented toward French language and culture.[11] In the early twentieth century, the German-Jewish Hilfsverein der deutschen Juden, founded in Berlin in 1901, quickly emerged as another powerful factor in the Yishuv when it established a number of important educational institutions in Palestine that were oriented toward German language and culture. The smaller (although more veteran) German-Jewish Esra Verein, established in 1884 in Berlin, was involved in a number of colonization and educational activities in Palestine beginning in the late nineteenth century.[12] And the "Odessa Committee"—the central organ of the Hovevei Zion, established in 1890—with its Hebraist-nationalist orientation, was also involved in education and

other activities in Palestine (albeit within the confines of considerable financial constraints).[13]

The residents of the new colonies established during the first Aliya, as well as the no less significant new additions to Palestine's cities, often chose not to join the existing Jewish administrative structures but to seek instead their own organizational frameworks, which would reflect their search for a new basis for Jewish life in Palestine. Two decades after the establishment of the first agricultural colonies, however—up until the early years of the twentieth century—Palestine's numerous disjunctive forces proved a formidable obstacle to the homogenizing impulse that lay at the basis of such organizational efforts, and attempts to establish organizational unity among Palestine's Jews were consistently frustrated.

This was due in part to the encounter between the new ideas regarding Jewish life that had come in large measure (but by no means exclusively) from Europe along with the immigrants, and the longstanding local traditions and deeply entrenched institutional structures that were in place in the Jewish community in Palestine. Many of the would-be changes the Zionist (or proto-Zionist) immigrants sought to effect met with opposition from more conservative and traditionalist segments of the population, who were troubled by the threat to the haluka system, which seemed to be implicitly inherent in the call for "productivization," and by the freer attitude toward Jewish law and practice that some of the immigrants adopted. Their sense of the potential threat to the Yishuv's traditional way of life was exacerbated by the host of new predicaments raised by the existence of Jewish agriculture and agricultural workers in Palestine—something that had been all but entirely absent since ancient times. Such tension, as well as the potential challenge to traditional Jewish law, came to the surface as early as 1888–1889, a sabbatical year according to the Jewish calendar, during which the land is to lie fallow.[14] While such sabbatical years recur in seven-year cycles, this tradition had been of little practical significance and had itself effectively been lying fallow during the centuries when there was no Jewish agriculture in Palestine. Its reintroduction by the new colonists therefore precipitated a combined religious, social, and political strain that cut across other dividing lines in the Yishuv and foreshadowed tensions that would become salient distinguishing features of the Zionist enterprise in Palestine and, later, in the state of Israel down to the present day. The divisive power of religious predicaments—and, by extension, divergences over the very nature of Jewish culture in Palestine—not only separated the traditional communities of the four holy cities (Jerusalem, Tiberius, Hebron, and Safed) from the new colonists but also frequently marked one colony off from another and at times strained social relations even within a single colony.[15]

In addition to the challenges to Jewish tradition that the changing Jewish landscape of Palestine entailed, the social and ethnic fabric of the Yishuv had undergone evident changes in the final two decades of the nineteenth century. The ethnic mixture that had characterized Yishuv society had been further diversified by immigration from far-flung parts of the world, and the increased ethnic diversity often meant intensified distinctions, social disparities, and intergroup tensions. The immigration that brought with it the new agricultural colonists hailed from different parts of eastern Europe, and contemporaneous waves of immigration from other parts of the Jewish world—from the Maghreb and Yemen, among the most conspicuous of them—brought groups different in looks and dress, language, traditions, and customs. These groups were separated not only by linguistic barriers but also by deeply ingrained cultural and psychological cleavages that, as is often the case, were frequently accompanied by mutual suspicion and prejudice. "We are accustomed on a daily basis," one letter to the editor of a Jerusalem newspaper complained, "to hearing such words in our streets as *'frank'* and *'Shknaz'* [derogatory terms for Sephardic and Ashkenazi Jews respectively]...[and] Ashkenazi women cautioning their friends not to buy *'Frankish meat.'*" Written by a local Sephardic wagon driver, the impetus for the letter had been provided by an incident in which two Ashkenazi women had hired his services, thinking him to be of European origin "since I speak the Ashkenazic Jargon [Yiddish]." Upon discovering his true ethnicity, they chose immediately to disembark. Having lost this source of livelihood, the writer concluded, "I cursed the day on which I was born to my Sephardic mother."[16]

Amplifying the impact these cultural gaps could have on the lives of Palestine's Jews, the ethnic divide was built firmly into the Yishuv's most important organizational, social, and economic institutions since the distributional axis of the haluka system was the complex of ethnically based *kolelim* (plural of *kolel*, the principal form of community organization and fund distribution). These organizational frameworks underwent repeated schisms, as groups determined to ensure receipt of funds from their respective countries of origin seceded from the larger bodies. Much of the haluka money came from European Jewish communities, and distribution of the funds in Palestine took place according to these geographic lines. This was one reason for Zionist criticism of haluka as a contributing factor in the ethnic division and social inequality of Jewish Palestine, particularly since immigrants from more destitute countries such as Yemen and Persia (often deeply impoverished after their arrival in Palestine as well) benefited little from the influx of funds, which were dwindling in any case. Instead of the ethnically based distribution, one Zionist critic complained, the funds ought instead to be used to erect "welfare

institutions [for] all of the Jews of our city, in complete intermixture." Such a policy, he argued, would not only alleviate some of the city's misery but also begin to "create true unity, the future *Hebrew* masses."[17] This desire to create "Hebrew masses," living together in a Hebrew public sphere, was the fundamental Zionist reaction not only to the perceived inequities of the haluka-based economy but also to all of the deep divisions running through the Yishuv.

Indeed, if the Jewish Yishuv in Palestine had been fragmented and disunited at the outset of the first Aliya, this continued to be the case by the time that wave of immigration had waned and given way to a sense of decline in the closing years of the nineteenth century. Fueled, moreover, by a profound sense of economic, moral, and demographic crisis, immigration was now all but replaced by an increase in emigration from Palestine. On January 1, 1900, the first day of the new century, Baron Edmund Rothschild, who had provided many of the colonies with a lifeline of financial and organizational support, transferred those colonies that were under his patronage into the hands of the Jewish Colonization Association (JCA). Motivated in large measure by the Yishuv's economic crisis, this action deepened the sense of malaise and anxiety within the Yishuv.[18] Although the baron's paternalistic managerial style had been the target of considerable criticism, the removal of this crucial backing seemed both an indication of disillusionment with the Yishuv's prospects and a catalyst in exacerbating its crisis. The expectation that the JCA would demand greater efficiency in running the agricultural farms, particularly given their already existing economic difficulties, led to the dismissal of hundreds of workers, further aggravating the economic and demographic plight of those years. "The ships arriving at Jaffa," one concerned resident related, "carry no new healthy Jews coming to settle in Palestine, whereas every ship sailing away from Jaffa takes with it many able hands from among the Yishuv's sons."[19] Never, he wrote in one of the Zionist world's leading Hebrew periodicals, "has the Yishuv raised such deep concern about its future as at this time."[20]

An overall sense now prevailed that, from the high hopes it had at first raised, the "New Yishuv" had entered into a reality of stagnation and decline. Writing of the effect of the crisis on the country's Hebrew schools, Itamar Ben-Avi, one of the founders of modern Hebrew journalism in the country, recalled that "but a few short years ago [they had] still raised hopes that they will provide us with a Hebrew-speaking generation." Now, he wrote, the schools serve as testament to the "indifference to the Hebrew language" of many of Palestine's Jews and to the general decline and "darkening skies" that were, to him, the natural consequences of this apathy.[21] While there were differing diagnoses of the problem, there was little disagreement that, in the piercing words of another veteran activist, "we who are known as the members of the New Yishuv

have grown old, and an odor of decay has spread around us—despair and impotence."[22]

These very public comments and open letters proved to be an important source of information on the Yishuv for its European well-wishers, and the bleak picture they painted was echoed and reinforced in private correspondence and the personal accounts of those who had left. Even when a new trickle of immigration began to arrive in late 1903 in the wake of the Kishinev pogrom, one private letter from Palestine lamented that, given the situation there, most of those newcomers "flee for a range of reasons. By the end of the first week after their arrival, they already regret having come, and admit so openly."[23]

Such reports on the air of despondency in the Yishuv further fanned the flames of frustration and made it a centerpiece of Zionist thinking on Palestine and its prospects as the soil for national rebirth. In the summer of 1903, when Russian Zionist leader Menahem Ussishkin attempted to launch a major thrust toward organizational unity through the projected creation of a Yishuv-wide umbrella organization, he defined it in large measure as a response precisely to these intersecting lines of divisiveness. The separation into "Ashkenazim, Sephardim, Yemenites, Persians, Georgians, Bucharians, Moroccans," Ussishkin declared, could no longer be tolerated. "All of these," he wrote, "must instead be included under the term 'the Hebrew Yishuv [Yishuv Ivri] in Palestine.'" The Yishuv's increase in size and its continued lack of cohesion, he argued, mandated that an organization be founded that would concern itself with all of the affairs of that Hebrew community.[24]

Ussishkin's undertaking, to be sure, was by no means the first attempt to provide the Yishuv with a unifying umbrella organization, nor did the explicitly Zionist tone of the convention he called in the colony of Zichron Ya'akov plant itself in virgin—or, for that matter, uncontested—soil. As early as 1891, the Hebrew teachers of the then still fairly young agricultural colonies had made an attempt to establish an organization to facilitate communication and reduce their isolation from one another. Although the "Teachers' Assembly" they founded then continued to exist formally for the next five years, it held only sporadic and poorly attended meetings, finally disbanding in 1896.[25] In 1894, Hillel Joffe, a prominent physician and activist in Palestine, made another short-lived attempt at coordinated activity.[26] As the crisis in the Yishuv deepened and the community's efforts at organization consistently collapsed, a delegation of Russian Hovevei Zion arrived in 1899 and 1900 and—accustomed to a relationship of paternalistic protection, which would soon become a source of ire for many of Palestine's Jews—proposed a substantive reorganization of the Yishuv's institutions.[27] The first move toward an explicitly Zionist local

organization that would unite the various Zionist associations that had been established in Palestine since the first Zionist Congress was undertaken in 1902, with the founding of the Va'ad ha-Agudot ha-Tzioniot ha-Me'uhadot be-Eretz Yisra'el [Committee of United Zionist Federations in Palestine] (hereafter Va'ad ha-Agudot).[28]

These earlier efforts, and the attempt by Va'ad ha-Agudot to obtain the recognition of the Zionist Organization as its official branch in Palestine, which were ongoing in the summer of 1903, seem to have set the stage for making the convening of the "General Assembly of the Jews of Palestine" by Ussishkin that summer both particularly timely but also hotly contested on a broad spectrum of organizational, ideological, political, and personal levels. Ussishkin's motivations in taking this step were complex and evinced his complicated and, in certain senses, ambivalent position within the ZO and his equivocal views of the Yishuv and its development. A veteran leader of Hibbat Zion, Ussishkin had grown increasingly alert to the demoralization of the Yishuv and, according to his biographer, had made "rescue" of the colonists and their enterprise the primary focus of his activity, calling incessantly for "the unification of all forces working for the benefit of the Yishuv."[29]

By the spring of 1903, the "bad news emanating from Palestine," as Ussishkin wrote to a friend living there, led him to express a powerful longing to travel to the country, where he was convinced that "there is tremendous work ahead of me" to unify and nationalize the Yishuv,[30] work he would indeed undertake as part of a new delegation of the Hovevei Zion's "Odessa Committee", which arrived in Palestine in June of that year. After touring the country, he decided to establish a new organization that would be not only the instrument of Zionist work in Palestine but ostensibly the expression of the Yishuv's own public voice as well. However, his decision evinced a number of existing tensions and produced some new ones. More than a demonstration of his famously difficult ego and his quest for a power base within the movement in his escalating personal and ideological struggle with Herzl, his founding of a new organization unaffiliated with the Va'ad ha-Agudot was also an expression of the complicated relationship between the Yishuv and the Zionist diaspora, even in the mind and actions of so Palestinocentric a Zionist leader as Ussishkin.

Indeed, the Hovevei Zion delegation's initial goals had not included the creation of such an organization but rather the reorganization of its own bureau in Jaffa on a local basis. During his stay in Palestine, however, Ussishkin seems to have become convinced that the goal of breeding a local leadership (or one that would be to his own liking and perhaps beholden to him) was a project

that would require initial cultivation from without (or from above). Rather than hold elections, for example, he would personally appoint delegates to a meeting of an initial organizational committee since "an instrument must first be made ready in order to prepare others in its own likeness thereafter." This, Ussishkin explained to the leaders of Va'ad ha-Agudot, who were frustrated with his paternalism and apparent lack of recognition, was equivalent to the path Herzl had chosen in preparing for the first Zionist Congress, when he had hand picked the initial delegates whom he "deemed necessary" and then, with them, decided on bylaws for future Congresses.[31] Parallels to Herzl notwithstanding, this was the beginning of deep tensions that ensued between the two Zionist organizations that would henceforth exist in Palestine, tensions that continued to deepen as they were swept up in the worldwide Zionist crisis of 1903–1905. This friction proved a decisive crucible that helped to forge what Zionism in Palestine would come to be and the ways in which it would operate, ultimately transforming the Yishuv over the coming decade and rendering it, by the end of the period, a budding national entity.

One of the sources of tension between the competing Zionist federations in Palestine went to their very understanding of the nature of the Yishuv, its meaning in the context of the overall Zionist project, and the meaning of being a Zionist—and a member of the nation-in-the-making—in Palestine. In its founding document, Vaad ha-Agudot had stipulated that the duties of a Zionist in Palestine (as elsewhere) were limited to paying the shekel (the Zionist Organization's membership dues), purchase of the Zionist bank's bonds, donations to the national fund, and participation in a local Zionist branch.[32] Ussishkin's vision of an all-Palestine federation, by contrast, diverged in two seemingly discrepant directions—one, apparently more inclusive, and the other more exclusive. On the one hand, in an effort to broaden the base of support and bolster the organization's image as a representative organ of the Yishuv as a whole, and to enhance its ability to act as such, participation in the founding assembly was not limited to those who were members of the ZO or local Zionist branches. This was not only a distinguishing feature but also a source of discord, both because members of Va'ad ha-Agudot opposed the inclusion of members of the orthodox Old Yishuv and because some were averse to a "mixed" organization of Ashkenazic and Sephardic Jews together that was at the very core of Ussishkin's conception.[33]

In their understanding of Zionism and the obligations of membership in a Zionist organization, the Vaad ha-Agudot adopted a conception similar to that of Herzl's political Zionism. Ussishkin's new initiative, by contrast, was an expression of his Hibbat Zion background and the "practical Zionism" that Herzl and much of political Zionism largely rejected. The public call Ussishkin

issued that summer not only made explicit the national basis upon which unity was to be achieved—a sensitive matter both within the Yishuv and in its relations with the Ottoman authorities—but also indicated who was to be included in the budding nation and began to sketch its contours in ways that no previous effort, including that of the Va'ad ha-Agudot, had done. Although it opened its doors to include members of the Old Yishuv and others who were not necessarily Zionists, Ussishkin's call stipulated that membership was conditional on at least minimal accouterments of the new national life as envisioned in much of then current eastern European Zionist discourse. "The meeting," the circular explained, "will be attended only by those forces working for the settlement and revivification of the land through vital, healthy labor." In a direct dismissal of the economic structure of haluka, the kernel of nationhood that was to be established would be composed exclusively of those Jews "who live from the fruits of their labor and do not live off charity."[34]

This land-based foundation for nationhood—a self-evident proposition for most national movements and in much of nationalist thought dating back at least to Herder, and yet still a divisive issue in the Jewish nationalist movement—was important, moreover, not only for the economic restructuring that Jewish nationhood was assumed to entail but for its mental and spiritual regeneration as well, as the founders of the assembly conceived it. On the eve of what was to become a bitterly divisive struggle within the Zionist world over the relationship between the nation, its culture, and its territory, Ussishkin's call to the Yishuv to begin to form itself into a national unit made it clear that, in this formulation at least, the nation's connection to Palestine and to its very soil was a fundamental feature of its constitution. Palestine, the flyer read, was "the land on which the nation's past was woven." As such, it was "the most fundamental basis for its present existence and the soul of its future." Indeed, so inseparable were the people and the land that, "if we seek to give a name to the thread running through our long history" even throughout centuries of exile, the circular declared, "we must call it 'the love of the land.'"[35] Ussishkin's "Great Assembly" initiative, then, was designed as the foundational moment of a new body that would not only compete with Va'ad ha-Agudot organizationally but—perhaps more importantly—pose a conceptual alternative that would determine and delineate the nation's demographic, social, and economic basis, as well as some of the principal elements that would constitute its nationhood.

The powerful cords that, as the circular indicated, bound the nation to the soil of Palestine implied another message that was beginning to emerge regarding the relationship between the Yishuv in Palestine, the Jewish Diaspora, and the Zionist Organization—all sites of disjunction that troubled many

Zionists. Hillel Joffe, who was among Ussishkin's local allies in organizing the conference (while remaining a trusted associate of Herzl's), later recalled that by deciding to convene the Great Assembly on the same day that the fateful Uganda Congress opened in Basel, the organizers had hoped to ensure "that Palestine might influence the Zionists abroad, rather than the other way around."[36] In fact, it is highly improbable that Joffe (or for that matter even Ussishkin) knew of the East Africa proposal that Herzl was about to present at the Basel Congress (and would soon burst into what would become known as the "Uganda controversy") since prior to the congress Herzl had been careful to restrict any knowledge of this development to a very limited circle.[37] This retrospective reconstruction of his own memory on Joffe's part is nevertheless a telling indication of the kind of sensibility that helped to inspire the establishment of the Palestine Federation and the atmosphere that came to surround it once the Uganda controversy erupted, embroiling within it the organizational tensions between the Federation and the Va'ad ha-Agudot. As the Yishuv's culture developed more fully in the ensuing years, its claim for ascendancy in the Jewish and Zionist world would become a salient feature of its ethos and a source of continued friction.

If there was some irony in the fact that this hope for reversing the traditionally paternalistic relationship of Diaspora support for the Yishuv was based on an initiative taken by a delegation of Russian Zionists from abroad, it was an irony that was inherent in the most basic assumptions of the Zionist cultural project. Penetrating to the core of the idea of creating a territorial center for the re-creation of the culture of a scattered people, the effort to negotiate and redefine the relations between Palestine and the Jewish Diaspora, and, by extension, between their respective traditions and customs would become a constitutive building block of that nation and its culture. But if the unequal balance of power and cultural weight was among the thorns in the side of Palestine's Zionists, it was not an easy pattern to reverse. If Joffe hoped that organizational unity might allow for greater influence by the Jews of Palestine over Diaspora Zionism, he would have to contend with the skepticism even of those who were in principle inclined to share his vision. "You know how much my soul thirsts to see some general organization in Palestine that might provide the Yishuv with its own leadership," Ahad Ha'am, the spiritual leader of Hibbat Zion and father of "cultural Zionism," wrote to Yehoshua Eisenstadt-Barzilai, another of the organizers of the Great Assembly and a long-time activist in Palestine (who had also been instrumental earlier in the founding of Va'ad ha-Agudot). However, until such time as the Yishuv could stand on its own feet and become "*truly* free from an economic point of view," Ahad Ha'am insisted, and until its residents "recognize the *need* for this in the depths of

their souls," Palestine would by necessity remain dependent not only on the financial support of its European benefactors but on their moral and organizational patronage as well.[38]

The Great Assembly convened on August 23, 1903, for a three-day conference in the colony of Zichron Ya'akov. It was attended by sixty-seven delegates from various parts of the Yishuv, chosen by an electorate of 2,157 individuals who participated in the preliminary elections. These included representatives of most Jewish ethnic groups, from both urban and agricultural settlements. The residents of Palestine were joined by the delegation from Odessa, which included Ussishkin and three others, for a total of seventy-one participants. Whatever the tensions and discord that had been part of the lead-up to the meeting in Zichron Ya'akov, the establishment of this new body was also accompanied by considerable excitement. Opening on the same day on which the sixth Zionist Congress convened in Basel, the assembly was also adorned with many of the outer trappings of the Zionist Congress itself, implicitly declaring itself the Palestinian branch of the larger congress gathering on the other side of the sea. Its very public nature marked it off clearly from Va'ad ha-Agudot, with its comparatively surreptitious style of work, and became another focus of opposition by both local Zionists and Herzl, who was concerned primarily with the Ottoman authorities' response. It was also this public nature, however, that lent it its aura of a significant breakthrough in the history of the Yishuv: It seemed to many of the Yishuv's residents to represent not only the establishment of a representative body, but also the creation of a quasi-national Hebrew public sphere.

Indeed, the fact that the proceedings in Zichron Ya'akov that summer were held entirely in Hebrew—a not insignificant accomplishment at a time when Hebrew was as yet a language of daily speech for but a very few people in Palestine (and one with a rather limited vocabulary)—was one reason for the excitement. Like the guidelines that had been set out in the call to convene, the linguistic choice was, of course, a further intimation of the fundamentals of Jewish nationhood as conceived by the assembly's initiators and which the assembly itself (and the federation it would found) were expected to embody. The decisions made at the meeting spelled these national fundamentals out further by demanding, for example, that "in all schools and educational institutions in Palestine, the Hebrew language must be a living language." Anticipating what would soon become another divisive and defining factor in Zionist Palestine (both internally and in its relations with the Arabs), the delegates declared themselves committed to the idea that "all work in the colonies be done by Jewish hands." The resolutions further included a requirement that all educational institutions be ruled by "the Jewish spirit [ha-ru'ah

ha-Yisre'eli]." By also stating that "physical education is one of the most im-
portant and necessary educational principles," however, they made it clear that
what they meant by the "Jewish spirit" stood in sharp contrast to what they
understood to be the spirit of the Jewish Diaspora or the Orthodox commu-
nities in Palestine. These communities' educational and cultural institutions
were all but universally censured in much of Zionist discourse for their neglect
of the Jews' body.[39]

The sense of exhilaration at having been involved in a historic event that
seemed to many to represent a veritable breakthrough in the history of the
Yishuv rings through both the circulars designed for public consumption and
the participants' private notes. There was an almost irresistible hope that the
assembly might become a critical tool in the nationalization, or Zionization, of
the Yishuv.[40] However, aside from the external tensions with Va'ad ha-Agudot
and the broader context of Zionist discord after the sixth Congress, the Pa-
lestine Federation suffered from a number of powerful pulls at its still sensitive
seams, and these would soon help to tear the new organizational structure
apart.

One source of friction had to do with the role of women. Although mutual
suspicion and ambivalence meant that there was only very limited represen-
tation of the Orthodox Old Yishuv in Zichron Ya'akov, a desire to avoid alien-
ating it completely led to a decision to deny women the right to vote. Since
everything about the assembly was seen as having defining force for the pro-
jected character of the nation it was expected to help generate, this decision
drew harsh criticism from those who had hoped that the gathering would act as
a vehicle for modernization and an instrument for a democratizing nationali-
zation. It was, as one critic wrote, "a frightening blow to our most human
sentiments" and an indication of small-minded submission to the forces of
darkness.[41] Even Yehoshua Eisenstadt-Barzilai, who had been pivotal in help-
ing to convene the conference in the first place, wrote some private notes
bristling with a biting sarcasm about the "war" against women and their right
to vote.[42]

From the outset, then, the assembly was forced to contend with congenital
discord. In spite of the concession embodied in the decision on women, much
of the Old Yishuv remained opposed and decided to absent itself.[43] Nor did
Baron Rothschild—still an important source of support for the Yishuv—take
kindly to the declaratively nationalist stance of an assembly that had taken
place in one of "his" colonies and that, he feared, might provoke the ire of
the Ottoman authorities. "A 'Zionist congress' in Palestine," he complained
in a private meeting, "can cause us a great deal of damage by its publica-
tion."[44] The most severe (and ultimately fatal) sources of opposition to the

assembly, however, were those that came from within the circles of Palestine's Zionists.

Questions regarding the character of the organization and its relationship to official Zionism had already emerged in the preparatory stages and were further amplified by Theodor Herzl's personal inimicality and the growing discord between him and Ussishkin.[45] As the volatile blend of personal and ideological rivalry between the two erupted and grew increasingly bitter over the question of Jewish settlement in East Africa, it reflected back onto the Yishuv's new organization, which was closely associated with Ussishkin himself. Once it became an open and acrimonious conflict, Ussishkin, who had been hailed as a hero in the summer of 1903 (see figure 2.1), was now accused of having acted underhandedly in convening the assembly so as to coincide with the Zionist Congress.[46] In the wake of Herzl's untimely death in the summer of 1904, the strife between the two would prove deadly for the federation as well. Ussishkin's stiff opposition to the ailing Herzl led some of the latter's supporters in the Yishuv to call for a boycott of anything that bore Ussishkin's mark.

If the Federation proved short lived as a nationalizing body, however, its convention served as the site for the formation of another organization that would enjoy significantly greater longevity and whose impact on the Yishuv's national culture would be immeasurable. As the delegates to the Great Assembly convened in Zichron Ya'akov, they were joined by a gathering of the Yishuv's Hebrew teachers. The Hebrew Teachers' Association, which they founded at that meeting, quickly emerged as an important tool in the creation of a Hebrew educational system in the Yishuv and one of the most active and influential tools in the reinvention of a spoken Hebrew language and the Hebrew culture that would attend it.

Zionist views of Palestine's heterogeneity derived in large measure from the nineteenth-century nationalism that was so animating a force in much of Zionism's thought and praxis. Nationalism's drive to create homogeneity out of what were in many cases deeply variegated societies has been explained as emerging out of a number of possible social, political, and economic wellsprings. Ernest Gellner has argued that the economic impact of the transition to modern industrial capitalism, with its shattering social fragmentation and unprecedented transience, called forth a need for a "minimal shared atmosphere" based on "the same culture."[47] Eric Hobsbawm suggests that nationalism was in large measure an expression of a yearning for new sources of political legitimacy and new means to mobilize citizens in an increasingly democratized age.[48] And Benedict Anderson's influential *Imagined*
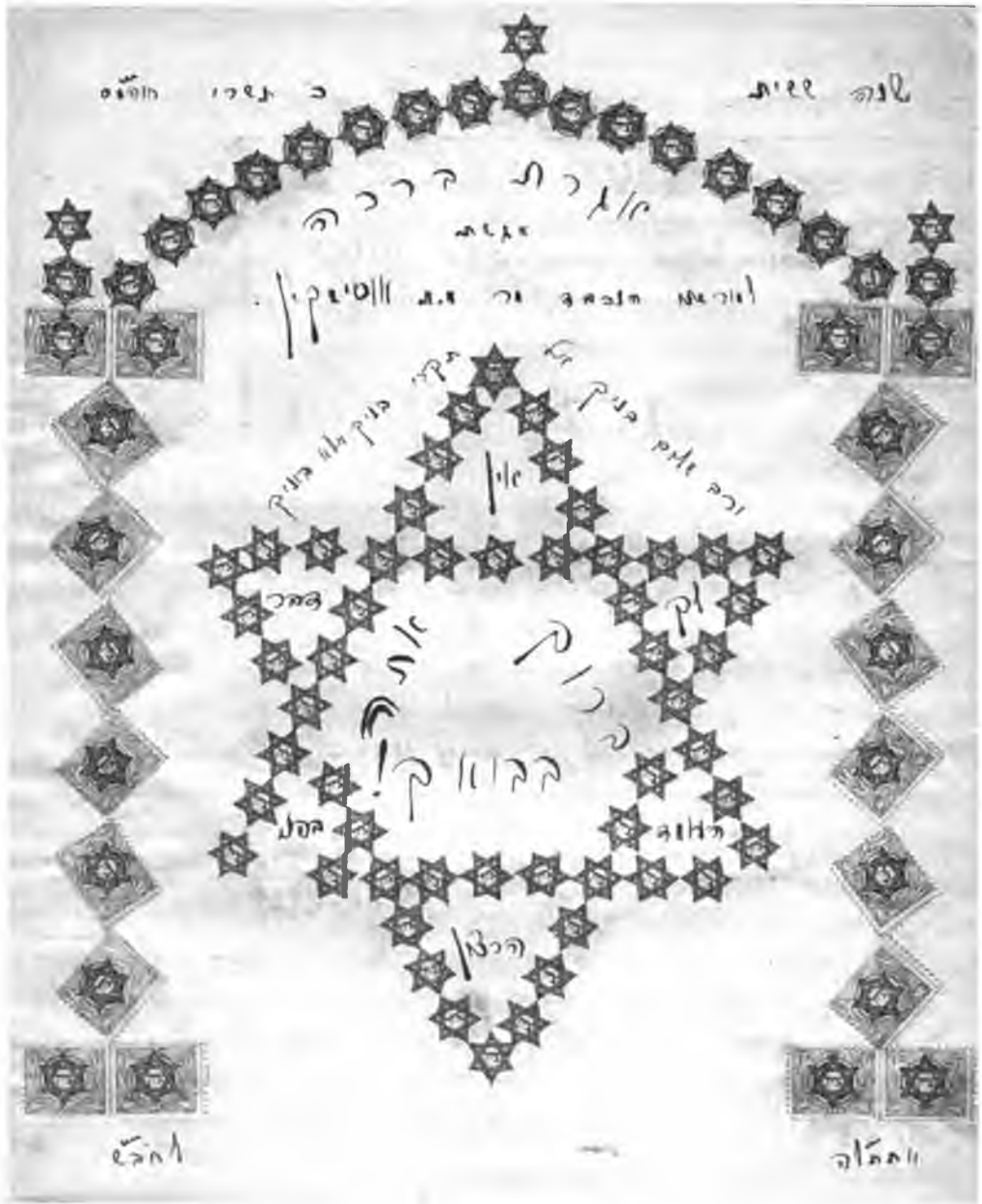
FIGURE 2.1. A greeting card sent to Ussishkin upon his return from Palestine in 1903, where he had convened the "Great Assembly." Time is marked on the card in three distinct ways. The upper left-hand corner notes the traditional Jewish date. The upper right and bottom express distinctly Zionist times: "1835 since the destruction of the Second Temple" and "year six"—positing the first Zionist Congress (six years earlier) as a new historical epoch, the counterpoint to destruction.

Communities places the combined cultural-psychological impact of modern communications, which "drove a wedge between cosmology and history," at the center of the modern experience, thereby launching a search for "a new way of linking fraternity, power and time meaningfully together."[49] The shattering effects of modernity on Jewish social cohesion, the decline of the traditional ruling elites and structures that it effected, the challenges to traditional world views that it entailed, and the fragmented nature of the Jewish Yishuv in Palestine all seem to have lent the Zionist thrust for homogenization a particular urgency.

However powerful the impetus, though, the homogeneity to which nationalism aspired and which nationalists sought to create often remained elusive, even in the comparatively cohesive nations in the western part of Europe. France, for example, in many senses the mother of modern nationalisms, was "neither morally nor materially integrated" even by the early twentieth century, as Eugen Weber has argued,[50] and the more recent Italian nation struggled for decades to find an effective method of governing very distinct regions and (certainly no less challenging) a way to conceptualize their often divergent cultures as constituent parts of a single nation.[51] Indeed, much of nationalism is marked by an inherent paradox: It seeks to speak in the name of a nation of ostensibly ancient origin, while nationalists themselves are at the same time often acutely aware of the need to yet create that nation in whose name they speak. Nationalism "makes political claims which take the nation's existence wholly for granted, yet it proposes programs which treat the nation as something yet unbuilt."[52]

The very foundations of Zionist thought lay not only in this paradox and the broader discourse of disintegration and degeneration that characterized fin de siècle Europe but also in the added anxiety over what seemed a self-evident notion that Judaism was a particularly crisis-ridden culture and the Jews an especially ailing people, both physically and psychically. If Zionism was conceived in large measure as a curative to this decay, based at its core on the prerequisite of relocation to Palestine, the motley mosaic that was the Yishuv offered a stark contrast to the hopes of national redemption that were associated with it. Confronted, as David Yudilovitz recalled, with a society of people who "had only just returned from exile, from all corners of the earth" and who possessed notions of culture "as distant as is Rumania from Georgia or Aden and Tzan'a from Yahopitz and Ishishok," he and other Zionist activists were determined "to cement this scattered mass into a single unit."[53] In the absence of a nationalizing government eager to disseminate an "official culture" (indeed, even the Zionist Organization had but a meager presence in Palestine up until 1908), the central pillar of their answer in the coming years was the

erection of an institutional skeleton for precisely that cement—a new lan-
guage, a discourse, a cosmology, and the rituals that would constitute a na-
tional liturgy—all of which, they hoped, would come together to effect that
transformation and dramatically reshape not only the Yishuv but the meaning
of Jewishness itself. The Hebrew Teachers' Association would emerge as one
important vehicle in this process, as would other institutions that soon joined
it. They would be able to do this, however, only after weathering the storm that
would soon tear apart the Palestine Federation and threaten to split the Zionist
movement worldwide into competing and mutually hostile camps. Precisely
because they struck at the very core of the nationalizing project, however, the
bitter polemics that attended the birth of the Great Assembly and the Palestine
Federation constituted an effort to work out and delineate new relationships
between the nation, its territory, and its culture and consequently helped to
give new form to the budding nation itself and to the ways in which it was
being conceived in what were still volatile and very malleable beginnings.

3

The Uganda Affair

Soils for National Culture

In the summer of 1903, then, the Yishuv seemed to many to be
ever more deeply steeped in decay, while a new wave of pogroms in
Russia had erupted that spring and engendered an increasingly
somber mood throughout the Jewish world. The Great Assembly and
the Palestine Federation it was supposed to have founded had been
conceived as the institutional expressions of the expectation that
Zionism in Palestine might provide a remedy for the ills afflicting the
Jewish people and that it might help to mend the rifts in a deeply
divided Yishuv. Instead, they quickly became sources of new divi-
siveness as the Yishuv, together with the rest of the Zionist world,
plunged into one of the bitterest controversies it would know. The
Sixth Zionist Congress, which had convened in Basel just as the del-
egates to the Great Assembly were convening in Zichron Ya'akov,
became an immediate catalyst for this new discord and a protracted
struggle that, over the next two years, would reshape the face of
Zionism and its national project in Palestine. The conflict that erupted
there when Theodor Herzl notified the delegates of a British gov-
ernment proposal to allot a portion of land in East Africa for Jewish
settlement—a proposal he somewhat uneasily recommended the
movement take up—reverberated loudly over the ensuing two years
before it was finally laid to rest at the Seventh Zionist Congress in
1905. By the time the storm had passed and the dust had begun to
settle, the Zionist Organization would have lost its leader (who died
in the summer of 1904 at the age of forty-four) and suffered the

secession of a significant number of leading and rank-and-file members. In the process, however, it would also have more clearly defined its political and cultural agenda, charted a political and diplomatic path, and more clearly formulated a new vision of the interface between national territory and national culture, as well as the role Palestine and its Yishuv were to play in creating these.

Herzl himself had initially had grave misgivings about the British proposal. While he had repeatedly broached the subject of other lands in his meetings with world leaders, these had always been territories that were in proximity to Palestine and which he saw as stepping-stones to the final goal. Now, however, after six years of diplomatic activity in an effort to obtain a charter for Jewish settlement in Palestine, Herzl had little to show. In the meantime, a pogrom had just taken place on April 19, in which forty-nine Jews in Kishinev had been murdered, hundreds of others wounded, and vast amounts of property looted. The Jewish world was in deep shock at the outburst of violence and what seemed a harsh reminder of the Jews' precarious position in their European homes. The coalescence of the deepening predicament of Russian Jewry, a sense that the British offer represented unprecedented diplomatic recognition of Jewish nationhood and the Jewish claim to *some* territory, and the diplomatic thorniness involved in an outright rejection of a British government offer together persuaded Herzl that an expedition ought to be dispatched to consider the prospects of the territory.

The delegates to the congress were largely taken by surprise, but it did not take long for conflicting emotions to rage. It quickly became clear that what Herzl thought might be a rather comprehensive solution—to the failure of his diplomatic activities up until then, to the new wave of pogroms in eastern Europe, and to the difficulties of obtaining a charter for Palestine—turned out instead to be the source of a painful rift within the Zionist Movement. The debate rapidly crossed the Mediterranean and flooded the Jewish Yishuv in Palestine, where it took on a tenor and a substance that reflected both Palestine's unique role in the Zionist imagination and the disheartening state of affairs in the Yishuv, as well as its internal divisions, now sharpened as the two competing Zionist bodies (Ussishkin's Palestine Federation and the Vaad Ha-Agudot) became identified each with a particular camp. The controversy would soon have a profound and multifaceted impact on the ways in which the land's place in Zionist culture was conceptualized and on the course of tangible cultural development in the Yishuv.

The notion that territory was integrally linked to a nation's attributes and culture had, of course, been a fundamental tenet of much nationalist thought from its outset. "As a mineral water derives its component parts...from the

soil through which it flows," Johann Gottfried von Herder had written more than a century earlier, "so the ancient character of peoples arose from the family features, the climate, the way of life...that were peculiar to them."[1] That so constitutive a dimension of the national movement should have been placed under so fundamental a question mark explains the force with which the Uganda controversy hit the Zionist world. Given the traumatic nature of the affair, the literature on it is comparatively limited, although its impact on the Zionist Organization and certain aspects of Zionist politics has, of course, been recognized.[2] What has gone largely unnoticed, however, is the powerful effect it had on the internal dynamics within Palestine's nationalizing elite—now divided between two bitterly opposed ideological camps that partially overlapped with the two competing local Zionist organizations—and on the budding national culture they were working to create (if now at times at cross-purposes).[3]

Zionism had learned from European nationalism to search for contiguity between the nation and its territory. "A nation," after all, as Eliezer Ben-Yehuda wrote, "cannot exist and *cannot be a nation* other than in a land of its own."[4] The reality of Jewish dispersion, however, framed this basic nationalist tenet in unusually acute and problematic terms in the Zionist context, where land was conspicuously lacking—a fact that, together with the absence of other commonly accepted central attributes of nationality such as a common language, seemed to many Zionists to suggest the fearful prospect that the Jews might in fact not be a nation at all.[5] Thus, if European nationalists, often influenced by Herder's thought and legacy, could make claims for their respective nations based on a strong sense of union with a particular stretch of land (even if its precise boundaries may have been a matter of dispute), territory for Zionism remained very much an unresolved question at least until 1905, with the end of the Uganda controversy. Even in its wake, when the question of *which* territory had been effectively settled, the connection between the embryonic nation's culture and the soil on which it was to be grown—the relationship, in Zionist terms, between a culturally petrified nation and its correspondingly barren land—would remain a challenge nearly as thorny as the land itself had been before.[6] Forging this bond in which the Jews seemed to many Zionists to be acutely and uniquely deficient consequently became a principal motivating factor that lay at the basis of much of their cultural work.

If a central thrust of Zionist thinking was to reconstitute the Jews in the form of modern nationhood and gain them entry into the community of nations, then, Zionist cultural work in Palestine was marked by a double bind. The oft-quoted (and usually misunderstood) Zionist dictum about providing "a land without a people for a people without a land"[7] in fact falls short of

expressing the complexity of the task that Zionism had set itself since the process (as it was envisioned) worked in both directions: Just as the people were in need of a land to reconstitute themselves as a modern nation, the land too was understood to be in no less need of a nation as a means toward regeneration—the very nation that was as yet unformed and that the land was expected to help generate. The clearest lines dividing Zionists from one another in the bitter struggle of 1903–1905, then, were between those for whom Palestine alone could serve as this national territorial base—the soil on which the land and the nation would be able to grow together, thanks to a unique link binding the nation's culture to that land—and others for whom the primacy of territory as a remedy for Jewish ailments did not necessarily imply a prescription for a specific land. The primacy of the territorial ingredient, however, shaped both much of the support for the East Africa scheme and the opposition to it.

Although two earlier studies have argued otherwise,[8] the bulk of the evidence seems to clearly support the conclusion that a very large proportion of Palestine's Zionists supported Herzl's proposal. Official communications from the Va'ad ha-Agudot speak overwhelmingly to majority support for Uganda among its ranks, and the personal correspondence of supporters and opponents alike further substantiates this picture. Ugandist Yitzhak Horwitz of the Eretz Yisra'el association in Jerusalem complained in one letter that although "no more than ten percent of all the Zionists in Palestine are Zionei Zion [Zion Zionists—supporters of a Palestine-only approach]," they were nevertheless succeeding in creating the impression abroad that they held a majority in the country.[9] And his opponent Leo Metman-Cohen, one of the Yishuv's vocal Zion-Zionists, echoed this assessment of the relative strength of the competing ideological camps in his repeated complaints about the overwhelmingly Ugandist atmosphere against which he found himself struggling.[10]

Among Palestine's most outspoken and influential supporters of the territorial alternative to what he had long proclaimed to be an ailing Yishuv was Eliezer Ben-Yehuda. To be sure, like other early Zionists, Ben-Yehuda had early on evinced some tentative willingness to consider territorial alternatives to Palestine as temporary solutions.[11] However, his decision to immigrate to Palestine as early as 1881 (before the outbreak of the wave of pogroms that is usually considered the immediate catalyst to the full-fledged emergence of Hibbat Zion) and his establishment there of his pioneering newspapers, *Hashkafa*, *Ha-Tzevi* and *Ha-Or*—the first Hebrew-language Zionist organs in the country—cast him in the role of pioneer in fusing a Jewish return to Palestine and a revival of the Hebrew language there as the twin nuclei of his worldview. His efforts to create the basis for a national culture in Palestine had

long been grounded in a visceral rejection of Jewish life in the Diaspora, and the focus of his cultural activity—in journalism, linguistic research, and the production of a national liturgy—was designed to be a reflection of this rejection and of the spiritual transformation that life in Palestine, as he believed, both mandated and made possible. A cultural (and political) activist of far broader range than the linguistic revival for which he is best remembered, Ben-Yehuda was involved in a wide variety of efforts to reshape national festivals and celebrations, often in idiosyncratic ways that nevertheless reflect central themes that were characteristic of much of the Zionist cultural undertaking in Palestine, along with the tensions and ambivalences that accompanied them.

Little more than a year before Ben-Yehuda's dramatic (if temporary) ideological shift toward territorialism, a spring 1902 supplement to his newspaper *Hashkafa* in honor of the festival of Purim gave quasi-ritual expression to this central nationalist paradigm in his thought. In a piece signed "Mordechai ha-Yehudi" (Mordechai the Jew), he mocked the traditions of the festival and even the biblical story on which it is based. The Scroll of Esther, as his lead column pointed out, was a unique biblical book in that its plot takes place entirely outside the Land of Israel, and the holiday of Purim, which was constructed around it, was consequently one in which the spirit of exile ran to its very core. Even the commanded joviality of the holiday, Ben-Yehuda argued, was a reflection of the Jews' loss of the "dew of youth" since only an unhealthy people must be commanded to be happy. "We Jews," after all, "have forgotten how to laugh for some two thousand years." Rather than a story of deliverance, Ben-Yehuda saw in the Scroll of Esther the "pathetic" story of a people "whose redemption is brought about by a beautiful maiden who was desired by a lustful ruler, a stupid despot who killed his [previous] wife because she was unwilling to appear naked in public." The life of such a nation, he lamented, was in fact "no life at all," and Purim therefore did not seem to him the occasion for drunken joy that traditional praxis mandated. It was, on the contrary, a sober opportunity to "challenge this long scroll which is no less than a small scale version of our lengthy exile, the entire contents of which is always the same: that in every generation there are those who seek to destroy us, and we sit and await redemption . . . with our necks stretched out for the slaughter."[12] Zionism in Palestine was about creating a different kind of Jew, one who would demand a different kind of redemption and whose culture—diametrically opposed to the ostensibly passive, lifeless quietism of the Diaspora and its traditions—would be a reflection of the active pursuit of Jewish fate, which was possible only in the Jews' own land.

For more than twenty years, between immigrating to Palestine in 1881 and the summer of 1903, this Palestinocentrism was one of Ben-Yehuda's leading

national imperatives. In the wake of the stormy Sixth Zionist Congress, however, he became a steady and outspoken supporter of Herzl and the East Africa proposal, and during the next two years he gave this agenda a prominent and strident voice on the pages of *Hashkafa* (at the time still the only Zionist organ in Palestine), which he had founded and continued to edit along with his son, Itamar Ben-Avi. Indeed, much to the often chagrined surprise of many contemporaries, scarcely a single issue appeared in the closing months of 1903 without an article or an editorial devoted to what Ben-Yehuda now consistently called "the Jewish State" which, as he (mis-)represented it, had been proposed for the Jews in East Africa.

This apparent incongruity between Palestinocentrism and the newly adopted Ugandism was in fact a direct product of Ben-Yehuda's particular vision of Jewish nationalism and his understanding of the manner in which national land and national culture were to be knit together. The two principal prerequisites for a national existence of any kind, he argued—the building blocks of national culture—were a common territory and a common language. Emerging from a particularly powerful and unambiguously articulated anxiety regarding the specter of national death, which, he believed, threatened the Jewish people, Ben-Yehuda frequently lamented the Jews' lack of national consciousness and, graver still, the implications it might have regarding a want of Jewish nationhood itself. The Jews, to him, were at best a nation in the making and at worst, in his not infrequent moments of sobriety, a nation in the throes of death. Should the efforts to resuscitate it succeed, he argued, the culture that would come to characterize the Jewish people would be one "which no person can foresee." The only thing that could be known about it with certainty was that it would be "a culture that the Jews will create at a point in time when a large number of them is concentrated in a single center . . . free to act according to their own spiritual inclinations."[13]

This premise—which for more than two decades had motivated Ben-Yehuda's resolve to work toward the creation of just that territorial center in Palestine—now combined with a number of factors in the Jewish world and the Yishuv, along with the advent of the East Africa proposal, of course, to turn his glance elsewhere. One of these factors was a deep admiration for Herzl, with whom he agreed that the British offer was not only a singular diplomatic achievement but also an epic recognition by one of Europe's leading powers of Jewish nationhood and of the Zionists' standing as the nation's representative.[14] As the pages of his newspaper make abundantly clear, Ben-Yehuda was also deeply affected by the crisis in the Yishuv. The increasing physical distress of the Jews of eastern Europe, moreover, had persuaded him—as it had Herzl—that a timely solution to the problem was essential. In the wake of the

pogrom in Gomel, which erupted in the midst of the Uganda debate, Ben-Yehuda argued that "even more than the events in Kishinev, the events of the past few days speak loud and clear that our people will never find peace among the nations of the world." The only hope for salvation, he was convinced, was for the Jews "to become citizens of their own state, *wherever that state may be for the time being*, whatever that state may be!"[15]

The frustration of his new ideological opponents over the fact that so veteran a resident of Palestine and so prominent an ideologue of the Hebrew revival *in Palestine* had now turned toward Uganda was often exacerbated by confusion over the fact that, alongside his staunch territorialism, Ben-Yehuda continued to advocate an expanded Zionist focus on practical work in Palestine. One of his responses to the Basel congress, in which he expressed his satisfaction with the fact that it had served as a prod for some Zionist "efforts to do more for the Yishuv in Palestine,"[16] led a puzzled Simcha Vilkomitz, a Hebrew educator in the Galilean colony of Rosh Pinah, to ask how he could continue to declaim such dedication to Palestine and at the same time argue that Uganda might be able to be "more of a Land of Israel than the 'Land of Israel' itself."[17]

In some sense, Ben-Yehuda's territorialism was indeed fundamentally at odds with itself. Even as he devoted much of his journalistic energy to arguing the Africanist position, he also continued to run countless articles—written both by himself and by others—underscoring the importance of Palestine to the Jewish national renaissance. Indeed, notwithstanding his protestations of agnosticism regarding his image of what the future national culture would look like, he did have some very clear ideas, and many of them were integrally related to Palestine. His vision of a national culture was firmly embedded in a version of Jewish history that was deeply rooted in the land and in the powerful bond that, he believed, should link all Jews to the land of their forebears. Even at his most passionate in support of the Uganda proposal, this point remained paramount. He was deeply taken, for example, by the opening ceremony of the German Institute for the Study of the Antiquities of Palestine, which he attended in October of 1903 and from which he "returned shamefaced and humiliated" since it served as a reminder to him that, unlike the Germans (and others), the Jewish people for whom "*this land is everything*—our past and our future, the land of our fathers, the land of our Torah, of our holy writings" completely neglected such scientific investigation and study of the land. Investigation of Palestine and familiarity with the land were to him not purely academic pursuits but rather enterprises of prime national-existential significance (figure 3.1). To leave such efforts in the hands of other nations was to relinquish the Jews' claim to the land and their place in it, and stood out to

FIGURE 3.1. A flier announcing a 1908 initiative to establish a "Hebrew Institute for Study of the Land of Israel," as the Hebrew calls it; a "Jewish Archaeological Institute" in the Yiddish. This was one response to a prevailing sense of shame at Jewish neglect of such work. Scholarship and land purchases combined, the text promises, will make the land's holy sites "the possession of the nation to whom they are holy."

Ben-Yehuda as a clear indication of an ailing national consciousness.[18] Both a lack of sufficient attachment to Palestine and a rejection of the opportunity now being granted for a "Jewish state" in East Africa, he wrote, were equally "fruits of our hideous [spirit of] exile."[19]

Hemda Ben-Yehuda, Eliezer's wife, an important author and ideologue in her own right, and a regular contributor to the family journalistic undertaking, gave more picturesque voice to Palestine's importance as the bedrock of the nation's culture. "We have already painted all of the palm trees, the sea, the sun setting into the waves," she wrote, "and every Arab who reminds one more or less of King Solomon, of Samson, of the prophet Jeremiah. And among the half-naked Arabesses, the young artist can quickly see the image of the passionate Shulamit, of Rahab of Jericho, of the treacherous Delilah, and of the delightful prophetesses Deborah and Miriam."[20]

This encounter with the nation's past—and the impact of its model of an ancient Jewish ideal on both high culture (and the arts) and the realities of daily life—was possible, Hemda indicated, in this place only. In Palestine alone, a new consciousness would stir in the heart of the Jewish artist, and would provide the basis for a new Jewish art that could draw from the Jewish legacy inherent in the land. "The Hebrew artist's senses," she wrote, "are increasingly awakened when he sees now in his waking moments things which he had previously only imagined or dreamt: the deep blue cloudless sky, the delicate, magical hues, the eastern flora, the faces of Palestine." All of these together were much more than mere sources of artistic inspiration. They were—as much for the nation as for the art now created by and for it—sources of renewed life and vitality (as the charged erotic imagery of the "Arabess," a not uncommon trope in the Ben-Yehuda papers,[21] suggests). Removed from the dark and cramped quarters of eastern European Jewish life as represented in Zionist imagery, the national artist—like the nation itself—now "with a deep breath, breathes the fresh, clean air into his being and listens to the roar of the sea."[22]

If there was an apparent incongruity between this romantic attachment to Palestine and the ardent support for East Africa as the new foundation of Jewish nationhood, it was also the case that the two positions stemmed from a single set of premises. Principal among these was the sense of acute and immediate existential threat that the Jews seemed to face and a belief that the only hope for a remedy was the acquisition of a national territory—and the sooner the better. Herzl's failure to make significant progress toward a charter for Palestine, combined with the crisis in the Yishuv itself, seemed to make it painfully clear that even if Palestine were the goal, it remained a distant one in a situation that called for haste. To be sure, while some Zionists-turned-territorialists

would later argue directly against Palestine as a worthy home for a nascent Jewish nation, Ben-Yehuda remained committed to the notion that Palestine was, in principle, the optimal base for a Jewish national future. "The place in which the people is most likely to revitalize itself and return to life," he granted, "is in the Land of Israel," which had for the Jews a unique "curative merit." Nevertheless, he argued, for a people "whose very national existence is in danger if it does not quickly stand on a land which can be its own," such as the land now being offered, the insistence—"like a tantrum-throwing child"—on the impossible, on "the moon from the sky," was testimony to the advanced metastasis of the disease of exile even among the proponents of national rebirth.[23]

With all of his loyalty to Palestine, however, Ben-Yehuda nevertheless rejected the suggestion that it was the only place in which the nation might find the strength to "return to life." Such an argument, he thought, constituted "a denial of the people's spirit, of its soul."[24] These, he argued, were in the end "even more powerful than the soil of the fathers."[25] And the business of nationalism, he added, was to concern itself primarily with that national soul. To deride the hope for regeneration in East Africa and to argue for the primacy of the nation's land over its spirit—as he claimed the Zionei Zion did—was, therefore, no less than "national heresy." "The land," Ben-Yehuda maintained, "is holy only for the people and for the sake of the people" and ought never to be elevated to the position of an end in itself.[26] Furthermore, if Palestine was, as it appeared to him, little more than a phantasm (however desirable), one would have to accept the prospect "that the people *will* be able . . . to create a land for itself and to live in it wherever that may be!"[27]

The distinction, consequently, as Ben-Yehuda saw it, was between the nationalism of those who placed the people at the center ("people-ists," according to his new coinage) and those who placed land at the center ("landists"), ostensibly willing to sacrifice or risk the people for an obstinate insistence on the exclusivity of a possibly unattainable Palestine. Focused on what was ultimately an abstract goal, he charged, the "landists" were indifferent to the reality of misery in which so many Jews were living and to the very concrete existential threats they faced. Given the objective difficulties that the attempts to acquire Palestine had confronted, to deny the prospect of healing the ailing nation in a land other than Palestine, he charged, amounted to resigning the people to a verdict of probable death.[28]

This synthesis in the Ben-Yehudas's national vision of a continued centrality of Palestine—along with its flora, fauna, and human scenery—with a zealous advocacy of the "Jewish state" in East Africa is worthy of particular emphasis, because earlier studies have claimed that theirs was a territorialism that dif-

fered qualitatively and substantively from that of other supporters of the East Africa option in the Yishuv. Shifra Schwartz has maintained that Ben-Yehuda supported the Uganda proposal "on an ideological-strategic basis" and would have been "willing to substitute any other territory for Palestine." She contrasts him in this regard with those—ostensibly the majority of the territorialist-leaning Zionists in Palestine—for whom support of Herzl and Uganda was based on "tactical considerations" only, out of personal loyalty to the movement's leader and concern for the suffering Jews of Russia.[29] By way of further explanation, Haya Harel contends that among Zionists in Palestine—in contrast with those in Europe and perhaps in contradistinction to Ben-Yehuda as well—the notion of an alternative territory "did not entail a conception of statehood, since [they believed] a national state could arise in Palestine only."[30]

Neither of these contentions is convincing. Lacking explanatory power for understanding the support for Uganda among the Yishuv's Zionists, they serve instead to oversimplify the contending views and, beyond this, lack the support of the documentary evidence. Indeed, the rhetoric in the Yishuv regarding Uganda seems at times to have invoked statehood more, rather than less, than some of the discourse in Europe, where stress was often placed on the notion of Uganda as a *nachtasyl*, a shelter for the night—a term coined by Max Nordau (although this was certainly a much-employed notion in the Yishuv as well). In Palestine, aside from Ben-Yehuda's column on "the Jewish State," which appeared in almost every issue of *Hashkafa* during these years, a circular issued by the largely Ugandist Eretz Yisra'el Association in Jerusalem in anticipation of the Seventh Zionist Congress called upon its members to consider the important items to be discussed in Basel, including "the burning question . . . of *a Jewish state outside of Palestine.*"[31] As the congress drew nearer, leaders of the Jerusalem Zionist association expressed their concern lest a Zionei Zion victory lead to an alteration in the bylaws of the Zionist bank in such a way that it be forbidden from pursuing "settlement in any other than lands adjacent to Palestine." Should such a change occur, they cautioned, "what good would it be if the Congress decided to establish *a Jewish state* in some place, if the bank would be unable to accept the charter for that state and to work to settle it?"[32] Such examples could be multiplied. Similar language (and a similar understanding of what was at stake) was used, moreover, in equal measure by those who were opposed to Uganda. One member of the Mizrahi association in Tiberias, for example, explained that, unlike most of his religious-Zionist cohorts, who (both locally and globally) were overwhelmingly Ugandist, he opposed the proposal since "I can in no way conceive of *a Jewish state* outside of Palestine, in a land lacking in ancient memories, ancestral traditions, and feelings of holiness that connect the people to its land."[33]

Nor was Ben-Yehuda exceptional in his fusion of ardent support for Uganda with a firm identification with Palestine and a passionate advocacy of Zionist activity there. The protocols of the August 22, 1904, meeting of the two Zionist organizations in Jerusalem at the time show that the one unequivocally anti-Ugandist position was voiced by one Yitzhak Nofech, who cautioned that "if we agree to Uganda we will forget the Land of Israel." As the protocol points out, however, Nofech was "a visitor" rather than a current member of one of the local associations (he was at the time studying law in Istanbul). Unlike Nofech, the vast majority of the participants combined fervent support for Uganda with a powerful sense of the uniqueness of Palestine and a personal commitment to the Yishuv. Together with his "rapturous argumentation for Uganda," Rabbi Eliezer Greenhut, a resident of the city since 1893 and a member of the Eretz Yisra'el Association, explained that "not only would Uganda cause no harm to Zionist work in Palestine, it would serve to enhance it" since it would still be in Palestine that "rabbinical seminaries would be established from whence rabbis would be appointed to all countries of the Diaspora, and in particular to Uganda." Indeed, even Palestine's faltering economy would be bolstered by Jewish statehood in East Africa, according to Greenhut, since "citrons and wine would be imported only from Palestine." Uganda, many concurred, "was the path leading to Zion." At the meeting's end, a series of pro-Uganda resolutions was followed by the question "will we leave Palestine?" which, as the protocol has it, elicited a unanimous and impassioned response of "we will never leave the Land of Israel, our land!"[34]

As a proclamation issued in the name of "the Zionists of the Land of Israel" made clear, moreover, the Yishuv's Zionist activists harbored no sense of inherent contradiction in demanding that the Zionist Organization work at one and the same time both for "the revival of our nation . . . on the Land of our Fathers" and toward "autonomous rights according to our national spirit" in an alternative territory.[35] Va'ad ha-Agudot, which refrained from taking an official position, could write to the "Committee of Political Zionists [i.e., Herzl's Ugandist supporters] in Odessa" that "most Zionists in Palestine agree with the details of your program"[36] and send a missive of support to the embattled Herzl in his struggle for the East Africa project, expressing their "faith in our leader," while offering their blessing that "the God of Zion" help him "lead our people to tranquility in Zion our mother."[37] (See figure 3.2.)

Clearly, whether it was ideological identification, loyalty to Herzl, despair with Zionist prospects in Palestine, or, as one critic (unconvincingly) charged,[38] mere economic opportunism, a considerable proportion of the Zionist "New Yishuv" shared Ben-Yehuda's pro-Ugandist stance, although it was rarely free from internal tensions, in particular stemming from a continued individual

FIGURE 3.2. This epistle of support was sent to Herzl during the Uganda affair by the Va'ad ha-Agudot, which had a Ugandist majority. Support for the Ugandist position is coupled with the wish that "the God of Zion" will help Herzl "lead our people to tranquility *in Zion our mother.*"

and collective identification with Palestine and the Yishuv. David Yudilovitz, a central figure in developing Hebrew education in Palestine since 1882, was on a business trip marketing the wines of his home colony of Rishon Le-Zion when he heard of the storm at the Zionist Congress. Away from home, he wrote to a friend of his longing for "all that is dear to me in my life," for "that

truly national life" that he could find only in the colony he had called home for some two decades and had helped to found. Unique though his home in the colony may have been, however, Yudilovitz added, "I have no doubt that had we settled twenty-two years ago in East Africa *(today's Jewish state)* [sic], and had we established a Rishon Le-Zion there...we would be attached to it today just as we are to the Rishon Le-Zion in which we reside."[39]

This sober assessment led Yudilovitz to share Ben-Yehuda's ideological stance and to concur with his characterization of the "Zion Zionists," to which he added his own invective for which he adopted widespread European tropes that held the Jews to be lacking in true intellectual capacity and tending to a range of mental ailments. "It was thought," as Sander Gilman has written, "not only that Jewish social practices led to madness, but that the Jews' undertaking these practices was a symptom of their underlying insanity."[40] In the Jewish context and particularly in Zionist thought, this idea was often adopted with the added explanation that it had been "the Jewish brain's inability to compete after 'a two-thousand-year Diaspora'" that lay at the root of this blight.[41] Adopting this view as an integral part of his own critique of "exilic" thinking, Yudilovitz argued that in their opposition to Herzl, the Russian delegates had demonstrated their "Yeshiva-meat"—the overly sharpened casuistic brains of Talmudic discourse—in place of the "European thinking and logic" that would have served them much better and would have militated naturally in favor of the prospect of a national home somewhere in the world that seemed to be embodied in it.[42] The trope of the mental deficiencies that were the price of exile became central in Yudilovitz's explanation of what seemed to him an otherwise inexplicable rejection (by self-proclaimed nationalists) of what was plainly the proper and healthy choice for the nation. The double bind of Zionism, as conceived by Yudilovitz, was clearly reflected in the rejection of Uganda, which showed that the path to national regeneration was blocked by the very maladies of Diaspora Jewish existence that made such regeneration necessary in the first place.[43]

A further aspect of this presumed mental decline that had afflicted European Jews and found its way into Yudilovitz's diagnosis of the Zionei Zion was "the conflation of Jewishness and femininity [and] the consequent anxiety of Jewish men about their own masculinity."[44] The inability to think straight, which Yudilovitz attributed to his ideological rivals, was, after all, assumed to be a salient characteristic not only of the Jew but of women as well. Yudilovitz's language in describing the reaction of the Zionei Zion betrays his sense that their lack of clear thinking was an instance of the general effeminacy that characterized their very beings. "Instead of rejoicing that a bit of fresh land has been found [where] we can become owners of our own home," he writes,

the Zionei Zion "weep," "protest," and "cry" in hysterics. In place of the masculine comportment that Zionism sought to evince as integral to its reclamation of Jewish national honor and physical and mental health, in other words, they have proven themselves more women than men, more Jews of exile than a generation worthy of rebirth. Taken together, Yudilovitz summarizes, in disgust mixed with distress, their behavior was a sign of the general "foolishness, childishness, depravity and ignorance" with which, in the Diaspora, even Zionists were afflicted.[45]

If Yudilovitz's depiction of the Diaspora Jew provides a telling illustration of the conflation of Jewishness with femininity, it was also an echo of the frequent attribution of some of the arsenal of disparaging European images of "the Orient" to eastern European Jews—an attribution that would resonate loudly in much of Zionist work in Palestine, although not always in predictable ways or in the tone used in this case by Yudilovitz (see chapters 7 and 8).[46] This ethnic dimension of the debate would take on a distinctive tenor in the Ugandism of Abraham Elmaliach. A native of Jerusalem with a lineage extending back through generations in Morocco to medieval Spain, Elmaliach was an educator, journalist, and prominent leader of the Jerusalem Sephardic community, within which he worked to disseminate Zionist ideas. In 1903 he too became a supporter of the Uganda prospect, arguing that in addition to the shock of the pogroms in Kishinev and Gomel, recent anti-Jewish violence that had accompanied the latest unrest in Morocco added force to the territorialist position through its patent illustration of the universality of Jewish distress. In the face of the "sad and bitter fate" that the "miserable nation" faced, Elmaliach wrote, it was difficult to understand how there were those "who, with great enthusiasm, oppose such prospects as the Uganda proposal!"[47]

There were, however. In the summer of 1905, as preparations were under way for the Seventh Zionist Congress, after two years of bitter strife, a group of local Zionei Zion gathered in Yudilovitz's colony of Rishon Le-Zion. Feeling themselves embattled in a colony that was at the time a center of support for Uganda, the group formulated a series of resolutions demanding of the Zionist Organization's governing bodies that the Congress "remain a *Zionist* [i.e., Palestine-focused] congress...according to the Basel program, which calls for...the spiritual and political renaissance of our nation in the land of our fathers." They went on to demand that this commitment to Palestine be given concrete expression through a revamping of Zionist policy. The Congress's financial resources, they stated, must be allocated exclusively to Zionist work in Palestine, which must now be finally undertaken as an official Zionist task. The list of demands concluded with the overarching provision that "any work involving

a search for a state for our people outside of Palestine and its immediate environs is not a part of the Congress's mandate, and the Congress is to be forbidden from engaging in any such work."[48]

If the Yishuv's territorialists rejected the Zionei Zion position out of hand as bordering on the depraved, the supporters of a Palestinocentric Zionism in the Yishuv were no more forgiving in their castigation of their opponents, whom they often found equally difficult to understand. "Is it possible," as Yehoshua Eisenstadt-Barzilai put it, "to look without disgust upon people who sit in Zion, and call out in her name that we must leave her and seek for ourselves a different land?"[49] If Ben-Yehuda had charged his opponents with nationalist heresy in ostensibly giving precedence to land over people, some of those opponents argued that it was precisely due to the centrality of the people that the East Africa prospect ought to be rejected. Seeking to undermine the argument of those like Ben-Yehuda and Yudilovitz, for whom East Africa was understood as a temporary measure on the road to Palestine, a national training ground to be complemented by a Zionist commitment to the ancestral land, Moshe Smilansky, another veteran colonist who had immigrated in 1890 and had been one of the founders of the colony of Hedera, cautioned that "a nation with two lands has never existed and will never exist." All of the work that had gone into the creation of a unifying national language and culture—in which Ben-Yehuda and Yudilovitz had played such prominent roles—would be rendered futile, Smilansky argued, in the event that that nation found itself divided between two continents. "All of the physical and spiritual powers that a people possesses," he wrote, "are needed for the establishment and maintenance of a single land. And one nation that lives in two lands becomes two nations; England and the United States attest to this."[50] The sense that the controversy threatened to create two distinct nations would reappear in its final phases and become one of the factors moving at least Eliezer Ben-Yehuda away from a territorialist position, as it served to more clearly delineate the contours of the specifically Hebrew nation in the specifically Hebrew land of Palestine (see chapter 5).

Together with the ubiquitous religiously phrased accusations of national heresy and sacrilege, this sense of impending national rupture also helps to explain the intensity of emotion that accompanied the debate. In Paris, in the first (but regrettably not the last) event of its kind in Zionist history, Chaim Selig Luban, a young anti-Ugandist student, attempted to assassinate Max Nordau, whom he held responsible for national treason. (Ironically, Nordau was in fact extremely uneasy about East Africa in private, although he supported Herzl publicly).[51] While in the Yishuv the level of violence remained

comparatively muted (the budding nation had not yet developed to the point of political assassinations), the atmosphere there was nevertheless fiercely divided, breaking up alliances and at times pitting former friends against one another in a bitter quarrel that was not infrequently accompanied by verbal invective and even incidents of physical violence.

Both sides in the struggle complained of underhanded tactics that their opponents were supposedly employing to gain ground. Hebrew educator Leo (Yehuda Leib) Metman-Cohen complained that in many places (most notably his home colony of Rishon Le-Zion) the Zionei Zion were being hounded and physically assaulted.[52]

On the other side of the barricade, Pesach Yapu, a leading proponent of Uganda, complained that in addition to the disorganization and ineffectiveness of his own camp, the Zionei Zion—whose ranks were being significantly reinforced by "teachers from Russia" and "young workers"—were employing all manner of illegitimate machinations in their struggle, "ferociously attacking our more veteran Zionists."[53] In one letter to Yehoshua Eisenstadt-Barzilai, now among the leaders of Palestine's Zionei Zion, Eliezer Ben-Yehuda bemoaned his loss of "my friend in the past," who had become "my enemy today."[54] Indeed, the rift between the two may have been more than ideological. In attempting to explain why Ben-Yehuda had declined his election as Rishon Le-Zion's representative to the Seventh Zionist Congress, one puzzled Jerusalem Zionist reported having heard a rumor that Ben-Yehuda had been threatened "by Eisenstadt and his cohort that if he were to go as representative of the politicals' agenda, there would be no hope for 'his dictionary'"—a reference to the Hebrew-language dictionary that was Ben-Yehuda's lifework.[55] Whether or not there was any basis to this allegation (and I have found no further confirmation of it), Ben-Yehuda's letter to Eisenstadt reads as an expression of genuine pain, in which he laments the fact that "hatred does not allow you to see all that I have done over a period of twenty-five years" and that the atmosphere in the Yishuv had grown so bitterly contentious that even "a sensitive man like you, who knows me, can fail to understand that my feelings are also pure and generous, even if in your eyes they are appalling."[56]

Not all of the mail was quite as heartfelt, however. In the wake of Herzl's sudden death at the very height of the storm, Menahem Ussishkin—one of the principal leaders of the opposition to Herzl and almost certainly the most litigious—became the target of a substantial volume of hate mail that originated in Palestine (and elsewhere), in which he was frequently accused of direct responsibility for the Zionist leader's passing and indeed of outright murder.[57] (See figure 3.3.)

FIGURE 3.3. A postcard to Menahem Ussishkin accusing him of responsibility for Herzl's death. The text, playing on the words of the biblical prophet Elijah to King Ahab, reads: "Woe to the shameless! Ussishkin as a cat stalking its prey. You have won and have inherited, but you have also killed."

Beyond private rancor and broken friendships, the controversy—and the sharpened relief in which the connection between nation and land was placed as its result—helped to give new form not only to the discourse of Zionism in Palestine but also to the character of its public spaces, as the ongoing attempts to reshape holidays and public celebrations into a national liturgy were at times swept up in the turbulence of the dispute. Within a very short time after his death, Herzl was no longer a (challenged) flesh-and-blood leader of the national movement but rather a national myth to be monumentalized and mobilized in the cause of a sorely lacking national unity. Time and space alike were now recruited to serve the new national hero and given new national

forms in commemoration of the fallen leader through the institution of a
"Herzl Day" and the planting of a forest in his memory outside of Jerusalem
(the irony of which, given that he had died in the midst of a plan for Jewish
settlement outside of Palestine, was left unspoken). As a galvanizing symbol,
Herzl was transformed into a soldier who "fell in battle for his nation," as
Hashkafa proclaimed,[58] and his arboreal monument—the first of many yet
to come in the Yishuv—echoed the European nationalist co-optation of nature
as part of the "cult of the fallen soldier" and the planting of "heroes' groves" for
those who fell in battle. Nature, to German nationalists commemorating the
fallen of the First World War a decade later, symbolized (among other things)
"an immortality that could be shared by the soldier and that legitimized war-
time sacrifice."[59] This immortality of the nation's soldier, with the unity of
national purpose and the fate that was implicit in it, was granted to Herzl
through the forest planted in his name (in a national land whose contested
footing was in this case obscured), through the consecration of a tree he had
planted near the colony of Motza during his visit to Palestine (a cypress he
had apparently mistaken for a cedar and which, adding to the irony, was ap-
parently destroyed during the First World War—see figure 3.4),[60] and through
the celebrations of the newly instituted "Herzl Day."

Other cultural innovations were less monumental in nature, designed
more to mobilize the Yishuv's masses (rather than their fallen leader) in the
service of the nation. Hayim Aryeh (Leib) Zuta, a Hebrew educator and long-
time Hovev Zion and Zionist, immigrated to Palestine in 1903, just in time to
become embroiled in the raging East Africa controversy. His educational ac-
tivity there reflected his commitment to the dual centrality of the Hebrew
language and the land in Zionist education and culture, and he constructed
both his pedagogy and a range of educational rituals along these lines. One of
Zuta's principal tasks as national educator, as he understood it, was to create
pedagogical tools and concrete rituals, practices, and customs that would ex-
press the new meanings attributed to Jewish traditions and to incorporate
them into school curricula, from whence they would become centerpieces of
the national liturgy. The forms he helped to give to the Yishuv's holidays and
celebrations often reflected the twin influences of European nationalism and
the transfiguration of Jewish traditions. During the years of the Uganda affair,
moreover, they served as a direct assertion of a Zionei Zion stance that sought
to celebrate the powerful bonds that were supposed to have bound the Jews to
their ancestral land over the centuries.

One particularly successful ritual that Zuta helped to create for the Yishuv's
youth—one that would later become central in Zionist and Israeli culture—
was the *tiyul*, the excursion into nature. Echoing themes that could be found in

רשנה טובה.

Herzl Baum
Motza.

FIGURE 3.4. A New Year's greeting card showing the tree Herzl planted
in the colony of Motza during his visit to Palestine. The tree later became a
site of pilgrimage, both direct and (with the help of such cards) vicarious.

the German *Wandervogel* or in Baden-Powell's scouts, hiking was seen as a
means of physically and mentally forging the bond between the individual and
the land and of bringing Jewish youth, long locked up in the ostensibly dark
and dank traditional *heder* (the one-room study house for young children),
closer to nature. The holiday of Tu Bishvat provided a particularly opportune
platform for the interweaving of all of these themes and an expression of the
pervasive Zionist notion that treatment of the Jew's ailments must include a
renewed connection with nature. A relatively minor holiday in the European

Diaspora, marked by a small number of popular customs and no established synagogue liturgy,[61] this "new year of the trees" became a major celebration in Palestine through the work of Zuta and other Hebrew educators, signaling the beginnings of spring and the springtime of the nation, now bound up with the land, its flora, and its nature.

In late winter of 1904, not long after his arrival, Zuta celebrated the festival of Tu Bishvat for the first time in Palestine, with his native Palestinian students. It was his somewhat ironic task as the newly arrived educator of these native Palestinian youths to help inculcate in his students a bond to the land and its landscapes. Although he seems hardly to have been aware of the irony, the *tiyul* on which he took them on his first Tu Bishvat in the country did lead him to reflect on a profound difference that he sensed between his experience as a Hebrew educator abroad and his new experiences in Palestine. Even in Europe, Zuta wrote, as a Zionist educator, he had sought to inculcate in his students a sense of nature's power of renewal. There, however, celebration of the holiday had been marked by a distinct and inexorable sense of alienation since "my pupils and I would go every year and plant trees on a foreign land, an impure land." In Palestine, the very act of hiking and planting took on a spirit and a meaning that were of a different order. "How happy is a people that can plant seedlings in its *own* land," he wrote. Unlike the frozen winter soil of eastern Europe—not in fact ready for new saplings (the holiday usually falls in mid- to late February)—in Palestine "the living land lovingly accepts the saplings" and imparts of its own life back to the nation. For the Jewish youth of Palestine, Zuta explains, the act of planting is one of reciprocal rebirthing. "We have planted trees in the land," he wrote in veritable exultation, "we have purified the air, we have increased the dew that quenches the flora's thirst." Extending from the land to a people in equal need of new dew, Zuta adds, "we have given the people of Israel fresh air from its own seedlings and trees.... May the trees blossom, may the land come to life, and may our people flourish."[62]

Ritualized pedagogical tools such as the *tiyul*—bound up in this case with a recast traditional Jewish holiday—were designed at once to both reflect and create the nation's bond with the land. As a native generation was being educated in the country's new Hebrew schools, the *tiyul* increasingly became a central pillar of the Yishuv's educational system and its public culture—and in later decades would come to be considered a hallmark of the native culture.[63] Its appeal, as a student described it in his account of one such excursion, was in its power "to bring us closer to our land, to come to know it not only from books, but through our own eyes"[64] and feet—a feat that even a Zionist education abroad could not offer and seemed to many Hebrew educators and

activists such as Zuta a more powerful tool than protracted and bitter ideo-
logical debate.

Not all of the changes in the public sphere were as idyllic as Zuta's de-
scription of Tu Bishvat, however. A Hanukkah celebration in Jerusalem in the
winter of 1904–1905 deteriorated into verbal abuse and physical violence when
it turned out that both Ugandists and Palestinists were among the speakers
chosen to address the assembly.[65] And in the Rishon Le-Zion winery, ferment
was not confined to the barrels. According to a report by Leo Metman-Cohen,
the owners and managers of the winery "have begun to persecute the [Zion-]
Zionist workers." In a letter to Menahem Ussishkin, Metman described a later
infamous altercation between the young worker (and Zion-Zionist) Shlomo
Zemach and the local (Ugandist) clerk who slapped him, as Metman would
have it, without provocation, (in his own memoirs, Zemach did not make as
full a claim to passive innocence).[66] Another worker, he wrote, had been ex-
pelled merely for speaking Hebrew, as well as for speaking his mind.[67]

To those engaged in it, the struggle was not only over the direction and
meaning of Zionism but also (yet more critically) over the very nature of the
Jewish nation and its bond with the land. Metman described the almost pal-
pable hostility that persisted even after the 1905 Seventh Zionist Congress
removed East Africa from the Zionist Organization's agenda and conferred
upon Palestine an unprecedented centrality in the movement's thinking
and praxis. "In Basel," he wrote (where the congress had taken place), "the
[Palestine-] Zionists won, but in Palestine itself, the territorialists are advanc-
ing. Our victory in the Congress led to such bitterness that they have come to
utterly despise us."[68] The turmoil, he related, penetrated every corner of life in
his home colony of Rishon Le-Zion, including the school, where the principal
drama, to judge from his letter, unfolded between himself and the French
teacher, whom he had earlier replaced as headmaster. Interpersonal rivalry
thus became entangled in struggles over pedagogy and ideology, with the
French teacher demanding to be reinstated as headmaster and his further
demand "that all studies other than Hebrew (Bible and grammar) take place in
French." Metman in turn insisted that the school declare itself "a national-
Hebrew school" in which "the language of instruction must be Hebrew." As
Metman relates it, the Ugandist-territorialist majority on the colony council
rejected his demands with ideological disdain. "First give us a land," they
retorted, "then you can found schools." In what later proved to be a critical turn
of events for the creation of a Hebrew national education, Metman responded
by handing in his resignation.[69] A short time later, he founded a new school in
Jaffa, which soon took the name "Herzlia Gymnasium" (after the deceased
leader who, ironically, had proposed the alternative territorial plan in the first

place). Metman's initiative quickly took on the form of a national undertaking, and the school, whose structure and curriculum were conceived in such a way as to be firmly rooted in the soil of Palestine, emerged as one of the most powerful vehicles for the production and dissemination of a new national culture in the Yishuv.

By the summer of 1905, Herzl had died, Britain had all but retracted its East Africa offer, and the Seventh Zionist Congress had declared Palestine the Zionist Movement's sole territorial focus. Pleased with the Zionei Zion victory at the Zionist Congress, Leo Metman now sought to parallel it by stamping the educational and cultural institutions in the Yishuv as well with the stamp of the Zionei Zion. "Only if education is in our hands," he wrote, "will we be able, within a short time, to create a national element in Palestine that will be capable of performing colonizational and political acts and of slowly and gradually extirpating the decay that has become so deeply imbedded in Palestinian society."[70] Some five months later, he was joined by educators Eliezer Pepper, David Yellin, and others, who together founded the Committee for a National Hebrew Education.[71] Echoing the sense that the seventh congress had marked the beginning of a new departure for cultural work in Palestine, a satisfied Menahem Ussishkin commented that the task of "nationalizing Israel, of binding and uniting them," required that "there, in the land of our fathers," work be undertaken "to set stone upon stone for the creation of an eternal edifice."[72]

If the question of territory, which had been the cause of two years of strife, was one of the central pillars of that edifice, the other was the Hebrew language. A great deal of effort had already gone into creating and disseminating a modern, spoken Hebrew in Palestine. Whatever difficulties and frictions this endeavor faced, it was at this point—when compared with the unrest of the Uganda affair—progressing in comparative peace. A full decade would yet elapse before the question of Hebrew would itself incur a veritable war in the Yishuv. Unlike the territorial battlefield, however, where strife had resulted from an inherent Zionist ambivalence, the war for Hebrew would erupt out of a virtual consensus in the Yishuv that the language had in fact largely ripened as the national tongue of an emerging Hebrew nation. In these early years of the century, however, such a prospect still seemed unlikely at best. The dramatic change that took place in the space of a decade was the fruit of ongoing efforts to shape a modern Hebrew language and the Hebrews who would speak it.

4

A Mother Tongue
in the Fatherland

*Transforming a Jewish Community
into a Hebrew Yishuv*

The Hebrew language had been a focal point of struggles and at-
tempts to modernize the Jews since the earliest days of the Haskalah
in the late eighteenth century. As Iris Parush has compellingly
shown, language—and varying degrees of access to it—had played
important roles in the social and political structure of traditional
European Jewish society, and *maskilic* efforts to propagate what many
maskilim (proponents of Haskalah) considered a pure biblical He-
brew and the study of its grammar was part of a wide-ranging power
struggle between the traditional Jewish elites and these new chal-
lengers. It was, as she writes, a contest over "who would be 'master of
the tongue' and who would thus be able to shape the conscious-
ness of society."[1] This contest continued as the Hebrew language
evolved into an integral component of an emergent Jewish national-
ism a century later (first in Europe and then in Palestine), although it
naturally changed in focus and tenor along the way, as the visions
of Jewishness that the language was being mobilized to shape
themselves underwent substantial shifts.

Not surprisingly, calls for a revival of Hebrew had therefore been
an important part of the backdrop to the emergence of Hibbat Zion
and Zionism. The specific role the language was to play as it was
becoming an integral component of some leading currents of Jewish
nationalism, however, was initially a matter for negotiation. In the
early years of the twentieth century, the place of Hebrew in the Jewish
national renaissance and the indissoluble bond between the land of

Israel and the Hebrew language that would later be conceived as the twin constitutive elements of the nation's culture in Palestine were as yet unsettled (and to some, unsettling). A social basis for spoken Hebrew, after all, still seemed even to many of its advocates a highly optimistic vision at best, and the national territory was still under (now bitter) dispute. The bridge connecting the language and territory was, consequently, a wobbly one indeed.

Some of the data on the processes by which Hebrew became the spoken language of Palestine's Jewish community and the evidence regarding the human agents who were primarily responsible for these processes remain controversial, as does the timing at which a sufficiently significant social basis for spoken Hebrew emerged, helping to shape a new Hebrew public (and private) sphere. Tudor Parfitt has suggested not only that the popular emphasis on the role of Eliezer Ben-Yehuda in this process has been overstated but also that Ben-Yehuda was able to erect his grand structure of Hebrew speech only on the basis of a preexisting infrastructure of extensive use of Hebrew among Palestine's Jews well before the introduction of the nationalist ideology that would motivate Ben-Yehuda and others.[2] According to Parfitt, it was in fact the largely secular nationalism of the Hebrew educators who appeared on the scene around the turn of the century that led to a retreat of spoken Hebrew among the traditionalist "Old Yishuv." A similar position is taken by Shlomo Haramati, who argues that Jews in Palestine had been speaking Hebrew "for many years and had created a kind of colloquial-natural dialect of Hebrew speech in their daily lives" long before the arrival of the Zionist and Hebraist modernizers.[3]

Benjamin Harshav, on the other hand, has argued that reports on Hebrew speech prior to the eve of the First World War (the type of evidence educed by Parfitt) are exaggerations at best, meant primarily for external consumption and calculated to project an image of the Yishuv that had little to do with its reality. The social cells that would become the bearers of the Yishuv's new spoken Hebrew, he suggests, emerged only with the advent of the "second Aliya," in the decade prior to the Great War (see chapter 5).[4] In his study of Hebrew's transition from "the language of a few to the language of a nation," Nathan Efrati has attempted to quantify the number of Hebrew speakers in the Yishuv in the decades leading up to the First World War. Even with the use of census data, however, the numbers have proven tenuous.[5] It is in any case difficult to determine with anything approaching a degree of clarity not only who was speaking Hebrew but also what speaking Hebrew actually meant— the lines separating knowledge of, occasional usage of, and a passive under-standing of a language can be nebulous, even (perhaps especially) when armed with census data.[6]

If part of what separates Parfitt and Haramati from Harshav is a conflict over the relationship between continuity and rupture in the linguistic history of Hebrew in Palestine,[7] moreover, some scholars have recently proposed that the vernacular of the Yishuv (and even more so, of Israeli society later)—in marked contrast to the classical image of modern Hebrew as a continuation of an ancient linguistic tradition extending back to biblical Hebrew—is in fact an entirely new language. In it, they maintain, the outer trappings of Hebrew have been draped over a structural skeleton borrowed from both Yiddish and the European languages that were the true vernaculars of the would-be revivers.[8]

While they do not stand at the center of my discussion, these controversies are helpful in framing some of the questions that pertain to the role of Hebrew in shaping the budding nation in the Yishuv. The evidence from the early years of the twentieth century does seem to point to at least some significant pockets of Hebrew speech that had come into being by that time. Surveying the linguistic reality in the country and in his home city of Jerusalem in particular, Eliezer Ben-Yehuda commented at the first convention of the Hebrew Teachers' Association in 1903 that even "the Old Yishuv...has already made a step in speech."[9] Other participants expressed their sense that the Hebrew being used in the "New Yishuv" colonies might already be sufficiently developed to stand alone in fulfilling their needs.[10] Made for internal consumption by educators who all resided in Palestine (rather than as propaganda for readers who had no means of assessing these claims), these comments take on a particularly compelling aspect. The cautious tone they invoke, however, suggests the importance of Uzzi Ornan's distinction between the claim that "the language which the Jews speak usually is Hebrew" and a more moderate one to the effect that "the Jews are able to speak Hebrew and they do so when the need arises."[11]

In the final analysis, if Hebrew speech seems to have had some presence in Palestine, the multilingual character of the Jewish population there was undoubtedly a more conspicuous reality even well into the early years of the twentieth century. Included in the linguistic mélange were not only the disparate languages spoken by Jews of various parts of the world but also a wide range of other languages brought into the country through the involvement of European powers competing for political, religious, and cultural influence in the Ottoman Empire and in the Holy Land specifically. The impulse of some early Zionists to transform Hebrew from the modern literary medium it had become (through the efforts of the Haskalah) into a spoken language that would serve as the basis for a "Hebrew" culture was reinforced by the multilingual and multicultural reality in the Yishuv that was so abhorred by Zionist activists there.

The various philanthropic organizations active in the education of the Jewish community's youth invariably provided the institutions they sponsored with the cultural and linguistic flavors of their countries of origin. The Alliance Israélite Universelle stressed French; the Hilfsverein der deutschen Juden, German; and the principal language of instruction at the Eveline de Rothschild school in Jerusalem was English. These European Jewish organizations were an important source of funding and support for the beginnings of modern education in Palestine and were not only appreciated as such but often courted as important allies by the Yishuv's Zionists, who lacked their own resources to invest in the modernization they sought to effect. And yet, however cordial the rapport between the Yishuv's nationalists and these nonnationalist (and at times even antinationalist) philanthropies, it was also a locus of some mutual chafing. From early on in this relationship, the educational system it produced seemed to some Zionists in Palestine to be "hitting us with an additional affliction" and creating further separation and discord instead of contributing to Zionist efforts to combat the forces of division that seemed to them to be tugging at the Yishuv's social fabric.[12]

In a one-act play titled "Scenes from the Life of the Next Generation: Between Man and Wife," Hemda Ben-Yehuda painted a vivid portrait of what, from the perspective of the Yishuv's Hebraists, seemed a harmful linguistic muddle and of the disintegrative implications she saw it having on the daily life and social foundations of the Yishuv. Set in the living room of a young couple's home in Palestine, the play presents even this intimate setting as a locus of conflicting loyalties engendered by the excessively cosmopolitan and multilingual character of the Yishuv's educational institutions—highlighting the expectation that Hebrew would transform public and private spheres alike. The scene she describes takes place in

> a small room. A bookshelf hangs on the eastern wall. On it are
> approximately ten English and French books.... In the right hand
> corner, an American flag.... Above it, a picture of Queen Victoria
> painted on a lovely plate.... In the left-hand corner is a French
> flag.... Rosie is sitting and embroidering the word *"Wilkommen"* to
> hang on the western wall, facing the entrance.

If the home itself stands as testimony to the national-linguistic confusion in the lives of Palestine's Jews, the acrimonious interaction between husband and wife that soon ensues, and which defines the morality play, argues (rather unsubtly) for the impossibility of a healthy social and family life given the Yishuv's cultural, linguistic, and political multivocality. When Rosie's husband, Salvator, enters, he addresses her in ("fluent") French, quickly growing livid as

he notices the changed placement of the flags that adorn their living room—his French flag, a note of gratitude from the local school principal where he supervised the children to make certain they spoke French, and her American flag (a gift from a tourist from New York who had been impressed by her English).

Following a round of mutual recrimination, Ben-Yehuda has the couple's two-year-old boy enter the scene. Tearing at the child physically and psychologically, both parents gesture to him, Salvator calling out "Vien, bébé!" and Rosie beckoning in English "Come, little boy!"[13] As his parents each reach out for him, "the boy takes one step in this direction, another step in that direction," finally hiding his face in his mother's lap. Hoping to seduce the child away from his mother, Salvator takes out a piece of candy that he offers to "Marcel," who responds with a weak and hesitant "mer-ci, Pa-pa." Dismayed at this interaction, Rosie pulls the child to her against his will, lamenting that "Mickey can't even speak my language, and is being called 'Marcel.'" Speaking to him lovingly, she tells the boy that "you will be English, my sweet. To hell with the French," at which point the conflict breaks out into physical violence as Salvator slaps his wife, the two hurl chairs at one another, and Salvator leaves their (no longer) shared home. The home itself, in Ben-Yehuda's allegory, is broken up by the Yishuv's splintered culture. Rather than a symbol of the hopes for a new generation of Hebrews that will arise in Palestine, moreover, the child becomes the fulcrum of the play's tragedy—a representative of a young generation torn by its elders' cultural disarray.[14]

This sense of cultural disarray in the face of competing linguistic forces mirrored (in the sense of both reflecting and reversing) a pivotal dilemma faced by Jewish culture producers in the Europe where many of Palestine's activists had made their first steps in cultural activity. There, too, the Russian, Polish, or German languages and cultural spheres served both to help "shape the idea of a modern Jewish culture" and at the same time to threaten its potential being through its power to "seduce successive waves of young men and women into it" and to "draw [them] into the culture of the metropole."[15] It was precisely this allure of the dominant non-Jewish cultures that, at least implicitly, the Zionist cultural undertaking in Palestine was expected to avoid. If, in Europe, non-Jewish languages were inevitably dominant, Palestine seemed to offer a unique setting that would be largely free of such temptations—a culturally virgin soil on which a new national culture could become the definitive, ultimately hegemonic, cultural force of a new metropole. Indeed, if the extent to which Zionists imagined Palestine as an unpopulated land is often overstated,[16] some certainly viewed it as culturally vacant.[17] In the context of this notion of Palestine as an open cultural playing field in which Hebrew would have a free

creative hand, the many other tongues that were ubiquitous throughout the country came quickly to be deemed "foreign languages" by Palestine's Hebraists.

Precisely what should be done about these "foreign languages" was a matter for some division of opinion even among the Yishuv's Zionists and Hebraists (two groups that had significant overlap but were by no means identical). Some suggested that a degree of instruction in a European language was important, particularly for students who might wish to go beyond the limits of the basic education available in Palestine.[18] Others believed that, instead of the foreign languages that served to highlight the Jews' own foreignness in their land, greater weight ought to be given to Turkish since graduates of the Yishuv's schools ought to be able to speak the language of the government and ruling powers.[19]

Yet another voice held that Arabic might be more valuable since, in any case, "most of the government officials speak Arabic, even if Turkish is the official language" and that, more important, "the natives of the land respect no one who does not speak Arabic." Knowledge of the local language, according to this view, was essential for any effective Zionist work in the land.[20] At times a distinction was made between the differing needs of urban and rural students. "All that a farmer needs to know," the prominent Hebrew educator David Yellin argued, "can be learned in Hebrew alone," and the introduction of other languages was "not only superfluous, it is a great disaster" since it above all effectively reproduced the European Jewish situation in which other languages constituted a temptation away from the soil itself and from the land of Israel more broadly writ.[21]

Yet another distinction was made at times between different European languages and their sponsoring bodies. If, by the end of the decade, the German-Jewish Hilfsverein would emerge as the Hebraists' arch nemesis (see chapter 10), in the early years of the decade, it was the French language and the Alliance Israélite Universelle schools that attracted much of their wrath—in Palestine as throughout much of the Ottoman Empire.[22] It was within the Alliance, according to David Yellin, that one would find the stronghold of opposition to the Hebrew Teachers' Association.[23] And Israel Belkind, a veteran educator who had founded a Hebrew school in Jaffa in 1889 (which was among the first of its kind), blamed its lack of longevity on the support he had been forced to seek from the Alliance due to the lack of more congenial organizations in Palestine at the time—a compromise to which he had resigned himself in spite of the fact that, as he wrote, the Alliance Israélite Universelle was "diametrically opposed" to ideas of national revival. As he prepared to open

a remodeled version of the school in 1902, he pledged that "the new school will distance itself entirely from any such affiliation."[24]

If "foreign languages" posed a lingering problem (and one that would grow more irksome as the social and institutional infrastructure of Hebrew grew), even Hebrew itself, as it was used in the Yishuv, failed to offer the picture of unity its advocates would have liked to see. It was "entirely unpleasant," as one Jerusalem teacher complained, to hear in so small a country so grating a cacophony of disparate accents, dialects, and pronunciations.[25] Even to many of those who were inclined to make the effort to speak Hebrew, the forms, mannerisms, and intonations with which the language ought to be spoken—even the gestures that ought to accompany it—remained a mystery. This was no idle concern for a movement set on countering a long-standing European Christian tradition which associated the sound and gestures of Jewish speech with "a hidden language which mirrors the perverse or peculiar nature of the Jew."[26] Hebrew, in this context, was viewed as perhaps the most important vehicle for an overarching revolution in Jewish life that would "normalize" Jewish being and eliminate its perversities. Its mannerisms and attendant gestures were consequently of great importance.

One pseudonymous letter writer, after first attesting to his thorough knowledge of the language, turned to the readers and editor of *Hashkafa* for guidance with his recurrent social embarrassment at being expected to express himself in a Hebrew style whose formality, he believed, was an imitation of European forms that were foreign to Hebrew. Now that "the number of speakers of the language is growing," he argued, the Yishuv would have to create for itself "a single language and the same words [*safa ahat u-devarim ahadim*]."[27] This phrase, borrowed from the biblical story of the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1) and used in this context to indicate not the multiplicity of distinct languages but the atomization even of the Yishuv's Hebrew, was repeated in the sympathetic response that appeared two issues later, whose author, Israel Halevi Teller, a Hebrew educator who had immigrated to Palestine and settled in the colony of Rehovot in 1897, called upon the public to submit "suggestions for new and renewed words and gestures," which he hoped would be "discussed and then resolved in practice."[28]

In confronting these problems and seeking to equalize accents and manners of speech "among all sectors of the nation living in our land," Rosh Pina educator Simcha Wilkomitz argued that the Yishuv's Zionists would do well to learn from analogous nationalist efforts in Europe. There, he explained, confronted by languages with accents and dialects "even more distant from one another than is the Ashkenazic accent from the Sephardic," nationalists had

nevertheless succeeded in educating youth who "all share a single language and a single accent." If this could be accomplished "among all nations," he concluded, it could surely be achieved in Palestine—and it was the principal responsibility of the schools and their teachers to do just this.[29]

In order to carry this out, it would first be necessary to determine which of the accents, dialects, and linguistic mores was most suitable for the emergent nation. Practicality, according to Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, militated in favor of a Sephardic pronunciation since this had already become the norm even in the Old Yishuv in interethnic communication.[30] It was a happy coincidence, moreover, that the aesthetics and science of the emerging nation dictated even more forcefully that the Yishuv adopt a Sephardic Hebrew. In spite of the fact that there had admittedly "been no phonograph when the language was alive in the past," Ben-Yehuda argued that the bulk of scientific evidence showed the Sephardic accent to be purer and more authentic, closer to the original Hebrew pronunciation of biblical Israel. By contrast, the wide range of distinct Ashkenazi accents, Simcha Wilkomitz observed—each the result of a different environment—was a clear indication of their exilic origin.[31] Finally, Ben-Yehuda added, capping the argument and reflecting the lingering influence of a "myth of Sephardic supremacy," which had long characterized a great deal of European Jewish thought (influenced in various ways by European Orientalist ideas), "the Sephardic accent is in any case more pleasing and proper."[32]

If the debates over accent and manner of speech were, at bottom, discussions on the form and character to be given to a newly reshaped nation torn between East and West, the question of language also played a central role in outlining the contours of the individual men and women who would be the new "Hebrews." Responding to a European discursive tradition in which the diagnosis of Jewish malady was attributed most obviously to the Jewish male,[33] Zionism's vision of a "new Jew" and of the Hebrew native of Palestine likewise often focused on the new Jewish male. The blueprint for the "new Jew" had come from visions that lay at the root of Zionist thinking, such as that embodied in Max Nordau's famous *Muskeljudentum* (muscle Judaism). In Palestine, some argued that the muscled native had already begun to become a reality by the early years of the twentieth century and that this was somehow directly related to his Hebrew speech. A quick comparison between the strong and courageous "Hebrews" of Palestine and the feeble Jews of the Diaspora, wrote Itamar Ben-Avi, Eliezer Ben-Yehuda's native-born son, shows the dramatic transformation that a life of Hebrew speech in the Hebrew land had wrought.[34]

If it is in some sense unremarkable that this transformation of the Jewish man was to be effected through the principal instrument of the Hebrew

language, the impact of the language on Jewish women entailed an inherent tension from the outset. Zionists (and many non-Zionists) conceived of Hebrew as a distinctly "male" language. Its revival in Palestine was geared in large measure toward redeeming the masculinity of the ostensibly feminized Jew, whose emasculation was in part conditioned by and reflected in his language. The "essential femininity" that was assumed to characterize the Yiddish language (still of course the principal language for most European Jews) was, as Naomi Seidman has written, seen to extend "as if by contagion" to the men who used it.[35] The respective imageries of masculinity and femininity associated with these Jewish languages, moreover, were rooted in a social reality in which Hebrew and Yiddish readerships were defined to a great extent along gender lines, and the knowledge of Hebrew that was considered fundamental in the traditional Jewish education of young boys was seen as at best superfluous for girls.[36] As educator Hayim Aryeh (Leib) Zuta contended in his memoirs, the failure of his attempts to establish a modern Hebrew *heder* for girls in his native Lithuania had been due to the parents' unwillingness to "pay for their daughters' Hebrew even a quarter of what they spent on their sons."[37]

In his role as headmaster of the Hovevei Zion School for girls in Jaffa after immigrating to Palestine, Zuta dedicated much of his educational activity to the goal of "raising educated Hebrew mothers for Palestine and for the Jewish world," as one of the school's fund-raising appeals explained its mission.[38] This creation of a new Hebrew woman, largely through the medium of language, is an aspect of Zionist activity in Palestine that has only recently begun to be increasingly appreciated.[39] Indeed, whatever its association with masculinity, the Hebrew language project placed Palestine's Jewish women in an ambivalent position, relegating them in many respects to a traditional role in the home but catapulting them in others into the very vanguard of the national project. "Our most important Hebrew assets," Eliezer Ben-Yehuda argued, "are Hebrew-speaking women," echoing a maskilic tradition that looked to women as the principal engines of modernization.[40] And along with the importance of women in the re-creation of the language went a refiguration of Jewish womanhood as a critical national task, whose lesser visibility as compared with that of Hebrew masculinity may reflect not only the inherent male focus among many Yishuv Zionists but also a deeper divergence in the very experiences of Jewish men and women in their encounter with the crises begotten by European modernity.

Like her male counterpart, this new Hebrew woman would be constructed as a direct rebuttal of familiar European imageries of Jewish women. Europe's Jewess, however, was in many senses the diametrical opposite of the Jewish man: If Jewish men were weak, effeminate, and desexualized, Jewish women

were often imagined as boasting an overly sexual exotic beauty—temptresses on the prowl. The trope of the Jewish woman's sexual depravity, moreover, was given an ostensibly empirical boost by the disproportionate Jewish presence in the white slave trade and in prostitution in Europe, in parts of the "new world," and in Palestine itself, a fact that helped it to become one of the central concerns informing efforts to construct a new Hebrew womanhood in pre–World War I Palestine.[41]

It was due in large measure to precisely such concerns that a group of young women came together in 1904 to found a new organization called Tze'irot Yerushalayim [Young Women of Jerusalem]—an echo of the Tze'irei Yerushalayim [Young Men of Jerusalem], which had been established shortly before.[42] Dedicated to the dissemination of Hebrew speech among Jerusalem's women and to "fostering an intense love for our language, our nation, and our country" as their founding statement explained,[43] the new organization was greeted with enthusiasm by the city's Hebraists, who celebrated it in a series of editorials and letters that appeared in Jerusalem's Hebrew press.[44] The author of one of these recounted how the sight of "row after row of young women, walking and speaking in Hebrew" as they emerged from their meeting—held at the site of the Hebrew kindergarten[45] (on which, see below)—transported him to "delightful visions of ancient times, when we were a nation settled on its own land, and the young Hebrew maidens danced in gardens, dressed in white dresses." For others, the sight was less inspiring. Standing nearby, according to the report, was "a Jewish Hassid with long sidelocks." Upon seeing the young Hebrew-speaking women, he began to flee "like a dog catching the scent of a stick," spitting toward them and bemoaning "the abomination [that] has spread into here!"[46]

Even for its supporters, however, the vision represented by Tze'irot Yerushalayim seemed a far cry from the reality of Jerusalem's young Jewish women. A response by teacher and journalist Ben-Zion Taragan, a founding member of the parallel Tze'irei Yerushalayim, implored the members of the new organization to make "the moral level of our young women" a central focus of its Hebrew activity since "it is corrupted by the many lewd songs that are current among us," songs that are "spiced with decadence and licentiousness." Aside from the fact that they "express neither taste nor beauty . . . no worthy emotions, [and] have no proper rhyme or rhythm," these songs "do not even use pure language, but rather the basest Sephardi jargon." If the effeminacy of the Jewish man was reflected in his language and speech, linguistic corrosion was in this case a manifestation of the Jewish woman's sexual depravity. Unable to tolerate hearing these "ugly, degenerate words . . . coming out of the mouths of innocent young girls," Taragan looked to Tze'irot Yer-

ushalayim to inculcate the Hebrew language and a Hebrew spirit that would safeguard the "modesty [of the] daughters of Israel" and ensure that "the name of Israel not be desecrated."[47]

In one of its 1905 issues, *Hashkafa* ran a song that was in some sense a direct attempt to implement this goal and provide a concrete cultural instrument—an actual Hebrew song (of which there were still few)—for the country's Jewish women. The note accompanying it explained that the song was to be sung to "the familiar and cheerful tune of the Jargonish [Yiddish] song 'Hot a Yid a Veibele [A Jew Has a Little Wife],'" although that song was "full of nonsense and owes its popularity exclusively to its melody." At the hands of *Hashkafa's* would-be lyricist, a lighthearted (if perhaps slightly misogynistic) Yiddish song poking fun at the miseries of marriage to a wife who cannot even make a decent kugel was now transformed into a rather staid Hebrew tribute to the merits of "The Hebrew Wife," whose stanzas explained that

> The Hebrew wife/Is the basis of the joy
> Of her family so full of life/She is honest, sincere and never coy
>
> She is a loyal companion/Her husband's garland and his love
> Pure, innocent, unsullied/A gift from God above
>
> Participates in all/Works and gives him aid
> In the cowshed cleans the stalls/And in the shop she is his aide
>
> Spends on nothing that's not needed/Her home her one affair
> No needs it has go unheeded/And for the children she does care.[48]

Literary merits aside, this was no mere linguistic translation of the Yiddish song, but a transformation of language and wife alike into something that was both new and distinctly Hebrew, something the lyricist himself was careful to stress in his accompanying note. The roles that the new song assigned to women were in many senses a reflection of the fact that women's responsibilities in the Yishuv—as envisioned even by those who saw themselves as revolutionaries in Jewish life—often remained very traditional. It was precisely this conservative streak, however—and the fact that one of these traditional tasks, as the lyrics suggest, was caring for children—that placed Palestine's women (at least potentially) in a pivotal position in the vital national task of inculcating Hebrew in the younger generation. There was a virtual consensus among the Yishuv's Hebraists that if Hebrew was to become a truly spoken language, it would have to be instilled in the children early on. And doing this would inevitably fall to women, who would be charged with tending to the

youngest children in the new educational frameworks that were to be set up to this end.

Early in 1903 a letter from four prominent Jerusalem educators to the Berlin offices of the Hilfsverein der deutschen Juden proposed the establishment of a Hebrew kindergarten in Jerusalem and sought the backing and assistance of the German-Jewish philanthropic organization.[49] Jerusalem's proposed Hebrew kindergarten would not be the first of its kind—the first had been established in 1898 in Rishon Le-Tzion by David Yudilovitz,[50] and there were certainly many other Hebrew schools for older pupils in the colonies. But the attempt to open such a school in Jerusalem was deemed to be of particular importance given the city's status as a stronghold of the orthodox Old Yishuv. The Hilfsverein responded as hoped, and Jerusalem's first Hebrew kindergarten (figure 4.1) opened a number of months later in spite of the protests and bans by the city's Ashkenazi rabbis.[51]

Given the high stakes associated with the kindergarten, however, and the expectations it would arouse for a dramatic transformation of Jerusalem's younger generation, the speed with which its founders (all men) abandoned the task of actually running it is striking. The one address given by a woman at the second conference of the Hebrew Teachers' Association in 1904 (only two others participated) was by Elisheva Gissin, who had been appointed teacher in the kindergarten (and who had, incidentally, also been one of the founders of Tze'irot Yerushalayim). After detailing some of the professional difficulties faced by the kindergarten teachers in their essentially unprecedented educational task, Gissin appealed to the overwhelmingly male gathering to come to the aid of the women, proposing that "all male and female teachers in each and every city and colony gather together to examine questions pertaining to the education of the younger generation"—a request that would naturally have entailed greater and more active inclusion of the women in educational matters generally and in the work of the Teachers' Association. "After all," she reminded her male colleagues, walking a delicate line between an expected deference and a claim for a more egalitarian division of labor, "it is we who prepare for you the foundations of the building; we hand over to you children who have been prepared, who speak the language."[52]

In his response, whose somewhat deprecating tone seems to echo even off the page of the written protocol, David Yellin explained that, notwithstanding his appreciation for the fact that Gissin had called "attention to a very serious issue," the male educators "cannot really express an opinion regarding the kindergartens since it is a topic in which we are not well versed. We therefore hand the profession over to you, our distinguished women teachers, to engage

FIGURE 4.1. The first Hebrew kindergarten in Jerusalem (ca. 1905).

in it, to disseminate it, and to perfect yourselves in it through books and journals." Shared meetings did not seem to be imminent. Yellin did believe, however, that in one area—the purity and integrity of the Hebrew language—the male teachers would have to step in. He was concerned, he explained, that "our language has been somewhat corrupted in the mouths of the little ones, and the male teachers must visit the kindergartens, listen to the corruptions and errors, and then gather the female teachers together and call their attention to the mistakes." Although it was up to women to trouble themselves with young children, in other words, they would need the assistance and guidance of the men, who alone could guard against the linguistic "corruptions" that emerged once the Hebrew language left the pages of intellectual journals and began to be transformed into a language used by young children (under the supervision of women).[53]

In her memoirs, Shlomit Flaum, who would arrive in Palestine some years later (in 1911) to serve as head teacher in one of a number of additional Hebrew kindergartens that had by then been established in Jerusalem, adds her own, somewhat more collegial description of the help she often received from the men who were the city's Hebrew language experts. "Whenever I would feel myself at a loss for Hebrew words or expressions," she wrote, "I would turn to [Eliezer] Ben-Yehuda or to Dr. [Aaron Meir] Mazieh and ask them. And immediately thereafter I would incorporate these innovations into my educational work, placing them in the mouths of the children. In this way, we inculcated knowledge of the language and enriched ourselves and our children."[54]

A very different vision of the Hebrew woman, her relationship with the Hebrew language, and her role in the national renaissance appears in the writings of Hemda Ben-Yehuda. In her feminist-inflected Zionism, a fundamental change in the image and social position of women was conceived as an integral component of the national rebirth and the human progress of which it was a part. When in June of 1904 she launched a fashion column in the family's newspaper, Hashakfa, she confessed in her debut piece that it was with "fear and trembling" that she had decided to make a place for fashion for "the first time ever . . . on the pages of a Hebrew journal."[55] Confirming these fears, her column would later become the target of considerable derision, especially in the Labor-Zionist periodicals, where it was presented as testimony to the lowbrow character of the Ben-Yehuda newspapers and its "tasteless imitation [of] Parisian indolence."[56]

A look at her fashion column, however, reveals both that its place in a Hebrew journal was by no means accidental to her overarching national vision and that it often served as a platform for women's issues in Palestine and throughout the world. Fashion, as Ben-Yehuda explained, "instructs women

not only with regard to their clothing and outer appearance, but concerns itself with their education and development [and] teaches them the general rule: emancipate yourselves!"[57] Illustrative of this point, she reported in one column on a conference on women's fashion that had taken place in Berlin, at which the participants argued for sweeping changes in women's clothing, taking aim particularly at "the corset, which terribly constricts the stomach and displaces organs from their natural positions, consequently leading to a range of diseases." As a piece of clothing, Ben-Yehuda editorialized, the corset belongs only "in a museum for the art of foolishness."[58]

Indeed, her initial concerns notwithstanding, the decision to make room for such discussion in a Hebrew newspaper in Palestine was a reflection of the inseparability of women's liberation from the project for national revival in Ben-Yehuda's worldview and of the centrality of the Hebrew language to both. It was up to women, she often argued, to stand at the very vanguard of the nation and the national movement. In another column, she explained that only the youth of Palestine, as the single authentic expression of the national ideal, can play the leading role in the nationalization of the Jews both in Palestine and abroad. This cadre of native-born national leaders, however, would have to be spearheaded by the Yishuv's young women. "You cannot imagine the impression made by a young woman speaking Hebrew," she wrote, "a woman who takes the lead in her national movement."[59] The dual role for women in the creation of a modern spoken Hebrew in Palestine reflected an ambivalence that seems to have been at least in part a carryover from Jewish societies in eastern Europe, where some traditional dicta were understood as militating against providing women and young girls an education that would give them access to traditional texts and knowledge, while some maskilim sought to turn their marginality in the Jewish educational system on its head and make them leading vehicles of modernization.[60]

Alongside the gender line, the impact of Hebrew's transformative power was expected to be shaped along at least two additional (and interconnected) fault lines—that of age and the generational divide and that of reconfigured notions of sacrality and profanity. As the focus on kindergartens suggests—and the 1903 initiative was just the beginning of a veritable wave of new Hebrew kindergartens—it was primarily upon the youngest children that the Yishuv's Hebraists most firmly believed they would be able to effect the combined physical-psychical revolution they sought to carry out. In this, the Jerusalem kindergarten shared much with the first kindergartens in nineteenth-century Europe, which had been similarly conceived as responses to the "social question" of the age and were expected to serve as instruments in the creation of a

new human type, thus often becoming loci of struggle between liberals and conservatives.[61]

For Zionists in Palestine, the goal of shaping a new Hebrew type through the kindergarten was intertwined with the task of figuring a new national sacrality that would compete with and indeed supersede traditional Jewish sacralities. In contrast to (or in conjunction with) its status as holy city, Jerusalem was, in the minds of many Zionists, a site of exile and combined physical and spiritual ignominy—a further reason for the importance of the kindergarten project as a transformative tool and, conversely, for the Ashkanazi rabbis' visceral response to it. Whatever the purposes of the new children's center, they wrote in an angry broadside, the kindergarten would surely not produce "holy fruit of praise [to God] (*Peri Kodesh Hilulim*)." What it clearly *would* do would be to "turn the children's hearts away from the ways of Torah and lead them to walk in tortuous paths."[62]

In an open letter to the rabbis, the kindergarten's founders fervently protested the imprecation, objecting that in no way had they intended to pose a challenge to the sacred core of Judaism. The school, they wrote, was being established in order to "teach our young children prayers and blessings . . . so that, from their very childhood, they might be good Jews, loyal to our laws and our Holy Torah." Indeed, the Hebrew language that was to be the language of instruction and speech had been chosen so as to ensure that "our children might be immersed all day long in our holy tongue," an imperative for which they produced a series of classic rabbinic proof texts.[63]

Whether the educators' tacit acceptance of these traditional notions of holiness was in earnest or merely tactical, their letter remained a lone voice of relative moderation in the polemical storm that followed, in which competing conceptions of holy and profane came to full-fledged blows. The establishment of the kindergarten now emerged clearly as a front in the struggle for political power within a changing Jewish community in Jerusalem and for the power to delineate sacred and profane. As most of its supporters now presented it, the kindergarten and its Hebrew would act as powerful tools not for bringing the children closer to "prayer and blessings," as the founders' open letter suggested, but, on the contrary, for transforming them into a new kind of Hebrew who would likely have little (at best) to do with such traditional ritual. The children who would emerge from this school, as one commentator wrote, would bear little resemblance to the "gaunt and feeble" children of exile but would instead constitute a new generation of strong, robust, and natural Hebrews. The rabbis, he implied, were therefore correct in identifying the kindergarten as a threat to their Judaism. The hygienic sensibilities of a Hebrew kindergarten, for one (the fact that it would be well ventilated and open to the

outdoors), stood in marked contrast with the traditional *heder*, where "the children sit crowded together, creating their own gusts of wind, and providing the *heder* with its own unique odor." The organized curriculum and trained teachers would strike a blow to the unsystematic approach of the traditional autodidactic *melamed*. In contrast to the aged and constricted children of exile, in a Hebrew kindergarten, the children will play, "stroll in the gardens and gather roses . . . and sing about the trees and flowers, about goats and dogs, God forbid"—bestowing upon them a renewed physicality directly bound up with nature and the natural landscape of Palestine. Finally, the piece promised, in contrast to an educational tradition focused exclusively on the rote study of text, the children in the Hebrew kindergarten "will exercise, wave their arms up and down and in all directions, hang on ladders, and make all manner of strange motions that our fathers and our fathers' fathers did not need, and that are designed solely to strengthen the despised body and to train the eyes and the heart, which are the agents of sin." The result would be children who differed in every way from the Jewish children of exile. They would be children whose "arms—heaven forbid—will be like the arms of Esau." Taken together, the piece gloated, the Hebrew kindergarten posed a real and deliberate threat indeed to the Judaism of exile, which was represented and defended by the rabbinical prohibition. "Combing one's hair," after all, it commented wryly, "is the beginning of heresy; a clean nose—the spark of sacrilege."[64]

Another response, this one by a pseudonymous "Pilgrim" ("Oleh Regel"), played on the imagery of traditional ascent to Jerusalem and served witness to the city's changing character, which, although still barely perceptible according to the writer, had been made more evident by the time he had recently spent away from Jerusalem. A new generation in the city, he observed, was now casting off its streimels, snipping off its sidelocks, and relinquishing the in-dolence of *haluka*. Jerusalem was beginning to open "windows onto [its] darkened alleyways, to eradicate its stench and to purify its air" with the breath of Hebrew breezes now blowing in the city, bringing with them "light, life, and progress."[65]

On the pages of *Hashkafa*, purity and life-giving light acted as cultural codes for this Zionist recasting of Jewish sacrality—a message that is further reinforced by a seemingly unrelated piece in that day's issue of the newspaper. In between the polemical pieces that filled much of that issue was a report on recent scientific advances, the likes of which was a common feature of the Ben-Yehuda papers. The report in this instance was on Marie Curie's discovery of radium and radiation. Titled "Hom ha-Ganuz la-Adam la-Atid Lavo" [A Heat Concealed from Men for the Future], the report played on the traditional notion of the "Or ha-Ganuz," the hidden light of the divine, which shone so

brightly that it had had to be reduced for human consumption but which, in the messianic age, would once again shine with full divine splendor. Soon, Ben-Yehuda promised, balls of *orit*, as he dubbed the new substance, would be hanging from our ceilings, "and the light will never darken or cease." Science, for Ben-Yehuda the nationalized *maskil*, was a path not only to a new truth but also to a form of holiness recast. The step forward for the human mind that was embodied in Marie Curie's discovery of a new wonder of the natural world would provide light and heat together "for the future yet to come" in a language that was adopted directly from the mystical tale of the *or ha-ganuz*.[66]

The often heated polemics that surrounded the establishment of new Hebrew institutions in Jerusalem during these years (such as the kindergarten) reflected a sense that the balance of actual and symbolic power in the city was shifting. In what was just beginning to emerge (or to intensify) as a struggle for hegemony in the Yishuv[67] and in Jerusalem in particular, the kindergarten's importance as the site where the youngest children might be *transfigured* by Zionism in Palestine, with its reconfiguration of purity and sacrality, before being *disfigured* by the reviled Judaism of exile was missed by neither its proponents nor its opponents. Indeed, the threat of such disfiguration, of a persisting profanation, hung even over the Hebrew kindergartens themselves as a constant reminder that much work remained to be done to make reality match the expectations and rhetoric. On the one hand, some reports indicated that the kindergarten was having some of its desired effect as early as a year after its establishment. "I passed by the kindergarten a few weeks ago," Eliezer Ben-Yehuda reported, and found that "the children are all speaking Hebrew! ... Groups of boys and girls playing on their own, unsupervised, and calling out to one another in Hebrew ... the way living, natural children play with one another in their mother tongue."[68]

On the other hand, Jerusalem's Jewish population was, after all, quite poor, and the city's hygienic infrastructure all but nonexistent. Contemporary accounts and later memoirs alike attest to an aura of squalor that persisted in at least some of the Hebrew kindergartens, particularly in their physical settings. Even after the passage of years and the establishment of additional Hebrew kindergartens in the city, the author of one letter written as late as 1911 attested to mixed results. On the one hand, he praised the orderly rooms and the cleanliness, especially that of the young girls. On the other hand, he complained, the Old City location was "an exceedingly dirty and unpleasant place, completely unbefitting an educational institution of this kind. Immediately in front of the gate there is at all times a garbage heap whose stench penetrates the rooms in which the children are seated."[69] Even many years later, kindergarten teacher Shlomit Flaum could recall her initial shock upon first en-

countering her new workplace, which was "located in a stifling, narrow and filthy alley." More than one hundred "malaria infested" and malnourished children, she wrote, "sat crowded like herring in a few small rooms... with no garden, no playground, in bad musty air."[70] The newly arrived teacher had much work ahead of her in transforming this into the national kindergarten of the Zionist imagination, the font of its new nationalized sacrality (see figure 4.2). If the greatest hopes for this transfiguration were fixed on the children, who were expected to differ markedly from their exilic parents, this was because the parents' generation had been too deeply infected by the toxins of exile and would never be able to free themselves from them entirely. As David Yellin explained, the fathers "infect their sons with disease, and then go searching for doctors,"[71] which it was the task of the educators to become.

At the very root of Hebrew education in Palestine, then, was a glaring paradox. The children were expected to be shaped into rooted, whole Hebrews by educators who themselves were not. It was not clear, after all, how the educators, most of whom had backgrounds similar to those of the children's parents, were to avoid infecting the children with disease and even go a step farther and provide them with an education that would make them the healthy

FIGURE 4.2. Inside one of Jerusalem's Hebrew kindergartens. The small and cramped indoor space is offset by the bucolic scene of Hebrew agrarian life hanging (precariously) on the wall.

Hebrews who were expected to be the antithesis of the educators themselves. Although no solution to this predicament was immediately apparent, it nonetheless translated in part into a broader concern to create frameworks in which the educators might be trained in pedagogical and national skills. "The greater the demand ... for the study of our language and for a proper education," one teacher lamented, "the greater one feels the scarcity of qualified and expert teachers."[72] Aided once again by the financial and organizational backing of the Hilfsverein, one result of this demand was the establishment of a Hebrew teachers' training seminary in Jerusalem, which contributed further to the city's growing number of Hebrew educational institutions.

The educational paradox was also accompanied by some hope that, however damaged the parents' generation may have been by exile, they too might be transformed (at least in part) by this educational project. It was incumbent upon the Hebrew educators, as one teacher argued, to incorporate the parents into their transformative vision so that even if "folly, cruelty and hatred" might not be uprooted from their own hearts, they might at least stand on guard not to pass them on to their children and not "corrupt the child's soul and cripple his spirit in a way that cannot be remedied."[73] Some educators entertained more far-reaching hopes and were convinced that the parents too might be affected by the proliferation of Hebrew educational frameworks and ideas. By the time a second Hebrew kindergarten had been successfully established in Jerusalem in 1904, one educator spoke of "a veritable revolution in our city" that the kindergartens were effecting since "not only small children have begun to adopt the language and to be educated in a healthy manner, but the children's parents have also made progress." Forced to use the children's Hebrew vocabulary to communicate with them, he explained, parents and older siblings had also begun to use the language more extensively than ever before.[74]

So powerful was the curricular innovation of the kindergartens, moreover, that the parents were being physically transformed as well, as their children insisted on demonstrating the gymnastics exercises and the songs and dances they had learned and demanded their families' participation. In themselves manifestations of the new Hebrew physique that the kindergarten was designed to engender, in other words, the children were also instrumental in improving the physical health of the older, "exilic" members of the family.[75] If early kindergartens in nineteenth-century Europe had been accused of subverting the traditional family,[76] in Zionist Palestine, subversion of the traditional family was in some sense one of the kindergarten's declared goals. So powerful a tool was the kindergarten in the eyes of its founders and advocates that it seemed to allow Hebrew's transformative power to penetrate beyond the

public space of Jewish Palestine into the homes and family lives of its residents, where it would work to refigure even the most private and intimate aspects of the world they inhabited.

That did not mean, of course, that the public sphere was neglected, nor that its shaping was left to the vicissitudes of language usage by children or adults. Since such usage was variable, the place of the language in Palestine's public spaces, as well as its role in shaping them, was carefully engineered through a wide range of public performances and rituals. When a group of Jerusalem's Hebrew educators and activists came together in 1902 with the aim of "creating a Hebrew city" out of Jerusalem's then non-Hebrew reality, they conceived of the process as one that would create a defined public space in which Hebrew would be the spoken language. Seven years later, a similar impulse would lead to the creation of a "Hebrew" neighborhood outside the city of Jaffa, which would quickly mushroom and become "the first Hebrew city" of Tel Aviv (see chapter 5). The authors of this earlier initiative in Jerusalem also imagined a single neighborhood as a preliminary foothold from which they would spread outward into other parts of the city, transforming it through such means as "Hebrew children's festivals... evenings of entertainment" and "children's plays in Hebrew."[77]

Theater in the strict sense and (more important, perhaps) the theatrics of the new public spaces they envisioned—planted in an increasingly solid Hebrew soil—would be the principal stepping-stones to the transformed Hebrew Jerusalem they hoped to create.[78] "Wherever one finds the creation of popular culture," as the social-democratic *Ha-Ahdut* would later explain, "one will also find the popular theater. And in the education of the nation, as well as in the creation of its culture, the theater plays one of the most important roles."[79] Attempts to establish some form of theatrical life, as the paper's commentator recalled, had indeed accompanied the Zionist undertaking in Palestine from very early on. Beginning in the late nineteenth century, amateur productions in schools and various other settings in the new colonies provided some relief from an often harsh reality and some entertainment in what, to many European immigrants, remained a culturally barren land.

The form and content of the Yishuv's amateur theatrical productions were together of great consequence to the Yishuv's cultural activists. A review by Itamar Ben-Avi of a student production of Abraham Goldfaden's "Joktan Jokshan" at the Mikveh Israel agricultural school (ironically, the Hebrew translation of a Yiddish-language play, like virtually all of the theatrical productions in Palestine at the time[80]) found it praiseworthy primarily for its compelling depiction of the degradation of exile. One actor in particular was singled out for praise since "all of his movements and actions evidenced the Jew of exile. In all

of his words one could see the man who will do injustice, even sin, for the sake of filthy money. When he bent over, or when he bowed down, one could recognize the individual prepared to grovel and to cower in order to receive the rich man's pennies." The music incorporated into the production, Ben-Avi added, had also been well chosen for its representation of "our degradation among the nations and our dilapidation in the arts, in the life of beauty."[81]

Aside from the visual confirmation of Zionist ideological tenets that the theater allowed, the public performance of Hebrew language was in itself important, of course, since "the Hebrew stage in Palestine is destined to be a public space in which our masses will learn to speak Hebrew properly," as one columnist explained.[82] Indeed, if theater had been a central form of public entertainment from the very birth of the New Yishuv, its importance as a Hebraizing tool was unprecedentedly enhanced as Hebrew became the Yishuv's spoken language and it became clear that "the theater is one of the most obvious means of assisting in its development," thanks to its power to shape the private and the public at once. "Through living pictures [tableaux vivants] and plays," Ha-Ahdut's columnist would later explain, "the language strikes its roots deep into the souls of the audience, and the nation's feelings and ideas thus become dear to its individuals as well; through theater, they become public property."[83]

When the first Hebrew theatrical production was held in Jerusalem, it became a showcase for the public performance of the nation and, consequently, the source of considerable excitement on the one hand and a focus of determined opposition on the other. The cause of the commotion was a 1906 production by the city's "Lovers of the Dramatic Arts"[84] of Russian playwright Yevgeni Chirikov's "The Jews" in Hebrew translation. Like the full-page advertisement that appeared on Hashkafa's front page before the performance, even the admission tickets emphasized that the play was to be "presented in the Hebrew language"—marking them as gateways for entry not only to the play itself but also into the nation it was meant to represent, entertain, and crystallize.[85] In addition to the somewhat ironic mobilization of the crafts school run by the Alliance Israélite Universelle (so disliked in Zionist circles) as the site for the performance of the play, the city's still somewhat embattled nationalist camp also joined its forces internally, and the recently established Bezalel museum and art school (see chapter 6) provided the sets, props, and costumes and acted as one of the outlets for ticket sales.

As they had no doubt anticipated, such combined mobilization was not without its reasons. As had been the case with the opening of the Hebrew kindergarten some three years earlier, the city's Ashkenazi rabbis, in their attempt to preserve their control over the character of Jerusalem's public

sphere, issued a ban on the play and admonished "all who maintained some feeling and spark of Judaism" to refrain from attending.[86] Hebraist and (judging by the admissions tickets in his personal archives) theater aficionado Yehoshua Eisenstadt-Barzilai responded with a lengthy and aggrieved allegorical tale that decried the ills of national fragmentation and division that the rabbis' decree fostered.[87] According to *Hashkafa's* dual reports, the performance drew between 700 and 800 of the city's residents from all ethnic groups and the entire spectrum of religious observance.[88] And, although critical of the Hebrew translation, which he thought somewhat unnatural and awkward to the Jerusalemite ear since it reflected more "the Hebrew of Jaffa," Eliezer Ben-Yehuda nevertheless considered the production a great triumph. It was, he wrote, an effective assertion that in spite of the Orthodox Ashkenazi rearguard, Jerusalem was becoming a Hebrew space, and this was by far the "most fitting and most genuine response to the foolishness...of the ban."[89]

This was not, of course, the end of the struggle for Hebrew public space—either in Jerusalem or even in many of the colonies. Although given the "appealing [new] custom...of celebrating our holidays in public," it was "self-evident that the [Yishuv's] theater must be Hebrew," the Labor Zionist *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* could still lament some years later that the 1909 Passover celebrations in the colony of Petah Tikvah included a children's play in French. Even the journal's protest, however, provided telling evidence of the advance of a Hebrew public space since it stressed the irony of Petah Tikva's linguistic heterodoxy at a time when "even in our Paris"—the colonies of Rishon Le-Zion and Zichron Ya'akov—Hebrew had already "taken over the place of French."[90]

The full extent of the transformative power that was expected for Hebrew in Palestine seems to be distinctive even among other nationalist language projects—and language, of course, held pride of place as a cardinal national imperative in much of European nationalism.[91] If the soil in which nationalism struck root was one in which "the idea that a particular script-language offered privileged access to ontological truth" had declined and a new status was granted to local vernaculars,[92] Zionism's ultimate rejection of the (eastern European) Jewish vernacular (Yiddish) in favor of the very language that had been the domain of clerical sacrality seems either to set the Yishuv's cultural undertaking apart from much of European nationalism or to raise more general questions about the varieties of ways in which language might function in nationalism and in the transition to modern forms of organizing political claims, constructing cultures, and shaping identities.[93] Indeed, it is somewhat ironic that in Europe, where cultural work often meant the production of a Jewish "high culture," this could be conceived in whole or in part

as based in Yiddish—a high culture produced in a language of the "folk," the Jewish vernacular[94]—while the language of Palestine's future national masses, the language through which a new "folk" was to be generated, was Hebrew, the language of the traditional Jewish elite.

The turn to Hebrew as the key defining feature of the new nation in Palestine and the principal transformative force in the revolutionary upheaval that the Zionist cultural project sought to effect in Jewish life was in part an outgrowth of the preceding century, during which the language had already become a pillar of Haskalah efforts to redefine Jewishness and Jewish community. Zionism was in this sense both a direct heir to the Haskalah and a rebellion against it. Similarly, Zionism's ambivalent relationship with the same traditional Judaism that the Haskalah before it had set out to recast was also manifested in the ways in which Palestine's Hebraists envisioned the language as a tool for the transformation of the Jews and the world they would inhabit.

In some traditional Jewish thought, particularly in the mystical traditions that shaped the childhood and youth of many of Zionism's cultural activists, the Hebrew language was understood as the cosmic force through which creation had been effected and through which human beings continuously participated in the act of creation.[95] Manipulation of language is endowed by certain kabbalistic exegetical traditions with the power to transform the human psyche and to change the course of nature and history. The ultimate stage of biblical interpretation, according to medieval mystic Abraham Abulafia, led through a use of the language of scripture itself that would allow the exegete to "produce . . . a new universe, a language and an understanding."[96] Where pockets of spoken Hebrew persisted in the medieval and modern Jewish worlds, moreover (at points of particular temporal or spatial sanctity—on the Sabbath and at times in Palestine), such speech was imagined to have a unique power to purify the soul. Furthermore, anticipating the image of nationalist respectability that initiatives such as the Tze'irot Yerushalayim would stir up for Hebraists such as Ben-Zion Taragan, diverse strains of Jewish thought— from the mysticism of medieval Kabbalist Abraham Abulafia to the rationalism of Maimonides—associate this purifying force of the Hebrew language with a sexual virtue and purity uniquely inherent in the language.[97] The resonance of these transformed traditional tropes highlights Zionism's dialectical effort to leave traditional Judaism behind as it reshaped Jewish life. It often did this by borrowing some of its central conceptual axes from the very tradition it sought to trounce and, once refigured, to deploy them as principal tools in its revolutionary endeavor.

Similarly, if this search for a new purification through Hebrew connected Zionism's language project in some senses to the Haskalah tradition, its vision of the reshaped Hebrew wholeness that it aimed to create also marked Zionism's departure from that precedent. Broadly speaking, the maskilim had sought a grammatically precise, literary Hebrew and struggled for the study of grammar against a rabbinic establishment that was by and large opposed to such learning. Iris Parush has argued that the maskilic focus on grammar was integral to the power struggle between them and the rabbinic establishment. Both sides saw study of grammar, whether approvingly or disapprovingly, as a pathway to an understanding of scripture—and hence the world shaped by it— through a lens that was inherently inimical to traditional rabbinic herme-neutics and exegetical molds. The maskilim's approach to Hebrew grammar, some of their opponents charged, made them akin to Karaites, a sect that rejects the Talmud and Oral Law—the very basis of rabbinic Judaism—for its ostensibly overly mythologized interpretations of the Bible.[98]

While continuing the maskilic struggle to wrest hermeneutical authority from the hands of the rabbinic establishment, Zionism tacitly accepted the charge that the Haskalah had stripped Judaism of myth. The Zionist linguistic project was, therefore, in equal measure a reaction against the disenchantment of the world that it deemed to be the product of this Haskalah rationalism. The Hebrew of the Yishuv was envisioned not only as one that would go well beyond the grammatically correct pages of literary journals (if at times am-bivalently, as evidenced by Yellin's discomfort at some of the children's "cor-ruptions") but also one to which the mythical element of language was to be returned. The Hebrew of the budding nation in Palestine and of the Hebrews who would speak it was to be a language layered with mythical resonances, in which a purifying antinomian force was directed at one and the same time against the language of rabbinic myth and the allegedly quasi-karaite ratio-nalism of the Haskalah that had jettisoned it. Its relationship to both was a dialectical one in which it was at once inheritor and insurgent.

As the following chapters will show, new coinages adapted from tradi-tional words or expressions were sprinkled throughout the Hebrew that de-veloped as the Yishuv's spoken language in such a way as to lend mythic dimensions to the new culture. This was done, for example, through such linguistic constructions as elevation of the word *avoda*—alternately "worship" or "labor," cast in a range of new ways that often fused these two meanings—as the core of the new culture and relegation of all that was extrinsic to that culture and inherently a product of exile to the status of *kelipah*, the outer shell of being that in Kabbalistic terminology also indicates evil. There was a

dimension to the Hebrew of the Yishuv, in other words, and to the Zionist cultural undertaking generally that was in some sense deeply religious (if often not self-consciously so). More than merely adopting and adapting certain inevitable motifs from the Jewish religious tradition, Zionism in Palestine was very much an attempt to reground language in mythological symbolic meanings and to re-create a Jewish cosmology that would have its feet set firmly on the concrete soil of Palestine and its head in a cosmos reenchanted to express the cosmic bond between the Hebrew language, the Hebrew land, and the new Hebrews themselves.

As in so much of the Zionist cultural undertaking, continuity and rupture were intertwined in the creation of modern Hebrew and the ways in which language and its relation to nationhood were conceived.[99] As it moved from the social reality and conceptions of the Haskalah and as the human and linguistic landscape of Palestine underwent changes that began in the closing decades of the nineteenth century, the place of the Hebrew language and the impact it was expected to have would undergo a series of reconceptualizations.

The nation-generating power of language was nowhere better expressed than in a postcard sent by Hemda Ben-Yehuda to Yehoshua Eisenstadt-Barzilai in 1907, as the publication of the first volume of Eliezer Ben-Yehuda's Hebrew language dictionary was approaching (see figure 4.3). On the backside of a card bearing a photograph of Berlin's Siegesallee (Avenue of Victory), Ben-Yehuda proudly proclaimed that her husband's dictionary, far from being a mere linguistic reference tool, was a genuine national monument. "Through the Avenue of victory," she wrote, "Ben-Yehuda—the path-blazer—will soon be passing. A more becoming monument than the one on the other side of the card will be established not by the nation for its hero, but rather by the hero for the nation. The success and publication of the dictionary," she could now happily proclaim, "is no longer in doubt."[100] Moreover, the erection of the (linguistic) monument, she seemed to imply, might help to dispel some of the lingering doubts about the nation's own reconstitution, as it was at once a representation and a vehicle for the creation of a "Hebrew" national existence and for the emergence of a new generation of "natives" whose language would be the basis for a sweeping transformation of Jewish existence.

The designation "Hebrew" to indicate not only a language but also the members of the budding nation in Palestine (as well as their culture, in the broadest sense of the term) had predated the actual existence of an emerging national entity in Palestine. In the decade before the First World War, however, the meanings associated with this terminology began to crystallize into a more
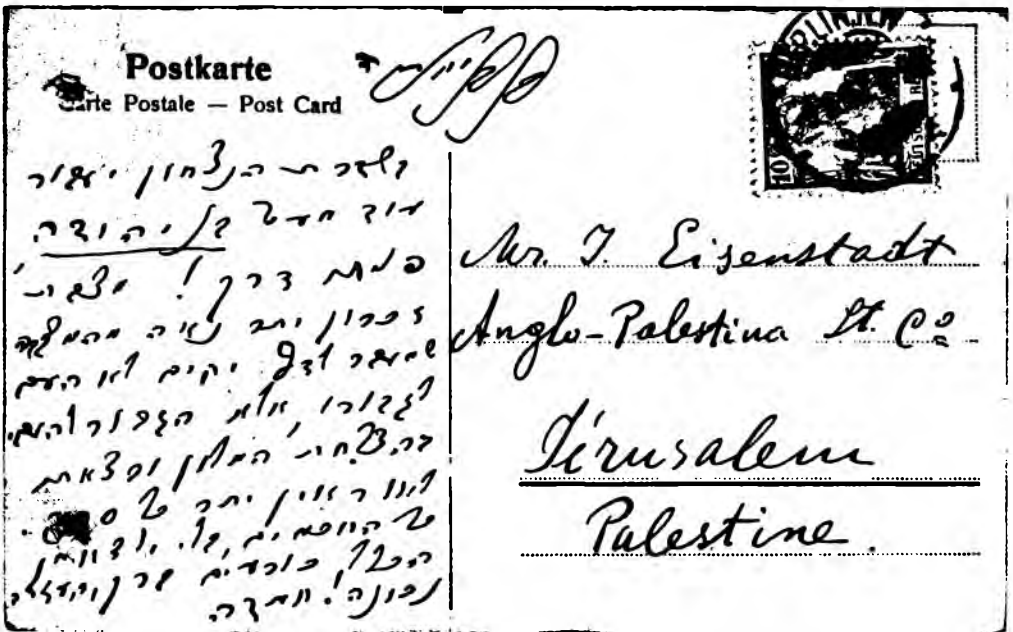
FIGURE 4.3. A postcard from the Ben-Yehudas (with text written by Hemda) to Yehoshua Eisenstadt-Barzilai.

clearly defined image of the new human types who would constitute the would-be nation and who were expected to be characterized by a distinctive worldview, shaped in large measure by their language and rooted in the soil of the land. If the outset of the period saw the social and institutional basis for the spoken language just beginning to take shape, the ensuing decade would see Hebrew

become the vernacular of what indeed appeared to be a critical social mass that constituted the nucleus of a national entity. The arrival of new groups of immigrants and the creation of a wide range of powerful cultural institutions would pave the way for the emergence of this new Hebrew and the Hebrews who would speak it.

5

New Immigrants,
Rival Vanguards

Like Hebrew speech, associated in both traditional discourse and in Zionism's altered version of it with a purifying transformative power, relocation to Palestine had long been associated in the Zionist mind with the emergence of Jews who would in some fundamental way differ from their Diaspora brothers and sisters. By the first decade of the twentieth century, after twenty years of Zionist settlement, a generation of natives had now been raised and had matured in the colonies and cities of the land that had been a new homeland to their parents and was to them the only home they knew.

The nationalists among them (and not all were, of course) developed a clear self-image as the first generation of the renaissance, in which a strong sense of national mission based in Zionist precepts merged with a local patriotism and a sense of belongingness to Palestine that seemed uniquely their own. Traveling in Switzerland in the spring of 1908, a young Avshalom Feinberg (born in the colony of Gedera in 1889) wrote home and confessed that he had been surprisingly unmoved by the scenery. "Switzerland," he wrote, "has acquired its reputation for beauty undeservedly." In any case, he added, whatever its objective virtues, "to my heart, the heart of a man of the south," it was unappealing.[1] Feinberg understood that heart of his and the eyes through which he viewed the world to have been indelibly stamped by the formative experience of life in Palestine. A contemporary, Menahem Weiner, had reported a similar experience when he had traveled to Europe some years earlier. Palestine, he wrote

home, had given him a true and authentic Jewish nationalism, in contrast to that of the Jews he met in Europe, who were quintessentially Europeans and could never truly be Hebrews like himself.[2] Unlike his own national sentiment, rooted in an undivided and experiential national belonging, he indicated, Zionism in the Diaspora could offer only what one historian has called a "supplemental nationality."[3]

The particular national novelty that the native generation represented was articulated more fully in what amounts to a manifesto of that generation that was published by Itamar Ben-Avi in 1907. There had been, to be sure, visions of a new Hebrew that preceded Ben-Avi by as much as two decades. As Yaffa Berlowitz has shown, the Hebrew literature that was produced by some of the earliest Zionist immigrants to Palestine often contained what she has referred to as "models" of a new Hebrew type.[4] However, while the writers she discusses (along with others still in Europe) may indeed have invented many of the (at times conflicting) models and imageries that would go into the construction of the "new Hebrew," it would be members of Ben-Avi's generation, as it reached adulthood some time between the closing years of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth, who would begin to claim that they were in fact the tangible personification of those models and to construct a range of public and private cultural practices designed to further entrench (and develop) both an imagery and a set of concrete realities of their new Hebrew life in Palestine.

For Ben-Avi, whose life story as the first child in two millennia to be raised exclusively in Hebrew has become the stuff of legend in Israeli popular memory, the Hebrew language and the organic bond to the land constituted the defining features of this unprecedented new Jew. The fusion of these two factors in his manifesto entails a full spectrum of cultural and temperamental attributes that are the hallmarks of the Yishuv's native generation. Like Feinberg and Weiner, he too was stirred to formulate this sentiment while abroad in Berlin, where, as he recounts it, he encountered a tone of condescension from Jews and Zionists who wondered out loud "what has Palestine given us?" Taking up the challenge, Ben-Avi argued that above all else Palestine had given "Hebrews"—a new type, fundamentally different from the Jews of exile. "Go out to the colonies and the cities," he suggested, and "look at the people, who were your brothers yesterday, whom you meet along your way. Are they familiar to you? Surely they are not!" Even the fathers, he wrote, although admittedly "still burdened by exile," had been transformed by years of life in Palestine: "Their skin has darkened, their bones have stretched, their look has grown clear, their demeanor has grown self-confident." And if the parents' generation had been transformed, Palestine's youth—"born under the sun and

sky of the East, who from childhood had no knowledge of exile"—constituted a new departure altogether. Those young men and women "who bravely ride horses and handle the plow," Ben-Avi explained, "they are the Hebrews," and they are "fundamentally different from your children, the children of exile. [They are] little Arabs, nice savages. Look in their eyes and say: did you not recoil from their open, vital look? Did you not see in it a special glow that was foreign to you?"[5]

Paradoxically, all of these representations of a native Palestinianism, in which the virtue of rootedness—the pride of a generation that has never known exile—is paramount, are also deeply concerned with the experience of exile, which in fact continues to play a defining role as the principal foil for this "Hebrewness." In all three of these instances, it is a sojourn away from Palestine and the encounter with Diaspora Jews that serves to kindle thoughts on one's native essence. The primary "other," moreover, the model against which these "Hebrews" measure themselves, continues to be that of the Jew of exile. A similar tension would continue to be a defining characteristic of Zionist and, later, Israeli thought as various thinkers and writers attempted to give voice and form to a new local national identity distinct in part or in whole from that of the Jewish Diaspora and to negotiate the relationship between the two. Indeed, one could chart a more or less direct line of continuity between Ben-Avi's particular brand of Palestinocentric Hebrew nationalism and the emergence, some four decades later, of the "Young Hebrew" or "Canaanite" movement, which, though small, would have an important cultural impact in the Yishuv and the young state of Israel in the 1940s and 1950s (with persisting influence into the twenty-first century) by placing the question of the relationship between the new "Hebrew" nation and the Jewish diaspora in particularly sharp relief.[6] Even in these attempts at a clear-cut programmatic resolution of this inherent tension, however, one is struck by a sense of fundamental elusiveness in the effort to characterize the new culture and its bearers. In trying to describe precisely what it meant to be a Hebrew, even Ben-Avi was forced to concede that "it is extremely difficult to define in words the essence of this new spirit. But that it exists," he concluded, "of this there is no doubt."[7]

In fact, however, there certainly were those who had some doubt about the existence of such a spirit, and they soon made their voices increasingly audible. Just as the sense of generational identity was taking shape among Ben-Avi's native contemporaries, a new group of immigrants began to arrive on the shores of Palestine. As early as October of 1903, Jerusalem's *Hashkafa* was reporting that "Jewish emigration from Russia is increasing from day to day.... The towns are being emptied, the workers are leaving their workplaces,

and many of them are young laborers, who will in the future become good artisans."[8] The renewed wave of anti-Jewish violence in Russia had sparked a new movement of Jewish emigration out of that country. That the exodus might have a palpable impact on Palestine began to be noted a few months later. In January of 1904 *Hashkafa* reported that "new faces are seen in the colonies every day. They come from Russia, from Kishinev, from Gomel, and they are all seeking work. Many Yemenites have come from Jerusalem as well."[9] By 1905, the distinctive character of the "new workers who have recently arrived" began to emerge as a matter of public discussion and interest.[10] What Zionist collective memory and historiography would soon refer to as "the second Aliya" had begun, and its core of activists, although a minority among the overall number of immigrants, would soon emerge as both partners and rivals in the efforts to nationalize the Yishuv.

Between 1903 and 1914 some 35,000 new immigrants filled the ranks of the Yishuv. Many of them would have been difficult to distinguish in any way from immigrants of previous waves or from the traditional Jews of the Old Yishuv. Among them, however, were also a number of individuals who would soon play important roles in stepping up cultural activity in Palestine's colonies and in the establishment of cornerstone cultural institutions in its cities. Also among the newcomers was a particularly conspicuous group (about 5,000 by the outbreak of the world war, according to one estimate[11]) of young men and women who were of roughly the same age group as the young generation of Palestinian Jews but whose educational backgrounds, Jewish outlook, ideological orientation, and temperament were often vastly different.

The impact of the general processes of radicalization that had characterized Russian-Jewish politics in the preceding years, along with the ongoing pauperization and socioeconomic pressures faced by the empire's Jews was often palpable in these young men and women in ways that had been unknown in Palestine previously. Of course, like the new arrivals, the founders of Palestine's Jewish colonies in the previous two and a half decades had also come from eastern Europe in no small measure due to the rising tide of anti-Jewish violence there in the late nineteenth century. The pogroms of 1903–1906, however, were characterized by a ferocity the older generation had not known, and the political mood of the younger generation of Jews was consequently marked by an increased militancy and unprecedented efforts at organized self-defense.[12]

In their broader political outlook, many of the new immigrants had been influenced by the Russian revolutionary movements that had swept through the country in 1905, and in which some had participated directly. Theirs was a

generation deeply influenced by socialist thought and discourse and among which the search for a synthesis between variants of socialism of Jewish nationalism colored a wide range of social and political philosophies and movements.[13] For many, this synthesis occupied a prominent place in the backdrop to their decision to immigrate to Palestine and constituted an important aspect of their motivation.

Letters to Zionist leaders such as Menahem Ussishkin from European Jewish youths, their imaginations ignited in many cases by his 1902 and 1905 calls for the formation of cadres of young men to devote two years to pioneering work in Palestine, along with the writings and memoirs of a number of the immigrants themselves, provide some insight into some further ingredients in their motivations. Words such as "exile," "*luftmensch*," and "labor" emerge from these letters as much more than belabored ideological slogans or rhetoric and seem instead to reflect a very real and profound despair—with the Zionist Movement itself, the situation in Palestine, and prospects for an individual and collective future[14]—anxiously fused with an almost painful hope for a threefold redemption: of the individual, of the nation, and of the land.

The existential prospects in Europe often lay at the basis of this despair and the decision to emigrate. In one letter to Ussishkin, a "young man of twenty-four years" by the name of Shimon Mintz feared that he would "be miserable if I remain in exile."[15] Another would-be emigrant confided to Boris Schatz, founder of the Bezalel museum and art school (who arrived in 1906, himself a part of this wave of immigration), that "when I look ahead toward my future, I secretly weep: What will I be? I ask myself. Will I be a *luftmensch?* Will I be a parasite? Will my entire life be without a goal? And will my longing and ambition amount to nothing?"[16] The weight of this personal anguish, as Shimon Mintz stressed, had been made more burdensome by "all the quarrels and debates" in the Zionist and Jewish world, which seemed to have derailed his hopes. The search for salvation, he explained, was therefore bound up with direct action, with "wetting the soil of our land with the sweat of my brow." Only in this way might one "banish the desolation of our land"—itself in exile—along with the desolation of the self.[17]

This personal despair was often mingled with a deep concern for the Yishuv's depressed and ostensibly degenerated state—a judgment from which Palestine's native youth was not exempt. Shortly before embarking on the boat that would take him to Palestine, a nineteen-year-old David Green (later Ben-Gurion) wrote Ussishkin to inform him of his own decision, along with that of a group of friends. "Our goal," he wrote, "is to create in the land of our future a healthy national atmosphere which, to our deep regret, is entirely lacking there." All that had gone before them in Palestine, many of them were

convinced (without, of course, having yet seen the land), had been a failure. Having embarked on an attempt to establish a new national life that "should have been able to confer of its spirit to all of the Jews in exile," the "first Aliya" experiment had ended up in a "moral rot that is eating away at the residents of the land." Green and his cohorts had consequently decided that the primary national imperative was "to establish a fresh national element in the Land of our Fathers, upon which we might in the future base the entire grand structure of the national renaissance."[18]

Nor did they have much doubt as to who would constitute that element. A sense of national mission served as a strident complement to their sense of despair. Mordechai Shimshon Rabinowitz, a twenty-year-old who "up until now had studied Talmud" in a small town near Vilna, had been so deeply influenced by reading Ussishkin's "Our Program" (1905) that he decided to write a letter—in language that reverberated with the lingering shock waves of the Uganda controversy—to that "man of valor, who does battle for his nation, his land and his language." In it, he asked above all to be informed when Ussishkin was "going to organize the order of national soldiers" of which he had written, and promised that once it was under way "you will be able to count me as part of the organization." In general the young man assured his adopted leader of the support of "vast troops of loyal Zionists who are capable of sacrificing themselves to their last drop of blood for the sake of . . . the revival of our nation in Zion."[19]

If there were willing troops, however, they lacked an army to join. Aside from the influence that his call for a youth corps had had on some of the youth at which it had been aimed, Ussishkin's "Our Program" had had no tangible follow-up. Shortly after their arrival in Palestine, then, motivated by an ambivalence toward the Zionist Organization and a rejection of much that had gone before them in the country, the young would-be workers, who arrived largely on an individual basis, set about establishing their own organizational infrastructure. By the outbreak of the Great War, they had established frameworks for providing health care, communal kitchens, language instruction, journals, publishing houses, libraries, paramilitary guardsmen organizations, and more, usually flavored by association with one (or sometimes both) of the two ideological organizations that emerged at a general workers' conference held in 1905. These were the more or less Marxist Po'alei Zion (Workers of Zion), which had in fact originated in Europe and sought early on to introduce class struggle into Palestine. In its cultural-linguistic orientation, Po'alei Zion initially included a significant Yiddishist strain. The non-Marxist and distinctly Hebraist Ha-Po'el ha-Tza'ir (Young Worker) party was a local

Palestinian outgrowth. Its platform was one that rejected class warfare and called instead for the "conquest of labor" by Jewish workers.

Rivalry between the parties extended beyond ideology to include a wide range of cultural activities. The first issue of *Ha-Po'el ha-Tza'ir* (the organ of the party of the same name) appeared in the spring of 1907, and the journal quickly emerged as an important Hebrew cultural vehicle in the Yishuv. It was followed in July of the same year by Po'alei Zion's (short-lived) Yiddish-language *Der Onfang* [The Beginning]. By 1910, linguistic ambivalence within Po'alei Zion had been largely resolved in favor of Hebrew, however, and its new Hebrew-language journal, *Ha-Ahdut*, made its debut. Both of these journals established publishing houses, which contributed to the appearance of a wide range of popular and sometimes even semischolarly literature in Palestine.

Competition and divisiveness within the ranks of the workers did not prevent an overarching sense among them that, together, they represented a new national vanguard that alone could revitalize Zionist work in Palestine and offer a new Zionist gospel. Indeed, this centrality of the worker in the national revival would become an essential and enduring feature of their self-image. As the first issue of *Ha-Ahdut* declared, the workers had been "the first element to introduce new life into the Jewish Yishuv in Palestine." Thanks to their determination to "live off the fruit of their own labors," only they "had been able to give a new, improved shape to the old and weathered coin; only they were able to give a Yishuv based on indolence and external support the shape of a working community."[20] This image would be bequeathed to Israeli popular memory and would gain a solid foothold in its historiography, in much of which the second Aliya would be credited with laying the foundations of Hebrew culture.

At the time, however, the new workers arrived in Palestine to an ambivalent welcome. Even as they were beginning their journey, one Russian Zionist concerned with the potential impact of the youthful firebrands on the already-troubled Jewish community of Palestine, urged a friend there to be vigilant. "I am ... not heartened," he wrote, "by the fact that our 'Po'alei Zion' here are departing for our land. The insolence of these youngsters has gone beyond all bounds, and they even seize money from our brethren at gun-point. I am fearful that these youngsters will bring great calamity to the Yishuv. You must stand guard!"[21]

Zalman David Levontin, a veteran Hovev Zion, a long-time resident of Palestine, and the recently appointed head of the Anglo-Palestine Company (the Zionist bank that was at the time of its establishment in 1902 the only

official Zionist representation in the country), believed that if any good would accrue to Zionism from the new workers (and he was far from convinced), they would have to be carefully channeled into desirable directions. This would mean, above all, their removal from the established colonies, where many of them hoped to procure work. "If they are truly [the] pioneers" they claimed to be, he wrote, "it is necessary to take 100–150 of these youngsters and settle them in Trans-Jordan or in the Negev, among the Bedouin." This would serve the Zionist cause in the Yishuv first by establishing new centers in remote and hitherto unsettled parts of the country, but no less so by removing a potential source of trouble and disorder from the established centers. In a letter to Ussishkin, whose famous calls for young pioneers had appeared a short time before, Levontin cautioned that "if the young [immigrants] continue to come and settle in the colonies with the aim of changing the economic structure of Palestine then *we are all in grave danger here.*"[22]

Deeply wary of the new workers and dubious of the earnestness of their Zionist intentions, Levontin wrote that they in fact "have no affinity for our [Zionist] work, or at least with our desire to redeem the land through the expansion of the Jewish Yishuv. Their sole aim is to destroy and to eradicate all that our brothers have acquired through the sweat of their brow." Their commitment to socialism, he was convinced, was "dearer to them than anything that is dear and holy to us," and their effect, consequently, had already been to scare away "Jewish capital," which might be used to build the Zionist infrastructure. Ultimately, Levontin concluded, the new workers "are sentencing all of our hopes to ruination."[23]

Although there were significant local variations in their relations, an enmity that was at times particularly acerbic emerged between some of the native youth in the colonies and the new workers who, in a reversal of Levontin's accusations, now often accused those who had grown up in the colonies of lacking national sentiment and Hebrew orientation. To be sure, in Rehovot, often considered the most "Hebrew" of the colonies, a sense of generational affinity between the young colonists and the recently arrived workers seemed at times to play an important role by uniting them against the ostensibly conservative old guard of the founding generation.[24] More frequently, however, the native youth were reported by their labor rivals to be painfully indifferent to the national renaissance and to exhibit a "woefully low cultural state" in general.[25] According to one report in *Ha-Po'el ha-Tza'ir*, Zichron Ya'akov's native youth, having been "educated from childhood with the idea that workers are slaves...despise the workers even more than do their fathers."[26] So visceral was the odium that developed between the workers and the native sons in Zichron Ya'akov that it erupted at times into fistfights.[27]

Not all of the Yishuv's veteran residents shared this hostility to the new immigrants, however. The immigrants, after all, had begun to appear on Palestine's shores on the heels of a prolonged period of malaise, and some residents consequently welcomed them with open arms. Yosef Weitz, who had lamented the "odor of decay" that, as he said at the second convention of the Palestine Federation, had spread among the settlers of the first Aliya, considered the young immigrants a much-needed stream of fresh air that promised to revive both "our spirit [and] our material situation" by adding new fields of employment, new trades, new commerce, and more.[28]

The revolutionary tendencies of some of the workers, and their general demand for employment, higher pay, and better working conditions than were customary in the colonies at the time have been the most frequently cited reasons for the ambivalence of their reception in Palestine. What has been all but completely neglected is that for some of the Yishuv's veteran Zionists, the young newcomers raised apprehensions precisely because of their as yet undecided picture of the future national culture and particularly their equivocal allegiance to Hebrew language and culture. The frequency and gravity with which such concerns were expressed rub against the grain of the common historiographical picture of Labor-Zionist idealists arriving in a decayed and culturally barren landscape, where they would become the exclusive creators of the new Hebrew culture. Benjamin Harshav has argued in this vein that "*social cells*, using the Hebrew language in oral communication, arose in Eretz-Israel only in the Second Aliya" and that "the revival of Hebrew in the Second Aliya was a new beginning, achieved in opposition to the 'bankrupt' First Aliya."[29] Harsahv seems, however, to have conflated the time period in which these social cells emerged with the demographic group of young Labor-Zionist activists who came to represent the second Aliya. In fact, the prevalence of Yiddish speech and ideological Yiddishist tendencies among the second Aliya workers became a cause for substantial consternation among those who had been working to create Hebrew educational institutions and to inculcate Hebrew speech during the years prior to their arrival. Although the decade of the second Aliya was indeed a critical turning point in this regard, the emergence of a social base for Hebrew was, in the end, attributable to the efforts of diverse actors, only some of whom can be considered workers of the second Aliya in the social-demographic sense.

While some of the workers who turned up in Palestine were already armed with a fervor for Hebrew, many also arrived with no ability to converse in the language (speaking either Yiddish or Russian instead) and espousing national and social ideologies in which Yiddish played a role as national language.[30] Reporting to Ussishkin in 1908, Yehoshua Eisenstadt-Barzilai, who was by no

means among those inimical to the newcomers, was pleased to be able to suggest that Hebrew speech had been making sufficient progress and that "with the proper work, it can be transformed within a decade into the language spoken by the Jews of Jerusalem." The principal obstacle, he noted, however, was the fact that "the young Russian immigrants do not know Hebrew and therefore, perforce, do not speak it."[31] Even at the third conference of Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir, the more Hebrew-oriented of the two workers' parties, protests were heard from a minority of the participants when the chair announced that he would conduct his opening address in Hebrew.[32]

Recurrent reports in the *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* journal on deviations from the party's general Hebraist line, moreover—such as its editorial criticism of the Petah Tikva branch, which, in the summer of 1907, produced a Yiddish-language play[33]—is a telling indication of the extent to which Yiddish continued to be used not only in private conversation, where its use can only be assumed to have been considerably more widespread, but even in the public arena of Palestine's cities and colonies and in the workers' clubs that were being established in them. More pointed remarks were aimed at Po'alei Zion, who, in their creation of a "cult of Jargon," as one commentator in *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* referred to their celebration of Yiddish, sought not to rebuild and revolutionize the Jewish nation but rather to rebuild exile in Palestine.[34]

Reflecting these internal tensions among workers, *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* editor Yosef Aharonowitz was particularly disdainful of Po'alei Zion's Yiddish and some of the cultural trappings that surrounded it. Commenting on their May Day celebrations in 1910, he complained that "this entire celebration is reminiscent of *Galut* [exile]," and not only due to the ongoing "arguments regarding Hebrew speech and Yiddish speech, Hebrew songs and Yiddish songs." What troubled him far more was what he considered the "'imitation out of self-denigration' to which Jewish workers have grown so accustomed." Whereas throughout the world, he wrote, workers unself-consciously infuse their festivities with "the songs, the language, the festive traditions and the various games" that make up their distinct national characteristics, the Jewish social democrats, he charged, feel a need to "uproot" any such national qualities. In their celebrations, he complained, "one may speak in any and all languages—just not in our language; one may sing all kinds of songs—just not Hebrew songs." And, he added, anyone who might dare attempt to articulate any notion of Jewish (or Hebrew) distinctiveness would be branded "a reactionary, a heretic who has no part in the psychology of the proletariat."[35]

Outside of labor circles, a correspondent for *Hashkafa* related his experiences at Jaffa's Purim celebrations in 1906. One, held in Hebrew, met with his approval due to its ability to bring together "Ashkenazi and Sephardic Jews,

along with Yemenites [all of whom were] speaking, arguing, going with one another to the drink room, bringing one another drinks." A party put on by some of the new workers, on the other hand, "ruined all of my dreams, and I was in a different world. I looked at the program, and [saw] ... a long list of speakers, songs and discussions in Yiddish.... The Yiddish part of the program was so substantial that many people could not hold back, and felt compelled to protest."[36]

The linguistic drama was dynamic and diverse, however, and its protagonists not always true to type. At a different party, where a Yiddish language play was presented, it was a group of young workers, according to the same report, who called out in protest: "Down with Yiddish."[37] Furthermore, in a linguistic reality that was complex, the accusations could fly in several directions at once. Just as the Yishuv's veteran Hebraists were at times critical of the non-Hebraist (and ostensibly nonnational) tendencies among some workers, they for their part would often accuse the more veteran settlers of having created a non-Hebrew environment in Palestine. One worker reporting from the colony of Hadera complained about the status of Hebrew there, where the absence of a library "has created a situation here, in which the Hebrew language is not spoken comfortably even by the younger generation."[38] In the more traditionalist Petah Tikva, according to frequent reports in the labor press, the problem went beyond an absence of means for the inculcation of Hebrew speech, to an ideological orientation that was opposed to the Hebrew language and culture, which were promoted in this case by the workers.[39] Even some seventy years after the fact, Shlomo Zemach, whose writings would serve as an important source for the image of a Hebraist second Aliya pitted against an indifferent veteran Yishuv, charged that during the years of the Uganda crisis (when he arrived in Palestine), Russian and French could be heard even in the Ben-Yehuda household, which, along with its adoption of a commitment to Uganda, had ostensibly abandoned its loyalty to the Hebrew language.[40] Although there is no evidence to support Zemach's claim and a plethora to indicate that the opposite was true, his ahistorical reconstruction is nonetheless a telling illustration of the ways in which this past would later be formed in Israeli popular memory and in a great deal of its historiography. The anachronistic association of Hebraism with Palestinocentrism reflects their closer pairing in years to come. Zemach's autobiographical writings, with the picture they paint of the Yishuv in the early twentieth century, are in this sense an illustrative reflection of the way in which the rights of Hebrew primogeniture were later appropriated by the Labor-Zionist second Aliya, whose public, political, and literary leaders would make this picture a mainstay of collective memory and historiography alike.

In fact, whatever the workers' allegations regarding the colonists and their children (many of whom undoubtedly fit some of the descriptions), the primary proponents of Hebrew speech and culture during these years remained the more veteran activists in the cities and colonies of the first Aliya, along with a number of new arrivals who belonged—socially, ideologically, and generationally—more to the veterans than to the emerging labor parties. Most conspicuous were the country's Hebrew teachers and the Teachers' Association they had established in 1903. The sheer number of Hebrew educational institutions was continuously growing, and there seems to have been a distinct sense that Hebrew was becoming the primary language for substantial sections of the Yishuv. This was given visible form, for example, with the establishment of a community center—Beit Ha-Am (literally, House of the Nation)—in Jerusalem in the summer of 1907 in the manner of those that stood at the center of virtually every colony. Events and lectures on a range of topics were held there almost exclusively in Hebrew, and its visitors included "young immigrants from Russia," along with Orthodox "Jerusalemites with Streimels."[41] A public space such as this—particularly in Jerusalem, where Zionist penetration faced more formidable obstacles than in most colonies—provided an important opportunity to broaden the audience for such Hebrew-language events and the spirit animating them. By around 1906 and for a number of years thereafter, the Yishuv entered a period of almost feverish activity in which a growing number of important institutions were founded and discrete ideological strands merged into a more coherent image of the Hebrew language, society, and culture that were being established in Palestine. This was complemented by broader developments within the Zionist movement.

The Seventh Zionist Congress, the first after Herzl's death, held in Basel in the summer of 1905, reaffirmed the 1897 "Basel program" and stated in clearer terms than ever before a Zionist commitment to Palestine as the sole focus of its hopes and activity. One result of this decision was the secession of the pro-Uganda faction, led by Israel Zangwill, who now established the Jewish Territorialist Organization, devoted to the search for a sovereign Jewish territory outside of (or, in some formulations, in addition to) Palestine. For those who remained within the Zionist Organization, the post-Uganda era led to a crystallization of what might be called a "normative" Zionist worldview, which continued, of course, to contain many conflicting strains but would now entail a commitment to the bond between Hebrew language and Hebrew land more explicitly articulated, as each of these gained greater prominence in official Zionist programs and praxis and as the twinning of the two became all but self-evident. The turn from a zealous territorialism to a renewed ardor for Palestine

and all things Palestinian on the pages of the Ben-Yehuda newspapers is particularly illustrative of the manner in which this process took place and began to give new form to the business of culture building in the Yishuv.

The first steps in this conversion came during Itamar Ben-Avi's journalistic mission as *Hashkafa*'s correspondent to the Zionist Congress in that summer of 1905, where the two-year long controversy was coming to its final showdown. In his reports from Basel, the Zionei Zion, who had been Ben-Yehuda's bitter foes for the past two years and a symbol to him of the ailing nation, begin to appear suddenly in a very different light, closer in spirit to the Yishuv, its residents, and its emerging culture. It was positively exhilarating, Ben-Avi reported, to see the representatives of the Zionei Zion, "tall, strong, sweating and red—bearing the holy blue and white Zionist flag." The sound of their Hebrew songs, in which "they swore to remain loyal to this old-young nation to their last drop of blood, *to remain loyal to the Hebrew language and heritage, and no less so to the Hebrew land,*" he recounted, could not but stir something deep in his Palestinian psyche. "My heart," he continued, "the heart of a Hebrew, born in the land of the Hebrews, pounded powerfully [as] . . . along with them I sang '*Hatikva*,' although I have little talent for singing."[42]

This identification with the Zionei Zion (or perhaps a sense that it was they who identified with him, as representative of the Yishuv and its culture) was offset by Ben-Avi's encounter with the territorialist faction. While he was not taken aback by their hunt for an alternative territory in itself, the components of nationhood as they seemed to conceive them, and their lack of feeling for what were to Ben-Avi the key elements of Jewish national character, were deeply troubling to him. "My blood boiled within me," he wrote, when he saw them mocking the Zionei Zion's national symbols and rituals. Some of them, he reported, went so far as to "belittle our flag, our past, our language—all those things upon which the Jewish people stand!"[43] The building blocks of nationhood as conceived by the Zionei Zion, in other words, rang familiar to Ben-Avi and reverberated with what had been emerging as his own national culture in Palestine. By contrast, the general amalgam that constituted the territorialists' conceptualization of Jewish nationhood, with their combined Yiddishist tendencies and their glance turned away from Palestine, seemed to distance them from the national entity that Ben-Avi's Yishuv was striving to become.

Initially, Ben-Avi reports, he had been somewhat agnostic in the ideological struggle as it took shape at the congress. "For a number of days," he recounts, "I had been speaking with members of both camps," disturbed by the mutual contempt each conveyed. As the days wore on at the congress, however, he became increasingly aware of what now began to seem a divide not only

between two competing ideologies but in fact between two separate cultures, two distinct nations evolving before his eyes. As mutual disdain evolved into "open and intense hatred," Ben-Avi realized that "two nations [had met] within our movement; two nations that differ from one another in every way—in their customs, in their spirit and in their goals."[44] Comparing the contemporary schism to the division of the biblical kingdom into Judea and Israel, today's "Hebrews and Jargonists," Ben-Avi wrote—with divergent territorial aspirations now more than ever inherently linked to conflicting linguistic-cultural orientations—were charting completely separate national paths. The territorialists, Ben-Avi noted in shock, not only choose Yiddish over Hebrew but actually "dare to raise their heads and to say: the ancient land—is dead! The Hebrew language—dead! And the Hebrew past—that too will die!"[45]

As the chasm widened between what to Ben-Avi were distinct nations with opposing national iconographies and liturgies, in other words, his own loyalties as a Hebrew-speaking member of the Hebrew nation in the Hebrew land became increasingly defined.[46] In a 1907 article, journalist, author, publisher, and long-time Hovev Zion Yehoshua Hana Rawnitzky (who, ironically, did not himself live in Palestine at the time) gave a more fully articulated form to what was now becoming an increasingly central Zionist axiom:

> A Zionist must understand and feel that... Israel has *no choice* with
> regard to a land, and that only his "old-new" land can serve the goal of
> a true renaissance, since only it can unite the historic past with
> the longed-for future. In the same way, he cannot choose any lan-
> guage other than his ancient and new language, the language of the
> past and of the future, the eternal language of an eternal people.[47]

Like a living organism, according to Rawnitzky, the nation's body (its territory) and its spirit (its language and culture) were inseparable. A national spirit could not flourish and live other than within its own body, and there is consequently "no preservation for the spirit of Israel other than in the Land of Israel."[48]

Deciding in favor of the Zionei Zion position, the Seventh Zionist Congress made this linkage of territory and language a part of official Zionist doctrine and praxis. Hebrew was formally accepted as the official language of the Zionist Congress, and a number of related decisions led to a quantum leap in Zionist activity in Palestine, among them the resolution to establish a full-fledged Zionist representation there (soon to be the "Palestine office," headed by Arthur Ruppin). Other decisions included funding to buttress the center-pieces of the Yishuv's two largest emerging Hebrew urban public spheres—the

soon to be established Bezalel art school and museum in Jerusalem and the new Hebrew gymnasium in Jaffa (soon to be Tel Aviv).

If Palestine and its culture were becoming the flagships of Zionist identity, claims to represent that culture now appeared as a point of ever greater competition between distinct social groups that were crystallizing in the Yishuv, each of which lay claim to the title of national vanguard. The hostility between the workers and the colonies' native sons in particular was framed in terms of a competition over nativeness. The new immigrants viewed their move to Palestine as a radical shift in their existential condition and identities—a veritable rebirth. Although they had arrived from Plonsk, Buczacz, Vilna, or Bobroisk, they were now from Petah Tikva, Sejera, Rehovot, or Jaffa. As one biographer of *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* editor Yosef Aharonowitz put it, "Very little is known about his life history prior to his arrival in Palestine.... Like many immigrants of the Second Aliya, he saw his immigration to Palestine as a new beginning, utterly detached from all that had taken place before."[49] In late 1908—he had been in the country for some three years now—Aharonowitz published a series of letters to a fictional female friend abroad, to whom he described various aspects of life in the Yishuv. Jews in the Diaspora, he wrote, are unable to understand either the joy or the despair that the "sons of the land"—such as he himself—experienced.[50] By his third year in the country, Aharonowitz was no longer an immigrant but rather a "native" son of the land—much more so, he was confident, than his contemporaries who had actually been reared there.

According to their self-image, in other words, the workers had become not only natives of the Yishuv but, perhaps even more important, they were the real "natives," as opposed to the rot-ridden children of the first Aliya, whose accidental birth in Palestine could hardly make them authentically homegrown since it could not compensate for their inherently exilic spirit. With another half-year in Palestine under his belt, Aharonowitz identified two basic trends among the native youth, reflecting divergent educational trends in the Yishuv. "Most of those who were raised on foreign languages," he wrote, "do not belong to the generation of the renaissance any more than do those who were educated in foreign schools in the lands of exile." And as for those who were brought up in the Yishuv's Hebrew educational institutions, he added, even if they may be "in our camp", they are "empty of any thought or knowledge." Not only did the overwhelming majority of Palestine's natives have nothing to offer the national renaissance, in other words, but they were also for the most part infected with the toxins of exile. The workers, on the other hand, although they

had arrived more recently (again apparently through a mere accident of timing) had so deeply integrated Zionism—and Zion—into their very beings that they had become truly of Palestine in a way that the country's native sons could not. "Just as [the workers] cannot exist without air to breathe," Aharonowitz wrote, "so they are unable to live without Palestine and without working its land."[51]

The descriptions of native youth as lacking in national consciousness and commitment—ubiquitous in the labor press—undoubtedly reflected a piece of the local reality. As the letters of Avshalom Feinberg, Menahem Wiener, and others make clear, however, there was also a significant core of articulate and ideologically charged nationalist activists among the Yishuv's natives.[52] During these years of competition over the construction of the new native culture and the essence of the new Hebrewness, moreover, this group was extremely active in shaping not only many of the rituals, celebrations, and festivals that would give new form to the Yishuv's public space but also the language and sets of imagery that would infuse them with meaning. The new public nature of the holidays that had become such a defining feature of the Yishuv's new forms of celebration was a cultural artifact that was in large measure a product of efforts by the youth of the colonies, particularly in a number of the more nationally active ones. Beginning in 1908 and continuing until the outbreak of the First World War, one of the most important annual celebrations in the Yishuv, one that repeatedly attracted celebrants from throughout much of the country, was the Passover fair in the colony of Rehovot (see figures 5.1 and 5.2). A report on its debut estimated that around one thousand spectators and participants flocked to the colony that year, where they were treated to a Passover that, like the traditional holiday, was conceived as a "celebration ... of freedom and [a] time of leisure." The similarities between the traditional festival and the Rehovot fair ended there, however. Designed as a showcase for the culture of the new Hebrew, the Rehovot celebration had the gathered crowd

> cheering as it reveled in the wrestling match between two young, strong, bold men who were completely unable to bring one another down or to defeat one another.... [This was followed by] a shooting match and a horse-back riding competition. Some thirty meters away, a young man stood holding a flag. The first to reach him had to seize the flag from his hands. The air reverberated with the clapping of hands, the shouts of "hooray" and the gunfire. The girls adorned the winners with flowers.[53]

Four years later, the advertisement for the celebration stipulated that it would include competitions between members of the Maccabi Athletic Association; a soccer game; horseback-riding competitions; various competitive

FIGURE 5.1. A crowd of spectators watching gymnasts arrive at the Rehovot Passover celebration. Such orderly, quasi-military marching was looked upon (in addition to gymnastic aptitude and physique) as a further marker of the new Hebrews.

games; gymnastics demonstrations; a musical-literary evening; *tableaux vivants* depicting "scenes of the country"; and, again, the requisite shooting match.[54] The distinctly outdoor nature of the celebrations was a conspicuous departure from the traditional Passover Seder, held of course within the home. Indeed, the one point at which the traditional Seder mandates some contact with the outdoors—the opening of the door for the prophet Elijah—was, for many Jews in eastern Europe, a moment of anxiety given the potential for violence that often attended the Easter/Passover season there. The Rehovot celebration consciously stressed the (fearless) rediscovery of the out-of-doors and nature by the new Hebrew and the reassertion of a culture of the body that was ostensibly so foreign to the Jew of the Diaspora,[55] for whom the centerpiece of the festival was (and is) the study of text around the Seder table. The inversion was undoubtedly palpable to all those who were present, and at least one report describes tremendous "excitement [which] spread like flames, the old men

FIGURE 5.2. The Rishon Le-Zion band arriving at the 1912 Passover festivities in Rehovot.

became young, and began dancing around the flames of the bon-fire with the young: men and women, mothers and daughters, grandchildren and grandmothers—and a single feeling of spiritual exultation, of life and hope, filled all of the hearts." The only element of the celebration that might in any remote way have recalled the textual pedagogy of the traditional rite was in the speeches about "the importance of celebrations of this kind and their influence on the younger generation's spiritual development in Palestine."[56]

Other Passover traditions that were experimented with over the coming years included a Yishuv-wide agricultural exposition that was added to the Rehovot celebrations in 1913 and, as in so many other holidays, outdoor excursions that became part of the school curricula.[57] The Rehovot festival, according to one report, had doubled in size by the time it was held a second time, in 1909, when it drew some two thousand people.[58] Those who were still unable to make the journey could benefit from similar outdoor festivities throughout Palestine's colonies and cities, and in Jerusalem, the "Lovers of the Hebrew Stage" put on a production of Karl Ferdinand Gutzkow's *Uriel Acosta*—a choice that combined a spirit of romantic nationalism with the commemoration of a marginal, even apostate Jewish figure, an early modern challenger of normative rabbinic Judaism, in whose criticisms and challenges the designers of the new Passover celebrations sought to share.[59]

Their apparent success at "placing new content in our holidays" inspired the youth of Rehovot to translate their springtime public centrality into a winter event by instituting a new celebration for Hanukkah, with which they also hoped to influence the rest of the Yishuv's celebratory style.[60] In a manner similar to the transvaluation inherent in the Rehovot Passover celebration, in this case a festival whose traditional focus was the home and the lighting of deliberately diminutive candles[61] became a public affair in which the entire colony seems to have been all but saturated with the blazing lights of national luminescence. The holiday's "new content," according to one report, included

> splendid illumination, as is appropriate for the Festival of Lights. The entire colony was lit with paper lanterns of various colors and the board building and library were decked with flags and large, attractive lanterns. At seven o'clock, the bell was rung to signal that the hour had come to light the lanterns, and each and every [resident], with special sanctity, lit his or her light. All residents of the colony, young and old, gathered around the bell to participate in the parade, which circumnavigated the entire colony with songs, shouts, and gunfire.[62]

Hanukkah, with its recovered symbolism of Maccabean military valor and the regaining of political independence, had long been a Zionist favorite.

However, in the general task of recasting and reshaping traditions and imbuing them with new meanings, even Hanukkah was not safe from some ambivalence. Hanukkah celebrations in Jerusalem in December of 1907 elicited conflicting understandings of the new meanings that ought to be inserted into the recast holiday when Eliezer Ben-Yehuda turned down an invitation to speak at the central Bezalel Hanukkah event, explaining his discomfort with some of the historical parallels he believed were often overlooked in Zionist interpretations of the holiday. The Hellenist Jews, against whom the Hasmoneans had waged civil war (along with their war against the Seleucid Greeks), Ben-Yehuda wrote, had in fact been the ancient equivalents of *maskilic* Zionists like himself and like much of the new Yishuv since they had striven "to extricate the Jewish public from the narrow confines of a religious sect and from the constricting borders of Jewish law. They strove to give it the *political* dimension that it was lacking, and to allow them to participate in the general world of enlightenment, wisdom and science which, in those days, was *Hellenism*, just as today it is European culture."[63]

Notwithstanding their political dimension, of which Ben-Yehuda naturally approved, the celebrated Maccabees were in his reading religious zealots much like the contemporary Orthodox world with which he had long been at odds. Imagining himself speaking in the shadow of Boris Schatz's famous sculpture of a militant Mattathias, Ben-Yehuda envisioned the historic figure coming to life at Bezalel, that center of modern culture and art, dedicated to the creation of the graven images that were forbidden with such zeal by the strict religiosity of the ancient leader. Surely, he wrote, the ancient Hasmonean would "thrust his spear into me with the very same feeling of holiness with which he stabbed those who sacrificed pigs on the altar in Modiin."[64]

Others differed. The Hellenistic Judaism of old was but a superficial imitation of true culture, according to one critic, and could consequently not be compared with modern-day Haskalah. Even the culture of the body that was championed by Palestine's Zionists, moreover, and that might seem to reflect continued Greek influence, in fact shared nothing with Greek physical culture, which had been dedicated in its entirety to "idolatry." The Yishuv's culture of the body, by contrast, was undertaken in the name of physical health—"something which the Torah never forbade." And like the rededication of the Temple that the Maccabees undertook and which the holiday commemorated, *maskilic* reform represented a rededication of the national spirit. The Maccabees, after all, had set out to "banish impurity, filth, the life of adultery and gluttony, of exploitation and deception," and it was this that stood as the goal of the Haskalah and its Zionist successors as well. Indeed, so loyal a reflection of the tradition of Maccabean revolt was the Yishuv's Hebrew culture, according

to this critic, that were the elderly Mattathias to rise (from his grave) and see his Maccabean grandchildren stretching their bones so that the nation might be healthy and strong, he would even permit them to play ball on the Sabbath, just as it was permitted at that time to make war on the Sabbath—for the sake of the nation and its happiness.[65] The Hebrew culture of the Yishuv, according to this understanding of the holiday, was at once both a break with the ostensibly petrified world of tradition and the most loyal representative of that tradition and of a true Torah, which for the nation's sake can be made to undergo all manner of change and inversion. As if in order to extract a holiness once contained in a now ossified tradition (represented in this instance by the Sabbath), Zionism works to shatter that tradition itself.

Throughout the Yishuv, the importance of public celebrations in the creation of a new cult of the nation made them contested arenas where meanings might clash and the rivalry between the competing national vanguards was performed. If Rehovot's Passover celebration seemed a compelling expression of the new Hebrew culture of the colonies' native sons—in contrast to the weakness of Hebrew among some workers—during Petah Tikva's holiday festivities in 1909 it was the workers who came to the defense of Hebrew, when they disrupted a planned children's performance that was to take place in French.[66] Indeed, the Passover festival in Rehovot was among the few aspects of the culture of the colonies that won regular praise in the labor-Zionist journals as a clear indication that perhaps not all was rotten in the colonies after all. However, this hint of viable competition also at times led certain labor-Zionist commentators to sound an uncomfortable tone. By the time the Rehovot festival was held for the third time in 1910, Yosef Aharonowitz began to fear that it was "beginning to be emptied of content." Instead of public celebration, he wrote, the by now formulaic new "tradition" was taking on the semblance of "public boredom—hundreds of people gathering in a single place and being publicly bored." There were a number of solutions to this danger, he suggested. First, he wrote, a public space dedicated specifically to the celebration ought to be established by "raising a sum of money and planting a garden of a number of dunams in Rehovot—the place [he conceded] where the initiative was born." The content itself, however, must also be continuously renewed, and here Aharonowitz seemed to suggest that, with all that the young colonists in Rehovot might have to offer, the way to ensure the eternal youth of the new celebration was for "all of the youth of Palestine to participate in planning the celebration, rather than relying exclusively on the youth of Rehovot to prepare it."[67] It is not difficult to hear in his suggestions a demand to wrest part of the work of so central a national and nationalizing

event from the hands of the colonists and to place it in the hands of that sector of Yishuv youth that he represented. This was, after all, in large measure a new version of the refrain the workers had been voicing for some years—that whatever national impulse might originally have been present in the colonies had long since putrefied.

Notwithstanding Aharonowitz's criticism and (implicit) attempt at a cultural coup, Rehovot continued to be the center of the Yishuv's celebrations of Passover until the outbreak of the First World War, and it remained largely in the hands of his nationalizing rivals. In compensation, Hanukkah became the setting into which distinctly Labor-Zionist meanings were often cast—an initiative that came from the social-democratic Po'alei Zion. Through published descriptions of his own transformative experience of pilgrimage to Modiin, the ancient home of the Maccabees and their presumed burial site, Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, an emerging leader of the Palestinian branch of the movement (and later, the second president of Israel), helped to instill the new tradition of pilgrimage to the site as a formative experience for Yishuv youth (see figure 5.3). His future wife, Rachel Yanait, recalled in later years how, after his first pilgrimage to the site in 1910, he returned "with a storm in his soul.... We could see he had so deeply pierced the [barrier of] generations, that it seemed to him that he himself had taken part in the Hasmonean revolt, that he himself had been born in Modiin."[68]

To Ben-Zvi, the political and military symbolism that had long since become mainstays of Zionist versions of the holiday could be properly understood only with the addition of a social element that imbued the tale with a hefty dose of class struggle. The intra-Jewish cultural contest between Hellenists and their opponents, Ben-Zvi wrote, reflected the social chasm that separated "the oppressed people, loyal to its Torah and to its land" *(am ha-aretz)* from "the traitorous wealthy Jews."[69] Ben-Zvi's celebration of what he terms the *am ha-aretz* as the true representatives of the national spirit reflected a transvaluation of the traditional terminology and the values associated with it. Whereas in rabbinic terminology this was typically a reference to uneducated masses, Ben-Zvi took advantage of the literal meaning of the words (roughly, "people of the soil") to stress both the popular nature of the masses and their loyalty to the land—thus indicating the inherent value of the peasants over the wealthy elite. Indeed, Hanukkah was consequently a "twofold miracle," he wrote, in which "the nation's victory over its external enemies, its liberation from foreign subjugation" was conjoined with the "liberation of the nation's masses from the yoke of internal oppression, from the Jewish oppressors." Together, these two victories recalled the twin work of the socialist Zionism that Ben-Zvi's Po'alei Zion espoused. The story of the Maccabees and

FIGURE 5.3. Residents of Tel Aviv on a pilgrimage to the graves of the Hasmoneans during Hanukkah, 1912.

their victory—"the triumph of the healthy forces, the class of agricultural workers over the parasites and leeches who clung to them"—was "the greatest social model that can serve today," a herald of the twin liberations that Po'alei Zion expected to effect centuries later.[70]

Contestation of meaning took place within sets of symbols and themes that were broadly enough defined, however, to enable such recast holidays to become Yishuv-wide events and the new rituals and praxis associated with them to be widely accepted as new national traditions. Themes of liberation (however understood), of a return to nature, of physical prowess, and of Hebrew language and culture, all wrapped up in an authentic (if still contested) Palestinian-ness, animated almost every public event, even where their outward performance might be understood in a wide variety of divergent ways. Workers' clubs and colony youth might at times hold separate affairs, but nationalizing institutions and public spaces such as the Herzlia Gymnasium, the Herzl Forest, Bezalel, and some of the celebrations themselves infused the Yishuv's calendar and geography with a sufficient dose of national inclusiveness to speak persuasively to proponents of diverging Zionist ideologies. A celebration like Jerusalem's Hanukkah in December of 1911, which showcased the Maccabee athletes in a combined parade and gymnastics demonstration; music by a self-styled national choir; and a speech by educator David Yellin, united virtually all of the city's Zionists in the feeling that this commemoration of the rededication of the Temple centuries earlier represented a "re-dedication of the nation itself" today.[71]

Indeed, despite their declamations of the national uselessness of the culture produced in the colonies, the labor-Zionists—who, by the end of the period were showing some early signs of heading out on a path that would take them two decades later to the leadership of the Yishuv—were in reality sufficiently comfortable with the aesthetics, symbolism, and praxis of some of these new traditions to adopt them and proclaim them their own (and then to convince others of this appropriation). They did this in part by successfully disseminating a sense throughout the Zionist world that they in fact more truly represented the budding nation in Palestine and that they were a vanguard willing to undertake a range of necessary and challenging national tasks. When the German-Jewish Arthur Ruppin arrived in Palestine in 1908 to establish the Palestine office—the Zionist Organization's first full-fledged representation in the country (see chapter 6)—the deep cultural, educational, and even linguistic abyss between him and the eastern European labor activists did not prevent the emergence of a growing alliance. Ruppin later recalled that "in many respects...the workers were of a spirit foreign to my own." Disagreeable

though their "over-emphasis of emotional motivations, the tendency to pro-
tracted argument, lack of perseverance, imprecision in work" might have been,
however, he also thought he detected a "sincere enthusiasm for agriculture as a
foundation-stone for the Jewish national home," which he saw as "an invalu-
able asset that must be secured." In order to do so, he believed, Zionism must
"take care not to degrade them [the workers] to the level of servants, but rather
to elevate them to the status of creative partners in the settlement project."[72]

This sense that the workers represented an invaluable asset soon began to
coalesce with a transformation of the question of labor in the Yishuv from
essentially one of employment to a matter of cultural and social identity. To-
gether, they would catapult the worker-activists into positions of cultural and
political prominence and, by the 1930s, into a position of veritable hegemony
in the Yishuv. Their point of departure in cultural work, however, was by no
means the blank slate that it has often been portrayed to have been. In many
areas of cultural activity, moreover—in some fields of art, music, and language
production, for example—educators and activists who belonged more to the
earlier circle of activists continued to have a formative impact—at times
alongside the emergent labor activists and at others largely on their own.

If native authenticity was one of the foci of competition between workers and
colonists, some activists—with veteran and recently arrived educators standing
together at the forefront—set out to create the true Palestine native. This goal
was an important catalyst to the establishment of the Hebrew high school in
Jaffa, which within a number of years became a significant cultural force in the
national life of the Yishuv. The idea for such a school had been raised at least as
early as 1899 by Ahad Ha'Am and a circle of followers, and then again at the
first meeting of the Hebrew Teachers' Association in 1903.[73] A first concrete
step was taken in early 1906, when Yehuda Leib Metman-Cohen opened his
small, private high school in Jaffa after leaving his teaching position in Rishon
Le-Zion due to his bitter ideological struggles there with the dominant
Ugandist majority (see chapter 3). Metman-Cohen's school opened in a small
Jaffa apartment with a total enrollment of 17 students. By the following spring,
there were 48, and by the final year before the outbreak of the First World War,
the gymnasium had 721 registered students.[74] When Metman-Cohen was
joined in his undertaking by Chaim Bugrashov (1906) and Ben-Zion Mos-
sinson (1907), the new school took on the character of a public institution
designed to offer a new kind of national education, rooted firmly in the Pa-
lestinian reality.

The school's central, self-proclaimed mandate was to create a new Jewish
type while providing the young generation of Palestine, as well as the significant

number of students who came from abroad to study there, with a comprehensive general education, coupled with an immersion in the new Jewish culture that it would both reflect and help to create. The culture of the school was founded upon Hebrew as the language of instruction, a secular approach to biblical studies, which held a prominent place in the curriculum, and an emphasis on the land and the students' connection to it, which it sought to reinforce by generating further celebrations and customs integrally connected to it—among them frequent hikes and excursions throughout Palestine. If the gymnasium's principal mission was the creation of a site of an all-encompassing Hebrew atmosphere and culture, it was hardly an accident that its birth, rapid growth, and often dramatic and at times polemicized conceptual development as a Zionist icon unfolded in tandem with the emergence of another flagship of the new Zionist culture in Palestine—the "first Hebrew city" of Tel Aviv.

Tel Aviv had gotten its start in 1906, when a group of about sixty veteran residents of Jaffa, along with a number of recent arrivals (the latter, however, distinctly not of the socialist-labor type), came together to form a land-purchasing society which they named "Ahuzat Bayit." Unhappy with what Jaffa had to offer its growing Jewish population—in terms of its residential possibilities, hygienic considerations, and aesthetic sensibilities—the members of Ahuzat Bayit set themselves the goal of buying land to the city's north, where they would establish a new "Hebrew" neighborhood. They began implementing their vision in 1909, when the first plots of land were parceled out, and the Ahuzat Bayit neighborhood was born, only to have its name changed to Tel Aviv a year later.

Although Jaffa/Tel Aviv and Jerusalem would themselves become centers of contending Zionist visions,[75] there were also some important shared impulses that contributed to their development by Zionists, principal among them the creation of an urban Hebrew public space in which a holistically Hebrew public culture might be fashioned.[76] The new quarter that the members of Ahuzat Bayit sought to establish differed from its mother city in terms of ethnic composition (strictly Jewish), spoken language (strictly Hebrew), and the very character of the urban environment it constituted—one that would reshape the Jewishness of its residents and give meaningful form to the Hebrewness they envisioned. Broad avenues, a garden city–influenced urban planning, modern piping, sanitation, and sewage treatment were all consciously designed to contrast not only with the narrow alleyways of much of Jaffa's cramped (and primarily Arab) old city, where sewage often flowed through the crowded, narrow alleyways, but with the ubiquitous imagery of the

dark, crowded Jewish quarters and *shtetlach* [villages] of eastern Europe as well.[77] This was a natural setting in which to plant the first "Hebrew high school," an important vehicle for producing precisely the new human type that Tel Aviv was designed to house.[78] In this, Tel Aviv and the gymnasium would clearly lead the way, serving as the model for the establishment of a Hebrew gymnasium in Jerusalem as well in 1909.

If the Uganda controversy—in its essence, a crisis surrounding Palestine's place in the Zionist vision of the national renaissance—had been a catalyst in Metman-Cohen's initial establishment of the Gymnasium, it was the Yishuv's growing centrality and crystallizing identity that helped to facilitate the school's emergence as a national institution of central importance. The Herzlia Gymnasium in Jaffa/Tel Aviv, along with the Bezalel museum and art school in Jerusalem (see chapter 6), represented the Zionist Organization's first twin forays into direct sponsorship of cultural institutions in Palestine— symbolically in the two emerging (and at times competing) centers of Zionist urban life. It also represented a growing sense that a generation of "new Jews" was beginning to emerge in Palestine and that this might have important implications for the Jews and Judaisms of the Diaspora as well. The fact that almost half of the school's student body came from abroad was, to be sure, a reflection of the limitations on acceptance of young Jews into gymnasia in the Russian Empire. It was also, however, an indication of a growing sense that the kind of education that the gymnasium would provide could take place only in Palestine. "If it is our goal to establish a spiritual national center in which our youth will be provided with an education that will transform them into national Hebrews," as Menahem Ussishkin had phrased it some time before the school's founding, "then there is no other place than in the Land of Israel."[79]

In the two years since the dissipation of the Uganda controversy, Zionism had become a Palestine-centered movement, and the consequences of this change for cultural developments in the country in the years that would follow would prove inestimable. In addition to the unprecedented financial and in- stitutional backing of the Zionist Organization for the Yishuv's cultural work, this also marked the beginnings of a dramatic shift in the traditional rela- tionship between the Yishuv and the Diaspora and in the balance of power and influence between them. By 1908, the new Zionist involvement in practical work in Palestine constituted a tacit acceptance of the notion that the culture of the Yishuv, as it was being developed in Palestine and by its residents, was where the future of the nation was to be located. Over the coming years, this shift in power relations would accelerate as the Yishuv grew in numbers, its

existing cultural institutions were fortified, and new ones were established. In their organizational structure as much as in their cultural content, the Yishuv's new institutions helped to create this shift in Yishuv-Diaspora relations, which would soon emerge as a central pillar of that culture. This would not take shape, however, without continued mutual chafing and struggle.

6

Beauty Out of Zion?

Zions Above and Zions Below

From its outset, Zionist thought had implied a radical transforma-
tion in the relationship between the Jewish Diaspora and the projec-
ted Jewish center in Palestine as the result of the emergence of a new
Jewish culture there. "Once fixed in their own land," as Herzl had
written, "it will no longer be possible for [the Jews] to scatter all over
the world. The diaspora," he continued, "cannot be reborn, unless
the civilization of the whole earth should collapse."[1] Even Herzl's
nemesis, Ahad Ha'am, deeply skeptical of political Zionism's poten-
tial to effect the elimination of the Diaspora envisioned by its
founder, argued that, with the establishment of a spiritual center in
Palestine, "the spirit of Judaism will radiate to . . . all the communities
of the Diaspora, to inspire them with new life."[2] The undoing of
galut, exile, in other words, was a goal shared alike by radical Zion-
ist conceptions, which envisioned the complete elimination of a
Jewish Diaspora, and by milder formulations in which the continued
existence of the Diaspora was expected to be radically transformed
by the spiritual-cultural center in Palestine.[3]

If a more or less deep-seated displeasure with Diaspora Jewish
life was the sine qua non of Zionist cultural thought, dissatisfaction
with the conduct of Zionism itself, at least as early as the Uganda
controversy, led some to seek a change in the relationship between the
European centers of the movement and the still small Yishuv. As
the controversy (and the personal acrimony that accompanied it) was
beginning to heat up, Menahem Ussishkin privately suggested to

one ally that "if the heads of the Assembly in Palestine understood what stood before them, then perhaps the Great Assembly would soon completely replace the Zionist Organization abroad!"[4]

If this was little more than a pipe dream in 1903 (Uganda, of course, contrary to Ussishkin's hopes, in fact ended up spelling the demise of his Great Assembly rather than of the Zionist Organization), it foreshadowed developments that were not far off in the future. Within two years, by the time the Uganda controversy had dissipated, the traditional relationship between Palestine and the Diaspora, inherited to a large degree from the pre-Zionist era, when the Yishuv was the passive beneficiary of Diaspora philanthropic support, began for the first time to be called substantively into question. Ussishkin's whimsy, moreover, pointed to the fact that, however implicit in virtually all strains of Zionist thought, the relocation of the Zionist center of cultural gravity would nevertheless unfold through contention and strife, in the process giving it some unanticipated characteristics.

Having won the bitter ideological debate with the resolutions of the Seventh Zionist Congress in 1905 and the unprecedented centralization of Palestine in Zionist thought and praxis, some former Zionei Zion now began to advance on their next target. "All work" in the name of Zionism, as one group of activists now demanded, "must issue out of Palestine.... Only then will it be ... truly Zionist work [and] only then will Zionism be what it truly ought to be—a Palestinian movement."[5] The Zionei Zion struggle for Palestine's centrality, in other words—as they themselves saw it—had not come to a close with the resolutions of the Seventh Zionist Congress but had in fact just begun. Many of the Yishuv's advocates remained suspicious of David Wolffsohn, who had been chosen (reluctantly, on his part) to replace Herzl as president of the Zionist Organization. Work within the framework of the ZO, as the activists' letter put it, would be selective, and in their activity in and for the Yishuv they would choose to work only with those Zionists "who truly desire the revival of the land."[6]

If this demand reflected the continued tensions that lingered within the movement as the aftershocks of Uganda, the Yishuv's increasing claim to a unique place as the genuine expression of a national Jewish culture seemed at times to leave many Zionists abroad—including some of the most dedicated Zionei Zion—somewhat ill at ease. A growing proximity between the interests of Palestine and the Zionist Organization abroad, on the one hand, and the ZO's increased interest in the emerging culture of the Yishuv on the other, could not obscure a persisting tension that was expressed in ideological polemics and in some of the efforts that went into the construction of new cultural institutions and practices. In many senses, it was precisely the greater

emphasis on Palestine and its emerging culture within the Zionist world that helped to exacerbate the tensions along this fault line. The increasing visibility of a distinct Yishuv culture was inherently intertwined with an ever more uncomfortable sense that that culture might reflect a growing distance between the budding Hebrew nation and the Jews and Jewish life of the Diaspora.

In the early fall of 1908—just around the time that Hebrew was becoming the spoken language of expanding social circles in Palestine—some seventy delegates gathered in Czernowitz (Bukovina) for a conference on the Yiddish language, the result of which was a resolution that declared Yiddish to be "*a* national language of the Jewish people". Notwithstanding the somewhat watered-down declaration (which was distinctly unsatisfactory to those who wished Yiddish to be declared *the* Jewish national language), Czernowitz marked an important watershed, one that led to a more distinct parting of the ways between "Yiddishism" and "Hebraism," terms which themselves emerged as after-effects of the conference.[7] When a protest meeting against the Czernowitz conference was held at the recently established Beit Ha-am in Jerusalem, Hebrew writer and veteran Hovev Zion Mordechai Ben-Hillel Hacohen, who had arrived in Palestine the previous year, came to its partial defense and argued that in the Yishuv "we are too quick to disavow" the Yiddish language. To be sure, he wrote, "just as we will never exchange our land, so we will never replace our language [Hebrew] with another." This, however, should not blind even the most devoted Hebraist to the fact that it was Yiddish that served the needs of the Jewish masses in Europe and often even helped to pave the way for them to learn Hebrew.[8]

This view was similar to that held by certain Zionists in Europe as well, such as Leybl Taubes, a pioneer of Galician Zionism and one of its leading and most notable figures. Taubes also happened to be among the initiators of the Czernowitz conference and an activist in the struggle to persuade the Austrian government to recognize Yiddish as the spoken language of the Jews of Galicia. Indeed, such a synthesis, in which Hebrew and Yiddish could coexist, was hardly a rarity in the days before the combined effects of post-Uganda territorial-linguistic crystallization in Zionism on the one hand and the post-Czernowitz entrenchment of linguistic encampments on the other, pushed Zionism and Hebraism more distinctly into one another's ideological arms.[9] For a Zionist such as Taubes, the question of language moved along the twinned axes of Zionist space (Palestine vs. Europe) and time (the future vs. the present). The future nation that would emerge in Palestine, he argued in the period surrounding Czernowitz, "will certainly speak Hebrew, but this is at any rate still a matter of many years." In the meantime, the exigencies of the present mandated that Zionists concern themselves no less with "our national rights in the

lands of our residence, where we pay our taxes, where we shed our blood."[10] In Europe, Taubes argued, "the basis of our national existence must be not the language that we shall speak in the future, but the language that we already speak, our Yiddish."[11]

In Palestine, things often looked a bit different. To Eliezer Ben-Yehdua, the "evil and devilish power of Jargon" that had been given a boost at Czernowitz was not to be underestimated precisely because, as both Ben-Hillel Hacohen and Taubes had pointed out, it was a living force among the masses of Jews in Europe. There are certain realities, Ben-Yehdua argued, of which one does not speak openly. "Everybody knows why a bride enters into a marriage," he wrote, linking language and sexual propriety, but nobody considers it appropriate to "defile one's mouth" with this information. The same discretion ought to hold regarding the "ugliness" that characterizes Jewish life due to the use of Yiddish. Ben-Yehuda's primary concern, however, was to ensure that the mark of legitimacy that Czernowitz seemed to bestow upon Yiddish not help it to grow roots in Palestine. He was, after all, only remotely interested in the language of Diaspora Jewry, he wrote. There, "if the Jews speak 'Jewish,' or German or Russian—it is of little concern to me." Should they transplant those languages (and the despised, exilic Yiddish in particular) to the Hebrew land, however, where rebirth was now inherently connected with Hebrew language, the inevitable result would be "national destruction" [Hurban].[12] If ideological turmoil had earlier led Itamar Ben-Avi to point to the emergence of two separate nations at the decisive and divisive Zionist Congress of 1905, his father now seemed to caution against—or perhaps to champion—a similar schism. Given the power Ben-Yehuda attributed to language as the shaper of nations, this would be a particularly deep chasm that would all but cut off the Jews of Palestine from those of the Diaspora.

It seems to have been precisely this specter that led Yosef Vitkin, a veteran Hebrew educator who had immigrated to Palestine in 1897, to address the question of Hebrew education in the Yishuv and in the Diaspora. Although Palestine stood at the center of Vitkin's vision, he believed that "many decades will yet elapse for the New Yishuv . . . before it becomes . . . a spiritual center." If for this reason alone, he argued, the Yishuv must take care not to allow its Hebrew character to become a force separating it from the Jews of the Diaspora. Hebrew education, therefore, must act as a bridge spanning the geographical divide and "revitalize the Hebrew spirit" in the Diaspora no less than in Palestine. There, too, the students must "strengthen their weakened bodies, their destroyed nerves; they must awaken in them the love of nature." They must, in other words, become in some respects like the new Hebrews of

Palestine. In a variation on Ahad Ha'am, whose influence on his thinking is manifest, Vitkin argued for a reciprocity between the Yishuv and the Diaspora that would ultimately, however, lead in a straight and unequivocal line to Palestine and ensure its preeminence. The task of a Hebrew education is to impart to students a love of the nation, he wrote, and this must not be "a platonic love that will lead them to dream in the Diaspora, but a concrete love, which mandates that [it] be fulfilled in their land."[13]

For the moment, however, the relationship was largely the reverse, and the Yishuv remained in many ways dependent on the support of Jews abroad. When the rise in immigration began to lead to housing inflation in Palestine's cities, Levontin wrote to Zionist leaders in other countries with a plan to raise money from wealthy Diaspora Jews for home-purchasing loans.[14] And when the teachers' association sought a wrestling instructor to help develop the new Hebrew physique in the native generation it was educating, it once again turned, ironically, toward Europe.[15] One incipient change in the nature of this support from abroad became immediately conspicuous, however, in the wake of the Seventh Zionist Congress. If virtually none of that support to date had come from the Zionist Organization, the post-Uganda years saw a quantum leap in the ZO's involvement and its financial support of a range of activities in Palestine. Paradoxically, the Yishuv's growing self-assertion as the site of a unique Hebrew culture was made possible in large measure through this increased support of Zionism from outside Palestine.

A key turning point both in the development of the Yishuv's culture and its changing relationship with the Diaspora came in January of 1906, when artist Boris Schatz immigrated to Palestine, determined to set up an art school and museum dedicated to the production and display of a new national Jewish art that would be rooted in the soil of Palestine. The scope of the new Bezalel's undertaking—and its national mandate—were broadly defined and included the ingathering of Jewish cultural possessions, the creation (based in some measure on that ingathering) of a new Jewish art, aesthetic, and culture, and finally, the training of Palestine's Jewish community—and the impoverished Jews of Jerusalem in particular—in a variety of crafts that would help wean them away from the *Haluka* economy. It was envisioned as the site in which a number of seemingly distinct national projects in the realm of the arts, artisanry, crafts, and even labor economics would be fused to express the new national spirit being born in Palestine.[16] Together they would give new shape not only to the Jewish community of Palestine itself, but also—by changing the visage of Jewishness there—to the interaction between the Jews of Palestine

and those of the Diaspora and ultimately to Jewish life throughout the world. Not surprisingly, such ambitious goals were not implemented without significant friction.

The organizational structure that Schatz first envisioned was from the outset an expression of a changing relationship between the Yishuv and the Diaspora. Bezalel was, for one thing, the first cultural project in Palestine to be granted official Zionist support. Indeed, Schatz had taken care to obtain a ZO endorsement before making his move to Palestine—he seems, in fact, to have first broached the idea to Herzl as early as 1902. Armed with this backing, Schatz insisted that Bezalel become the first "thoroughly national, Hebrew institution" in Palestine, hoping that official Zionist support would eliminate the kind of dependency on the Hilfsverein or other philanthropic (and non-nationalist) organizations that had characterized previous cultural projects, citing the threat that such a relationship would pose to the national Hebrew character of Bezalel.[17]

Highlighting the emerging complexity of Yishuv-Diaspora relations, he was backed in this effort by Ussishkin in Russia, who informed him that, when he had heard of the "desire of the Westerners to hand the leadership of Bezalel over to the *Hilfsverein*, I immediately wrote to Berlin and to Cologne [the seat of the Zionist executive] that in no way will I agree to this."[18] Support for this stance from some of the central European Zionists in Cologne, who were no less crucial allies (if more distant in cultural approach), was not always equally enthusiastic.[19] Alliances with Hovevei Zion or the ZO were, in any case, acceptable forms of Yishuv dependency on Diaspora Jewry in Schatz's view. Subordination, on the other hand, of what were intended as national and nationalizing institutions to nonnationalist organizations such as the Hilfsverein, he insisted, was no longer acceptable. In the end, the physical Bezalel in Jerusalem was governed in part by a Bezalel committee that was seated in Berlin and included representatives of the ZO, the Odessa committee, and leading non-Zionist philanthropic associations, such as the very Hilfsverein Schatz would clearly have preferred to exclude but whose funding he could not afford to forego.

As Inka Bertz has stressed, the history of Schatz's relationship with the Bezalel committee in Berlin is one of chafing and a struggle over authority that stemmed not only from a clash of formidable egos but also from conflicting expectations and notions of the relationship between the Yishuv and the Diaspora, which were not free of competing ideas regarding the essence and meaning of national art.[20] However, as the Yishuv grew demographically, as its institutions became ever more entrenched, and as the ZO progressively deepened its commitment to Palestine in the years following the Uganda

crisis, Schatz's approach to the institutional relations between the Yishuv and its Diaspora supporters became increasingly prevalent and viable.

Bezalel's impact on the Yishuv-Diaspora relationship, however, ran far deeper than this institutional dimension (where its successes were partial at best). Within a short time after its establishment, Bezalel proved a catalyst to changes in the very meanings that were attributed to the land as a national center and the diaspora as its periphery, and in this way it penetrated to the very heart of the project of crafting the new nation. Its creation and dissemination of a new national culture in Palestine served as a stimulus for a renewed—and dramatically altered—Yishuv-Diaspora relationship that would begin, according to Schatz's vision, with the transformation of Yishuv Jewry's aesthetic life and material living conditions alike. Schatz wrote frequently of "returning our people to a natural life" as one of Bezalel's paramount objectives, a formulation by which he meant the two seemingly distinct undertakings that he combined in the new school.[21] One of these was Bezalel's determination to create "productive" sources of income for rural colonists and city dwellers alike. The former often found themselves only semiemployed during transitional periods between agricultural seasons, while the general poverty of the urban Jewish communities—and Jerusalem's in particular—was a source of national consternation due, among other reasons, to the resultant dependence on *Haluka* as a principal source of income. Schatz's approach to ameliorating these economic blights was based on the creation of workshops designed to "productivize" the Yishuv by training its residents in a range of crafts and artisan skills.[22]

This was the kind of undertaking that found an echo among the Yishuv's supporters abroad, and Bezalel was often able to obtain financial backing for specific projects—and from those sponsors whom Schatz effectively handpicked and deemed acceptable. The Odessa committee provided the funding for stonecutting classes in Jerusalem, for example—an economic niche that was at the time occupied almost exclusively by "Christians and Arabs" and in which Schatz was convinced Jews could and should stake out a place for themselves.[23] Classes of this kind and the workshops Schatz initiated for crafts such as carpet and jewelry making quickly established Bezalel as a leading instrument for a brand of productivization that was clearly stamped with a Zionist ethos, a standing that is revealed in the many pleas Schatz received for assistance with a wide range of undertakings related to productivization. A year after the school was established, the Hebrew Teachers' Association asked to use the services of its artists to produce Hebrew monograms for use in the schools where girls were taught needlework.[24] A school teacher in the Galilean colony of Mescha (Kefar Tavor) wrote Schatz, asking for his help in providing

employment in Bezalel's carpet division for the sister of a young man who planned to settle as an agricultural worker in the Galilee.[25] Word of Bezalel's transformative role in Jerusalem reached as far away as eastern Europe, where young Jews, hopeful of immigrating to Palestine, at times addressed Schatz with their dreams of joining the artists and craftspeople of Bezalel (and others in the Yishuv) who "live off their fruits of their own labor rather than from 'haluka.'"[26]

Enmeshed in this anticipated economic transformation was what Schatz expected to be the crown jewel of Bezalel's revolutionary effect on both Palestine and Jewish life. Before his arrival in Palestine, Schatz had been an active observer of European national movements and had been involved in the construction of the Bulgarian national exhibition for the 1904 World's Fair in Saint Louis, Missouri.[27] He seems to have been particularly taken by projects aimed at gathering national folk attributes—an activity that was common among nationalist literary and artistic activists throughout Europe during these years and which many Zionists undertook as well.[28]

Art and artisanship were for Schatz the basis for a new Torah, and he conceived of Bezalel as its holy sanctuary, a veritable Third Temple. Indeed, the opposing poles of holiness and profanity were pivotal in his ambitious recasting of Jewish life in which Jerusalem stands at once as a center of the profane and the site of a future renewed sacrality. Schatz's vision—the combined impact of material and aesthetic production—was for a sweeping revival that would place Bezalel at the very heart of what he and many others in the Yishuv and the Zionist world saw as no less than a project of national redemption.

Indeed, the mood among many Zionists in Palestine seems to have been all but bristling with excitement in late 1905 with Schatz's imminent arrival, accompanied by Zionism's artistic superstar, Ephraim Moshe Lilien, who had provided the movement with some of its early congress imagery and some of the most familiar and important portraiture of the recently deceased Herzl.[29] Their arrival was adumbrated in all but messianic terms: All of the Yishuv's ills, the reports seemed to indicate, and even those of the Jewish people outside of Palestine—including the divisions between Ashkenzim and Sephardim, the *Haluka* system, the linguistic mélange, the degradation of the Jews among the nations, the economic hardship of life in the colonies—would be solved with the establishment of Schatz's art school.

In one of several pieces on the impending appearance of the two artists, Eliezer Ben-Yehuda expounded on the national significance of the event. "For Beauty will issue forth out of Zion and Art from Jerusalem," he wrote in his title—a paraphrase of the traditional "For Torah will issue forth out of Zion

and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem." Bezalel, as the new aesthetic and artistic expression of the national imperative, would replace (or perhaps reclaim) the religious dimension of the Torah and the covenant with God that it embodied, and exert a powerful spiritual influence on the lives of Jews in Palestine and throughout the world. Bezalel's commitment to workshops and training in the various crafts, Ben-Yehuda proclaimed, will help bring about an end to "the life of shame through 'charity,' which so degrades one's soul and spirit" and would usher in "salvation to the colonies." But the dejected mood in the Yishuv was not only the product of its material and economic plight. A no less urgent problem, Ben-Yehuda wrote, was "the masses of Jews here who are slowly perishing in a life lacking in hygiene and cleanliness." Among them, he projected, "there will gradually emerge a generation that will be more attuned to feelings of beauty, cleanliness and purity," thanks to the work that Bezalel would undertake. Echoing imagery that had been central to the "Jewish question" since the age of the Enlightenment, and resonating with the foundational experience of humiliation that was a motivating force behind many a Zionist position, Ben-Yehuda explained that this internal change in the psyche of Palestine's Jews—their improved hygienic and aesthetic sensibilities in particular—would be translated into an unprecedented respectability and honor and a new place in the community of nations. In an environment of intensifying international competition for cultural, religious, and political dominance in the Holy Land, he argued, the fact that "the first artistic institute in Jerusalem will be a Jewish one" would undoubtedly "add to Israel's honor."[30] Ben-Yehuda's exuberant expectations of Bezalel's national importance and impact were rooted in what was to him the singular fact that Schatz, as he reported, "has made it an immutable law that all Bezalel people—the principal, the teachers, the students and the workers—will all speak only Hebrew!"[31]

In his own first programmatic statement following his much-anticipated arrival in Palestine, Schatz framed what he expected to be Bezalel's importance as part of a modern nationalist movement in terms of a traditional religious act of constructing a home for sacred national treasures in Jerusalem. The creation of a Jewish art institute in Jerusalem, he wrote, was first and foremost an expression of the Jewish people's return to life. Jerusalem, after all, "has remained holy to us throughout our extended period of exile." And while it was true, he conceded, that in the past centuries "we have not constructed glorious temples" in the city, the lingering bond to the land and the city had inspired Jews to continue to build "many houses of prayer and of burial."[32]

Indeed, for centuries Jews had maintained customs such as burial with small packets of soil from the Holy Land, and some had immigrated there in old age with the goal of being buried in its soil. While burial rites had been

important in maintaining a bond between the Jews and their land, this link, Schatz argued, was too exclusively associated with death. Now, in the era of national rebirth, it must be given new form. Bezalel's presence in Jerusalem would renew the Jewish people's link to the vitality of their distant past in the land, thus prompting a profound transformation in the Jewish people and infusing their death-bound connection to the land with a stream of new life. "Gradually," Schatz wrote

> our people will learn to look to the Holy Land not as a ... place where
> one hopes to be buried, but rather as a *living* land, in which one
> can live a pleasant life today as well, and to return it to that distant
> time when the Mount of Olives was covered in olive trees and an
> echo responded from within that grove to the voices of the daughters
> of Israel and to their song.[33]

The transvaluation that Schatz envisioned in the reality of the Mount of Olives and its national-spiritual significance evinced precisely the kind of interplay between traditional tropes and radical innovation that characterized much of Zionist discourse and cultural praxis in Palestine. While excoriating the traditional Jewish relationship to the Mount of Olives (and to the land as a whole), echoes of that tradition continue to resonate in Schatz's vision of the transfigured bond between nation and land. Of course, the death traditionally associated with the Mount of Olives had itself been interwoven with a vision of renewed life: It was from there that the messianic resurrection of the dead was to begin. Schatz interlaces an echo of this traditional sentiment within his attempt to supplant it. His use of traditional imagery, moreover, rather than mitigating the revolutionary nature of his message, instead further radicalizes it by underscoring the messianic presumption that Bezalel (and Zionism in Palestine) was to play in Jewish life. The end of days—the resurrection of the dead and the return to life of the land of Israel—will no longer await divine intervention. Zionism (and the Bezalel project as its new spearhead) thus represents a concrete and immanent revival of the dead (or dying) nation through an active transformation of the land, of the Jews' connection to it, and of the Jews themselves.[34]

Further endorsement of this messianic dimension of the new institute, equally couched in the language of death and rebirth, came in a dedication message sent to Schatz by Rabbi Abraham Isaac Ha-Cohen Kook, then rabbi of Jaffa (later, under the mandate, chief rabbi of Palestine) and an all-but-prophetic figure in the pantheon of religious Zionism. In an elaborate parable, Kook likened the destroyed Jerusalem, which he imagined as being itself in exile, to an ailing child and pointed to Bezalel as the first sign of "hope for

salvation and comfort," a "life-giving stream" for a child long confined to a sickbed. Steeped in the traditions of Jewish mysticism, which were a primary defining force in his particular version of religious Zionism, Kook extolled Bezalel and the "sensitivity for beauty and purity" that it was destined to produce among Palestine's Jews as a force that would "uplift many depressed souls"—a compliment that, particularly when coming from Kook, could not but resonate with the traditional image of the uplifting of the sparks associated with cosmic redemption.[35]

If these were the words of a mystically oriented religious Zionist, much of the so-called secular discourse surrounding the new art of Bezalel struck a similar cord, although here a dissonant note was often added, thereby transfiguring the claim to sacrality and redefining the profanity with which it was contrasted. Indeed, these messianic expectations were one facet of a pervasive tone of religiosity that permeated much of the discourse surrounding the new school. Bezalel, after all, had been named for the biblical Bezalel Ben-Uri, whom Moses had charged with the task of designing and building "a temple in the wilderness," in Schatz's words, for a people heading toward the Promised Land.[36] This peculiar juxtaposition by Schatz—of the Temple, constructed by a sovereign monarch of a sovereign Israelite nation in its land, with the "wilderness" of a nation as yet unformed—appeared in a great many of his writings and in much of the visual imagery Bezalel produced. It was a recurrent trope that serves as a telling illustration of a defining tension at the very heart of the messianic overtones associated with Bezalel, one that corresponded to the ambivalence of Zionist imageries of Jerusalem and constituted a seminal breach within the Zionist undertaking in Palestine generally. The sense of the Jewish people even in Jerusalem as still in the wilderness and in need of guidance through the new Torah, which a Mosaic Schatz and his artists would provide, resonated with the ubiquitous image of Jerusalem as a site of exile. At the same time, this wilderness image stood in tension with the fact that Bezalel now stood, after all, in Jerusalem. However exilic much of its current Jewish life, Jerusalem's geographic and conceptual centrality to just about any Zionist notion of the Promised Land, as the very epicenter of that promise, could hardly be ignored. An inner conflict, in other words, stood at the very core of Bezalel's messianic self-representation as both a tabernacle for a people still wandering in the wilderness and—in terms that are strikingly unmetaphorical—as a new Temple, the structural foundation of a modern national redemption. Bezalel and the Jerusalem in which it was established belonged both to that wilderness, and hence to exile—with yet a long and arduous trek to redemption—and to the concrete reality of a nascent redemption in the heart of the Promised Land.

Both poles in this tension cast Schatz (in his own eyes) and the art he would create as a veritable renewal of prophecy in modern form. Indeed, Schatz often viewed and represented himself as the modern equivalent of Moses (traditionally the first and greatest prophet of Israel), once again appointing the artists and directing the art that would create a modern tabernacle to lead a wandering nation to its promised land. "I looked upon art," as Schatz wrote in a moment of thoughtfulness for the future historian, "as a temple and upon artists as its priests."[37] (See figure 6.1.)

That art would be the principal medium through which the renewed living bond between the nation and its land would be inaugurated, then, was not an accident. For a people ostensibly ailing in aesthetic sensibility,[38] the inception of a new national aesthetic was imagined as a critical centerpiece of the creation of a healthy and living national culture. In this, Bezalel was part of a broader search for Jewish folk art and through it for the Jewish folk character, which was under way in Europe as well, having begun there at least as early as the late nineteenth century.[39] This, Schatz wrote (and one can also hear echoes of his experiences in Bulgaria), is the natural trajectory for any national movement. "It is the first sign of any nation coming to life," he explained, "that it begins to search and to gather its memories and antiquities, its legends and poems—any object that reminds it of the life of its forefathers, and illuminates that life."[40]

While devoted to the creation of a national art and aesthetic that would be markedly new and would emerge as distinct from that which was being searched for and created in Europe, Schatz therefore sought to ground them firmly in the soil of Palestine and the Jewish past in that land. Among the chief mandates of the museum associated with the school was to gather the nation's "memories and antiquities, its legends and poems"—artifacts of any and every kind that reflected the land and the Jewish past in it and away from it.[41] These included artifacts associated with the Jewish religious heritage, which were placed alongside botanical and zoological exhibits taken from the native flora and fauna of Palestine, thereby implicitly granting them equal status with the displays of traditional Judaica as components of a Jewish cultural heritage. "What is vital for nationalism and the nation," Anthony Smith writes, "is not some promise of imminent apocalypse, but the very core of traditional religions, their conception of the sacred and their rites of salvation. This is what the nationalists must rediscover and draw upon in fashioning their own ideals of community, history, and destiny."[42] Bezalel's reconfiguration of a new national sacrality was given form through an iconography, geography, and discourse of a very concretized Palestine, a Yerushalayim shel Mata (earthly Jerusalem), set against the symbols of traditional religious sacrality of

FIGURE 6.1. Boris Schatz in the white *jalabia* styled robe he often sported, with its combined intimations of fusion into the Oriental environment and the priestly/prophetic position he claimed for himself and his artistic endeavor.

Yerushalayim shel Ma'ala (heavenly Jerusalem) and conflated with them.[43] If one important function of the museum was to serve as a training ground for the students preparing to create the nation's new art in the school, moreover, Bezalel's combination of sources, which juxtaposed the traditional cultural heritage with a Palestine-centered Zionist aesthetic that in some ways subverted that heritage, indicated the twin fonts of the new national creativity Schatz expected Bezalel to foster.[44] (See figure 6.2.)

There were other reasons for the museum's ingathering as well. The Jews' ostensible aesthetic deficiency—as much a result of the modern Jew's rupture with the cultural assets of the Jewish past as of the calcification of traditional Judaism, according to Schatz—also had political ramifications as a leading explanation for Jewish degradation among the nations. "We are unable to have respect for ourselves and to dream of our future," Schatz wrote, "if we do not know how to cherish our past." Reclaiming and refiguring that past was a project that could be undertaken only in Jerusalem, he added, since that city was "the cradle of our nation." Gathering the Jewish antiquities whose very being was tied with Jerusalem and Palestine, Schatz explained, "will provide us with invaluable materials for the creation of a Hebrew style in our art," and this in turn would allow Bezalel "to return our nation to a natural life, each under his vine and fig tree."[45]

Given this importance of physical location in the rearrangement of Jewish aesthetics and culture, the site Schatz initially chose for his new artistic tabernacle—in the eastern part of Jerusalem and in proximity to the Old City— was selected as a particularly evocative spatial marker. Its most salient feature (and one that Schatz repeatedly highlighted in his efforts to obtain the necessary funding to purchase it) was the view it offered of the Temple Mount. It was "of prime importance," he wrote to Russian Zionist leader Bezalel Jaffe in October of 1906, that so vital a national institution as his own be erected so *"near the location of the Holy Temple,"*[46] thereby providing it a location that would manifest the promise of a quasi-messianic salvation that Schatz (and others) expected of his Bezalel.

Aside from the obvious implications of locating the first national institute of art in such a location for the resurgence of a national spirit, Schatz argued, it would also help establish the institution and the art it would produce as "the possession of the entire nation."[47] And a religious-national possession of this kind in a Palestine that was at the time the site of intense struggle between the European powers would have a profound importance in altering the Jews' political position in the country and their relations with other nations. It was "only by a miracle," Schatz wrote, "that this land has remained in Arab hands rather than having been purchased by Christians, who already own everything

FIGURE 6.2. An invitation to the opening of the Bezalel museum. Held on Lag Ba-Omer, the event served as a ritual assertion of the new school's standing as a centerpiece of Jerusalem's newly nationalized public space. With an art exhibition as its centerpiece, the invitation promises a celebration of the nation that will include choral singing, theater, magic lantern pictures, and *tableaux vivants*.

in its proximity. Every mountain, and around all the city walls, every nation can boast a house of prayer, a monastery, a school and more. And we—if we purchase this land—will secure for ourselves a national institution near the walls of our city."[48]

The significance of the site was echoed by the Zionist Movement's official representatives in Palestine. Menahem Sheinkin, a veteran Zionist who directed the Hovevei Zion Information Bureau in Jaffa, and Zalman David Levontin, director of the Anglo-Palestine Company, wrote ZO President David Wolffsohn in support of Schatz's request for funding to make the purchase possible. They agreed with Schatz's characterization of the site and the importance of the view it offered of "the historical Mount Moriah" and the *Makom-Mikdasch* [site of the Temple; literally, site of holiness]. Confirming the sense that the site offered to provide the Jews with a combined religious-political foothold in the city, they went a step further than Schatz by urging Wolffsohn to have the national fund "purchase the entire plot." "Aside from the Jews," they explained, "every nation has national land and national buildings in Jerusalem and its surroundings.... Only the Jews, who now lay claim to Palestine, have nothing."[49]

The ubiquitous anticipation of individual and collective redemption that was associated with Bezalel from its outset did not spare Schatz protracted negotiations with the Zionist Bank under Levontin's directorship, at the end of which the purchase of the plot failed to materialize—a fact that surely served only to deepen his sense of kinship with the original Ben-Uri, constructing a tabernacle for a nation still wandering in the wilderness. Notwithstanding his disappointment, however, Schatz would soon complete the purchase of a building in the developing western part of Jerusalem. Although the view it offered of the Old City and its eminent religious and historic sites was not quite as compelling, the new location quickly emerged as a site of pilgrimage to the "new" Zionist Jerusalem and as a national icon in its own right. Adorned with a seven-branch menorah (see figure 6.3), Bezalel's building would become one of the most important and recurrent symbols of national rebirth in Zionist depictions of a Jerusalem that was often imagined as "the musty deposits of two thousand years of inhumanity, intolerance, and uncleanliness ... in ... foul-smelling alleys," as Herzl had written after his visit there some years earlier.[50]

If Jerusalem, in other words, often seemed an outpost of *galut* within the land of rebirth, Bezalel was the spearhead of its transformation into the land of the new Hebrew. Schatz would undoubtedly have endorsed Eric Hobsbawm's understanding of national icons as images that "represent the symbols and rituals or common collective practices which alone give a palpable reality to [an]

FIGURE 6.3. The Bezalel building, with the seven-branched menorah displayed prominently on the roof. The Temple of the new Jerusalem, offering a view (although admittedly a compromised one) of the site of the ancient Temple of the old Jerusalem.

otherwise imaginary community."[51] And if Bezalel figured prominently as a leading symbol of the new Yishuv and its new national sacrality, this was in no small measure the result of very calculated efforts by Schatz and the artists under his tutelage, who set out to create the new national iconography for the budding nation, whose spiritual center they believed themselves to be.

Not long after the museum's establishment, Schatz began to be virtually inundated with appeals and requests for collaboration of various sorts from individuals and other institutions dedicated similarly to the creation of a national iconography and to nationalizing the public and private lives of Palestine's Jews. By 1908 the Hebrew Teachers' Association began to look to Bezalel to provide art classes for its members,[52] and the newly emerging Hebrew gymnasium in Tel Aviv turned to Schatz in Jerusalem to design the façade for its new building.[53] An appeal for embroidery monograms in Hebrew lettering that was sent to Schatz by a teacher in the northern Galilee colony of Rosh Pinah was even more plainly concerned with the juncture of public and private in the colony. Wherever young girls were provided such training in the country's colonies, Schatz's interlocutor complained, it was never in Hebrew since "ornamented Hebrew letters" were simply unavailable, and there was consequently hardly "a single Hebrew home in which the linens have Hebrew letters embroidered on them." The French and Russian lettering on the colony's hanging laundry, he complained, "pains one's eyes."[54]

Emphasizing the mythical dimensions associated with Bezalel's production of a national symbolism, moreover (intimately tied up here with the mythic dimensions of the Hebrew language), the Latin and Cyrillic lettering on Rosh Pinah's linens had to be replaced, according to the letter, since they are "foreign images" *(ha-Tziyurim ha-Zarim ha-lo Ivriim)*. These resonated with one of the most severe prohibitions in Jewish tradition, one that spoke directly to Bezalel's mandate to produce an imagery and art that were distinctly Jewish.[55] Schatz's speedy reply seems to indicate the importance that he too attributed to the matter. He promised that Bezalel had already begun to look into the creation of "all sorts of games and monograms out of the Hebrew letters that will be made available for sewing and embroidery as well,"[56] and before long Bezalel's artists had indeed produced a plethora of new Hebrew lettering and design.

Cast in the role of quintessential representative of the new culture that was emerging in the Yishuv, Bezalel's combination of economic and artistic revival became simultaneously a source of great excitement and a site of friction and unease among Zionists outside of Palestine. As early as November of 1906 (shortly before his own move to Palestine), Bezalel Jaffe could write to Schatz

of the importance of the new museum's work of ingathering in generating renewed energy for Zionist activity in Russia. Bezalel, he wrote, was already serving as a "shelter for the spirit of Israel and its Teachings"—not only for those of the Yishuv itself.[57]

As a pillar of Jewish rebirth in a city into which Jewish death and exile had crept too deeply, Bezalel offered the Jews of Palestine and the Diaspora alike a vision of the nation reborn and redeemed. In one conversation with "one of the important tourists," as Hebrew writer and educator Kadish Yehuda Silman recounted some four years after Bezalel's establishment, he had asked the visitor what he had seen that had been tourist-worthy in the city. "Two things," was the answer. "The dead Western Wall and the living Bezalel; the remembrance of the past and the harbinger of the future."[58]

And if actual tourism was a rare privilege, an initiative from Cleveland, Ohio, sought to export this imagery of the nation returned to life for mass dissemination among Jews abroad. Looking to Bezalel as the fulcrum of this redemption and a wellspring from which Jews in the United States might draw on the national energy emerging from Palestine, one supporter sought to enlist Schatz's collaboration in the preparation of "a full set of moving electrical pictures of the life of our nation and of all our colonizing and national work in Palestine." The show would conjoin Palestine's distant past with its Zionist present by juxtaposing "pictures of the lives of our farmers and their labor in the colonies," images of national institutions such as Bezalel and others, along with likenesses of "Samson, Bar-Kochba and Deborah in the very places where they performed their deeds [in the setting of] beautiful sites in Palestine." It would be accompanied by "a phonograph to play the songs and games of Jewish children in Palestine," thereby bringing this fusion of sounds and images to "the United States to awaken the members of our nation and to interest them in our national project in Palestine."[59] In addition to its task of productivizing the Jews of Palestine and providing them with their own set of new national symbols, Bezalel was beginning to be seen abroad as a new oracle that might convey its message to the Jews of the Diaspora as well.[60]

As a new source of inspiration for Jews in the Diaspora, Bezalel would have to compete, however, with the long-standing "suspicion [with which] people tend to regard all Palestinian undertakings," as David Wolffsohn reminded Schatz in one letter. It was therefore best, he urged him, to hold off on placing far-reaching demands before the Zionist annual conference "until you can present positive results."[61] But some of the discomfort that would come to characterize the relationship between Bezalel as representative of Yishuv culture and certain Jews in the Diaspora ran deeper than a persisting paternalism.

An exchange between Boris Schatz and the (then) American Hebrew writer Ephraim Deinard surrounding Bezalel's artistic orientation and its representation among Jews abroad is a particularly telling instance of the ways in which the geographical distance between these two emerging centers of Jewish life would prove constitutive of fundamental divergences in their sensibilities.[62] Even as Bezalel was becoming a source of pride for Diaspora Jews and a showcase of Palestine's new Jewish culture, its artists' readiness to stretch and redefine the boundaries and substance of Jewish culture in ways that were declaredly Palestinian also began to emerge as a source of discomfort for Deinard and others in his milieu. In his letter to Schatz, Deinard identified himself as a Bezalel supporter who was now reconsidering his backing after "a Yiddish journal has published the fact that the image of Jesus of Nazareth and pictures of his apostles are being created in your school," therefore poisoning the joy and pride they had expected Bezalel to be.[63] As a Hebraist and Hebrew writer, Deinard wrote, he might have been skeptical of this particular source— the organ of a competing version of Jewish culture. However, a visitor from Jerusalem brought reports not only of an art that displayed forbidden images but also of customs that surrounded it and characterized the Zionist Yishuv in general, which evinced a heretical bent and lent the emerging culture the tenor of a pagan cult. Further transgressing the traditional prohibition on the forging of images, Deinard reports, the guest related that "a statue of Dr. Herzl was formed, and a procession marched with cries of joy to a colony where the deceased had planted a tree." Supporters of Zionist work were deeply disconcerted, Deinard reported, and now found no answer to their opponents' charge that the Zionists were "*defiling the land* with statues and images."[64]

Symbolic of the growing distance and miscommunication that at times colored the relationship between the Yishuv and Diaspora Jewry (and perhaps occasionally do so today), the overall presentation of the new blend of holidays, style of celebration, and artistic work that was coming together to constitute the Yishuv's national culture was not inaccurate (see figure 6.4). In its deviation from traditional Jewish norms and the suggestion contained in it of a new cult centered around a new national style, it may have appeared to some Jews abroad—and even to a Zionist and Hebrew writer like Deinard, who was undoubtedly well in tune with the ideas of contemporary Hebrew literature and Zionist thought—as a form of outright idolatry.

In his reply, Schatz implicitly acknowledged that the culture that Bezalel was helping to produce in Palestine represented a transformation not only of the Jews but of the Holy Land itself. This transformation was not desecration, however, he retorted, and accusations of this kind could be made only by "one of the indolent Jerusalemites who see Bezalel as a threat to their *haluka*

FIGURE 6.4. Herzl Day as celebrated at Bezalel. The image of the deceased leader would become a point of contention. Here it is combined with a templelike façade, a Masonic square and compass, and the ever-present imagery of the biblical tabernacle. Schatz as prophet-priest stands in the center.

livelihood" and who therefore constituted the true blemish on the city's holy character. Bezalel's efforts to create avenues for the productivization of Jerusalem's Jewish community, as Schatz indicated—a task that was inseparable from its reclamation of a lost national aesthetic sensibility expressed in its new material culture—was the reclamation of Jewish holiness (and of the holiness of Jerusalem). Those who opposed these efforts, he wrote, were "of the clan of Korach"—a reference to biblical rebels who, motivated by greed and corruption, attempted to challenge the leadership of Moses in the desert (and were punished accordingly). Bezalel (and Schatz), in contrast, were cast once again in this context in the role of Moses, the messengers of a new Torah that would indeed issue forth from Zion—not, however, from that of the traditional, corrupt, and exilic old Yishuv but rather from the productive and culture-generating Bezalel. The secularized sacrality constituted by the new Jewish art and the new Hebrews' celebrations would replace the old, exilic traditions and were now beginning to claim increasing exclusivity as the nation's true "Torah."

While working in a certain sense for a secularization of the land and struggling to wrest the hegemony in the Jewish community from the religious leadership, Zionist cultural work (as Schatz understood it) also had a core of deep religiosity. Zionism's economic, settlement, and cultural activity as brought together in Bezalel constituted a reclamation of both the land and its holiness.[65] Sacrality itself was being contested, as differing visions of Jewish culture and Palestine's place in it increasingly competed for centrality and legitimacy in a changing Jewish world. To opponents of Zionism, such as the visitors from whom Deinard had heard the disturbing news of some of the cultural activity in Palestine, that activity—Bezalel's conflation of Yerushalayim shel Ma'ala with the concrete Yerushalayim shel Mata—constituted a demotion that threatened to sap Palestine and the Jewish connection to it of their holiness and sacrality. For Zionists like Schatz, this reunification of the heavenly and the earthly through the re-creation of Jewish material and spiritual cultures represented a new kind of sacrality and a means, perhaps, to retrieve a sacrality of old, which had degenerated and decayed in the city's debased physical, economic, and social conditions.

This struggle over meanings and the power and authority to create them was unfolding not only within the Palestinian arena. As the Zionist sector of the Yishuv was beginning to evince its potential for the hegemony it would obtain there some time after the First World War, that dispute was developing between competing centers of Jewish life and their respective power to serve as central axes and defining factors for Jewish culture. As Deinard's letter suggests, this new rivalry would pit the Yishuv's principal Zionist activists not only against more traditionalist Jews but also at times even against some of their

most stalwart supporters abroad. It was a contest over the very definitions of center and periphery in the emerging life of the nation, and even some of those who had taken part in the early visions of Palestine as a new spiritual center, where Jewish culture could be comfortably recast in nontraditional terms, began to grow uneasy in the face of its actual emergence and at the sight of the form it was beginning to take on. If the Zionei Zion had set out after their 1905 Congress victory to transfer the movement's center of gravity to Palestine, the relationship that arose as that shift began to materialize was proving to be a complex and often ambivalent one.

If Bezalel was the symbolic manifestation of that evolving relationship, its organizational basis would soon be given a new footing with the establishment of the Zionist Organization's Palestine office in Jaffa in 1908. In the spring of that year, a young Arthur Ruppin arrived on the shores of Jaffa as the newly appointed head of this first Zionist office in Palestine. As Margalit Shilo has pointed out, the ideas that lay behind Ruppin's mission reflected the lingering duality in the ZO's view of Palestine, in which recognition of the Yishuv's increased prominence was mingled with continued skepticism of its ability to act on its own behalf. Not only was Palestine viewed as a backward and primitive land, after all, "but its residents were considered to be primitive as well," and for this reason the ZO's new office in the Levantine city of Jaffa was to be headed not by a local resident but by a new arrival who had not only come from Europe, as had many of the Yishuv's residents, but from the urban, central European cultural hub of Berlin, as had virtually none of them.[66]

If dispatching the young, urbane, and highly educated Ruppin (he was a lawyer and a sociologist) was an expression of the ZO's wary attitude toward the Yishuv, moreover, his very visible differences in mannerism and cultural orientation helped at first to make him—and the office he headed—somewhat suspect in the eyes of many more veteran settlers. There may have been some thinly veiled sense of personal and organizational rivalry in the chilly welcome afforded Ruppin by Menahem Sheinkin, who saw the newcomer and his office as a competitor to the Hovevei Zion Information Bureau in Jaffa, which Sheinkin headed. But his repeated complaints about the newcomer's cultural habits and general disposition are indicative of more substantive differences as well. The New Year's Eve party Ruppin held as 1908 came to a close, for example, seemed to Sheinkin to evince an "odor of European imitation." The fact that the party had not been complemented by an official Hanukkah celebration seemed to further support this sense of Ruppin's foreignness, and Sheinkin was not to be mollified by the "explanation that...this was the custom in Europe."[67]

At its establishment, then, the Palestine office exposed the strong sense of estrangement that tempered the growing mutuality between the Yishuv and the centers of the Zionist establishment. However, the suspicion of Ruppin and his office would quickly fizzle and then dissipate almost entirely by the outbreak of the First World War, as the Palestine Office emerged as a vital link between the ZO and the Yishuv, through which the residents of Palestine took an increasingly frequent lead in setting the agenda for Zionist activity. Ruppin's personality and ability to unquestionably become both a resident of the Yishuv (in spite of his continuing difficulties with the Hebrew language) and a representative of the Zionist Organization was an important factor in this process. Its implications for the changing nature of a complex relationship between a nascent nation's appendages ran far deeper, however, than the meeting of personalities. The initially cautious cooperation between the ZO and the Yishuv through the Palestine Office soon became a close alliance and eventually a virtual identity of interests.

Some years later, in 1911, Jacob Thon, Ruppin's secretary in the Palestine Office, would write that, although its structure might still be delicate, "as a national organism, Palestinian Jewry has gained strength during the last few years."[68] Indeed, by that time, a "national organism" did seem to be in the works in the Yishuv, the joint project of a number of distinct forces—veteran activists such as Ben-Yehuda, Yudilovitz, and much of the membership of the Hebrew Teachers' Association; the recently arrived workers, who saw themselves as the new vanguard of the national project in Palestine; others, such as Boris Schatz, who arrived along with them but were socially and culturally closer to the views and approaches of the more veteran Yishuv; and the direct backing of the Zionist Organization, now active in a range of settlement and cultural activities funneled principally through Ruppin and the Palestine Office. By 1908, the human and institutional infrastructure of that national entity seemed clearly to be emerging, and along with it a palpable transformation in the nature of Palestine-Diaspora relations. But just as this infrastructure was being put in place, appearing to change the face of Jewish life in Palestine and its impact on Jewish life abroad, revolutionary events in the Ottoman Empire would bring about important changes in the conditions in which Zionist work in Palestine was taking place and alter the tenor of Zionist cultural activity.

7

"Halbasien" in Asia

East Meets West in Zionist Culture

Just as Arthur Ruppin was beginning his work as the Zionist Orga-
nization's man in Palestine, the political situation in the country and
in the empire of which it was a part underwent a sudden and unex-
pected upheaval. In July of 1908 a coalition of groups composed
primarily of students and military officers successfully forced the
hand of Sultan Abdulhamid II, leading him to reinstate the consti-
tution he had revoked more than three decades earlier, in 1876. The
Young Turk revolution rocked the empire and sent shock waves
through the Zionist Movement as well.[1] Although the revolution
was relatively bloodless, the Ottoman Empire henceforth entered a
period of political unrest and instability that would continue until its
ultimate dissolution in the wake of the First World War.

The modernizing impulse that lay at the basis of the revolution
led to an internal tension within the new regime. On the one
hand, the emphasis placed by the Committee of Union and Progress
(CUP) on constitutionalism, liberalization, and various freedoms
that stemmed from them (such as an increased freedom of the
press) led many of the empire's ethnic groups to view the revolu-
tion as an opportunity for unprecedented expression of particularist
nationalisms—a veritable Ottoman springtime of nations. On the
other hand, that same modernization, as many of the new regime's
leaders envisioned it, entailed an unprecedented presence of a
newly cast Turkish nationalism in the reconstitution of the empire,

which caused them to look with much displeasure on what they deemed potentially separatist national movements.[2]

Between the revolution and the outbreak of the First World War, the Ottomans would loose substantial portions of their empire's territory to the combined effects of breakaway nationalism and the intervention of foreign powers. This began as early as October 5, 1908, when Bulgaria declared its complete independence and Austria-Hungary annexed Bosnia-Herzegovina the following day, and continued through the Balkan wars, the First World War, and the empire's ultimate collapse.[3] A central aim of the new regime was the transformation of the empire into a modern sovereign state that, as one historian of the revolution has written, was "unlikely to tolerate the privileged position enjoyed by foreigners in Turkey,"[4] the much-resented centerpiece of which was the system of capitulations—a set of agreements with foreign governments that allowed foreign residents in the empire to be subject to the laws of their own countries and to the authority of their respective consulates. Hence, the CUP's policy of reform led almost inevitably to a head-on clash with the European powers, which had in any case been poised over the preceding century to consume the spoils of the ailing empire.

The altered circumstances in the postrevolutionary empire seemed, especially at the outset, to provide new opportunities for Zionist diplomacy and its work in Palestine, even as it posed new challenges on both of these fronts as well.[5] It also entailed a number of choices that Zionists (both in Palestine and abroad) would have to make, involving both pragmatic considerations and substantive-ideological decisions. These in turn often sharpened tensions that in many cases had been inherent in the Zionist project in Palestine from its outset but would now emerge as salient factors in shaping Zionist cultural work, just as that work was gaining unprecedented momentum.

One such simmering tension, which lay at the very root of Zionist cultural work and visions of the future national entity it was striving to produce—visions, one might add, from which Zionist diplomacy and politics were inseparable—was rooted in Zionism's internal conflicts regarding Occident and Orient, their respective cultures, and the position of the Jews along that continuum. On the one hand was Zionism's familiar assertion of its unique capacity to bring European civilization to a backward Levant and to serve as a bulwark against the "Orient." Coexisting with this, however, was a pervasive, if less familiar, sense that in establishing themselves in the "Orient," the Jews—alien in any case in a Europe that was ejecting them—would be returning to their true "racial" and cultural wellspring. Although Zionism was born in Europe and rooted in its intellectual and cultural climate, its gaze was, in a range of elaborate ways, drawn intrinsically to the East.

The growing fascination with Palestine among European Jews in the nineteenth century, which had been one of the constitutive ingredients in the making of Zionism, had been adopted in large measure from a broader interest in the Orient and things Oriental, which characterized much of Europe's artistic, cultural, and political discourse. As a now vast literature on Orientalism has demonstrated, nineteenth-century Europe was home to a veritable fascination with "the east," in which the Holy Land held a place of special distinction.[6] The Jews, moreover, as recent scholarship is becoming increasingly aware, played a pivotal role in the manner in which Europeans imagined the Orient. In turn, the Jews' own image in the European mind (as in their own) and their place in European societies were themselves deeply affected by this imagery of the Orient.[7] Within the Zionist context, the unique and pivotal role that Palestine was to play in the Jewish national renaissance, coupled with the powerful traditional valence of the very term "East" (*mizrach*) in traditional Jewish terminology, served to cast multiple (and often conflicting) visions of "the East" in a distinctive hue.

It was hardly an insignificant coincidence, moreover, that those engaged in the Zionist project of constructing a new national culture rooted in the "Oriental" soil of Palestine were by and large immigrants from *eastern* Europe. The very concepts of "eastern Europe" and the "Orient" were of contemporaneous origin, articulated in direct relation to one another around the late eighteenth century as the twin counterpoints to the idea of a Western, or European, civilization. One eighteenth-century American traveler traversing the European continent from Siberia westward wrote of his sense of relief upon returning to Europe after crossing "the great barrier" of "Asiatic and European manners" that ran roughly between Poland and Prussia.[8]

The conceptualization of a Europe divided along an east-west line resonated with a wide range of cultural, philosophical, and even ethnic and racial overtones, intimately related to the division of the world beyond Europe into an Occident and an Orient. Indicative of the conceptual affinity between these two geographical constructs, the lands beyond the eastern borders of Prussia might be referred to by French travelers and scholars alternately as "l'Europe orientale" or "l'orient de l'Europe" [literally, the Orient of Europe].[9] The peoples of those lands, moreover, and their mores and culture seemed to many a western European observer to evince an Oriental, or quasi-Asiatic, essence.[10]

Even more than other local populations, the Jews were deeply implicated in the twin conceptualizations of the Orient and of Europe's own "Orient" at home. By the late nineteenth century, the notion of eastern Europe as *halbasien* (half-Asia, or semi-Asiatic) had acquired particular resonance in the context of the ever-present "Jewish question." For many non-Jews, and in anti-Semitic

discourse in particular, the Jews were foreigners precisely because of their Eastern origins and Oriental nature. When the increased immigration of the late nineteenth century brought large numbers of Jews from the East into central and western Europe, the emancipated and integrated Jews of Germany in particular sought to distinguish themselves from their backward "Asiatic" brothers and sisters. The Ostjuden (eastern European Jews), it was now assumed in a great deal of Jewish discourse as well, represented the "Asian" element in Judaism, which acculturated Jews had happily left behind.[11]

In German Zionist youth circles, the imagery would be reversed, emerging instead as a countermyth that glorified the Ostjude as a more authentic, undivided Jew, "a foil for the presentation of the Western Jew as shallow, imitative, and assimilating." This critique, moreover, was often extended beyond the Jewish context into a broader denunciation of European civilization and its purportedly mechanical and spiritless nature.[12] The allure of the "Europe" to which so many Jews had aspired since the age of enlightenment—where humanism, emancipation, and equality reigned—had surely not dissipated in the age of Zionism, but it seemed to clash with another "Europe" where many of Zionism's founders and activists had been made to feel distinctly unwelcome, futureless, and at times physically threatened.

At the very foundation of the Zionist cultural project, then, lay assumptions that placed the Jewish Yishuv in Palestine at a critical juncture in this divide between multiple conceptualizations of East and West. As most Zionists understood it, the goal of replacing an ostensibly degenerated Jewish culture in exile with a new, healthy, national Jewish life was based on a geographical precondition—the removal of at least a significant number of Europe's Jews to the Middle East. Inevitably, then, divergent perceptions of the East and "Oriental" culture, interwoven with differing views of Europe and European civilization would have a formative impact on the ways in which the future national culture was envisioned. Yet in spite of the complexity of this multifaceted imagery of Orient and Occident in Zionism and the Yishuv—and the diverse views this composite entailed for relations between the nascent Jewish nation and the peoples of the Middle East—the multihued (if at times uncomfortable) tapestry these all came together to create has often been painted in various monochromes more reflective of current ideological struggles than of a thorough examination of Zionist thought and praxis.

In her study of Zionist Utopias and their projected visions of a future Jewish society, Rachel Elboim-Dror argues for a distinctively Eurocentric disposition among Zionist writers, which "surfaces in every corner and from every topic" and was indicative of these writers' general tendency to identify themselves with a supposedly superior European civilization.[13] Approaching the

question from a different perspective, Edward Said has argued that Zionism and European anti-Semitism shared an "Orientalist perspective" that in the case of the former was applied to the Arabs and the peoples of the Orient, who were seen as "by nature lacking the desirable qualities of the Occidentals."[14] And Amnon Raz-Krokotzkin, whose often-nuanced reading recognizes the "variety of attitudes toward the Orient" that emerged within Zionism, nevertheless argues that "Zionist thought ... did not challenge the dichotomy between Europe and the Orient" but was rather unequivocally "based on the desire to assimilate into the West."[15]

In fact, however, the range of views on "East" and "West" that Zionism accommodated was considerably wider, and the relations and tensions between them more complex, equivocal, and at times ambivalent. A Europe-centered approach could indeed be found in many Zionist texts and the cultural activity they informed. But this perspective was often accompanied—at times within the confines of a single piece of writing or a specific cultural undertaking—by notions of a decline of the West and a concomitant anticipation of a rebirth of the East, in which the Jewish return there would play an integral role. While one recent study sheds a more nuanced light on the imagery of East and West in Hebrew literature,[16] the application of this imagery to the act of cultural production has yet to be examined. This multivocality (and the differing understandings of what East and West in fact were) often permeated even the most "European" visions of the future national culture and the ways in which that culture was produced.

One attempt to sketch the contours of a new Jewish society in Palestine was Theodor Herzl's 1902 utopian novel, *Altneuland*. Although Herzl had little direct contact with Zionism's cultural work in Palestine—and was in fact largely opposed to much of it—both his standing as the virtually uncontested leader of the movement he had founded and the common view of *Altneuland* as a particularly Eurocentric text make it worthy of examination. Indeed, even in this archetypically Eurocentric Zionist vision, elements of "East" are stirred into the mix in a number of important and telling points.

The novel opens with the despair of Friedrich Löwenberg, a young, educated Viennese Jew who detests the empty life of the Viennese Jewish bourgeoisie. Contemplating suicide, Löwenberg gives the last of his money to a poor family of eastern European Jewish immigrants and then notices a newspaper advertisement for "a cultured and despairing young man willing to try last experiment with his life."[17] After responding to the ad, Löwenberg finds himself embarking on a trip around the world with a middle-aged eccentric by the name of Kingscourt. One of their first stops is Palestine, characterized by

"narrow alleys" that "smelt to heaven" and were "full of motley Oriental misery."[18] Echoing Herzl's own impressions of the country (and of Jerusalem in particular) during his sole visit there in 1898 (see chapter 6), Löwenberg concludes that "If this is our homeland, then it has been brought just as low as we are."[19] Only the non-Jewish Kingscourt is convinced that, despite the land's poor condition at present, "you can do something with it.... It might have an undreamed-of future."[20]

And indeed, when Kingscourt and Löwenberg return to Palestine twenty-one years later, they are greeted by a radically different reality. A new Jewish society has since emerged in the land, and one of its leading figures is David Litvak, the child of the family to whom Löwenberg had given his money before embarking on his journey with Kingscourt. Litvak's hospitality and the introduction he provides the two into the new society serve as the novel's main axis.

Eastern European Jews, transformed by their regeneration in the Orient; the westernized Löwenberg; the more Western Kingscourt; and the Arabs of the East, who constitute a litmus test for the new society of which they too are a part (represented in the novel by the figure of Reshid Bay), together highlight what is in the end, in spite of the utopian gloss Herzl gives it, a tense coexistence of disparate Easts and Wests in the novel. When the two travelers first encounter their principal hosts in the New Society—David Litvak, the former eastern European (now "new" Palestinian Jew), and the Arab, Reshid Bay—they are greeted, Herzl writes, "in the Oriental way.... David spoke a few words in Arabic, and Reshid answered in German with a slight North-German accent."[21] Traveling through the country to see how the Zionist enterprise has transformed it, the two witness further manifestations of an East-West duality: "Horsemen and camel-riders" appeared from time to time alongside the railroad tracks, Herzl writes, "some in European dress, some in picturesque Beduin garb. Now and again there were whole camel caravans, romantic relics of a primitive period."[22]

This is not to suggest that the novel does not evince a fundamentally European-centered vision. In fact, it is precisely in so European centered a writer as Herzl that the scattered presence of an East-West fusion highlights even more powerfully the fundamental Zionist ambivalence with respect to this divide. The fact, moreover, that Herzl's Orient is undoubtedly that of a romantic (if at times deprecating) European imagination does not detract from the significance of that Orient in his vision of the Jewish future. This is complemented by a far more complex and problematized image of Europe and . European civilization than has been attributed to Herzl's novel in the past.

Europe, as Herzl portrays it, offered the Jews living there a climate that was far from hospitable, as Löwenberg's very first encounter with the poor

Ostjude peddler (David Litvak's father) reveals. Everyplace he goes, the elder Litvak relates in despair, "Dey trow me out.... If you are a Tshu, better go drown yourself."[23] Indeed, so dire is the situation of the Jews in Europe that when Löwenberg and Kingscourt arrive in Palestine for the second time and learn that the seemingly phantasmagoric Zionist idea of transferring the Jews from Europe to the Holy Land has in fact taken place, it is Kingscourt—the non-Jew—who is aghast: "Devil take me!" He exclaims, "So you've been driven out of Europe?" To be sure, the now-adult David Litvak explains that the Zionist plan was not carried out through "medieval" measures taken by non-Jewish Europe. "The operation," he clarifies, "was *more or less* bloodless."[24] And yet, both Kingscourt's immediate inclination to suppose that the Jews were violently expelled from Europe and indeed even Litvak's reply that the surgery was "more or less" bloodless are indicative of the manner in which Herzl perceived the strained relationship between "Europe" and the Jews at the turn of the twentieth century. This, of course, is hardly surprising given Herzl's acute awareness of European anti-Semitism—the very basis for his conversion to Zionism.

But not only the Jewish question casts a shadow over Herzl's Europe. Throughout the novel Europe is referred to a number of times as "aged," in contrast to the "new society" that the ostracized Jews have established in the East and, incidentally, to the "new world" of the United States, as Kingscourt describes his experience living in that country. "Only in America," he says, "did I realize what lazy bums we Europeans are."[25] Indeed, anti-Semitism and Europe's general fatigue and decline are intertwined. The rampant anti-Semitism of late nineteenth-century Europe, Herzl seems to indicate, is perhaps the most distinct symptom (or is it a cause?) of Europe's "degeneration." To be sure, as Litvak recounts the historical processes leading to the creation of Palestine's "New Society," the Jews who created it had benefited greatly from "the accumulated experience of all the advanced nations of the world" and from the fact that "the professionals, the graduates of the universities, of the technical and agricultural high-schools, who came here from civilized countries, were well-equipped with scientific knowledge." Europe's superior civilization, in other words, was essential to the construction of the new Jewish society (as Herzl indicates in *Der Judenstadt* as well). Nonetheless, the manner in which this superior technical and scientific culture was channeled into the making of a new society in the Levant was hardly unproblematic. It had, after all, been imported there by

> the pathetic youth, the intellectuals who in anti-Semitic countries
> could find no employment and who had there sunk lower and lower,

til they became a proletariat without hope, ready fuel for every rev-
olutionary flame—it was this cultured and despairing Jewish youth
which had brought the greatest blessing to Palestine, by its tech-
nological application of the latest scientific discoveries.[26]

Europe's contribution to Herzl's New Society, in other words, is to be found
not only in the blessings that its civilization bestows but also in the curses that
result from its degeneration and disease, of which anti-Semitism is a con-
spicuous element.

In Palestine, too, one can point to manifold ambivalent attitudes toward both
Europe and "the Orient" from an early stage in the emergence of the New
Yishuv. For many of those actually engaged in cultural work in Palestine, the
Easternness of the soil on which they were toiling to create the new national
culture was by no means incidental to that culture itself. Similarly, an am-
bivalence toward Europe was an integral part of the thinking and, in many
cases, of the personal experience of people who had chosen to leave Europe,
often after feeling the brunt of anti-Semitic activity there. This ambivalence,
then, lay at the root of Zionism but took on a new and at times more urgent
form after the events of 1908, with the apparent renaissance that the Young
Turk revolution ushered in, the visible emergence of Arab nationalism, and the
growing presence of a more official Zionism in Palestine in the form of the
Palestine office, Bezalel, and the Hebrew Gymnasium.

As in the fictional Palestine of Herzl's novel, one trope that helped to
shape conceptions of national culture in the actual Palestine was that of a
Europe that had grown old and tired under the weight of its degenerating
civilization. The aged continent, as Itamar Ben-Avi cautioned in one piece
shortly after the Young Turk revolution, would soon be overtaken by the rising
young powers: "The wise and the bold among the Europeans," he wrote, al-
ready "lament Europe's decline. It is all over, they eulogize—the old woman
has reached her end. Her limbs are already gangrenous."[27]

For Ben-Avi, moreover, the imagery of youth and old age—whose multi-
valent resonance echoed, among others, with the deep-seated Zionist trope of
the aged Diaspora Jew, replaced by the youthful and vigorous new Hebrew of
Palestine—is amplified by the linguistic advantage he takes of Hebrew's
gendering of common nouns. Continents (Europe in this case) are invariably
feminine, and Ben-Avi goes beyond the call of linguistic duty in stressing
Europe's apparently linked decrepitude and effeminacy. The youthful mas-
culinity that characterizes the new Hebrew of Palestine, for whom Ben-Avi is a
self-proclaimed spokesperson (see chapter 5), is inherently rooted in his dis-

association from Europe and his identification with what appears to be an emerging and resurgent East.

Such imagery also served to invert categories of youth and old age as they often appeared in European representations of the Orient. As a staple of British policy in the "Orient" during the nineteenth century, it was common practice to retire colonial administrators by the age of fifty-five. In this way, as Edward Said has argued, "no Oriental was ever allowed to see a Westerner as he aged and degenerated, just as no Westerner needed ever to see himself, mirrored in the eyes of the subject race, as anything but a vigorous, rational, ever-alert young Raj."[28] Ben-Avi's scorn for the ailing and feminized Europe was also, of course, a direct inversion of central tropes that shaped so much of European discourse regarding Jews at the time, which envisioned "the Jew" as aged, weak, effeminate, and ailing (an image deeply internalized in Zionist thought). In this inverted imagery it is now the Orient that pulsates with youthfulness and hence with the promise of renewed youth for the aging Jew immigrating from a Europe already festering with decay.

If these visions of a resurgent East had a place in Zionist rhetoric and imagery before 1908, the revolution seemed to greatly reinforce them. The Zionist executive responded to the revolution with a statement welcoming "the new events and the changing conditions in Turkey." These events, it declared in what was surely a complex composite of tactical, diplomatic maneuver and the expression of a cultural ideal, "do not weaken our hopes. On the contrary, they serve to strengthen them. The Hebrew people sends its deepest blessing to *the family of Ottoman nations, which is close to it in spirit.*"[29]

For many Zionists in Palestine, the revolution that shook the empire that summer seemed not only evidence of an incipient dawn of the East but also pointed toward its superiority over the ostensibly decayed Europe they had left behind. In the eyes of one commentator, the relatively bloodless revolution not only inspired admiration but also undermined disparaging European views of the Ottomans and the Orient. While critical of certain aspects of the revolution—in particular what he referred to as the scapegoating of the Armenian people, who "play the role here of the Jewish people in Russia"—*Ha-Po'el ha-Tza'ir*'s correspondent attributed them for the most part to reactionary forces and the attempted counterrevolution of April 1909. As a general rule, he argued, the revolution had been carried out in a manner that could only inspire admiration. "The East," he wrote, "that symbol of permanent immobility, has once again shown Europe what fresh powers are in fact hidden within it and what potential it bears. It has once again provided an example of a revolution carried off in a manner which the aged Europe has never known."[30] It was particularly noteworthy, as another writer stressed, that the revolution

had been carried out without any attacks on the empire's Jews. "We who were born in the countries of the North," he wrote, "are completely unaccustomed to this."[31]

In some of the more radical attempts to reconceptualize the place of "West" and "East" in demarcating the contours of the new nation, the rupture seemed to mandate an out-and-out reversal of the very meaning of culture and civilization. One columnist for the social-democratic *Ha-Ahdut*, for example, cautioned against a facile European hubris in the face of the gap between the "pleasant homes, trees, greenery" and sophisticated agricultural machinery in the Jewish colonies on the one hand and the typical Arab village on the other, which appeared to be composed of "piles of ruins and garbage" and whose peasants used "old and outdated tools." A closer look, he wrote, would reveal that next to the fancy machinery, it was the Arab residents of the clay huts who were doing the work—an indication of their "love for the country, for the land and for labor," the true wellsprings of a people's life and culture. The contrast therefore, he wrote, ought not to be between "our culture and their primitiveness; our national consciousness and their ignorance and backwardness, but rather [between] our empty arrogance, our exaggerated self-awareness—and their healthy life, the life of a simple people."[32]

Here, in other words, was an Orient that offered a sweeping alternative to the stale and calcified culture of bourgeois Europe and, perhaps more important in the Zionist context, to the petrified culture of the exilic Jewish *luftmensch*, so alienated from nature, from the soil, from life itself. The transvaluation of values in Jewish life that the Zionist endeavor in Palestine entailed meant (or at least could mean) not only the creation of a new Jewish culture but a refiguring of the concept of culture as well. Much as young Zionists in Germany sought a lost Jewish authenticity in eastern Europe, some of those Ostjuden, now transplanted to Palestine, cast their eastward glance farther still in search of a new authenticity. Still reverberating in the background, the traditional imagery of the eastern European Jew as somehow Oriental afforded this critique a double barb: While aimed primarily at Jewish culture, the sweeping reevaluation of the Orient also seemed to erect a useful framework within which to recast the image of the Jew in general and to stake out a counterclaim to European assertions of cultural superiority, whether vis-à-vis Orient or Jew.

Clearly, the much-repeated call for an allegiance to the "East" that grew out of this understanding of the Orient (and of the revolutionary events that had just taken place there) ran deeper than mere political considerations and tactics. In the wake of the revolution, a letter to the editor in *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* declared that the time had now come "to openly declare to all that we are a

branch of the Semitic peoples who must all unite and carry out a defensive struggle against all those who would seek to sow among us the seeds of European virtue."[33] Such scorn for European pretenses of bearing a unique virtue was echoed by many others. Author Yosef Haim Brenner mocked those who, in the wake of Italy's 1911 invasion of Tripoli, complained that European virtue had gone missing. "There is no virtue in Europe," Brenner declared. "Europe, whose entire existence is based on stealing from the poor and on the groans of the destitute—now people come and demand that she be virtuous!"[34]

Where European powers encroached directly on the Ottoman Empire, a similar sentiment often prevailed. Although by the outbreak of the First Balkan War in October of 1912 the new Ottoman regime had proven less favorable to Zionism than many Zionists had initially hoped, European roles in the conflict and the European powers' increasingly obvious scramble for pieces of the weakening empire were often severely condemned as evidence of this so-called virtue. "Europe's disguise," as journalist Abraham Ludvipol charged shortly after the eruption of hostilities, "has been removed and she has now been exposed in all her hypocrisy, baseness and deceit." Indeed, so deeply rooted were these traits in European civilization, Ludvipol cautioned (presciently, as it turned out), that even after the Balkans quiet down, "who knows what will then occur among the countries which make up Europe."[35]

This view of Europe was given a supposedly scientific backing in the language of evolutionary biology by Mordechai Baruchov (Berachiyahu), for whom this theoretical framework implied critical operative conclusions for the making of Zionist policy. Baruchov, a physician and veteran Zionist activist, immigrated to Palestine in 1912, where he published articles and booklets on medical issues and public health. Like the individual human organism, he argued in one of these, human societies are often marked by evolutionary remains—the equivalent of the human appendix—which are not only no longer valuable but may also at times become harmful. European civilization, he maintained, was now particularly weighed down with such injurious vestiges. It is replete, he wrote, "with remnants and remains which destroy all that is good, which not only cause harm by their very existence, but also serve to diminish vitality by means of the influence they have even upon other, healthy and fresh elements." Disturbingly, Baruchov believed he identified the seeds of such corruption in a number of cultural practices that had already begun to establish themselves in the life of the Yishuv. These included the periodic "masquerade balls, the ironed and pressed attire ... the European education which tears our children to bits, and ... the [European-sponsored] schools with their irrelevant studies which stupefy the mind and lack in studies that would aid in the creation of a healthy and whole generation which should be

well-adapted to life, to our life, to the life which we desire and for which we strive." Given these dangers, Zionist efforts to construct a new civilization in Palestine would have to take full cognizance of these potentially damaging elements in designing its immigration policy and in shaping the Yishuv's new national culture. Degenerate elements borrowed from Europe's "foreign peoples" must be prevented at all costs from infiltrating the new society and eating away at it from within. "We must stand on guard," Baruchov unsettlingly admonished, "and be careful not to plant the seeds of European decay in the land of our rebirth."[36]

This sense of standing guard against the importation of Europe and its decay converged comfortably with the sense that Europe was in any case in the throes of violently vomiting the Jews from within it—a sense that came through not only in the fictional account of Herzl's *Altneuland* but also in the personal experience of many Yishuv residents, whose immigration to Palestine had been precipitated by pogroms. A contrasting and long-standing Jewish appreciation of Turkey as a historically hospitable refuge for Jews expelled from other (European) countries helped to foster this view.[37] The Jews would indeed be leaving Europe, as many of the creators of the Yishuv's culture indicated, and in the process they would be returning to their true home, the font of their true cultural origins, which, not coincidentally, happened to be in "the East." Jewish culture, according to this view, had emerged in the Orient; Jews had for centuries been facing eastward in their prayers, and in the process of healing the Jews and re-creating their civilization, this was the place to which they must return. "For thousands of years," Yosef Aharonwitz wrote in a piece critical of the Western orientation of the Zionist congresses, "an entire nation has been standing and praying while facing East. And suddenly, some people appear and create for that people an altar facing West." Given this dis-orientation, he concluded, it was hardly surprising that "the altar has been left behind the People rather than in front of it."[38]

Author Meir Wilkansky provided another vision of a mystical Jewish re-union with the soil and atmosphere of the Orient.[39] The national renaissance that he envisioned required that, in physically departing from the shores of Europe, the Jews not only remove themselves from the foreign soils on which they had resided but also begin to extricate Europe from within themselves and merge once again with their Eastern essence. "Life in The Land," as he explained in one of the many short stories he published after arriving in Palestine in 1905, had already transformed those who had been there for some time and who were now "vigorous and healthy" young Jews. Palestine "had erased the semblance of Europeanness from their faces, their manners and their clothing." Jews in Palestine were healthy and authentic—in sharp contradistinction

to those of the European Diaspora—precisely because they integrated the Easternness of the land and the Eastern culture of the Arabs into the very core of their newly Easternized selves. This transformative fusion, as Wilkansky describes it, was a direct result of the mystical power of the land and the cosmic bond to it that was shared by Jew and Arab alike, whose own pulses were bound up with that of the land, all merging to the point of becoming indistinguishable. As "songs of the Qur'an are sung," he writes, "the Hebrew trills attract the hearts of Israel, gather in the courtyards and ascend to the roofs. . . . The choir lowers its head and body . . . and responds, breathing 'Allah,' or 'Eloheinu.'"[40]

If the chief function of European Orientalism has been explained by Edward Said and others as providing a vital conceptual backdrop for Western dominance, the cultural and intellectual paradigms of Wilkansky and others like him point to a more complex picture. Even outside of the Zionist and Jewish contexts, interest in the Orient was in fact often far more diverse and nuanced. For many consumers of Orientalist art and imagery, as John MacKenzie has shown, "these images did not so much celebrate a doomed world, dominated to be destroyed, but a world they yearned to regain . . . an atavistic reaction to modern industrialism, with its urban squalor, moral and physical unhealthiness, mass demoralisation, [and] social discontents."[41]

In the Zionist context in Palestine, this type of impetus was layered with yet another dimension. To the Jews returning to their source, as some would have it, the East offered not so much an image of an "other" who might echo a lost world but in fact the possibility of complete self-transformation in which that lost world would be re-created in the external reality of the land even as it was regained within oneself. Hebrew-speaking children in Palestine, in other words, were "fundamentally different from . . . the children of exile" precisely because they were, as Itamar Ben-Avi triumphantly described them, "little Arabs, nice savages."[42]

Generating this new Palestinian Jew was among the chief pedagogical goals set for the Herzlia Gymnasium in Tel-Aviv, which was already emerging as the flagship of Zionist education in Palestine. Chaim Bugrashov, the school's headmaster and one of the leading architects of its curriculum, insisted that school's graduates must be deeply rooted in the civilization of the East. An education based on the foundations of the Jewish national revival, he explained in a 1912 programmatic speech, "demands that we develop our strength in accordance with the conditions of the land and the environment in which we live. . . . *Palestine and the East*, our nation, its language and all of its spiritual assets must serve as the foundation and center of the civilized culture of the students of the gymnasium."[43] That this was the platform of the Herzlia Gymnasium—arguably the geographical, architectural, and conceptual

centerpiece of early Tel Aviv—serves as an important reminder of the complexity of East and West even in so clearly modernizing and European-oriented a component of the Zionist undertaking in Palestine as Tel Aviv itself.[44]

To be sure, there were those who recoiled from this romantic image of the Orient. Notwithstanding the often bitter experience of Europe that served as the impetus for much of Zionist thought—and as the background to the presence of many of the Zionist immigrants in Palestine—an image of (some version of) Europe as the seat of civilization and culture continued, naturally, to reverberate in a great deal of Zionist writing and in its cultural project in Palestine. To some, whatever prospects it offered for a Jewish national rebirth, Palestine could still seem an unappealing province in a backward Orient, into which Western civilization must be imported.

In a short story titled "Ha-Sepharadiya" [The Sephardic Girl], author, artist, and future art critic Arye Yaffe (Leo Koenig) imagined the encounter between Jews of two Orients (one, Europe's own Orient; the other, the Middle Eastern Orient) through the tale a young Sephardic girl who marries a Russian Jewish immigrant to Palestine. In Yaffe's vision of the fusion of these two worlds there is an assumed superiority of the more Western of the two Easts. Indeed, fusion becomes possible only through the adoption by the Sephardic bride of her husband's (eastern) European ways. Emerging from her ostensibly uncultured background, the girl gradually learns to drink tea and tell time according to European clocks and generally adopts European culture. She is contrasted with her mother, who remains in her Oriental world, untouched by the encounter with Europe's so-called civilization and with no comprehension of the transformations that her daughter has undergone. Hers continues to be a life of Eastern decadence and lethargy as she smokes her mildly intoxicating *nargila* and basks in her Levantine indolence.[45]

A *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* correspondent describing conditions in various neighborhoods of the newly developing city of Haifa distinguished even more sharply between those inhabited by European Jews and those occupied by Sephardim. The Jews of the Orient, he wrote, have arrived with "worthless" cultural possessions. He had little doubt that only under the influence of their Ashkenazi brothers and sisters might "they too begin to progress."[46] In contrast to the vision of a rising East that the Young Turk revolution could arouse, moreover, it could also lead to the hope conveyed by a correspondent in Jerusalem that that city might now begin to modernize and "be transformed in the near future from an Asiatic city to a European city in every sense of the word."[47]

More explicit and more vehement yet was publicist Ya'acov Rabinowitz, who had immigrated to Palestine in 1910. The disingenuous self-deprecation that he believed he detected in the popular romantic imagery of the Orient was, he cautioned, a symptom of *galut*. He, too, he wrote, longed for the emergence of a "new Jew" who was fundamentally different from the exilic Jew of the eastern European ghetto. Yet he rejected the notion that this "new Jew" must be in some essential sense "Oriental." For Rabinowitz, this "new Jew" must be in his very essence European. "If we are successful in raising a generation of tall-standing Jews in Palestine," Rabinowitz contended

> this is for the best. If, on the other hand, all that we can create here is *galut*, then a European *galut* is to be preferred to an Asiatic *galut*. But the terms "tall-standing" and "free" do not mean that one must be *savage*. The tall-standing and the free may, it is true, be Bedouins. But what we need is European-style tall-standing individuals, and a freedom that is cultured and civilized.[48]

The Eastern type after all, Rabinowitz explained, echoing some of the more disparaging images in the arsenal of European Orientalism, "has no principles and no truth.... He is a conniver who will sell his brother for a small profit. He has no solidarity and no social feeling."[49] And here, according to Rabinowitz, lay the fatal weakness of the East, which was indeed bound in the end to be conquered by ("true") Western civilization—both within the Jewish-Zionist context and more broadly. Economically and spiritually backward, the would-be culture of the Levant, which has only "the false façade of civilization with no national culture," strives, almost against itself, "to be healed. And in spite of all of those who would preserve [it]—[it] will eventually be conquered by language and culture."[50]

In the final analysis, the intellectual climate in the Yishuv might be characterized as one in which a longing for a romanticized Oriental origin intermingled at multiple junctions with the European sensibilities of people who were, after all, mostly European and who, as eastern Europeans, were accustomed to looking to the West as the seat of enlightenment and emancipation. At least on occasion, this could mean an accompanying sense of Western cultural superiority, even where that might be merged with dreams of demographic, racial, and political fusion with the peoples of the Orient. In the process of reuniting with their true Eastern origins and racial brothers, as this synthesis would have it, the Jews would import the best of European civilization, which they had adopted over the years of their extended exile and as a result of which they were in a unique position to act as a bridge between East

and West, to the mutual benefit of the Jews themselves and the peoples of the Orient.

The Zionist encounter with the East, many of the Yishuv's activists argued, therefore differed fundamentally from the Orient's encounter with Europe's colonial empires. Even as Zionist diplomacy could not but seek out allies and support among the European Great Powers and hoped to take advantage of their often-conflicting interests in the "Eastern question," many Zionists argued that the Jews' importation of Western civilization would not take the shape of a foreign colonialism, which they continued to reject. "We ... have come not to conquer like other nations," as one writer stressed, "but rather to settle on the Land of our Fathers ... not in order to fill our stomachs alone, but rather to spin the broken thread of original Hebrew creation."[51]

Indeed, in the Zionist context, as many would argue, the introduction of West into East would take place as part of a new fusion designed to reestablish the ostensible racial and spiritual bonds between Arab and Jew. Another commentator stressed that, unlike the European powers, the Jews were seeking to return to the East "without warships and armies to back us up. Instead, we come with the pure ambition of creating an original culture." Writing at a time of escalating tensions between Arabs and Jews in Palestine, he added that he continued to hope for a time when "the nations of the East, who are close to us, will come to understand that we are coming to live among them; that in our awakening, we are coming to awaken them as well."[52]

Virtually all of the components of the national culture created in the Yishuv during these years (and the debates surrounding them)—from the language to be spoken by Palestine's "new Jews," to their music and arts, their holidays and celebrations, and even the manner in which they would dress—incorporated this intricate tension between Easts and Wests. In some instances there were clearly defined roles. When the idea for the establishment of a scientific-technological institution in the Yishuv began to circulate in early 1908 (the Technikum, or Technion, as it was later called), its alliance with the German-Jewish philanthropic Hilfsverein der deutschen Juden seemed a matter of course. Eliezer Ben-Yehuda excitedly anticipated a future in which "the Jews will be able to supply engineers to the countries of the east."[53] He would become less enthusiastic about the Hilfsverein's role some four years later, when expectations in the Yishuv began to change and even an institution such as the Technikum was expected to be a bearer of the Yishuv's particular blend of Easts and Wests rather than a strictly European (and German-language) institution (see chapter 10).

If Western superiority in matters scientific was largely uncontested, however, the East, variously conceived, often held a more central position in other cultural arenas. In their efforts to sketch the contours of a new, authentic Jewish national art, Boris Schatz and the artists of Bezalel blended significant doses of "East" with then-current European artistic styles. As in the art of many European Orientalists, a powerful inclination to depict biblical scenes reflected a conflation of the Bible with the contemporary East.[54] (See figure 7.1.) This notion had been adopted from Orientalist trends in European art dating back to the latter half of the nineteenth century, when it was commonly held that the "Arabs . . . provided an accurate idea of how characters in the Bible really looked."[55] In the Zionist context, this biblical imagery, rooted in the soil of Palestine, served also to more firmly establish the Jews' sense of belongingness to the land.

In its dedication not only to art itself, moreover, but also to the role of art and artisanry in restructuring the Jewish economy of Palestine, Bezalel devoted significant efforts to the cultivation of crafts and placed particular

FIGURE 7.1. Bezalel students drawing an Oriental-looking model in this representation of representation, in which the students are clearly posing for the camera even as the model poses for them (and for the camera). The intimacy gained with the (biblical) Orient through painting was expected to transform the Jewish artist and reawaken a cosmic bond with the ancestral land.

emphasis on Oriental-style carpets and Yemenite-influenced silver objects. In order to develop these fields, Shmuel Parsov, director of the silver department, was sent to Damascus in 1908 to study local filigree work, and Aviezer Yaacov Kantrowitz, director of the carpet division, was sent to Istanbul in 1911 to study the processes and styles of carpet-making there. In order to further authenticate these Bezalel activities, the workers employed in these departments were invariably chosen from among Jews who had originated in those countries: The carpet division employed women from Persia, Kurdistan, and Turkey, while the silver department primarily employed Yemenite Jews, for whom silverwork was a long-standing tradition.[56]

If many of the artistic objects created by the workers and artists of Bezalel in its early years reveal this Eastern influence, this was very much the case with the modern Hebrew calligraphy they created (partly in response to the requests they had received for Hebrew monograms). This, too, was designed to appear distinctly "Oriental," often reminiscent of Arabic script—imbuing the Yishuv's Hebrew with an Oriental visual form that complemented the Oriental sound that the choice of a Sephardic-influenced accent was supposed to impart to it.[57] Indeed, educator David Yellin saw this connection between the visual and aural aspects of the language, as well as their conflation of the modern Yishuv with the images of the biblical ancestors, as central to the project of the Hebrew revival, in which he was, of course, a central figure. Writing for a 1911 publication aimed at explaining the Zionist cultural project in Palestine to those abroad, Yellin explained that the Jews of Palestine "live with the picture of our ancestors' lives before us, as they sat under their vines and fig trees [and] we speak as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob spoke." Just as the renewed encounter with the land's physical landscape caused "the early history of our people [to] rise up again before our imagination," he added, "so the proverbs and idioms of our ancestral language and the quotations from our poets and prophets, bring these to life again before our mind's eye."[58]

And if the Arabs were often mobilized in this collective imagination as living illustrations of that ancestral life, this was manifested in concrete cultural praxis through the many imports from Arabic into the spoken Hebrew of the Yishuv. Literary depictions of the new Jewish life of workers in Palestine often self-consciously employed Arabic words as part of the renewed Hebrew language in an effort to impart to them a more authentic, colloquial (as opposed to literary) character.[59] Others saw such influences negatively and cautioned against the linguistic (and cultural) adulteration toward which they seemed to point[60] (see the discussion in chapter 8).

Even aside from such reservations, however, the Eastern motifs and orientations had to coexist in many of the Yishuv's cultural undertakings with

what were clearly European influences. This was evident in the ultimate out-
come of the discussions surrounding the Hebrew accent (see chapter 4). With
all of the words of praise lavished on the Sephardic accent, the accent that
ultimately emerged as Israeli Hebrew was not in fact a distinctly Sephardic one
but rather a Sephardic-influenced one, which nevertheless maintained certain
characteristics of Ashkenazic Hebrew as well. It was (and remains), as Ben-
jamin Harshav has written, "the lowest common denominator between the two
main dialects, Sephardi and Ashkenazi"—an East and a West fused together in
the Yishuv's speech.[61] Similarly, the Eastern motifs that were prevalent in
Bezalel's art were often placed in settings that evinced the influence of German
and Austrian art nouveau and other European artistic currents. The style Be-
zalel sought to cultivate lay, consciously at times and less so at others, in a
blending of East and West—an implicit statement that the new authentic
Jewish art in Palestine would be in its very essence a blend of Easts and Wests,
much as the returning Jews were ostensibly a composite nation originating in
the East but now deeply influenced by the Western civilization in which they
had resided for many centuries and had helped to shape.

Local musical traditions common among the Jews of the Old Yishuv
tended to be influenced by their disparate ethnic and geographic origins,[62] and
this continued largely to be the case as the colonies and urban centers of the
New Yishuv began to emerge. In some colonies such as Rishon Le-Zion,
suffused through the sponsorship of Baron Rothschild with a significant dose
of French cultural influence, the founding generation took pains to purchase
pianos for the musical (and cultural) edification of the colony's daughters in
particular—a custom that was also a carryover from the norm among mod-
ernizing (and often wealthier) Jews in eastern Europe.[63] This attempt to impart
a European bourgeois tone to the colonies' life, however, became a target for
the scorn and derision of settlers in some of the other colonies and later by the
Labor-Zionist youth, to whom the colonies' pianos were a sign of bourgeois
decadence and European decay. *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* editor Yosef Aharonowitz
was particularly scornful of the young women of the colonies, "whose hearts go
out to the piano and new 'fashions' rather than seeking labor."[64]

Another commentator fused ethnic segregation with class distinction in
his critique when he wrote of his "feelings of bitterness and shame" upon
witnessing the treatment of Yemenite workers in Rishon Le-Zion, particularly
when this was contrasted with the blithe discussions of "business and budgets"
that took place in the colony's "pleasant streets," whose "air is filled with the
playing of pianos."[65] In the northern colony of Rosh-Pinah, on the other hand,
which had a Jewish population that was more of a mix of Ashkenazim and
Sephardim than was common in most other places and maintained more

intensive contact with local Arab villages, the dominant musical trend, according to the Yishuv's leading music historian, was a blend of distinctly European-styled music and the Arab songs of the Galilee.[66]

Musical differences of this kind became focal points for struggles over cultural identity, at times even within a small and self-selecting group. When the Jerusalem print-workers union came together to celebrate its first anniversary in 1908, choosing the songs to be sung at the festivities proved impossible. The Ashkenazi workers demanded songs in Yiddish, while their Sephardic coworkers called for Arabic. The *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* reporter who was in attendance (and for whom the hallmark of "culture" would undoubtedly have been Hebrew singing) concluded despondently that "the union has clearly done very little to elevate its members' cultural level."[67] If Eastern and Western motifs were found side by side in the Yishuv's music (if at times uneasily), when conscious efforts were made to mobilize the music of Palestine's Jews for the creation of a distinctly national music, a particularly strong voice was given in these early years to the sounds of various Easts.

The central figure in the nationalization of music in the Yishuv in the prewar years and in the efforts to establish a presumably authentic Jewish music was the cantor and musicologist Abraham Zvi Ben-Yehuda (Idelsohn). A pioneer in the then-emerging field of ethnomusicology while still in Europe, Idelsohn decided in 1906 to immigrate to Jerusalem, the "cradle of original Jewish music,"[68] as he referred to it, where he would first set out to gather the auditory evidence of authentic Jewish sound. Later, in 1910, he put this academic, ethnographic enterprise to functional use through his establishment in Jerusalem of the "Institute of Jewish Song," whose principal goal was the redistillation of that authentic Jewish music in barrels conditioned by "the scientific laws of music and harmony."[69]

Idelsohn's view of music as one of the principal forces preserving the life of the nation drew in obvious ways from a broader cultural-nationalist discourse that he had brought with him from Europe. In arranging these themes for the ears of Zionist Palestine, however, he gave them a form that echoed with imagery he had culled from traditional sources, implemented to ground his musical institute, like other Zionist cultural undertakings in Palestine (such as Schatz's Bezalel) in an ancient spiritual heritage, while at the same time seeking to usurp it. Idelsohn did not seek out the physical and geographical markers that Schatz had employed as tangible indicators of Bezalel's status as the new Temple, perhaps out of a sense that his more abstract art was less in need of the physicality of Schatz's visual arts. He was no less adamant or explicit, however, in claiming a place for music as modern-day worship, the truest

expression of the nation's deepest spiritual attributes and longings. Prophecy, Idelsohn concurred with the Talmud, had long since ceased in Israel—a fact that was one among many telltale signs of the nation's decline. But in "national song" one could still hear "echoes of the song of Moses, man of God, the psalms of David King of Israel and the singing of the Levites in the Holy Temple." Only in music could one still find "a spark of the souls of the prophets."[70]

If the physicality of Bezalel, moreover, pointed toward a recast reclamation of the Temple of Solomon in geographical space and in physical structure, it was in music, Idelsohn indicated, that one could find the spirit of holiness that had permeated the physical site. Indeed, his "Institute for Jewish Song" was hailed by Eliezer Ben-Yehuda upon its establishment in 1910 as the institutional means for reclaiming that lost spirit of national sanctity. When, after a number of months of study and preparation, Idelsohn's new singers made their public debut, Ben-Yehuda hailed the event's "great importance". The concert, he explained, was the first public demonstration of the new Institute's musical production, through which "ancient Jewish music will be returned to its seat of honor . . . [and] a new national music will be created." Reinforcing the Davidic-messianic implications of Idelsohn's project and the fusion of the spiritual and the political that it entailed, Ben-Yehuda went on to proclaim that the Eastern-toned music that would be (re-)created there would surely be

> a music which, in its character and in its nature, in its voices and scales, will recall that same music of Israel's musician of old [a reference to King David]; it will recall the singing whose sounds echoed in the Temple, the singing and the playing of the Levites on their stand, the singing and playing that was brought to such a level of perfection by David, the King of Israel.[71]

These messianic-Davidic overtones were further reinforced by the date chosen for the debut. If Bezalel's physical location had reflected the importance of a Zionist reconfiguration of space, Idelsohn's choice of timing for the premier pointed toward a Zionist shaping of time. Performed on Saturday, August 20, 1910, the concert was also part of a new nationalized ritual for "Shabbat Nahamu"—the first Sabbath following the Ninth of Av, the traditional day of mourning for the destruction of the two Temples. The day's name, the Sabbath of Consolation, is derived from the Haftara (portion from the Prophets) that is read in the synagogue—a section from the book of Isaiah, in which the prophet consoles the people for the destruction of Jerusalem and describes the ultimate redemption that is yet to come. A momentous event for the nation, as Ben-Yehuda indicated, Idelsohn's musical debut was a step toward just that (now Zionized) redemption. It was, he wrote, "one of the

greatest creations of the spirit ever to have been created here on the holy soil, and one of the true signs of a national spiritual awakening."[72]

Although it may seem a rather abrupt leap from King David and the promise of a musical rebuilding of the Temple, there was little dissonance for Idelsohn in the fact that, as a guiding principle for his new creation, he embraced Richard Wagner's *Judaism in Music*. Indeed, he waxed particularly enthusiastic about Wagner's contention that the Jews and the European musical tradition were utterly foreign to one another. Idelsohn reversed the anti-Semitic vitriol of Wagner's piece, however, by arguing that it was not the Jews who had introduced a foreign element into European music but rather Europe that had introduced a foreign quality into Jewish music throughout the centuries of Jewish sojourn there. In order to re-create a healthy national music, he therefore explained, "we must strip away the outer shell [*kelipah*] that it has grown in past generations, and...the foreign spirit with which it has been impregnated." The effort to recapture an authentic Jewish national sound, according to Idelsohn, would have to be directed toward the music of the Jews of the Orient and of Yemenite Jews in particular—"the only shining star in the darkness of a millennia-long night."[73] They, he believed, had been less integrated into the societies around them and had therefore preserved more of the original and authentic music that had characterized the Jewish nation before being exiled from its homeland. Even where the Jews of the Moslem world had absorbed influences of Arabic and Turkish music, moreover, these had caused less harm to the Jewish essence of their music since the Arabic sound "is in principle closer to Hebrew music."[74] After stripping away the European "outer shell" that had encrusted the more exilic music of European Jewry, then, Idelsohn wrote, Zionism would create a new national music *"which has virtually no relation to European music at all."*[75]

In contrast with the English "medical men with strong missionary leanings" who, as Edward Said argues, often became colonial officials in India out of a belief that a European presence there would ameliorate an ailing and degenerated Orient,[76] Idelsohn posited the Occident as the source of infection and the return to the East—at once both physical and musical—as the Jews' only remedy. This was reinforced by his (repeated) linguistic choice of the Hebrew word *kelipah* to describe the outer shell of European sounds with which Jewish music had become encrusted. In popular Jewish discourse, inherited from Kabbalistic terminology (with which Idelsohn's readers would have been intimately familiar), the term *kelipah* refers to the exterior crusts that envelop the sparks of the divine emanation in the process of creation and hence the source of evil in the world.

Idelsohn's institute was not the only body in Palestine devoted to creating music for the Yishuv. Down the hill from Jerusalem, in Shulamit Ruppin's music conservatory in Jaffa, which was established the same year as Idelsohn's institute, one heard a very different sound. Some two years after having joined her husband Arthur in Jaffa in 1908, where he became the Zionist Organization's man in Palestine, Shulamit Ruppin founded the country's first professional music school, one in which the dominant tones were very much those of Europe and the Berlin music scene she had left behind. It was a musical oasis of European civilization in the midst of what was to her a very foreign Oriental environment.[77] Although Ruppin seems to have been less moved by an expressly articulated nationalizing impulse in the establishment of her conservatory, it too was hailed as a critical lifeline for an ailing national spirit. Who knows how many young potential musicians had wasted their talent given the lack of opportunity for proper, orderly musical training such as Ruppin would now offer, a column in *Ha-Or* asked. It was not the individual loss itself with which the columnist was concerned, however, but rather its results, which were "blandness and a lack of feeling, materialism and a lack of inspiration, even among the younger generation... for which we had had such high hopes!" It would not be long, however, the paper predicted, before the impact of the new school would be felt, and then "song and melody will penetrate the [heart of the] nation, the masses; and those masses will begin to create for us new songs, songs of love; living and natural songs, original Hebrew songs of the Land of Israel."[78]

In later years, following the Great War, when cantor and musicologist Joel Engel arrived in the country (in 1924), he brought with him a vision of Jewish national music with its own place in the complex of Western and Eastern sound. The authentic tone of Jewish music, Engel held, was to be found in the songs of the eastern European Jewish folk, which he now sought, like Idelsohn before him, to blend with the sounds of the more distant Orient and the music of the Sephardic communities.[79]

The Yishuv's musical culture, however, was not only a product of professional musicians and musicologists motivated by such self-conscious musical agendas. In the self-professedly spontaneous culture of song and dance that came to be associated with the Labor-Zionist immigrants, an intellectual desire to merge with the East seems to have coexisted with a longing and a need for the familiar sounds of the (eastern) European homes they had left behind. These two impulses—reflecting, respectively, a conscious nationalizing impulse to "discover" the folk and to create folk traditions and a more genuinely spontaneous need for emotional outlets in what was nevertheless a

harsh and foreign reality—came together in the prewar years to create a new Hebrew "folk" musical and dance culture in the Yishuv.[80]

Memoirs, literary accounts, and even journalistic reports attest to the centrality of spontaneous musical outbursts, often on the slightest pretext, in the culture of the young worker-pioneers. Many of the popular folk songs sung by the Jews of Palestine (some of which can still be heard in Israel today, albeit to a rapidly decreasing degree) were in fact adapted from popular Russian songs, to which some effort was made to add an "Eastern" tone and subject matter. Describing the unprompted outbursts of music among workers groups, educator and Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir activist Rachel Yanait wrote that "we sing of the Volga and mean the Jordan."[81]

If singing in two voices in this way could be challenging, the most formidable challenges posed by the impulse to configure the Yishuv's culture according to reconceptualized notions of East and West were those that most directly involved concrete encounters between real people of vastly different backgrounds and at times starkly conflicting interests. Constituting a new nation meant, among other things, mapping its figurative geography—delineating the nation's cultural, demographic, and conceptual boundaries. These would be drawn in an effort to encompass disparate Jewish groups and to negotiate their role and place in the national amalgam. Since the ethnic division between Ashkenazim and Sephardim—one of the most salient lines dividing the Jews of Palestine—was drawn along what were understood to be East-West lines, the discourses surrounding ethnicity in the Yishuv (and much of the cultural praxis that followed) placed Jewish ethnic divisions in the broader context of Easts and Wests in the construction of the national culture.

In drawing the boundaries of their budding nation, moreover, the Yishuv's activists were negotiating and determining not only the relations between the various groupings within those boundaries but in equal measure setting the tone for relations with those who were across those lines, outside the nation's boundaries. In Palestine in the years following the Young Turk Revolution, it was becoming increasingly clear that the Yishuv's principal constitutive "other"—relations with whom would continue for decades to pose bewildering and defining challenges for the Yishuv (and later for the state of Israel)—was another budding nation, that of Palestine's Arabs.

8

Bounding the Nation

Ethnic Selves and National Others in Yishuv Culture

Both the question of determining the internal contours of the nation—who was to be included within its boundaries and how—and that of shaping the budding nation's relations with the competing Arab national claim to Palestine, which was becoming much more audible in the wake of the Young Turk Revolution, reached to the very heart of the process of constructing the new nation. Both questions, moreover, resonated clearly within the broader project of placing the new Hebrew nation somewhere in a reconfigured East-West constellation.

A recent historiographical trend has drawn a picture of almost idyllic relations between Arabs and (primarily Sephardic) Jews in a halcyon pre-Zionist Palestine that were shattered by the arrival of a Eurocentric, Orientalist Zionism with its denigration of Arabs and Middle Eastern Jews alike.[1] As I argued in chapter 7, however, Zionist conceptions of Orient and Occident were themselves considerably more diverse and complex than this picture indicates, and the range of attitudes toward Arabs and Jews of the Islamic world were, consequently, considerably more variegated and composite. Far from being the undifferentiated byproduct of a priori views, moreover, these attitudes were conditioned by changing historical circumstances.

Zionism in Palestine was heir to conflicting traditions regarding internal Jewish ethnic divisions. There was, on the one hand, a long-standing European tradition that saw Sephardic Jewry as superior

to its Ashkenazi corollary, as racially purer and closer to the ancient Israelites of Palestine in looks, spirit, ethnic composition, and language. Echoes of what has been called "the myth of Sephardic supremacy"[2] are clearly audible in Ben-Yehuda's claims regarding the Hebrew accent and in Idelsohn's image of Sephardic and Yemenite music. This was challenged at times by a distinct sense of Ashkenazi superiority that, in Palestine, seemed to some to be reconfirmed when confronted with an ostensible Sephardic decadence and inferiority.

Underlying both approaches was an often intense interest in the ethnic distinctions that so palpably shaped a fragmented Jewish world. The Hebrew press in Palestine followed with interest periodic reports on investigations by European scientists into the physical and mental characteristics of disparate Jewish groups and the corresponding attempts to chart the ways in which they together constituted a whole—research projects that had grown out of the efforts of founders such as Francis Galton, whose 1885 photographic superimposition project had aimed at capturing the "typical features of the modern Jewish face."[3] If leading cultural undertakings such as Idelsohn's musical institute and the Yishuv's crown jewel—the Hebrew language project—were based on a search for a lost or hidden authentic Jewish essence, science seemed to offer a compelling basis on which to seek it. And the best scientific research, as Eliezer Ben-Yehuda argued, reflecting a widespread current of thought in the Yishuv, had determined that, in contrast to the Ashkenazi Jew, who had a "coarse face, a broad mouth, a nose that is wide at the end and which is unlike the model of the Jewish nose," the Sephardic Jew "stands more erect . . . his nose is attractive, his lips are thin," and he is in all ways closer to an authentic Jewish type.[4] For many Jewish scientists, especially those with Zionist leanings, the Sephardic Jew, as John Efron has shown, "represented the *Urjude,* the original Jew, the Jew who could be authentically linked to both an ancient and glorious past, and by extension, could serve as a model for a future rejuvenated Jewry."[5] Aiming to root this general observation in the concrete reality of Palestine, Ben-Yehuda added that, "if we wish to know which of them is more similar to the ancient Hebrew face, we may find an answer to this in the faces of the Arabs."[6]

For Zionists, however, there was a potentially threatening tension inherent in these scientific undertakings, between their efficacy in pointing to and highlighting the distinctions between disparate groups of Jews and a tendency (indeed, often a desire) to conflate these groups and to conceive of them as belonging to a single national whole.[7] The translation of these scientific paradigms into the concrete workings of Zionist cultural activity made this tension particularly salient wherever interest in disparate Jewish physiognomies

and cultural traditions would have to be adaptable to the interests of the homogenizing national impulse. In an act of conceptual and liturgical superimposition not unlike that which Galton had undertaken some decades earlier with his camera, Jewish ethnic diversity would have to be seen and somehow palpably represented as cumulatively composing the Jewish people's discrete cultural profile and physical visage. These efforts were invariably informed by the underlying multivocality that characterized Zionist approaches to the East-West knot, which in turn helped to shape the ambivalence that would now characterize Zionist discourse—much of it Ashkenazi—regarding the Sephardim in Palestine and other parts of the Ottoman Empire, as well as Zionism's cultural praxis as manifested in differing attempts to construct roles for each of the disparate groups in constituting the nation.

On the one hand, a lingering sense of Sephardic supremacy often continues to inform a discourse based in harsh criticism of Europe, the European Diaspora, and the concomitant imagery of the reconstituted "new Jew." In the substance of their daily lives and in their bodies and physical comportment, according to some commentators, Sephardic Jews had suffered fewer of the ills of exile than had their Ashkenazic brothers and sisters and had consequently been able to remain a healthier Jewish "type." One report in *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* described the Sephardic community in the ancient city of Safed as composed of "all healthy individuals, boasting a robust body, who have grown accustomed to the life of the land, to its air and to its climate." This physical health, moreover, was a clear indication of a superior moral constitution, as the Sephardim of Safed, according to the report

> are satisfied with modest demands, and do not seek out luxury
> and indulgence like the Ashkenazim. Their foods are simpler and
> more nutritious than those of the Ashkenazim, which are com-
> plicated, and weaken the body. They are all industrious and fond of
> work. . . . The number of merchants among them is quite small—
> peddlers and salesmen are not overabundant among them the way
> they are among the Ashkenazim.[8]

This, according to the report, stands as an important model for the restructuring of Jewish culture in Palestine; thus, "when the history of New Yishuv in Palestine is written, the Sephardic community of Safed will play a leading role."[9] Here again, the history of the creation of a new Jewish society is a narrative not of European bourgeois civilization relocated but of culture itself reconceived and transvalued.[10] Given these estimations, at least one commentator puzzled at the apparent "exilic" behavior that seemed to be in evidence among some Sephardim. Following the 1910 murder of an Arab in Jaffa,

fear of collective revenge spread among some of the city's Jews. It was "strange to note," as one *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* correspondent commented, that such fear had "fallen not only on those who have come from Siedlce, Bialystok, Gomel" (cities that had been the sites of pogroms in eastern Europe) but also on the city's Sephardic community, "to whom so many . . . point as symbols of dignity and speak of their lack of exilic character."[11]

Yet views of the Sephardim and their potential role in the national project were by no means unambiguous. The same report from Safed that extolled their physical virtues lamented that these were attended by a complete loss of authentic culture where the life of the spirit is concerned. Frightful depictions of the conditions in which children studied, the strong consequent tendency to send them to missionary schools, and the general superstitious nature of the community's particular brand of religiosity are explained as resulting in large measure from the Sephardic community's extensive adoption and imitation of Arabic ways—here an emblem of cultural decay and degeneration (in sharp distinction to some of the reports on the Arabs as role models for the new Hebrews). The Sephardim of Safed, the report concluded in a spirit difficult to reconcile with its estimation of their destined role in the history of the New Yishuv, are on a lower level even than the orthodox Old Yishuv of Jerusalem[12]—a harsh judgment indeed on the pages of *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir*.

For a variety of reasons, then, in contradistinction to the Haskala legacy of Sephardic superiority, the encounter between the Jewish ethnic groups in Palestine, often fused, no doubt, with a preexisting sense of European superiority, left at least some Ashkenazim with a sense of Sephardic decadence and inferiority. One cultural critic offered a historical explanation for this dissonance: Whatever their merits generations ago, he wrote, "in vain might we search among today's Sephardic Jewry [for] . . . a single remnant that might remind one of the great and glorious past."[13] Columnist Ya'acov Rabinowitz, whose general animus toward "the Orient" made its appearance in chapter 7, voiced repeated concern about the culture of Palestine's Sephardim, who were in his words a "deformed element" with "an external and false civilization [but] no national culture." In response to the then current notion that the Sephardim had endured a kind of exile that was in some sense less debilitating than that of Europe, Rabinowitz retorted that they had in fact suffered "terrible material and spiritual decline" and had consequently become "similar, and growing closer, to the Levantine type."[14] Adding a note to the general Zionist charge sheet against the Alliance Israélite Universelle and its nonnationalist and anti-Zionist stance, Rabinowitz placed much of the blame for this threat of Levantinization on that organization and the education it provided in the Levant. Indeed, he added, in comparing groups of Sephardic Jews, it was evident

that "the Yemenite Jew [is] superior to the rest of his eastern brethren thanks only to the fact that he has been spared this Levantine education."[15]

Although Rabinowitz differed from many others in much of his ethnic diagnosis, the primacy he assigned to the Jews of Yemen reflected what was generally a keen interest in Yemenite Jewry that animated many Zionists in Palestine and took on changing manifestations throughout this period. As "Hebrew labor" became a rallying cry for expanding circles of Zionists in Palestine and abroad and the progress of the Labor-Zionist youth who had raised that banner seemed increasingly unsatisfactory, many Zionists turned their glance toward the Yemenite community, now conceived of as "natural laborers." Ostensibly accustomed to a life of poverty and hence able to live on the meager wages paid to Arab workers, the Yemenites suddenly seemed the key to success in the "conquest of labor" where their Ashkenazi brethren had failed.[16]

For a period of about four years, roughly between 1908 and 1912, it seems to have been possible (and, for many, desirable) to believe that this tactic might bear fruit. In 1912 *Ha-Ahdut* reported that Yemenite workers in the colonies were "successfully penetrating into areas of work in which the face of a Jewish worker has not been seen in ages."[17] In the ZO's Palestine office in Jaffa, sentiment was no less sanguine, and Ruppin and others adopted an official policy based on it, dispatching Shmu'el Yavne'eli to Yemen in 1910 to encourage immigration to Palestine in what was the Zionist Organization's first foray into the business of promoting and coordinating immigration.

This vision of the Yemenites' role in building the nation was contested from the outset, however, and the combined cultural and economic gaps between Yemenite workers and Ashkenazi employers, now living in close quarters (although, in many cases, in clearly separated parts of the colonies), was hardly favorable to maintaining such a vision.[18] Conflict arose in Zichron Ya'akov when members of the Yemenite community there undertook the practice of using their own ritual slaughterers to provide their meat—a problem, the colony's committee complained to the Palestine Office, since it violated the contract the committee had signed with another slaughterer for exclusivity in the supply of the colony's meat. It was the hope of the Palestine Office, Jacob Thon replied, that "all of the ethnic groups among us could be a single unit," but given the strictly religious nature of the conflict it was beyond the Office's jurisdiction and would best be referred to Rabbi Kook or a rabbinic court.[19]

The conflict in Zichron Ya'akov was comparatively mild. In other places, the mixture of culture gap and economic disparity had far more severe

repercussions. A report from Petah Tikva spoke of a colonist who had slapped a child across the face with a shoe when the youngster had asked for a pay hike and a woman who suffered a beating so severe that she had died of her wounds.[20] Rishon Le-Zion was the site of repeated complaints about the cruel abuse of Yemenite workers at the hands of their Ashkenazi employers. At least two reports described beatings of pregnant Yemenite women that were so brutal as to end their pregnancies, as well as the battering of another woman who "lost her mind" as a result.[21]

When the Palestine Office inquired into these incidents, the colony's committee complained that they could no longer tolerate the local Yemenites' lack of respect for "private property" and their failure to understand "basic moral foundations such as 'Thou shalt not steal,'" which lead them to "take fruit and branches from trees" in private orchards and yards. With regard to the alleged beatings, the committee claimed that the colonies' farmers did their best to "repress their anger" but that at times their "strength failed them" in their efforts to overlook the Yemenites' conduct; once a "quarrel" erupted, moreover, the Yemenites—much like "the natives of the land"—tended to exacerbate their behavior by telling all manner of lies, "such as that the woman immediately . . . [lost] her child."[22]

If daily life and its sometimes violent encounters problematized the apparently easy solution that the Yemenite "natural laborers" had been expected to provide, there were those who had been opposed from the outset to the instrumentalization that this conceptualization seemed to imply. At the Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir convention in the summer of 1908 grievances were heard not only over the Yemenites' poor treatment by many of their employers, who "look upon them as complete aliens," but also over the very notion that the Yemenites should be "made into a means for the attainment of our ends."[23] Nor was this instrumentalization appreciated by many of the Yemenite immigrants themselves, who were often not quite the "natural laborers" they were imagined to be and did not see it as their national destiny to earn lower wages than their Ashkenazi coworkers while suffering insult and abuse.[24]

In at least one case in 1913, Yemenite workers in the colony of Hadera went on strike to demand greater equality in wages. Their strike was supported by the colony's (Ashkenazi) workers' committee, but their employers were nevertheless able to simply replace their Yemenite workers with Arab laborers.[25] So dire were the poverty and abusive conditions that many Yemenites suffered in the Yishuv that, in 1913, Yehoshua Radler-Feldman (known by the pen name of Rabbi Binyamin)—now a member of the Palestine Office's "Committee on Yemenites," which was established that year in recognition that a "Yemenite question" had emerged in the Yishuv, and an activist dedi-

cated to the welfare of the community—warned of a rumor "that Yemenites in Petah Tikva, Rishon Le-Zion and Rehovot have been organizing in order to return to Yemen."[26] There was in the end no mass exodus from Palestine back to Yemen, but the Palestine Office and some of the workers' parties, with Ha-Po'el ha-Tza'ir at the helm, undertook to improve the material situation of the Yemenite community and to once again reshape the vision of their role in the national renaissance.[27]

One critical shift in the allocation of national tasks to the Yemenite community came with the 1913 establishment of the first purely Yemenite Zionist organization, which won considerable support from Ha-Po'el ha-Tza'ir,[28] and took the name "Tze'irei ha-Mizrach" [Youth of the Orient]. "The time has come," the new organization declared in its inaugural statement, "for us young Yemenites to participate in the nation's work and to volunteer on its behalf,"[29] and it would undertake to do this in a way that differed markedly from the earlier conception of the Yemenite role as "natural laborers" in the national renaissance. Tze'irei ha-Mizrach initiated and took part in a wide range

FIGURE 8.1. Yemenite workers in conversation with farmers in the colony of Zichron Ya'akov. The encounter was often a difficult and painful one.

of Zionist cultural activities, proclaiming and projecting their Yemenite heritage—in which their distinct ethnicity was presented not as a divisive factor but rather as an integral part of what made them members of the Jewish nation[30]—within the context of the European nationalist aesthetic that was ubiquitous in the Yishuv's public culture. The organization was now presenting Yemenite ethnic particularity, in other words, as a constitutive element of the new national culture. In 1914, the group's "very appealing" Purim celebration, for example, as one description reported, was kicked off by

> a tableau taken "from the life of a Yemenite family." ... The inside of
> a Yemenite home [was depicted] in full detail; on the right, the home-
> owner is busy with his work—the work of a jewelry maker ... the
> elderly father relaxes, smoking a long *nargila* and teaching Torah to
> his grandson; at the center of the home, the homemaker is grinding
> flour with millstones and the young daughter is weaving wicker
> baskets. After the tableau ... a poem by Bialik, "To the Nation's Vo-
> lunteers." Equally appealing were the gymnastics performed along
> with a chorus singing a Yemenite song.... The second part of
> the banquet was opened once again with an appealing tableau of
> Yemenite life "The Bridegroom's Joy with Song and Dance"; the
> chorus sang a number of Yemenite songs, and the gymnasts formed
> pyramids.[31]

Reception of these Zionist Yemenite youths was mixed, both within the Yemenite community and among their Ashkenazi counterparts, some of whom, even while lauding the new organization, expressed their surprise at the "phenomenal sight [of] Yemenites, who are so far removed from beauty and culture as we see them, [creating] such an orderly banquet, and in such good taste;" the bulk of the Ashkenazi Yishuv simply stayed away.[32] Their new public presence was nevertheless a signpost in the division of national labor among Jewish ethnic groups. In Palestine's emerging culture, Tze'irei ha-Mizrach seemed to be saying, traditional Yemenite jewelry making and *nargila* smoking would merge with the poetry of Bialik and gymnastics displays adopted from European nationalism to constitute the new Hebrew nation. The Zionist world, much like many of its European nationalist counterparts was, after all, filled at the time with projects aimed at gathering the nation's folk traditions, motivated by the common nationalist conviction that a folk and its folklore were among the repositories of the national spirit. The ritualized folklore introduced by Tze'iri ha-Mizrach—which they brought to life with visual force through the very European medium of the *tableau vivant*—and its message regarding the daily life of the Jews in Palestine added a seminal ethnic

(and "Oriental") dimension to the nation's quarry of folklore and popular culture.

If distinct ethnic groups might be assigned specific roles in the creation of a national symbolism and folk culture based on their real or imagined characteristics, this was also the case in the Yishuv's economic activity, as the unsuccessful attempt to mobilize Yemenite workers as a strike force for the conquest of labor indicates. A seemingly more promising effort was initiated on the eve of the Great War, when Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, by now a prominent leader of the Po'alei Zion party in Palestine, set out to turn the combined ethnic-economic crisis of the Salonika Jewish community to the advantage of the Zionist Yishuv.

Jews had long been a dominant force in the economic life of the Greek city's seaport. When, as a result of the First Balkan War (1912), the city was wrested from the Ottoman Empire, the Greek state into which it was now incorporated undertook to nationalize the port and its economy, and the position of the Jews became increasingly precarious, leading to impoverishment and emigration.[33] Ben-Zvi saw in this an opportunity. Few places in the world offered a cadre of experienced and professional Jewish seamen, and in fact the Jaffa port—the main gateway into Palestine—had remained largely impenetrable to Jewish workers. Here, then, as Ben-Zvi saw it, was a chance to come to the aid of a "besieged" Jewish community and at the same time to serve a fundamental economic need of the Yishuv by bringing these new natural laborers to Palestine. Unlike most Jewish diasporas, Salonika's was a Jewish community composed of a segment of "simple but healthy [Jews] (porters, wagon-driver, seamen, factory workers) . . . who make a modest living and are familiar with the oriental ways of commerce from their youth," as well as a group of "property-owners, connected with Europe by commerce, and therefore natural intermediaries between Europe and the East."[34]

Appealing to the Odessa Committee for support for this initiative, Ben-Zvi argued the double benefit that his proposal entailed and the double peril of its neglect. "If we are able to open up the gates of Palestine to these Jews," he suggested, "it is possible that dozens of sea-faring Jewish families may find respite and sustenance there." Failing this, the Jews of Salonika will be "forced to desist" from their traditional occupation, which was, for Jews, unusually productive and physical, and many of them will, by default, "depart for America to become peddlers," transforming these potential seeds of healthy physical rebirth into garden-variety exilic Jews.[35]

The outbreak of the world war prevented more than a handful of these seamen from putting Ben-Zvi's plan to the test. Larger-scale immigration of

Jewish port workers from Salonika would await the postwar years and a dramatically different political climate in Palestine.[36] That this was both a political and an economic undertaking had been clear from the outset, however. In enlisting the support of Zionists abroad, Ben-Zvi argued that the fact that the Jews of Salonika were all Ottoman subjects would "be a great advantage to us in the political sense as well" since neither the government nor their Arab competitors would "be able to open their mouths against them."[37]

In the democratized political context of the post-1908 Ottoman Empire, the fact that most of the Jews of the Yishuv chose to retain the citizenships of their former European homes had become in many ways a political liability. The "springtime of nations" that the revolution had initially seemed to usher in led to a growing chorus calling upon Jews in the Yishuv to renounce their foreign citizenships and become Ottoman subjects. "Hebrews, organize!" one writer called out a short time after the revolution. The time had come for "Sephardim and Ashkenazim, Yemenites and Bucharians" to overcome their divisions in order to create "an organization of Hebrews in Palestine."[38] Another explained that the empire's national groups "are all in motion, stirring with life; the atoms are uniting to form a whole, a living body, a body which may demand its right to life." The Yishuv, he cautioned, must not "miss the boat and be left behind."[39]

The new political reality, in other words, called for a more central role for Jews who were Ottoman subjects—and these were almost exclusively Sephardim—in creating a new Jewish politics unique to the Yishuv. The 1910 municipal elections in Jerusalem, the only place in Palestine where Jews constituted a majority but failed nevertheless to become an organized political force, became for many local Zionists a painful illustration of what they deemed a lack of political and national consciousness on the part of the city's Sephardic community—one instance of a greater frustration at Zionism's relative failure to make more significant inroads among Ottoman Jews.[40] A number of initiatives were designed to provide the necessary "political education," as Ben-Yehuda called it, to enlist the empire's Sephardim in the Zionist cause, and in the post-1908 atmosphere, Zionism did indeed begin to make considerable inroads into the primarily Sephardic Ottoman communities.[41]

In Palestine, one significant initiative emerged from within the Jerusalem Sephardic community on the immediate heels of the revolution, when Abraham Elmaliach, a native of Jerusalem and a prominent Zionist journalist, declaimed his excitement at the "return to life ... of our homeland" and called upon Ottoman Jewry to take advantage of the new freedom of the press and take the lead in bringing "all that is good and beneficial to the land of our

birth."[42] Good to his word, within the year Elmaliach founded and began editing a new Hebrew-language Zionist newspaper whose very title—"Ha-Herut" [Liberty]—celebrated the revolution and the new regime and stressed its inherent Ottomanness.

Michelle Campos has argued that *Ha-Herut* and similar voices represented a unique brand of Ottoman Zionism that was particular to Palestine's Sephardic community, for which participation in Ottoman life was an inherent value. She posits this as distinct from the Zionism of Palestine's Ashkenazi nationalizing elite, for whom, she writes, alliance with the Ottomans was "good strategy" but "devoid of any inherent value."[43] The evidence, however, fails to substantiate this distinction or these characterizations of either Sephardic or Ashkenazi Zionisms. There was, to be sure, a very self-conscious Sephardic tone to Ha-Herut. However, the claim that this entailed "support for cultural Hebraism without the corresponding separatist political aims [of Ashkenazi Zionism]"[44] and that this was a unique feature of Sephardic Zionism, overlooks much of what was taking place both in the official political Zionism of the ZO at this time vis-à-vis relations with the Ottomans and in the work of Palestine's nationalizing elite.

Prewar Zionist diplomacy with the Sublime Porte went to considerable pains to stress the lack of any separatist intent by using language such as "an autonomous vassal state...under the suzerainty of the Sultan" to replace demands for an "independent Jewish state" or a "republic."[45] While there were undoubtedly tactical reasons for the choice of such language by European Zionists, there is little reason to suppose that such tactical considerations were entirely absent when "pro-Zionist Ottoman supporters denied that Zionism had any anti-Ottoman aims or repercussions."[46] More importantly, this was a formulation with which virtually any Zionist in Palestine, of whatever ethnic background, would surely have felt comfortable. The Zionism of Palestine's Ashkenazi nationalizing elite—no less than that of their Ottoman Sephardic counterparts—was often aimed principally at precisely the kind of "cultural Hebraism" Campos presents as a unique feature of the Sephardim. Most of Palestine's Zionists—whether they were focused principally on the production of a new national music or art, on the Hebrew language, or on "Hebrew labor"—were only remotely concerned during these years with the kinds of political objectives that might have exercised Zionists in Cologne and Berlin.

Nor is it sustainable to argue that the Sephardic Zionists native to Palestine, who were more acculturated into local Arab culture, were more sensitive to Palestine's Arabs and consequently held more conciliatory political positions in what, after 1908, was a budding national conflict.[47] To be sure, the ability to converse in Arabic and a closer familiarity with local Arabic culture tended to

set Sephardim in Palestine apart from most Ashkenazi Zionists. It is by no means clear, however, that this cultural familiarity necessarily bred more accommodating views in the increasingly bitter encounter, which was quickly proving to be a defining one for a nascent Jewish nation attempting to create itself in part by blending its European and its Middle Eastern wings. The pages of *Ha-Herut* were indeed filled with calls to establish an Arabic-language newspaper that might help to bridge the deepening chasm between the two peoples, but this in itself hardly made it unique—*Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* repeatedly issued a similar demand. Given, moreover, that the paper's editors and contributors were mostly non-Europeans, for whom direct experience of anti-Semitism was not a formative part of their background as it was for many of their European counterparts, they were surprisingly prone to attribute escalating Arab hostility to the bald anti-Semitism of "our Arab tormentors [*tzorereinu ha-Arvim*]" in much the same reactive fashion as many of the Yishuv's Ashkenazim and at times in a style that sounds an even more combative and militant tone.[48]

If the ethnic question entailed sketching the internal contours of the nation and determining its components, the mapping of its outer limits was now being increasingly shaped by these deteriorating relations with the Arabs, who were emerging with growing clarity as the Yishuv's principal "other." The question of the budding Hebrew nation's relations with the Arabs, Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir Central Committee Secretary Yosef Sprinzak wrote, was one that, by the summer of 1914, could no longer be ignored. It was not the "slander and hatred" issuing forth from the Arab press that lent urgency to the matter but rather the fact that "our style of life, which is becoming an increasingly prominent reality in Palestine, mandates a delineation of the boundaries between the two nations." So long as Zionist work in Palestine had been more or less haphazard, Sprinzak argued, it might have been possible "to give little consideration to what stood outside of us." Once it had begun to come to fruition, however, and a sense had now emerged that the Yishuv had indeed become the nucleus of an emerging national entity, it was "inconceivable" that Zionist work not take into account "one of the most important factors in the land—*an additional national body.*"[49]

After 1908, the new Ottoman regime's dialectical combination of liberalization of the press and the parliamentary system on the one hand, and its intensified repression of national minorities as part of an amplified Turkish nationalism on the other, helped to stimulate the emergence and unprecedented visibility of nationalist movements throughout the empire, and of an Arab nationalism in Palestine (and elsewhere), whose fear of and hostility

toward Zionism seemed to increase daily.[50] Notwithstanding an older historiography that has suggested that Zionism both in Palestine and elsewhere remained for a long time oblivious and indifferent to the Arabs and Arab culture, they in fact figured quite prominently in Zionist imagery and thinking in Palestine. If this had been at times a consideration of secondary magnitude before 1908, in the postrevolutionary years the question of relations—and national competition—with the Arabs proved to be one of the most vexing consequences of the new political reality (and indeed one of the reasons for the urgency many Zionists felt in their efforts to win over local Ottoman Jews).

Falling into the broader context of Zionism's ambivalent position in the East-West dichotomy, the image of the Arabs among Zionists in Palestine was from the outset widely variegated. They might be seen as uncultured savages posing a threat to the culture of the native "Hebrew" generation, as in the recurring concerns over youth culture in the colony of Zichron Ya'akov, whose young natives, as one commentator grumbled, "have adopted the ways of the Arabs along with the common and vulgar language." Another complained about the "vulgar obscenities" characteristic of the "Arabic atmosphere [that] has damaged the human development of the young men and women of Zichron Ya'akov."[51] Ya'acov Rabinowitz added an element of sexual innuendo when, in response to critics of the coeducational policy at the Herzlia Gymnasium, he reprimanded them for their willingness to send their children to missionary schools, where, he retorted, "under the influence of the natives, the danger of same-sex [encounters] is by no means smaller than the danger of opposite-sex [encounters]."[52] For a movement intent on reclaiming the lost masculinity of the emasculated Jew, this was a serious charge indeed.

This tone of displeasure with the ethnic and cultural environment that Zionism had chosen for its national revival was mitigated, however, by a very different view of the Arabs, one that represented them both as lost racial brothers who offered a glimpse of the actual likeness of the ancient Jews who once inhabited the land and as tangible links to that ancient Jewish past. "Insofar as we can picture it," as one early report on archaeological activities in Palestine explained, "the regular lives of the residents of the land in those days were very similar to the lives of the *fellahin* [Arab peasants] in our own times."[53] And in this role, of course, Palestine's Arabs might also constitute a beacon showing the way toward the refigured healthy national Jewry of the future. Indeed, the very same Arab influence that had penetrated the culture of the Yishuv's native youth and seemed to some commentators a cause for alarm was for others a source of enthusiastic pride, as in Ben-Avi's praise of the native youth as "little Arabs."[54]

A romanticism that cut across ideological lines envisioned a racial and cultural blending of Arab and Jew in what Alan Dowty has called "naïve ass-miliationism,"[55] as in Meir Wilkansky's fusion of Bible and Qur'an (see chapter 7) or in the writings of Rabbi Binyamin, in which he proclaimed his attraction to the "melancholy melody of this relative of ours, the great Arab nation," a melody that was "inherently related to this environment" and could be heard across the expanses of Palestine's natural landscapes.[56] Racially and spiritually linked, Rabbi Binyamin envisioned the synthesis of Arab and Jew as taking on a demographic-biological and political dimension as well.[57]

If Ya'acov Rabinowitz used sexual innuendo in his critique of "the east," this romanticism of the Arab might likewise at times recruit Eros to its side. Resonating with the common European trope of Oriental sexual exoticism and at the same time reversing its cognate image of the exotic beauty and sexual allure of Europe's Jewess, Itamar Ben-Avi describes the unexpected scene of a snow-clad Jerusalem in the winter of 1902–1903 and a young Arab woman passing by in bare feet. "I saw her two unclad legs," he writes, and they were "beautiful, charming . . . round, full at their height and narrowing as they reach the foot." As she walked on, the ice melted on her warm, exposed flesh, and "snow wet her azure dress, fastening it to her tan, quivering skin." Even her apparent misery in the cold, Ben-Avi writes, could not obscure the fact that she was "so ravishingly beautiful . . . that I coveted her, I longed to give her a kiss," although in the end, he writes, he simply walked on, leaving the Arab woman an unattainable (and perhaps ultimately undesirable?) subject of fantasy.[58]

During the lead-up to the Young Turk revolution and ever more evidently in its wake, the question of Jewish-Arab relations became a more urgent political issue in the life of Zionism and the Yishuv as challenges to the entire spectrum of views began to grow, along with the mounting tensions between Arabs and Jews. As Arab nationalism became a growing force in Palestine and evinced an increasingly visible hostility to the Zionist enterprise there, Zionists in Palestine and abroad took notice of what was beginning to look to growing numbers of them like a budding national conflict that would entail a host of cultural and political questions. Well before the outbreak of the First World War, escalating intercommunal strife, soon to crystallize into full-fledged national conflict, became etched clearly into the still very fluid definition of self that was taking shape in the Yishuv.

Yitzhak Epstein's famous and oft-quoted article "She'ela Ne'elama" [An Invisible Question],[59] one of the first and starkest expositions of the emerging conflict between Arabs and Jews, appeared in the summer of 1907 and elicited

a hailstorm of responses in the Jewish and Zionist press in Palestine and abroad.[60] That same summer, a report on Rishon Le-Zion's anniversary celebrations (an event of particular Yishuv-wide significance since some viewed the founding of the colony as the inception of the New Yishuv) attributed a new kind of significance to that moment of birth. The establishment of the Jewish agricultural settlement a quarter of a century earlier had been a historic landmark, one report explained, since it had proven to the surrounding Arab population that the Jews were not Walad al-mitti [children of death], as they were frequently referred to in Arab parlance, but in fact were quite alive.[61] To be sure, a desire to elevate an ostensibly lost Jewish national honor had been a primordial Zionist drive from its earliest days. Rarely (if ever) before, however, had it been the Arabs to whom that national honor had to be proven.

It was surely not a coincidence that the first steps were also taken that summer toward the formation of the Yishuv's first paramilitary organization. Motivated by "the Yishuv's social degradation"[62] and the escalation in Arab-Jewish tensions, founder Israel Shohat sent Menahem Ussishkin a proposal for the establishment of a cadre of young Jews to guard the Jewish colonies and work their own land.[63] This was one of the measures that led to the establishment of the Yishuv's first paramilitary self-defense force, Ha-Shomer, in 1909, spearheaded by its clandestine founding kernel, Bar-Giora, which was established in that summer of 1907.[64] Echoing the mood and motivation in the reports on the founding of Rishon Le-Zion, Alexander Zaid, one of Ha-Shomer's soon-to-be legendary founders, recalled that the organization's slogan—"By blood and fire Judea fell; by blood and fire Judea shall rise"—reached the tents of the Bedouin, who "learned that the degrading designation of 'children of death' was a thing of the past."[65] Indeed, one of the new organization's principal aims was to demonstrate to the Arabs that they were dealing with a new type of Jew—Jews who "are courageous, and would choose to die on their guard duty rather than retreat," as one founder explained.[66]

Although escalating enmity served as the critical backdrop to its foundation, in their clothing, mannerisms, the horses they rode, and even their self-defense stance itself, Ha-Shomer consciously adopted a style that was based on a romantic emulation of the Bedouin, into which, as Israel Bartal has argued, they introduced a lingering image of the Russian Cossack as well.[67] This was emulation, however, that reverberated with a strange jumble of dissonant motivations. Many shomrim [guardsmen] were influenced by the romanticized notions of racial assimilation that were widely current in the social-democratic Po'alei Zion circles from which most were drawn, and they often looked to the Arabs as a living link to the ancient heroic (and more warriorlike) life of the

Israelites. Some who spent extended periods living among the Bedouin would later recall "beautiful moments, which have been carved in my memory for the remainder of my life."[68]

At the same time, however, the drive to adopt Arab ways was often also phrased in terms of a need to know a (potential) enemy. Those beautiful moments, after all, had been prompted by a series of violent clashes that had led some members to conclude that "we must become light of movement like the Bedouin" precisely in order to more effectively defend against them.[69] In other words, this vision of fusion was at the same time an attempt to erect partitions, and indeed, the gulf separating the two communities grew, and the conflict between them intensified. In later years, recalling his own dreams of a Jewish-Arab synthesis, one former watchman wondered how "we never asked ourselves how Europeans would suddenly shed their skin and become Bedouins." Far fetched though it may have seemed to him in retrospect, though, at the time "none of us imagined that it was no more than a beautiful dream."[70]

The romantic ideas and the desire to emulate Bedouin ways could not obscure the growing chasm that was separating Arabs and Jews in Palestine. In the spring of 1908, mounting tensions between the communities had already erupted into the largest outburst that Palestine had yet seen, when a brawl in Jaffa escalated, shocking many in the Yishuv with its level of violence, its potential implications for Zionism, and the discomfiting rumblings of a nascent national conflict.[71] In an indication of what was to come in the ensuing decades, it also became a small-scale international diplomatic affair that involved the consulates of a number of countries, as well as the sultan's government in Constantinople.[72]

A few months later, the change of regime and the boom in the Arabic-language press in Palestine, much of which became increasingly nationalist in tone and ever more hostile to Zionism, were accompanied by sporadic conflict and even bloodshed throughout the country, catapulting Ha-Shomer into a role of increasing prominence in the Yishuv. Clashes between the colonists in Wadi Hanin and neighboring Arabs in the spring of 1909 led the former to seek funding from the Russian Hovevei Zion for "ten *Jewish* watchmen" and for weapons with which to arm themselves.[73] By 1913, the escalation and perceived "ill will of the Arab League" led a newly established union of Judean colonies—colonies that in many cases had rejected Ha-Shomer when it was first founded in 1909—to request that the group arrange for Jewish guardsmen in all of the Yishuv's colonies.[74] "Our situation in Palestine," as the union explained, "has become dangerous. Our enemies are organizing, and seek to swallow us alive."[75]

This new defensive stance and the aesthetic sensibility promoted by Ha-Shomer began to claim a place of growing importance in the Yishuv's public

spaces and, not surprisingly, in its culture of celebration and its national lit-
urgy. When local Arabs paid an unexpected visit to the 1912 Herzl Day cele-
brations by the Sea of Galilee, the uneasy dialectic of enmity and admiring
emulation took center stage as one of the event's symbolic imperatives. The
organizers, one report explained, had in any case "had the wisdom" to incor-
porate a range of physical activities, all of which were distinctly un-Jewish in
any traditional sense. Some, such as horseback-riding competitions and the
salvos of gunfire in the air that accompanied so many of the Yishuv's cele-
brations, were also manifestly associated with local Arab culture and reflected
the attempt to cast the new Hebrew at least in part in the image of the local
Arab. But this emulation, this sense of merger with the East, also took on a
more combative tone in the hostile atmosphere of 1912, and the demonstra-
tions of physical prowess, according to the report, were also designed to con-
clusively show, in a reiteration of what was by now becoming a ubiquitous
refrain, "that the Jews are not 'children of death.' "[76]

The unexpected appearance of the Arab horsemen, with the freedom and
confidence they seemed to convey, elicited an initial reaction of fear and jeal-
ousy among the celebrants, who "follow the convoy with a sad and wretched
look," despondent at their own lack of equivalent health, strength, and courage.
The festive mood was saved, however, by one Jewish rider, who suddenly

> clings to the proud Arab, and the two embark on a contest.... The
> whip is raised and brought down upon the Jew: Do you really
> dare to overtake me? The Jew clings to his mare. She seems to feel
> her rider, and concentrates all of her strength. Once again the
> whip is raised in the Arab's hand, and is brought down upon the
> Jew's cheek.... [But] the Jew has won. The eyes [of the Jewish cele-
> brants] radiate shimmers of joy and happiness.[77]

In many senses, the arrival of the Arabs provided a vehicle for the per-
sisting ambivalence and the emulating enmity that now increasingly charac-
terized the Yishuv's relations with and attitudes toward the Arabs. There was
something fierce in the competition even at the level of this local microdrama
of the broader national conflict as it appears on the pages of the journal's
report. At the same time, however, the means by which the Yishuv hoped to
prevail in this conflict were based at least in part on emulation of the Arabs
and an adoption of what were at least imagined to be Arab ways of life (see
figure 8.2).

Politically, the sense of growing enmity could at times bolster calls for
Ottomanization—and now not always out of identification with an ostensibly
rising East. The combined escalation of violence and the increasingly strident

FIGURE 8.2. A horseback riding competition as one of the centerpieces of Yishuv celebratory style, shown here at the Passover celebration in Rehovot.

tone of the Arabic-language newspapers led one commentator to caution as early as the autumn of 1908 that "the homeland is in danger" and that, should the Yishuv not take the requisite action to secure it, "our land will be lost . . . and our nation will remain an eternal wanderer, with no hope at all."[78] However widespread in the Yishuv, the Zionist discourse of racial brotherhood and fusion seems to have struck few chords among Palestine's Arabs, in whose eyes the Zionist settlers remained a foreign European transplant.[79] The argument for Ottomanization, in this context, was at times based not on the expectation of merger but, on the contrary, on an increasingly acute awareness of the improbability of such a Jewish-Arab synthesis. Although a longing for a kinship between the supposedly semi-Asiatic Jews and their Oriental kin might continue to motivate many Zionists in Palestine, some now wondered whether the ruling Turks were not a more likely "Oriental" partner than the local Arabs.

Alternatively, the escalating conflict could lead to an even greater urgency for those insisting on union with the Arabs. Some in the Yishuv looked toward the Arabs and their budding nationalism as natural allies in a shared struggle against the decaying empire, whose rulers were sympathetic to neither of Palestine's nationalist movements. On the eve of the First World War, Chaim

Margalit Kalvarisky, a veteran Yishuv activist who, among other things, had devoted himself to the coeducation of Jewish and Arab children, commenced political negotiations with leaders of the Arab national movement. Kalvarisky took pains to convey that the Jewish settlers were not instruments of imperialism—even of an imperialism of the Orient. "We are not anti-Arab," he explained, adding that "we have no desire to become tools in the hands of the Turks in order to repress our racial brothers, the Arabs."[80] In one meeting with Arab leaders and students, he went so far as to propose the establishment of "a clandestine alliance between Moslems and Jews."[81]

However, even with his earnest commitment to Jewish-Arab coexistence in Palestine (a commitment he would maintain for many years to come, among other ways as a founding member of the dovish Brit Shalom in 1925), Kalvarisky could not close his eyes to certain very real areas where the interests of the two groups simply clashed. When some of his Arab counterparts "complained about the fact that the Jews are boycotting Arab labor," as they understood the Zionist call for "Hebrew labor," Kalvarisky sought to dispel their fears. In a private letter, however, he reflected that

> With all of my love for Hebrew labor I find it appropriate to say that our newspapers must be cautious with their words: "C'est une chose à laquelle il faut toujours penser mais pas le dire"—say the French with regard to Alsace. And I say, with regard to Hebrew labor in the field and in the city, that we must institute it everywhere, but not declare it openly in the newspapers. Hebrew labor must be, among us, a *mot d'ordre*, but not a matter for debate in the press.[82]

The Yishuv had begun to view itself as a community on guard. While Kalvarisky could not, of course, have anticipated the nature of the war that would soon erupt over (among other things) the Alsace that served him as an analogy, it was surely clear that his attempts at rapprochement were rooted in, and assumed, a language of conflict. By 1913, when his negotiations were taking place, national conflict was emerging as an all-too-evident feature of the Zionist undertaking in Palestine—so much so that even those who were committed to laying foundations for peaceful relations, such as Kalvarisky himself, now found their activity to be predicated on the presumption of conflict.[83]

Hopes for racial fusion were now increasingly forced to contend not only with the competing vision of distinctly European new Jews, set apart from their Arab environment, but with the concrete reality of an increasingly violent conflict between Arabs and Jews in Palestine. In subsequent decades, intensifying conflict between Arabs and Jews, combined with an array of other

influential factors—including the annihilation of European Jewry, mass Jewish immigration from Arab lands, and the Cold War, with its implications for an East-West divide of a whole new kind—would lead the Yishuv and later the state of Israel to turn increasingly toward the Western world in search of political allies and cultural partners. A delicate and multifaceted interplay between Western and Eastern cultural orientations continued, however, throughout. Its general trajectory was set during the pre–World War I years, when the foundations were laid for a culture that was neither wholly "Oriental" nor purely "Occidental," however these terms were conceived. Ironically, in light of Zionist hopes for a clearer-cut resolution to the Jews' uncomfortable position as cultural intermediaries—as neither fully European nor completely Oriental themselves—the culture that was now emerging in the Yishuv was one that selectively incorporated, rejected, and synthesized elements of diverse traditions into a new Jewish culture that, in an unanticipated reflection of the vision of some of its architects, seemed to constitute a bridge of persisting ambivalences between Easts and Wests.

However checkered it remained, the project of constructing that culture entailed the delineation of new national boundaries. The dramatically changing circumstances of subsequent decades would provide unexpected avenues and forms of expression to this Zionist multivocality regarding the lines separating and crisscrossing East and West and the consequent implications for inter-Jewish ethnicity and Jewish-Arab relations. The tone of intertwined anxiety and hope, of kinship and alienation that would continue to characterize those changes, however, was set in large measure by the first translations of this ambivalence into tangible cultural and political praxis during the prewar years.

9

"The Jew Has Died and the Hebrew Has Been Born"

Making and Locating Cultural Traditions

If the delineation of national boundaries was an important part of constituting the Yishuv's new Hebrew national culture, the emergence of that culture would also be animated by, and in part dependent upon, a contested repositioning of the national center and its peripheries. The geographical rearrangement of Jewish life that the Zionist project called for—the physical relocation of the Jews from Europe to Palestine—entailed a demand for a concomitant cultural realignment. A self-image as the new center of Jewish life—a new hub of human geography and the new fulcrum of Jewish modernity—had been an undercurrent in much of the Yishuv's cultural work from early on. As a distinct Hebrew culture seemed in fact to be taking shape in Palestine in tangible and evident ways in the years that followed the Young Turk revolution, what had been an undercurrent began now to move to center stage.

The culture that was being generated in Palestine, the Yishuv's cultural agents asserted with increasing vehemence, deserved pride of place in Zionist politics, in the Jewish world, and consequently (and perhaps most importantly) in determining what Jewishness would mean in the modern world. By the final years before the outbreak of the First World War, the Yishuv was beginning to chafe at its traditionally subordinate position in the habitually paternalistic relationship between the Diaspora and its protégés in Palestine and had begun to evince an increasing appetite for asserting the primacy of its cultural offering over what was in any case an unhealthy

Diaspora and its decaying culture, as the most fundamental premises of Zionist thought had long maintained.

The trend toward greater centrality of Palestine in Zionist life, which had begun to take shape at the Seventh and Eighth Zionist congresses in 1905 and 1907 and by the establishment of an increasing Zionist presence in the Yishuv, was reinforced by the events of the Young Turk Revolution, which seemed at once to open new opportunities for work in Palestine and to pose Zionism with new challenges. The postrevolutionary years saw a redoubling of official Zionist efforts and a virtual fury of cultural activity within the Yishuv, which seemed to be testing every possible avenue of articulation for what it now increasingly represented as its distinct cultural voice.

Beginning with the founding of *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* in the spring of 1907 (and its literary section a year later), new journalistic and literary organs were being launched at what seemed to some a breakneck pace. That same spring, Hebrew writer Simcha Ben-Zion, who had immigrated to Palestine two years earlier, inaugurated *Ha-Omer*, an "anthology for literature, science and current affairs published in the Land of Israel," as the cover of the first issue announced. Although ultimately short lived, *Ha-Omer* represented a first attempt to make the Yishuv a center of Hebrew literary activity and to transfer the fulcrum of Hebrew culture from eastern Europe to Palestine.[1] A spate of new journals followed shortly thereafter and with redoubled vigor after the revolution. Some had very specific professional or cultural foci, such as *Ha-Hinuch* [Education], which the Hebrew Teachers' Association launched in 1910, or the even more specialized *Proceedings of the Medical Association in Jaffa*, which first appeared in 1912, with the goal of serving not only as a professional medical journal, but also as a tool for the creation of a "Jewish medicine" that would be a critical contributing factor to the formation of a healthy national culture.[2]

Aimed at a more general audience were also periodicals and newspapers such as *Ha-Herut*, which made its first appearance in 1909, and *Ha-Ahdut*, the Yishuv's second Hebrew-language, Labor-Zionist periodical, this one associated with Po'alei Zion (after the demise of its Yiddish-language *Der Onfang*, which had first appeared in 1907). As early as the fall of 1908, Menahem Ussishkin commented on the "literary mania that is running through the country now." Even so long-standing a supporter of the Yishuv and its ultimate cultural primacy in the Jewish and Zionist worlds would caution at this point that "little good can come of this frenzy" since most of these initiatives, he thought, were destined to fail.[3] Some indeed did, but a surprising number did not, creating instead an increasingly palpable sense that the Yishuv was actually beginning to evince the capacity for a certain cultural independence— and at least some of the material and institutional wherewithal to support it—

and that it was in fact becoming the center of a new Hebrew culture. By late 1909, one writer in *Ha-Shilo'ah* would remark that "a significant part of *the new Israel* has already been created in Palestine."[4]

As some of the early discomfort with Bezalel and other expressions of Yishuv culture had portended, the emergence of this identifiable culture generated new sources of friction between the Yishuv and the Jewish centers of Europe, as the appearance of a new center seemed necessarily to mean at least a partial relegation of the older ones to the periphery. As the new cultural praxis—rituals, celebrations, art, language, and more—and the meanings associated with them came to define the culture of the Yishuv, this also implied with increasing clarity a partial marginalization of traditional practices that many Zionists in Palestine now identified as rooted in a culture of exile. As the preceding chapters have shown, traditional imagery and rituals were at times mobilized and recast in the Yishuv's reinvented festivals and celebrations to become the spearheads of direct assaults on the very traditions from which they were culled. But if such assaults from Palestine aroused little stir before 1908 (even the exchange between Schatz and Deinard remained within the confines of private correspondence), in the reality that began to unfold under the impact of the change of Ottoman regime and the increased Zionist commitment to (and presence in) Palestine, these hints of discomfort erupted into a number of explosive confrontations.

Shortly after the revolution, the Herzlia Gymnasium—by now recognized in Palestine and abroad as a central pillar of the Zionist cultural enterprise in the Yishuv, whose goal it was to create a new generation of native Palestinian "Hebrews"—emerged as a focus of intense debate in which some of the same motifs that had been presaged earlier now became points of all but ultimate concern and catalysts in the changing alignment between Yishuv and Diaspora. From its very outset, when Yehuda Leib Metman-Cohen initially established the Gymnasium as a private educational venture, he had hoped to create a school that would reflect his own commitment to the centrality of Palestine and Hebrew culture in the national renaissance. Later, the school's fund-raising policy (and the difficulties it would confront) and its choice of institutional affiliation were designed as expressions of this pedagogical and cultural identity. The major donation—the one that would allow for the construction of the Gymnasium's new building—was obtained from Anglo-Zionist (and philanthropist) Jacob Moser. Despite this support, Menahem Ussishkin's concern that the school's teachers would "have to live as nomads for no less than half a year just for the purpose of raising funds for the high-school"[5] proved all too realistic for its two leading teachers, Chaim Bugrashov

and Ben-Zion Mossinson, who spent extended periods of time on fund-raising missions in Zionist communities in Europe.

Although they welcomed the support the school received from the Zionist Organization and the Odessa Committee, Metman-Cohen and his board pointedly chose to forego the promise of German government certification—potentially an important benefit to graduates, who would be readily accepted into German universities—in order to avoid entanglement with "foreign" languages and cultures and with the Jewish philanthropic agencies (such as the Hilfsverein), which were falling into increasing disrepute in the Yishuv. Instead, in 1911, when the school first opened its upper classes, it requested—and received—Ottoman certification,[6] seeking in this way to highlight its native character and the rooting of its education, its graduates, and their culture in the Ottoman East.

Even having chosen its allies, however, it was not all smooth sailing for the Gymnasium. The more it emerged as a distinct voice of the new Jewish culture in Palestine, the greater the discomfort some of these would-be allies abroad began to feel at what that voice seemed to be saying. Initial protests came from the Orthodox-Zionist Mizrahi party, whose representatives at the Eighth Zionist Congress—where official Zionist support of the school was pledged—charged that the pedagogical tone and cultural outlook of the school were fundamentally antireligious. Zionist support for the school, they argued, therefore constituted a violation of the long-standing status quo, according to which no step would be taken that might offend the religious sensibilities of Orthodox Jews. In his efforts to allay the impending storm, ZO president David Wolffsohn charged the representatives of the newly established Palestine Office to look into the matter.

Arthur Ruppin and Jacob Thon confirmed that the school's outlook was fundamentally secular and that the Bible, for example, was taught according to the principles of biblical criticism. Indeed, Bible instruction would soon become the primary focus of dissension. And yet, they argued not only that the school was an authentic native creation but that it was, moreover, very much a genuine expression of the spirit of the Yishuv and in particular of the segments it served. This ought to grant it legitimacy in the eyes of the movement, they contended, adding that as a national cultural institution, it was unquestionably worthy of the support of the Zionist Organization.[7]

It was precisely this authenticity of the school that was the cause of so much wrath among many Diaspora Zionists, according to Shmaryahu Levin, a veteran Hovev Zion and a recently elected member of the Zionist Executive, who attacked what he considered the absurdity of the position taken up by the gymnasium's opponents. "So long as the business of establishing schools in

Palestine was conducted by various organizations outside the national move-
ment," he wrote, "there was peace in Israel." Just when the initiative had been
taken to establish a school that would be entirely committed to the national
movement and to the creation and dissemination of a national culture, the
attitude had changed. The gymnasium, according to Levin, ought to be per-
ceived by Diaspora Zionists as

> the first attempt . . . to clearly show those who lack faith in the poten-
> tial for our rebirth that a new generation must be raised in Pales-
> tine; a generation that will be in consonance with the demands of
> general human civilization, without being forced, as a result, to lick the
> crumbs of a foreign language from under the tables of others. . . . A
> generation that will not suffer from an abyss that divides the real
> life with which the child is surrounded from the life that is reflected
> in the books.

It was a sad irony, he concluded, that just when "this attempt has been proven
successful, to the credit of the pioneers of our renaissance and in spite of the
non-believers," the very people who ought to be supporting it were emerging
instead as detractors.[8]

Levin was convinced that the controversy over educational content stemmed,
at least in part, from the difficulty some Diaspora Zionists were experiencing
in accepting the changing relationship between the Yishuv and the Diaspora
that was the result of the emergence of this new Jewish culture. He urged such
acceptance, however, since increasing Yishuv autonomy ought to be seen as the
fulfillment of Zionist longings. "We are not the guardians of the New Yishuv's
residents," he maintained. "The students' parents will never accept overseers
from the lands of exile, whose only advantage is that at the moment they con-
tent themselves with seeing only the shadows of things from a distance."[9]

The controversies surrounding the gymnasium, however, were all but
built in to the very nature of the project. The school occupied a place in what
was undoubtedly one of the foundational fault lines within the Zionist
movement. "Jewish nationalism," as Steven Zipperstein has phrased it, "from
its beginnings walked a thin line between secular and religious revivalism,
progressivism and nostalgia, post liberalism and dreams of a Davidic return."[10]
In so delicate a balancing act, the Hebrew gymnasium became the object of
controversy precisely because it sought to chart a distinct path for the Yishuv's
culture that would somehow span, and in some senses conflate, these some-
times uncomfortably coexisting impulses.

For its part, the Zionist Organization, under the often reluctantly accepted
leadership of David Wolffsohn, had its own careful balance to strike between

two tendencies that had been at odds with one another since Herzl's earliest days as the movement's leader (and, arguably, dating back to the days of Hibbat Zion). On the one hand was the impetus to fundamentally restructure Jewish culture and "the Jew" that served as a principal motivating force for many Zionists. On the other hand was the fear of alienating the small segment of the Orthodox establishment whose support Zionism had succeeded in obtaining. As a result, the movement's leadership—itself apparently ambivalent and divided—sought at times to obscure its association with and support of the school. During one of his fund-raising trips abroad in anticipation of the Ninth Zionist Congress, Ben-Zion Mossinson was informed in a letter from Haim Bugrashov back in Palestine that, on the one hand, the Zionist Central Bureau had decided "not to provide official support for the Gymnasium, for fear of Ha-Mizrachi." Otto Warburg, on the other hand—a leading member of the Zionist Executive and soon to be the organization's third president—had not only "promised to engage in public relations on our behalf" but had already proven true to his word as well, having aided in the establishment of a "society for support of the Gymnasium" in Vienna.[11]

If fear of the Orthodox wing of the movement was one factor that helped to stir this ambivalence toward the Gymnasium, the discomfort ran much deeper and well beyond religious Zionism. It extended in fact to the very core of the question of culture, where it penetrated into the smallest recesses of the movement, crossing the lines of Zionist political divisions and affecting the dynamics even within local Zionist chapters in Europe. Evidence from Ben-Zion Mossinson's fund-raising trip in the fall of 1909 suggests, for example, that there was considerable interest in and popular support for the gymnasium among Zionists in Vienna and Galicia,[12] while other movement chapters, where Orthodox influence was stronger, were often (but not always) more reticent.

Mossinson's planned stop in Warsaw had to be cancelled in light of the warning he received from Yitzhak Nissenbaum, a prominent member of Mizrachi in that city, who wrote that public relations on behalf of the Hebrew gymnasium might not be welcome among Warsaw's Zionists. While there might be possibilities for enlisting support on a private basis, "the Zionist Committee will not agree to" a public lecture. The committee's general opposition, Nissenbaum explained, was being spearheaded by Joshua Heschel Farbstein, another Mizrachi leader, whose animosity was directed primarily against Mossinson personally, who, in his role as Bible teacher, had introduced instruction based on biblical criticism into the curriculum. Farbstein, Nissenbaum wrote, had "expressly declared that if you speak publicly on behalf of the Gymnasium, he will use the same opportunity to speak *against* the Gym-

nasium and against you. He will surely fulfill this promise. This means that there will certainly be no benefit to the Gymnasium, and perhaps it might in fact be to its detriment, in addition to causing a great scandal."[13]

The spillover of this antagonism, moreover, meant that Mossinson would have to cancel a planned lecture before the local Hovevei Sefat Ever [Lovers of the Hebrew Language] as well, when Nissenbaum cautioned him that, even there, he would be treading on thin ice. Although it appeared that Mossinson would be permitted to speak to its members, the organization insisted on two preconditions: "1) that you speak in Ashkenazic, rather than Sephardic, accent, so that you will be understood; 2) that you do not speak about the Gymnasium for the same reason as stated above."[14]

Mossinson and the gymnasium he had come to Europe to represent were becoming a battlefield in what was now turning into a struggle over the fate of Jewish tradition as its centers of gravity were undergoing a revolutionizing geographical shift—to Palestine in this case and, in a separate development, to North America. As these points of cultural friction and power struggle demonstrate, the contest over the remnants of a traditional world that was changing and being changed was now inseparabe from a tug-of-war that was taking place between the Diaspora and the self-professed center of national revival in Palestine for primacy and authority in Jewish life. In an unanticipated and ironic way, Ahad Ha-am's vision of a spiritual center in Palestine, radiating its culture and spirit to the Jews of the Diaspora, seemed to be emerging as a reality. Yet instead of the placid symbiotic relationships that even the dourly skeptical leader of "cultural Zionism" had envisioned, the connection between the emerging center and its Diaspora allies was turning out to be a rather troubled one.

The fact that by 1908–1909, a high school in the backward Ottoman region of Palestine had acquired the power to cause controversy in so large a Jewish center as Warsaw was an indication both of the Yishuv's growing centrality and of the increasingly problematic dynamics between it and other Jewish centers. Indeed, even more than the objections of the Zionist Committee in Warsaw (motivated in large measure, after all, by the powerful sway of its Mizrachi members), the conditions placed on Mossinson by the Hovevei Sefat Ever serve as a twofold indication of the growing cultural influence of matters pertaining to the Yishuv. In their unwillingness to accept a Yishuv version of the language, with its Sephardi-influenced accent and inflection, the committee members were effectively asserting a claim for Warsaw as a center of Hebrew creativity and renewal; Yishuv Hebrew had not yet established itself as unquestionably hegemonic in the Hebraist world. There was, however, something of a rearguard action in this resistance, which indicated that the Yishuv's

Hebrew and the increasingly composite culture of which it was a linchpin had become significant and powerful enough to justify this vociferous opposition in so faraway a place—and so powerful a center of Jewish life—as Warsaw. The controversy surrounding the Gymnasium, as Nissenbaum's letter indicates, touched on some of the most fundamental premises—and consequently on some of the rawest nerves—in the Zionist lexicon. It is not surprising therefore that the censure of the religious Zionists was soon joined by a chorus of critics from among precisely the more secularist cultural quarters where the gymnasium's faculty might have expected their most ardent support.

Ha-Shilo'ah—originally established and edited by Ahad Ha'am, now still a leading organ of eastern European Zionist and Hebraist thought—came to be one of the primary vehicles in the debate over the Hebrew Gymnasium and the emerging culture of Palestine's Jewish youth, thanks in no small measure to the palpable presence of its editor, Joseph Klausner. For some time, Klausner had been expressing misgivings and even fears (as he referred to them)[15] that the new culture being created in Palestine was taking on a form not quite in line with the image expected by those who had first dreamt it some twenty-five years earlier in Europe. The cultural reality of the Yishuv, as it was reaching him through the Jewish press (Klausner would not actually visit Palestine and see its culture up front for another five years) differed in some deeply discomforting ways from the Hibbat Zion vision of national rebirth in Palestine, of which he had been a part for many years.

"For twenty-five years now," Klausner had written in 1907, "we have been basing our longing to settle specifically in Palestine on the claim that there Jews will be free from the pressures of a foreign culture." Echoing a classical Zionist critique of Diaspora Jewish life, Klausner conceded his happiness upon hearing reports "that many Jews in Palestine have abandoned their exilic cowardice and the idleness that characterized the study houses of the past, and that they have returned to life and to courage and to the freshness of nature." At times, however, those same reports also made the reality of that life and those who were living it seem to him deeply disagreeable. Although "the influence of Hebrew culture is more or less conspicuous throughout Palestine," he reported, Klausner remained concerned that the Jews of the Yishuv were not as free from the influence of foreign cultures as he might have hoped, having now begun to absorb the influence of Arab culture ("a primitive culture, which—notwithstanding its many positive aspects—also suffers from a number of enormous drawbacks") in place of the European cultures in which they had been immersed before.[16] Klausner's concerns spiraled with the eruption of controversy surrounding the Gymnasium, which seemed to him to introduce a sense that the Yishuv's new Jewish culture was threatened not only by the

pressures of a "foreign" culture but also by forces that were at the very heart of the Hebrew cultural and educational institutions.

The kind of cultural Zionism that *Ha-Shilo'ah* represented was the almost exclusive creation of Jews who had been raised in a traditional Jewish environment, with which they had subsequently broken after having discovered the world of "general" culture. Their break with traditional Judaism emerged out of—and continued to exist within—an ongoing, if often painful, dialogue with that tradition. It was this painful aspect of the dialogue that created the "fissure in the heart" of these Jews—a term that became virtually omnipresent and axiomatic for many of Klausner's generation. A central goal of the new variety of Jewish education that was developed both in Europe and in Palestine was to obliterate that split between what is "Jewish" and what is "human."

Part of the backdrop for the conflict that emerged over the character of the younger generation in Palestine seems to have been provided by a clash of two conflicting longings that characterized cultural Zionism and to which Klausner gave particularly articulate voice. The first was a desire to raise a new generation that would be undivided, free of the psychical-spiritual ruptures that shaped the experiences and mental world of its parents and educators. This, however, seems to have collided with an instinctive wish for pupils or children who would be largely molded in one's own image. Although the goal of the new education was, in other words, to eradicate that "fissure in the heart" of the modern Jew, the all but necessary consequence was that, for the pupils, it often eliminated the tension-fraught dialogue with Jewish tradition that the educators lived. And however painful that dialogue often was, its loss appears to have been difficult to accept. "Within the depths of the old life," Klausner wrote, "there is a gradual, yet incessant, creation of the new life. The new is latently embodied in the old." Indeed, the new Hebrew literature, which played so central a role in the Jewish renaissance, Klausner argued, had—like his own generation, which had created it—grown out of an intimate, if at times difficult, familiarity with the world of Jewish tradition, which had shaped their striving for a renewal of Jewish culture. Mordechai Zeev Feierberg, Hayim Nahman Bialik, Y. L. Peretz, and Micha Yosef Berdyczewski—quintessential representatives of the buds of the new, national culture—had "made war their whole lives on the darkness of religion but have affection for the light that is contained within it. And they know in the depths of their souls, that this light and darkness are intermingled, that one cannot exist without the other."[17] It was this state of "being suspended between these two magnets" that had made these writers both great and popular, because their reading public lived the very same experience of suspension between two poles. The Jewish people, Klausner wrote (and here he was undoubtedly seeing his own image),

have liberated themselves from the burden of religion, have entered into the new general life and enjoy it more or less. But at the same time, they have not yet forgotten their childhood or the customs in their parents' home, *and they still have a longing for the light contained in the Torah,* or for the customs so filled with religious beauty and the poetics of faith.[18]

It was this longing, this sense of the beauty and poetry that the break with the traditional world had left behind, that was lacking, Klausner wrote, in the education of the younger generation in Palestine. There, "a new generation has arisen," which had both an advantage and a disadvantage over the preceding generation. "This generation has not suffered any oppression by the practical commandments [of traditional Judaism], but it has also not felt much of the poetry that is contained in many of them." It was, consequently, a generation that lacked a sense of internal division that had so characterized its predecessors. Almost as though he was unaware of the about-face contained in his words, given the long-standing tradition that aimed to eliminate the split, Klausner unequivocally asserted that "it is precisely this 'fissure' that enriches our poetic creations in its many forms."[19] He conceded that "the members of the new generation are fully national Jews. And more: They are whole Jews, '*Historic Hebrews.*'" However much the production of just such "Hebrews" may have been a goal for him from a distance, however, he now seemed to recoil at their (vicarious) sight and at his suspicion that "*Judaism to them is—the Hebrew language and the Land of Israel only.* Aside from this, or beyond this, there is nothing of 'Judaism,' there is only humanity."[20]

Klausner's critique was neither that of the Mizrachi nor was it based on religious concerns in a conventional sense. He was, after all, a leading figure of a self-avowedly secular, cultural nationalism (like Ben-Zion Mossinson, for example, he was a leading figure in bringing principles of biblical criticism to Hebrew-language scholarship and to a Hebrew reading public). His concern, in other words, was focused on the substance of essentially "secular" national forms and the national education that ought to shape the world of the first generations of fully national Jews. In the construction of a national pedagogy· and a viable national consciousness, in which the children would be brought closer to their nation, to the land, and to the language, Klausner now suggested, one must turn to the "poetry" of traditional Jewish rituals and sources. The Gymnasium's declared neutrality vis-à-vis "the variety of religious tendencies contained within Judaism" was to him deeply disconcerting.[21] Given the formidable obstacles facing the new education, it was clear, Klausner argued, "that for a number of generations at least, we *will be unable to place a pure Hebrew nationalism* (which has two principles only: Hebrew and the Land of Israel), *instead of the Jewish religion.*"[22]

Traditional religious doctrines and forms, Klausner maintained, were not to be cherished as vessels of eternal truths to which the child must be expected to cling throughout life. On the contrary, he anticipated—indeed, he hoped—that a day would come in the life of any child when "only their faint aroma will remain in their eternal memory, but this aroma will bring forth national flowers such as were produced in our literature by Bialik and Feierberg and their friends." In order for such creativity to be possible, however, "one must not deny the young Hebrew the flowers of religious *myth.*" The revolution that was embodied in the effort to produce a new culture in Palestine, in other words, must not be *too* revolutionary. In its attempts to create something fundamentally new, it must also return "to the good that is contained in the old" and must draw upon the religious power of the tradition as a nationalizing force.[23]

Klausner had an acute awareness of the religious dimensions of his modern, secular, nationalism. Indeed, nationalism was to him the only viable modern replacement for the traditional society from which he and his generation had emerged as it seemed to come crashing down around them. But given that collapse, the agents of nationalization in the Yishuv must be up to the task and recognize that the national culture they were in the midst of creating would have the power to nationalize the masses only if based on a utilization of the religious customs and traditions of the past.

Klausner was pleased, for example, with the refreshed power given to old festivals such as Hanukah, Passover, and Tu-Bishvat through their new forms of celebration (see figure 9.1). His displeasure stemmed from the fact that these seemed to him to be unconscious and almost accidental creations. "The teachers in Palestine," he wrote, *"are creating national-religious creations unconsciously....* They imagine that they are busying themselves with exclusively national festivals and they do not see that they are reviving ancient holidays, which would have been long forgotten had it not been for Jewish religion." This adoption and adaptation of traditional festivals was of particular importance, furthermore, since it was clear to Klausner that *"no movement in the world can become a mass movement if it does not become a matter of faith and religion."*[24] Although the full source of his discomfort seems to have remained just below the surface of full articulation, Klausner seems in effect to have been suggesting that the Zionist attempt to wrest the reins of power from the clutches of traditional religious authority was ultimately doomed to failure as a nationalizing strategy unless it undertook also to reclaim the myth and the language of sacrality that were concealed within the garments of tradition. Indeed, even the attempt to strip that language of its traditional garb seems in Klausner's thought to be both an essential component of the nationalist program and yet a very tenuous enterprise indeed.

FIGURE 9.1. Children in one of Jerusalem's Hebrew kindergartens on the holiday of Tu Bishvat, 1912.

In the many responses that ensued, two of the most central and repeated complaints leveled at Klausner had to do with his understanding of religion and of the religious dimension of the Jewish national renaissance. First, the instrumentalization of religion and its use as a tool—even if one for so ostensibly noble a cause as the nationalization of the Jewish masses—was rejected out of hand by a number of respondents as embodying precisely the kind of religious hypocrisy—religious formalism stripped of its sacral core—that the Zionist project in Palestine was supposed to uproot.[25] One attack, by Yosef Aharonowitz, argued simply that the entire matter of the place of religion in the schools was of little interest to the new Jews in Palestine. Aharonowitz leveled a portion of his response at Klausner's claim that the abandonment of Hebrew speech—the central pillar of the nationalist education—by the Yishuv's youth was one indication of the weakness of a national education that was devoid of these religious components. "Dr. Klausner, however, sees a remedy for [the decline of Hebrew] in the Etrog and lulav, in *Hoshanot* and in the Friday night meal" (all symbols of traditional Jewish rituals), Aharonowitz mocked. "We, however, the complete heretics, whose hearts are not moved even by the closing prayer of Yom Kippur, consider this entire question to be a question of literature and no more."[26]

Moshe Smilansky, on the other hand, took the substance of Klausner's claims with a greater degree of seriousness and focused on one argument that went to the heart of the cultural efforts taking place in the Yishuv. Unfamiliar with the reality of the Yishuv, Smilansky argued, Klausner was simply mistaken in his analysis of the loss of Hebrew among the Yishuv's youth. The reason that many graduates of the Yishuv's Hebrew educational institutions forgot their Hebrew had nothing to do with their lack of sufficient religious education. The education that many of the Yishuv's younger generation received *was* in fact religious, Smilansky argued. A quick look at the reality in various colonies, moreover, would reveal that precisely those who came from more traditional homes were the first to forget or abandon their Hebrew speech. "They are the first to return to speak in Jargon [Yiddish] mixed with Arabic, and they are the last to respond to any spiritual awakening. It is they who look upon anything that extends beyond the limits of their foreign material existence with utter indifference."[27]

In clear contradistinction to this deracinated youth, according to Smilansky, there were other young men and women in the Yishuv who were utterly indifferent to matters of traditional religion and its formal rituals but who "devote all of their powers to the revival of the Hebrew language."[28] What was lacking in many of the Yishuv's schools was not a nostalgic return to old religious customs but rather a much more Palestinian focus: "What must be

taught," Smilansky argued, "is knowledge of the land, its nature, its flora and fauna, and its work."[29] The land, in other words, had obviated the need for the religious traditions of the past, at least for those Jews who now lived there. "The days of the poetry of the etrog are gone," Smilansky admonished

> long gone, never to return. There is no turning back. . . . In exile, we needed the poetry of religion to maintain us in our nationality. In Palestine, we wish to—and can—educate nationalists who are healthier, whose nationalism is based on their lives in the present rather than on memories of a distant past that exist *in writing*. In place of religion, which is progressively dying, we wish to give them *a language and a land and the life of a free nation*. . . . Our children will not maintain the religious traditions because they will be *unable* to maintain them, just as even those who cry in longing for the poetry that is contained in them no longer maintain them. We wish and hope that our children will be good national Jews even without these exilic means.[30]

Whatever poetry or religious force might be necessary for Zionism's task of national mobilization, according to Smilansky, it was not to be found in the old traditional religion, which, being in its essence exilic, had long since become little but an empty shell. He rejected Klausner's claim that the newly invented national festivals in Palestine were taken in any substantive way from exilic religious traditions and that they drew on them for much of their spirit. The two kinds of festivals, he argued, could hardly be compared since one was a product of exile, whereas the other was the creation of free people in an atmosphere of a free nation in its own land. Rooted in the reality of the land, the spiritual dimension of the festivals being celebrated in the new Palestine was in fact so distinct from that of *galut*, according to Smilansky, as to make any meeting point between the two impossible. "We feel a great spiritually motivating power in our national historical celebrations," he wrote,

> and we strive to improve upon them from year to year. If Dr. Klausner wishes to see in this a religious instinct—so be it. I know, however, that those whose religious instinct is not in doubt are opposed to our celebrations and try to obstruct us—at times passively, and at times actively. I know that those who hear the poetry of the *etrog* have no understanding whatsoever of our national celebrations, and consider them something which corrupts the youth.[31]

This was not, as Smilansky saw it, a debate about the proper place of religion in a modern Jewish school, as it might appear to be and as some others

in fact understood it.[32] It was a head-on collision between an approach to spiritual life that sought vitality and one that could not liberate itself from the decay and death of exile. The new rituals and celebrations such as the "hiking and traveling...shooting contests, riding competitions," which were central pillars of the Yishuv's celebrations and to the uninitiated might provoke "fear of 'foreign cultures,'" Smilansky argued, provided Yishuv culture with a "vigorous substance that awakens the nerves and the youngsters' blood, banishing [the] boredom" of the traditional Jewish world.[33]

Although like Klausner, Smilansky too leaves this incompletely articulated, his understanding of the clash between their two conceptions—and the seemingly inherent incompatibility between "the poetry of the *etrog*" and the spirit of national celebration—indicates that what was at stake was a conflict of opposing sacralities. As Smilansky frames it, moreover, it was an opposition for which there could be no shared resolution for the Yishuv and the Diaspora alike, due to the inherent mutual untranslatability of the two contending poetries. The change of geography from the Diaspora to Palestine had served as the basis for a fundamental shift in spiritual constitution for those who had undertaken it and, as a corollary, in the cultural expressions and manifestations of that spirit. The traditions and customs for which Klausner longed, Smilansky argued, were products of exile and were destined to die along with it. It was consequently no surprise to him that Klausner purportedly failed to understand the new national celebrations. Palestine's new traditions, Smilansky argued, were both designed for, and produced by, those who had already grown distant from the harmful environment of a putrefied exile and had purified themselves of its contamination.

The style and rhetoric surrounding the November 1910 celebration of Eliezer Ben-Yehuda's thirtieth anniversary in Jerusalem expressed this connection between particular traditions and the specific location in which they were rooted more explicitly, perhaps, than any other event. The event, held in the city's Beit Ha-am (House of the Nation)—"where else could such a general and national celebration be held?" as *Ha-Or* asked—was hailed as Jerusalem's "first living, national celebration after two thousand years of exile and destruction." The festivities, according to one report, attracted a crowd that included "many who had never before visited this house," a composite representation of "Jerusalem in its entirety." The set adorning the stage of the *Beit Ha-am* was carefully assembled as a piece of public theater in which Ben-Yehuda was cast in the dual roles of national symbol and local symbol of a resurgent Jerusalem. Its centerpiece was "a small tent made of Hebrew flags, with a powerful [spot]light flooding it with light from above." The image of the Palestine sun

that the light was intended to evoke was complemented by the "surrounding green branches and flower decorations" that adorned the tent, recalling (even in the indoors) the renewed bond with the local flora. Scattered on the table at which Ben-Yehuda was seated were "thick books, his various newspapers, a quill and an inkwell." As he sat on stage, a series of speakers representing various sectors of the Yishuv came forward, often dressed in dark clothing offsetting Ben-Yehuda's white, to offer congratulations and national wishes. The most definitive of the speeches was given by Jacob Thon (who had immigrated to the country a mere two years earlier to become Arthur Ruppin's right-hand man in the Palestine Office), who proclaimed that, through his tireless linguistic-cultural work rooted firmly in the land, Ben-Yehuda had created in Palestine "the new [human] type we have all been looking for, fundamentally different from the exilic type." By planting the Hebrew linguistic and cultural revival deep in the soil of Palestine, Thon declared, Ben-Yehuda had been the first to demonstrate that within his very soul "the Jew has died and the Hebrew has been born!" Thon's words, according to the report, were followed by a "storm of applause."[34]

If the French Revolution, as Paul Connerton has written, involved "a severing of a head and a change in the clothes people wore,"[35] in Zionist Palestine the severing of the head was, happily, more figurative than literal, the literal severing replaced for some by the geographical amputation of the former European home in "exile." The change in people's clothing and their bodily comportment as representations and means of transmission for a form of collective memory and identity (the broader context of Connerton's discussion as well) was quite as literal in this case as well.

Culture, in other words—in its mundane and its sacred alike—could not be created generically, Smilansky and Thon seemed to imply; and their new national culture was the distinct product of Palestine, its residents, and their particular spiritual composition. It consequently mandated a radically new understanding of traditional religious Judaism and indeed the creation of a new national religion that was not only different from the religion of exile but fundamentally at odds with it. The implicit tension between a potential cultural isolationism on the one hand, and on the other, the Yishuv's image of itself as a new axis of Jewish culture that was a reclamation of a true and long-dissipated spirit and was destined to influence world Jewry, would be an enduring feature of the sometimes strained relationship for many decades to come.

When veteran Hovev Zion Zalman Epstein added his voice to the debate over the Gymnasium and the Yishuv's emerging culture, he phrased his concern in terms of the new boundaries that the controversy seemed to be etching for

FIGURE 9.2. Teachers at the Hebrew gymnasium in Jerusalem. The prominently placed maps mark and contextualize the geographic location of Hebrew culture.

Jewish life. His apprehension, he wrote, was that the Gymnasium's curriculum and the cultural praxis developing in the Yishuv (which Smilansky had described with such contentment) would leave the younger generation on the "outside" of Jewish life rather than at the hub of a redefined Jewishness, as Smilansky supposed. Epstein was full of praise for the Gymnasium's teachers, who had been able to transform "an ancient eastern language" into "the language of instruction and of living conversation . . . in teaching mathematics, physics, chemistry." He was deeply worried, however, about the fate of what he deemed the Gymnasium's principal mandate—the creation of a new type of Jewish intellectual who, he argued, "must by no means be an ignoramus [am ha-Aretz] from the point of view of the ancient spiritual field" but rather "a Torah scholar in the very sense that has been accepted by the nation from ancient times." Sounding a tone similar to Klausner's, Epstein added that "from the springtime of his life," this new intellectual must "not lack the internal cords that bind him to the sacral aspects of the nation." Unlike Klausner, however, for whom religion's role was largely that of a nationalizing tool, Epstein argued that it was impossible to separate Jewish nationhood and

nationalism from the religious tradition or from some form of religious faith. The Gymnasium's education consequently threatened to make its graduates "a withered limb in terms of the national-spiritual understanding of all of Israel."[36]

For Smilansky, those who insisted on clinging to the religious tradition of exile would soon find themselves on the "outside" of the new Jewish culture. That tradition was in any case dying, and the new direction that Jewish civilization was taking was that which was developing in the Yishuv. It was, moreover, as he believed and hoped, a radical departure from the exilic tradition. For Epstein, on the other hand, there was a distinct danger that, given the nature of its educational and cultural activities, the Yishuv was removing itself from the circle of Jewish civilization and the primary fonts of sustenance for the Jewish spirit. It was a debate that was at once about tradition and its geographical and figurative locations. Was Palestine the center, as Ahad Ha'am had envisioned, and would its influence determine the circumference as well? Or was the culture of Jewish Palestine, as Epstein would have it, a dangerous divergence from the fundamentals of Jewish culture and one that would leave the Yishuv beyond the boundaries of Jewishness?

It was not long before Ahad Ha'am himself joined in the fray. Although he too had some criticism of the gymnasium, he wrote, his primary goal was to defend it against the perception that this was a battle between the camp of the "Philistines" and that of Jewish culture.[37] Ahad Ha'am had just returned from his most recent visit to Palestine, which had changed his overall estimation of the prospects of a national revival there—from one of dour pessimism to a sense that "the road to the ultimate goal remains long, but even the simple eye can already see it on the distant horizon."[38] That goal was the creation of "a permanent center for the spirit and culture of our nation, which will constitute a new spiritual bond between the nation's scattered pieces, and will shower them with its spirit, awakening them to a new national life,"[39] and his new estimation of its progress was, for him, an expression of virtually unprecedented optimism.

Much of the sentiment that had been expressed against the Gymnasium, Ahad Ha'am argued, stemmed from misperceptions and misunderstandings. In fact, the Gymnasium was evidence of "a very healthy seed, which has the ability to develop nicely given the proper conditions."[40] It was indeed the Gymnasium's task, Ahad Ha'am agreed (with both sides), "to create through Hebrew education in Palestine a new model of an educated Jew, in whose spirit the national Hebrew element will be completely united with the general human element, thus creating a single, whole being, devoid of internal contradictions, without that 'fissure in the heart.' "[41] Ahad Ha'am concurred with the

Diaspora critics who maintained that the study of Jewish sources must hold a central and prominent place in the education provided by the Gymnasium. He differed with them, however, on their perception of the reality. "The truth is," he informed them, "that the Gymnasium itself is more 'kosher' than its program, and the pupils emerge from it with much more than 'some notion' of religion, prayers, holidays etc."[42] What criticism he did have, he added, was largely the natural outcome of the fact that the school was still a pioneering experiment that could not be expected to know its precise path when it had just barely begun to operate.

One central point, however, seemed to him to be of vital importance. The Yishuv's understanding of its culture's relation to the Jewish past and tradition raised concern regarding the emerging relations between the budding spiritual center and the Diaspora. "The deep desire for a revival of the nation in its own land," Ahad Ha'am wrote

> and an awareness of the important role which education must play in the attainment of this ideal, has led the teachers in Palestine to invest the whole of their spirit in the distant past, when our nation lived an independent and free national life in its own land. And since they are at all times surrounded by the very air of the land which our prophets and kings of old breathed, they are in danger of imagining the connection with that distant past as an *unmediated* bond, as though two-thousand years of exile were nothing but a passing, external phase which must be removed from the heart; as though every indication of its influence on our national spirit must be obliterated. *"Negation of exile"—this is the source of a great many other "negations" which one often encounters in Palestine, and which arouse in us a sense of bewilderment and sorrow.*[43]

More than a mere emotional revulsion and pain that this radical negation of the Diaspora and its culture aroused, however, Ahad Ha'am argued that it would be fatal for the production of a healthy national culture. Notwithstanding the deep emotions that presence in the land might stir, he cautioned, "one cannot skip over two-thousand years of history and educate 'ancient Jews' today, as though they were living in the generation of Isaiah." Whatever his new optimism regarding the emergence of a national spiritual center in Palestine, a temporal leap such as the one the gymnasium's educators ostensibly proposed would effectively set new boundaries to Jewish life, but rather than placing them at the vanguard, it would leave them on the outside. "If one removes the middle links from the historic chain," Ahad Ha'am advised, "its beginning and its end fail to meet." An education that would disconnect the

Jewish child in Palestine from those middle links—the centuries of Diaspora existence—would consequently "make matters so confused for him that he will not know what his place is in the world in which he lives, in what manner he is related to the rest of his people, who continue to be ruled by 'the spirit of exile.' "[44]

The coincidence of Ahad Ha-am's new estimation of the Yishuv as a budding spiritual center and the eruption of this cultural struggle between the Yishuv and the Diaspora was not an accident. A distinct culture now seemed to be emerging in Palestine, and as it grew in complexity, he argued, so too did its connection with that of the Jews outside of Palestine. As the Yishuv's culture consolidated and crystallized, it would demand an even greater position of independence, in the process asserting its uniqueness as opposed to Diaspora Jewry and tending toward a cultural isolationism rooted in the belief that an impenetrable barrier separated the culture of "exile" from that of the national rebirth.

At the same time, however, the Yishuv would demand for its culture a position of increasing hegemony over Zionist (and, ultimately, Jewish) culture, a demand rooted in the thesis that only in Palestine, where Jews were in direct contact with the very soil of Jewish culture and lived in relative independence, could their culture be developed freely and authentically. For a nation to be able to develop its culture unhindered, as Rachel Yanait explained, it must "stand on its own in its economic life and [be] independent from others in its political destiny and in its cultural creativity." Hebrew culture in the Diaspora, she argued, was therefore necessarily "like a prisoner, unable to develop freely."[45] Only in Palestine would a Jewish (or Hebrew) culture develop unobstructed, and this was in itself a seal of authenticity that ought to accord it special standing in the Jewish world. As A. D. Gordon contended, in Palestine "the Jewish people's original creative force awakens upon first contact, because here it is nourished from the soil in which it was planted."[46] The new national sacrality being created there, its unique link to the land in which it was rooted, and its consequent uneasy stance vis-à-vis the traditional Jewish religion of the Diaspora were fundamental to the re-creation of the new Jewish nation in its historic home.

Before the polemics surrounding the Gymnasium had dissipated, a new storm broke out that replayed and sharpened some of the very same issues, including the boundaries of Jewish nationhood, the relationship between traditional religion and the new national culture, and the connection between the Diaspora and the emerging center in Palestine. The incident surrounded a particularly provocative article by author Yosef Haim Brenner, one of the cultural icons of

the increasingly prominent Labor-Zionist youth, who had immigrated to Palestine in 1909. Although the "Brenner affair," as the flood of accusations, counteraccusations, and power plays that ensued came to be known, has been described at length (including a book-length study),[47] the increased cultural and material independence that the Yishuv demanded and was able to obtain as its result, and the connection between this increased autonomy and questions of new and old traditions, merit some attention here as well.

In the controversial article that ignited what turned out to be a highly volatile spark, Brenner criticized the persistent concern in the European Jewish press over Jews who chose to be baptized, arguing that those who took that final step out of the Jewish fold were hardly a loss to the nation since they were invariably individuals who had effectively placed themselves outside the bounds of Jewishness even before their full-fledged breakaway. Missing Brenner's bitingly ironic tone, some of those who responded deemed his column at best an acceptance of baptism as a legitimate step and at worst an implicit call (in the service of "the [Christian] Mission," according to one respondent) to Jewish youth to join the church.[48]

The most inflammatory lines in Brenner's article were those in which he insisted that the national rebirth in Palestine meant an entirely new means of drawing the boundaries of Judaism and that the traditional criteria by which this had been done for generations in the Diaspora were now defunct. "The question of our Jewish life," Brenner wrote, "is not the question of Jewish religion," nor ought the "survival of Judaism" to be of any concern at all. The Jews who were engaged in the production of a healthy, new national culture— "we free Jews," in Brenner's terms—"have nothing whatsoever to do with Judaism, and yet we are nevertheless inside the collective no less than those who lay *tefilin* and grow *tzitzis*."[49]

Notwithstanding the strong reservations many respondents from within the Yishuv expressed, the affair quickly took on the tone of a Yishuv-Diaspora divide and indeed resulted in a new alignment of power between the Yishuv and its would-be supporters abroad. This was to a large degree the consequence of the Odessa Committee's decision to withdraw its financial support of *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* pending the appointment of a new editorial board.[50] In Palestine, this step was seen—even by many of those who had been offended by the substance of Brenner's argument—as the transformation of a debate into a struggle for free speech and the Yishuv's right to independently determine its own policies (editorial or otherwise) without accepting dictates from patrons living abroad. Popular support for the journal was expressed not only in writing but also in a Yishuv-wide campaign to raise the financial means that would allow the paper to continue to appear in spite of the withdrawal of

Hovevei Zion's support (which in any case amounted to only about ten percent of *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir*'s operating costs).[51] Taking aim at Ahad Ha'am, who had helped to spearhead the campaign to cut off support, and stressing the transvaluation of spiritual values implied by the geographical transfer of the spiritual center to Palestine, one report on the fund-raising campaign crowned *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* the "spiritual center" for the Jewish workers of Palestine.[52]

One Palestine resident who had little sympathy for Brenner's views was A. D. Gordon. Whatever his reservations, however, he found the attempt to censor Brenner or *Ha-Po'el ha-Tza'ir* and to impose on the Yishuv a discipline from abroad more odious than the offending article itself. Not only was this an infringement on the Yishuv's freedom and independence, he argued, but it also illustrated the chasm that had come to separate the sensibilities and outlooks of Yishuv and Diaspora Jews, respectively. In Palestine, he explained, the expression of even such objectionable views as the ones in Brenner's piece was simply not as threatening as it was to Jews in the Diaspora since "in Palestine a Jew does not need to constantly measure his national pulse every hour [as he does in the Diaspora], for in this sense he is entirely healthy." In the place where a full national life was in the process of being created, it had simply "never occurred to us that an individual's opinion could pose a threat of any kind to the wholeness of Jewry."[53]

As Brenner himself indicated in one of his responses to his critics, the struggle between the Yishuv and the Diaspora was now interwoven at its very core with a conflict over the place of traditional Judaism in the emerging center and its nascent culture. Attacking what Joseph Klausner had termed the "arrogance" of "our young and still tender Yishuv,"[54] Brenner complained that Diaspora Lovers of Zion such as Klausner, for whom "national ideals" were an abstraction, "would like to see the residents of Palestine as machines to cultivate the eggs of the national ideals which he has raised from the books." In Palestine, however, where Jewish culture was a function of actual life, "we arrogant people will not be cowed by [claims in the name of] the totality of Judaism.... Our own freedom of thought and feeling is more important to us."[55] Brenner now translated and transported the conflict between "life" itself and the yoke of "the book"—a recurring theme in modern Hebrew literature since the early days of Haskalah—into the struggle between an ostensibly dictating and suffocating Diaspora (replacing the book) and the new Hebrew life of Palestine, where an authentic wholeness—radically dissimilar to the claims for wholeness made in exile—was being forged.

Nurit Govrin has argued that the Brenner affair resulted in "the center in Palestine growing stronger and ... discovering the powers hidden within it."[56] She adds that to the extent that the affair was an expression of strife over the

reconstitution of Jewish national identity, it was left unresolved and continues to this day. While there is, of course, a great deal of validity to this, it seems also that the inherent fusion of the two aspects of the struggle meant that the Yishuv's "victory" on one front entailed important achievements on the other as well. As the Yishuv's economic and material position vis-à-vis its sponsors abroad was reinforced through the struggle—indeed, *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* was now able to appear weekly rather than biweekly—it was also able to more firmly assert the role it claimed as a site of a refigured Jewishness and a significant focal point in a realignment of the Jewish world.

Another "war" would yet break out over the character of the Yishuv's Hebrew culture and its relationship with foreign sponsors before the world war would forever alter the playing field. By the end of what would come to be known as the "language war," the Yishuv would emerge as a budding national entity with increasing power to determine its own cultural course and as an authority with substantial cultural impact on the Zionist and Jewish world beyond. The language war, which broke out before the storm surrounding Brenner had had time to fully subside, proved, in fact, to be of far greater magnitude, and its shock waves reached the highest levels of international diplomacy and politics while providing a showcase for what now appeared to be at least the preliminary ripening of a Jewish national life and culture in Palestine.

10

Language Wars and Other Wars

The seeds of this final battle for a distinct Yishuv cultural style and substance and for its relative independence from the legacy and hold of the Diaspora were sown as early as 1907, with the first visit to Palestine by Paul Nathan of the Hilfsverein der deutschen Juden. It was then that the idea of establishing a Jewish technical institute of higher education (known initially as the "Technikum") in Palestine under the auspices of that organization was first circulated, bringing Nathan and his idea extensive acclamation among the Yishuv's cultural and educational elite. To Eliezer Ben Yehuda, Nathan had proven himself a great "friend of the Yishuv,"[1] whose educational initiative would be an important step in eradicating the profusion of languages that divided the Jewish community there. "Who knows," Ben Yehuda wrote excitedly, "if we might not very soon live to see a Jewish institute of higher scientific learning in Jerusalem—*a higher institute in which the language of instruction will be Hebrew.*"[2] By the time the first stones were being laid for the Technikum four years later, however, the initiative was coming under intense fire from the Hebraist cultural front, and Nathan, so recently declared the Yishuv's great friend, was being vilified as a nefarious enemy.

The conflict that erupted in the autumn of 1913 and quickly became an intensely bitter battle marked a dramatic shift in the relations between the Yishuv's cultural elite (and, as it appears, a significant portion of the rank-and-file population) and the German-Jewish philanthropy. In marked contrast to the more veteran French-Jewish

Alliance Israélite Universelle, which Zionists in Palestine deemed early on to be brazenly un-Hebrew and unsympathetic to the Zionist enterprise, the Hilfsverein had been an important partner to Zionist educators in the early years of the twentieth century. And although it was from the outset an alliance of convenience between committed Zionists and an organization that "lost no opportunity to stress that [it] was completely detached from Zionism" and cautioned against the "Jewish chauvinism" with which Zionism was ostensibly infected,[3] it was nevertheless both cordial and efficacious.

The Hebrew kindergarten that had raised such tremendous hopes among Zionist educators in the Yishuv for a young generation of new Hebrews in Jerusalem (see chapter 4) had been founded with the assistance and financial backing of the Hilfsverein. The association's representative in Jerusalem, Ephraim Cohn-Reiss, was hailed as a virtual hero for his role in obtaining his organization's support for the establishment of a training seminary for He- brew teachers in the city in 1903 as well. Like the kindergarten, this initiative, too, *Hashkafa* promised, would surely bestow upon the German-Jewish phi- lanthropy "the good will of all who desire the advancement of our nation here."[4] Abraham Elmaliach, long involved in education, especially within Jerusalem's Sephardic community, claimed to speak "in the name of the entire young generation of Palestine" in using familiar Zionist language to convey to Cohn-Reiss and the Hilfsverein "the blessings of Zion and Jerusalem."[5]

By 1908, however, the desire of some Hebrew educators for local Palestinian primacy in the establishment of educational institutions and in curriculum development, exemplified as early as autumn 1905 with the estab- lishment of the Committee for a National Hebrew Education (see chapter 3), was beginning to evince early signs of a growing militancy. Part of this in- creased assertiveness can be attributed to the more palpable presence and mounting influence of the Labor-Zionist pioneers and primarily the newly founded journal of *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir*. There, even as early as Paul Nathan's visit to Palestine, as *Hashkafa* was singing the praises of his friendship to the Yishuv, the tone was markedly different. Whatever credit he deserved for being "perhaps the first western [Jew] to understand the damaging superfluity of European languages in the colonies' schools," one commentator argued, Na- than was nevertheless one more liberal Western Jew who was inherently in- capable of understanding the organic and authentic spirit of national Jewry.[6]

Another columnist, writing after Nathan had come and gone, complained that those who had been hoping for "the victory of common sense over false patriotism" and the consequent allocation to Hebrew of its "appropriate place" in the teachers' seminary could only have been disappointed at the results. Although he had "announced to everyone when he came that he favors the

Hebrew language," his caution to the teachers lest they be "chauvinistic" in their application of this predilection was an indication that Nathan's true purpose all along had in fact been "the strengthening of German as against French." His work in the Yishuv and ostensibly on its behalf, in other words, was no more than a tool for the advancement of his true loyalties in the Franco-German rivalry over cultural and political influence in the Ottoman Empire and the Holy Land in particular. Hebrew, to Nathan and the Hilfsverein, as this author concluded, was little more than a tactical "camouflage" in his efforts on behalf of German culture and Germany itself.[7]

Before long, similar sentiments found their way onto the pages of *Hash-kafa* as well. Educator Eliezer Pepper, who had been a central figure in the appeal for a committee for a national Hebrew education in 1905 (shortly after his immigration to the country the previous year), aligned himself with *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* in cautioning the Hilfsverein and its representatives in Palestine not to be "misled" by the large number of students enrolled in their schools. Those students were there because the schools, Pepper stated, "are closer to us [in spirit] than any others that exist in Palestine," but this should not be taken as an indication of complete satisfaction. In a recent meeting with students in some of the Hilfsverein's schools, he added, he had heard vociferous complaints about "the increased emphasis on the study of German, which is unnecessary for our lives here."[8]

At the time (spring 1908), this remained for the most part a simmering undercurrent. During the years that followed, however, with the increased sense that a distinct culture was in fact emerging in the Yishuv and that it had acquired some of the requisite material means for a degree of independence from the Diaspora, the undercurrent became a flood. By late 1913, the discomfort over non-Zionist and non-Palestinian domination of the Yishuv's educational institutions—which were among the most important tools of the Zionist nationalization project—was embedded in a social and cultural infrastructure that was now sufficiently self-confident to erupt in an outburst of unprecedented militancy.

When, in the fall of 1913, the Technikum's international board, composed of Zionist and non-Zionist representatives from Europe and the United States, along with the leadership of the Hilfsverein, decided that the principal language of instruction in the institute and the associated high school would be German, the fledgling institution suddenly became the focal point of international controversy. Given the centrality of the Hebrew language as the nucleus of the Yishuv's Hebrew culture, the conflict rapidly spread into what was seen as a battle for the life and soul of the emerging national culture. In their ensuing struggle with the Hilfsverein and in the less overt but no less

determinative power struggle between the Yishuv and the centers of Zionist activity in Europe that attended it, activists in Palestine now asserted that the Yishuv alone was the legitimate determinant of its cultural agenda. The underlying demand of the language war was for a fundamental shift in power relations between the Yishuv and the Diaspora, in which primacy would be transferred to the Yishuv. If some undercurrent of dissatisfaction with the Hilfsverein was audible in the years leading up to the outbreak, the sense among Yishuv leaders that a "war" such as this one could now be viably waged—and won—reflected the dramatic changes that had taken place during the preceding years.

The experience the Yishuv's Zionists had gained in establishing core cultural institutions such as Bezalel and the Hebrew high schools in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem had changed the playing field on which the now-contested Technikum took shape. By 1910, when the Hilfsverein announced that all of the graduates of its teachers' seminary and vocational schools in Jerusalem would benefit from automatic acceptance into the Technikum, at least one Hebraist leader in the Yishuv regarded this news not as the boon it might have been considered some years earlier but as a potential threat to the character of the Yishuv's Hebrew education and its native Palestinian authenticity in particular. In an open letter to Ahad Ha'am (one of the Zionist members on the Technikum board) Bezalel Jaffe protested that this automatic acceptance implied that the Technikum too was a Hilfsverein institution, something that to him was unacceptable. Ahad Ha'am responded that the Technikum was not a Hilfsverein institution and that the announcement must have been issued by the organization's excessively independent local representatives in Palestine. Jaffe's fears do not seem to have been completely assuaged.[9]

The outbreak was in some sense fortuitous for the Yishuv's cultural activists. If nations have often been forged in the crucible of battle, a certain impulse existed in the Yishuv well before language war to find a unifying, nationalizing struggle. The adoption by Ha-Shomer of Kahan's "blood and fire," in which Judea had been felled and in which it would rise again, was, at the time the organization was founded, more an expression of wishful thinking than of the reality of Palestine, where there was as yet little blood and fire to go around (that would come soon enough). The importance attributed to the commemoration of the earliest fallen *shomrim* and the relative immediacy with which this was undertaken are indications of the impulse to transform what still often amounted to local clashes into the stuff of a Garibaldi. Indeed, one commentator on the first *Yizkor* (memorial) book that was published in their honor as early as 1911 wondered whether it was not a sign of excessive impetuosity "in creating history [and] sanctifying things that can only be sanctified over generations."[10]

In the days before the escalation of the Arab-Jewish hostility that came in the wake of the Young Turk revolution, the nationalizing force provided by a struggle against a common enemy might have been found elsewhere. Itamar Ben-Avi had come across an opportunity for such imagery in the cholera epidemic that afflicted Palestine near the end of 1902. In a rare expression of approval of what he saw as the Yishuv's quasi-national unified conduct, Ben-Avi wrote that the Jews had "organized in every neighborhood to defend the residents against the impending disease." In this rare moment of unity, he explained, the fragmented Yishuv "forgot our quarrels [and] our hatreds" and had come together to become "Hebrews in the Land of Israel." Thanks to this, he concluded, the Yishuv had proven uniquely successful in its efforts to "confront the microscopic enemy and to remain standing on the land, rather than underneath it."[11]

A drive to eradicate the influence of missionary institutions—primarily schools and hospitals—from among Palestine's Jewish population had roots extending back to the nineteenth century, when missionary schools and hospitals had begun to proliferate (primarily in Jerusalem) and had set their sights on the country's Jews as a particularly important (and safely available) target for proselytizing.[12] Jewish resistance was quick to follow, both in the Orthodox community and in the modernizing educational activity of organizations such as the Alliance Israélite Universelle. By the early twentieth century, however, leadership in Jewish anti-missionary resistance was shifting to the New Yishuv Zionists. Beginning around 1910, the antimissionary campaign emerged as a central rallying cry in the Zionist Yishuv's public discourse and in the cultural, social, and political activities it shaped, reaching an almost fever pitch by 1912. By the spring of 1913, a few short months before the outbreak of hostilities with the Hilfsverein, *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* reported that "the war against the mission is now the most powerful public action being taken by the enlightened," a category in which it included in particular the Hebrew educators and the Maccabi Athletic Association as vanguards of the Zionist cultural undertaking in Palestine.[13] Although this struggle against missionary educational activity permeated the Zionist press during these years (and indeed had been an important part of the context in which Brenner's provocative 1910 article had touched such a raw nerve), its influence on the emerging national culture and its place in Zionist activity in general still awaits sustained research.

The principal front in the "war against the mission" involved little direct contact with any missionary institutions themselves, which, with the powerful backing of European powers, would have made formidable targets indeed. Instead, it became part of an ongoing Zionist struggle for hegemony within

the Jewish communities of Palestine, in which the primary opponents were the nonnationalists of the Yishuv, and the Orthodox community in particular. The battle against missionary activity coincided with this internal Jewish struggle since many of the Jewish students in the missionary schools came from within the Orthodox Old Yishuv. Reasons for this included the absence of frameworks for the education of young girls within the Orthodox community—a need to which the missionaries often responded in an attempt to make inroads into the Jewish community[14]—and the general poverty of much of the Old Yishuv, for whom the meals and the extended school day that the missionary schools offered the children who attended were an often irresistible windfall.

To Palestine's Zionists, of course, such reasoning could not expunge what to them amounted to national ignominy, nor could it obscure what they deemed its true motivation—an opportunism that smacked of a pathological lack of national consciousness among both the Orthodox and much of the country's Sephardic community. This assessment seemed to be bolstered by the opposition much of the Orthodox community evinced toward modern, secular education and especially toward Zionist schools. To some in the Orthodox Yishuv, a secular education offered by nominal Jews seems hardly to have appeared a better, or in any sense a more Jewish, alternative. As one article in *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* reported, when asked why their children attended a missionary school rather than that of the Alliance Israélite Universelle, Orthodox parents in Safed replied that they saw no difference between the two, whose common goal was to turn their children into "goyim."[15]

Nor did the Zionist Hebraist alternative seem any better—as the opposition even of religious Zionists to the Herzlia Gymnasium as a bastion of impiety and heresy indicates. Indeed, so profound was the opposition to some aspects of the new Zionist education in Orthodox circles that, when the Hebrew Teachers' Association sought to enlist the support of Jaffa's rabbi Abraham Yitzhak ha-Cohen Kook in the struggle against missionary education, he seems to have seen in this appeal an opportunity to further the campaign against the Gymnasium. His cooperation, he reportedly stipulated, would require a combined effort that would target both the missionary schools and the Hebrew high school.[16]

The very notion of turning to Kook as an Orthodox supporter, Yosef Aharonowitz complained, was evidence of a failure to understand the true essence of the great effort against the missionary schools. It was, he wrote, a war against an entire system of "unconscious assimilation," of which the Orthodox Old Yishuv and even Orthodox Zionists such as Kook were an integral part. It was, in other words, a war of Hebrew culture against an array of

different forces which, although profoundly different from one another—as in the case of the missionary schools and Rabbi Kook—now formed a unified front in opposition to the Hebrew revival. In this campaign for the life of Hebrew culture, he argued, the Zionist Yishuv could expect no cooperation from those who were either consciously or unconsciously allied against it. The fundamental tactic must therefore aim at the grassroots level, directly at those who tacitly undermined the national project. To this end, Aharonowitz advocated that "the names of the parents who bring this disgrace upon us and send their children to the missionaries" be made public. By forcing "these individuals to come face to face with a public that is rising up against them," he concluded, this civic-guerilla tactic would in any case "be far more effective than any casuistic sermons by Rabbi Kook."[17]

When the war against missionary education was still raging a year later, another correspondent ascribed to it an almost eschatological significance as a struggle for the very soul of the nation against what he called the *"avoda zara"* of missionary education. Adopted with many variations and transformations into the Yishuv's discourse during these years, the term *avoda zara* referred in traditional Jewish discourse to idolatry (literally, "foreign worship"). In the context of Labor Zionism, the term had often been mobilized on behalf of the struggle for Hebrew labor and used as a reference to "foreign labor," that is, Arab labor in the Jewish colonies (taking advantage of the equivocal "avoda," which, in addition to "worship," can mean "work" or "labor"). In the struggle against the missionary schools, this new meaning could be melded into the religious overtones of the traditional usage for a touch of added ardor, as the economic and the cultural-educational were fused into the general struggle for all things Hebrew, the one source of a true sacrality, with many forces of impurity and false sacrality arrayed against it. "The very same youngsters who are doing battle against *avoda zara* in the colonies," as a *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* commentator argued, "can and must take up arms against the *avoda zara* that exists in the field of education as well."[18]

The Sephardic Zionist *Ha-Herut* pressed this point further in its juxtaposition of the theologically inspired language of *avoda zara* with the medicalized imagery of a disease that afflicted the education of the Yishuv's children. In one piece recalling a less than heroic biblical Israel, writer Yehuda Burla suggested that one ought not to be surprised "that our forefathers took part in worship of other gods," a practice that at times included a cult of child sacrifice. The Yishuv today, he wrote, "with our own hands, without being forced or coerced from without," was repeating that false worship by "happily and blindly handing our children over to . . . a new *avoda zara*—the missionary and Jesuit schools in our country."[19]

Coming from within the Sephardic community of Jerusalem and aimed at a Sephardic readership whose educational orientation seems to have been disproportionately inclined toward the missionary schools and the French-Jewish Alliance Israélite Universelle, the veritable flood of writing on the missionary schools that filled the pages of *Ha-Herut* during these years was placed alongside commentaries on the francophone education of the Alliance. Although themselves products of that schooling, the editors now adopted a line that rejected the non-Zionist organization as a further symptom of a general blight whose remedy was to be found only in a nationalist, Hebrew education. According to one diagnosis, the desire for French education was "a malignant leprosy...a contagious disease, which threatens to consume body and soul alike" should measures not be taken to quickly eradicate it.[20]

This was a struggle to instill a "national consciousness" heavily overlaid with theological overtones among the Yishuv's masses, as well as a battle for the social and political dominance of its nationalist elite. However widespread a Zionist inclination was among the population of Palestine, most of the immigrants who arrived during these years, as Gur Alroey has shown, had not been motivated principally by the nationalist ideology of the Yishuv's cultural elite but had come, rather, as part of the general wave of Jewish emigration flowing out of eastern Europe.[21] Together with much of the native Jewish population, these nonideological inhabitants constituted the masses that the educational and cultural elite had set out to nationalize. Whereas Alroey contends that the nationalizing impact of the elites began to be felt in a later historical age,[22] the evidence of the campaign against the missionary schools (and certainly the impact of the language war, which came on its heels) suggests rather that it had established itself as a powerful nationalizing force by the eve of the First World War.

In this context, the drama of the language war seems to have overshadowed the importance of the Yishuv's antimissionary activity and to have placed it in a historiographical corner. The campaign against the missionary schools, however, deserves to be recalled, and not only as a small-scale model of, or precedent for, the greater furor against the Hilfsverein but also as an early skirmish in what amounts to the same war. A month or so before the outbreak of the language war, a reporter for *Ha-Ahdut* recalled "the excitement that the war against the mission had inspired in the Jerusalem public." As if lit by an unexpected ray of sunshine, the Jews of Jerusalem could suddenly see "the filth in which their children are mired" and mobilized themselves more or less en masse for this "war against the mission, against alien education, against all that undermines our own independent and free development."[23]

The antimissionary drive made its way not only into public discourse and print but also into the Yishuv's public space and ritual cycle. In the spring of 1913 it infused the Yishuv's celebrations of "Flower Day"—a new holiday designed to celebrate the renewal of the Jewish bond with nature and the landscape of Palestine (see figure 10.1)—simultaneously helping, as some reports indicate, both to disseminate consciousness of the antimissionary campaign and to more firmly establish the new festival in public life. If the previous year the "Jerusalem crowd [had] stood by passively and hardly participated in the purchase of flowers," the fusion of the new festival and the religio-national campaign helped to inspire in them a sense that "it had an obligation to support our treasury so that we will be able to fight against the mission—the purpose to which the proceeds of this year's 'Flower Day' were devoted." Bestowing added significance on the event, the report added, "the flowers were sold by the boys and girls of the Hebrew schools."[24]

The Flower Day celebrations that year seemed not only to build bridges linking usually distant segments of the Yishuv but also to fuse the practical work of raising funds for the national project and a particularly evocative opportunity for symbolic representation of the national struggle. Although Flower Day would dissipate in the post–World War I years, it was at this point a holiday in which the impulse to recast traditional symbolism and liturgy met, perhaps more comfortably than usual, with the passion for creating entirely new forms of celebration. The day's festivities in 1913 included not only the sales of flowers in the streets of Palestine's cities but, as was the case in many of the Yishuv's festivals, pageants redolent with national symbolism as well. The decision to have that year's Flower Day coincide with Lag Ba-Omer—a minor festival in the traditional Jewish calendar, resurrected in Palestine, where it was transformed into a commemoration of the Bar Kochba revolt against Rome[25]—gave the struggle against missionary activity a particularly explosive symbolic power and historical depth.

The public celebrations in Jerusalem were given extra "substance and vitality," wrote *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir*'s correspondent in the city, by the recently established Jerusalem branch of the Maccabi Athletic Association, which marched "in a procession of close to one hundred people, all dressed in uniform." Arriving at a large open field, they were joined by a "vast crowd," which was treated to speeches by some of the leading figures of Zionist activism, including Po'alei Zion leader Ya'acov Zerubavel, educator and founding member of the Jerusalem Maccabis Aviezer Yellin, and Zionist Executive member Shmaryahu Levin, who all took the opportunity "to protest against the mission and against those who send their children to that inferno." This list of

FIGURE 10.1. A group of students on "Flower Day" (date unknown), one of the new Zionist festivals designed to shape the public sphere.

speakers was itself an indication of the unity that this battle on behalf of Hebrew culture was able to infuse in the often divided Zionist camp. The speeches were punctuated by the crowd's cries of "down with the mission" and were followed by a gymnastics performance by the Maccabis, who brought the event to a close with another procession through the Old City and some of the new Jewish neighborhoods. "Wherever they went," according to *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir*'s report, "they were met with cheers and bouquets of flowers."[26]

The campaign against missionary education was a powerful galvanizing force and acted as an important step on the way to the outbreak that would follow on its heels. The language war proved to be a decisive campaign that seemed to firmly lay in place the foundations of a national culture in the Jewish Yishuv of Palestine. In collective memory and in the historiographical literature, the language war has overshadowed the struggle against the mission, perhaps because it involved a somewhat more tangible—and perhaps more vulnerable—enemy and a clear cause that seemed to go to the very heart of the Zionist enterprise in Palestine. Benefiting perhaps from the combative spirit that the antimissionary campaign had helped to instill in the Yishuv, and successfully packaging the cultural autonomy of the new Hebrew culture, the Yishuv's institutional independence, and its right to set the agenda for cultural activity in Palestine and the Zionist world in a single package, the language war served as a powerful axis around which virtually all segments of the non-Orthodox Yishuv could rally.

Writing in June of 1913, just before the shift in focus from the missionary schools to the Hilfsverein, Ya'acov Rabinowitz gave voice to the connection between the two phases of the struggle when he wrote that the Yishuv must make it clear "in Paris and in London" that it had undertaken to establish purely Hebrew institutions that neither serve foreign governments nor cast their cultural-educational programs in "alien" terms. Should the Jewish and Zionist bodies abroad fail to understand this, he added in a cautionary tone, "the day will come when we will be forced to wage war against Jewish schools with foreign politics in the same way that we now do battle against the mission."[27]

Within the month, rumors began to spread regarding the Technikum board's decision to establish German as the principal language of instruction in the nascent institutions, and the first rumblings of protest could be heard in the Yishuv, with the opening shot fired in a letter by a group of young residents of the veteran colonies.[28] The Yishuv's protests, and the demands that soon accompanied them, were aimed initially at the Zionist members of the board, and seem to have pushed them toward greater entrenchment and

exclusiveness for Hebrew. On the other hand, Shmaryahu Levin's retort to the attacks contained in the colonists' letter, which seemed to label him an enemy of the Yishuv, seems likewise to have shifted the thrust of their protest and in so doing was equally important in forging a more united Zionist front. The protest, their subsequent letter of apology explained, had not in fact been aimed at the leaders of cultural Zionism who sat on the board (Levin himself, Ahad Ha'am and Yehiel Tchlenow) but had been sent to them as messengers to "those who, lacking in national consciousness, dare to create a rupture in the Hebrew language in our land, thus undermining the foundations of our young culture."[29]

In the end, the grassroots pressure led to the resignation of the Zionist representatives from the Technikum board and their more committed enlistment in a cause whose agenda, tenor, and protest style were largely defined by the Yishuv, and in particular by its youth, students, and workers. The power and emotional fervor of the struggle were mobilized through the use of a range of tactics, including a boycott of Hilfsverein schools, strikes (initiated by students at the Hilfsverein schools with the later, somewhat reluctant participation of the teachers), vitriolic calls disseminated throughout Palestine against the organization and alleged collaborators, and organized mass public demonstrations. Both sides drew in local police authorities, diplomatic representatives, and community organizations outside of Palestine. The language war, as Margalit Shilo has observed, quickly took on the form of a popular uprising.[30]

Even popular uprisings are led, however, by cadres of activists bent on mobilizing the masses, who may respond in larger or greater numbers and to lesser or greater degrees. As in the campaign against missionary education before it, the tactics adopted by the Yishuv's activists were aimed not only at undermining the power of the Hilfsverein but also at sparking the emotions and marshalling the support of the broader Jewish population of Palestine (and, to a lesser extent, abroad) and, of course, intimidating those who might not be entirely on board. One key activist complained privately to Shmaryahu Levin about the confusion and ambivalence among the students' parents, who "do not know on which side to stand." On the one hand, he wrote, they seemed to share the Hebraist displeasure with "the spirit [of] these educational institutions." On the other hand, they were " tempted by the glitter of innovations that are taking shape before their eyes" and what that seemed to promise to their children.[31]

Even among students, who have often been viewed as an almost monolithic vanguard of the struggle, there was some initial uncertainty. In another report to Levin in October of 1913, Yosef Aharonowitz provided a somewhat dour assessment of the rate of mobilization in Jerusalem: There was a total of

ninety-three students in the two schools sponsored by the Hilfsverein in the city, among whom "a large number are . . . young people who have no cultural or national value." Only some thirty to forty students, he wrote, constituted "the best" among them—"the more developed and more nationalist element"—and most of these had been educated abroad or in non-Hilfsverein institutions in the colonies.[32]

Ambivalences and continued divisions notwithstanding, there are many indications that the language war did indeed elicit a relatively mass base of support, which is one reason it would become such a watershed in Yishuv history. Not only are the sheer number of protests against the Hilfsverein and the expressions of support for the students imposing, but one can find in them the distinct footprints of the involvement of individuals and groups that had previously been unlikely to be implicated in a struggle of this kind or in cultural and political activism of any kind. As the campaign was crystallizing into a popular movement, Po'alei Zion leader Ya'acov Zerubavel commented on the "forces that had previously been far removed from us"—not, to be sure, the determined opponents to "the renaissance" but the nonideological immigrants, "those simple Jews, storekeepers and artisans" who had been "too concerned with the 'life of the moment' to pay heed to 'life eternal' "—who had now, according to Zerubavel, joined in "the ranks of the warriors" for Hebrew language and culture.[33]

Many other reports expressed similar satisfaction with the extent of mobilization and the participation of segments of the population that had previously been aloof to the Zionist enterprise. A mass public protest in Haifa, according to one report, had succeeded in bringing out much of the city's Jewish community, including, it stressed, a Sephardic majority. The rally, which took place in front of the Technikum's new courtyard in the city, ended in a joint resolution in support of Hebrew exclusivity, which was drafted and approved by "members of the various Hebrew edot [ethnic groups] in Haifa" and declared that "we residents of Palestine find that, from our national perspective as well as from a general, practical point of view, only a school in which the Hebrew language dominates has the right to exist. Only the Hebrew language has the power to unite the disparate parts of the Hebrew nation in Palestine."[34] A similarly worded resolution was adopted by the Sephardic Kehilat Ya'acov synagogue in Jaffa,[35] inspiring Ha-Ahdut to comment that "those very same Sephardim whom many of us considered to be the symbol of indifference and national corruption have suddenly shown us their face in a completely new light."[36]

If journalistic reportage and public events help to suggest the level and character of participation, these are further confirmed in private correspondence.

Since many private letters also spoke unreservedly about the continuing divisions and incomplete mobilization in the Yishuv, their testimony regarding the campaign's popular aspect is particularly compelling. In a letter to Shmaryahu Levin, Bezalel Jaffe claimed that there was "complete unity in Palestine" in the struggle. "The entire New Yishuv," he wrote, "is marching hand in hand with us."[37] Even allowing for some exaggeration, letters like Jaffe's and the corroboration by public and private articulations of similar impressions do provide a sense that the struggle had taken on the feeling of a grassroots popular uprising. When *Ha-Ahdut* declared victory in February of 1914, the paper stated that "the war for the Hebrew Technikum" could very well be seen "as a mass movement."[38]

The struggle spanned a period of only a few months—from the early protests in June of 1913, when rumors of the board's impending linguistic decision began to spread, until the meeting of the Technikum board on February 24 of the following year, when the Hilfsverein's position was decisively defeated with the help of the U.S. and Russian representatives, who sided with the Zionists. Its reverberations continued in the form of journalistic discussion and debate, calls for action, and new educational initiatives during the weeks and months that followed, finally cut off by the outbreak of the First World War.[39] As the thrust of the early letter from the Yishuv's youth to Levin indicates, from the outset they had to a significant extent defined what was at stake. Levin, moreover, seems to have accepted the terms of their conception when he explained, as the conflict was escalating, that the Zionist Yishuv

> is beginning to liberate itself not only from the supervision of the
> money-givers, but from the guardianship of the Diaspora as a whole.
> The New Yishuv demands that it no longer be viewed as a means to
> prove the necessity of the efforts at revival, but rather that it itself
> become the center, and that all of our labors be aimed at that
> center.... *It is not the Yishuv that was created for the sake of the insti-*
> *tutions, but rather the institutions [. . .] for the sake of the Yishuv.*
> For the Yishuv has come to see itself as a living being and as the
> spearhead of the [national] revival.[40]

This tendency, Levin acknowledged, might "arouse the anger" of some Jews abroad—even supporters of the Zionist project in Palestine—but "it is healthy and natural in a place enjoying a natural development and a powerful faith in its own strength."[41]

The Yishuv's combativeness had indeed aroused some anger, even among those who were generally supportive of its position. Unhappy with the Yishuv's leadership, Ahad Ha'am, who, with Shmaryahu Levin and Yehiel Tchlenow,

had resigned from the Technikum board, nevertheless chastised Levin for his support of the Yishuv's militancy. "Your battle tactics," he wrote him, "do not appeal to me at all." Although the activity on behalf of Hebrew culture, he conceded, "cannot fail to arouse in me feelings of joy," Ahad Ha'am found the way in which it was being conducted to be "disagreeable." In a tone resonating with the same expectation of paternalism that had been evident in his position during the Brenner affair, he explained that, as far as the Yishuv was concerned, "all is forgiven" since, in effect, they had acted out in the way children will. "Their actions," as he wrote, "are the result of an unmitigated inner drive. They are unable to measure the benefit and detriment of their actions." Levin, on the other hand, "could have been expected to weigh and balance matters; not to be swept up after your hearts alone, for it is for this reason that you are leaders."[42]

Although supportive of the Yishuv, Levin himself had initially in fact been less militant in his own stance. "Despite the radical standpoint of the Teachers' Association and other influential bodies," he explained in one letter to the American board members, "I have always been willing to allow German to be the language of the Technical Institute. I only expressed the desire that at least one subject or a small number of subjects should be taught in Hebrew."[43]

Whatever reservations he may have had, however, Ahad Ha'am was not off the mark in his estimation that Levin had effectively accepted the thrust (if not the full scope) of the militancy in the Yishuv. His speeches and writings throughout the affair reverberate with a call for recognition by Diaspora Jews and Zionists of their changing relationship with what was now an identifiable, if still nascent, national entity in Palestine. In the Yishuv, the clear sense that the struggle was an inclusive one, long since transformed from a battle over particular educational institutions or even against "foreign" languages alone, led to increasingly clear articulations of the core cultural elements for which the battle was being waged. In a statement redolent with the liturgical overtones of a new *Ethics of the Fathers*, Ha-Po'el ha-Tza'ir's central committee declared that "On three things is our world founded: On Hebrew soil, on Hebrew labor [*avoda Ivrit*] and on the Hebrew language!" (The Mishnaic original would have the world founded on the Torah, worship [*avoda*], and acts of loving kindness.) All of these together, inseparable, they wrote, "are one—*a whole national body, living and developing and creating on its own—in matter and in spirit.*" An attack on any one of these constituent elements was therefore an attack "on our entire national body...an attempt to kill our soul." Adding a seasonal flavor to the imagery it used as the festival of Hanukkah was approaching, the statement explained that the struggle was one of self-defense, a righteous war (*milhemet mitzvah*—literally, a commanded or necessary

war) against "assimilationists who seek to mummify our national spirit ... and to place [forbidden] images in our Hebrew Temple here in the Land of Israel."[44]

That this was a battle of the sons of light against the sons of darkness, between holiness and abomination, was a pervasive trope that ran through the campaign, beyond the incorporation of Hanukkah symbolism. The Technikum board's decision left educator Pinhas Cohen—a native of Zichron Ya'akov who would become one of the founders of the Hebrew Reali High School that was one of the tangible results of the controversy—with an acute sense that "the holy Temple has been violated and desecrated". The non-Zionists on the board, he wrote in a letter to German Zionist Elias Auerbach, were deaf and blind to

> the spiritual revolution that has taken place [in Palestine] before
> our very eyes in recent years. They cannot see the danger ho-
> vering above the tender spiritual sapling that has only just begun
> to plant its roots in the soil.... All of the nation's protests will
> amount to naught on the day the people send its sons to this altar,
> at which the Hebrew spirit will be proscribed on its ancestral soil.
> It is not possible to watch with equanimity as all that is holy is
> desecrated by our own hands.[45]

Given these stakes, Cohen concluded, "war must be brought upon that house and upon its masters". In waging that war, moreover, the Diaspora would matter little. All eyes, Cohen wrote, were now turned toward "the nation settled on its land."[46]

A central thrust of the language war, as public and private writings alike indicate, was a reclamation of this recast sacrality and, inseparable from it, the geographical realignment in which Palestine was asserting preeminence as the center of the emerging Jewish nation, with the Diaspora as its periphery. A related side effect of this pointed toward a nascent transformation that was taking place in that would-be periphery. The board of the Technikum had been designed from the beginning as an international body, in no small measure due to the increasingly hostile international atmosphere in which the European powers were vying for political, cultural, and religious influence in the Holy Land. As Judah Magnes, one of the American representatives who had been included to this end, explained, "every possible care should be taken to avoid the suspicion that international Jewry is playing into the hands of German political ambitions in the Near East, to the detriment of any other country. We need an institution on Mount Carmel that will benefit Palestine, the Ottoman Empire, the Near East, and not least of all, international Jewry." Indeed, for this reason, Magnes argued—in partial support of the Hebraist position—

"the official language cannot be a European language, because a decision in favor of any one would create jealousies and suspicion among the others."[47]

As the conflict reached an impasse, the Zionists turned to the Jewish representatives from the United States for support, placing them in a position of unprecedented centrality as arbiters in the feud. In a letter to these board members, Shmaryahu Levin seems to have assumed that they had little understanding of the situation and was therefore moved to explain at some length the danger that the decision on language of instruction threatened to pose to "all our endeavors to unite the different elements of Jewry and to give them a uniform language and culture." At the same time, however, he indicated that the Americans were now in a position to play a pivotal role in promoting the free cultural development of the Yishuv. More than others, perhaps, he indicated, the American trustees

> will appreciate the full meaning of these resolutions. I expect from
> the American gentlemen that when giving their support to Palesti-
> nian institutes, they will do it in the first line in accordance with
> the true requirements and desires of the Jewish population of Pa-
> lestine, and that they will be careful not to encourage in Palestine the
> creation of another of those objects of controversy as cannot be
> avoided in the countries of the Diaspora.[48]

What could no longer be expected of the European Diaspora and the Yishuv's relations with it (i.e., that Palestine would be allowed cultural autonomy and its interests and desires would receive priority in determining cultural activity) could now be expected, Levin seemed to hope, from American Jews. A search seems to have been on for a new Diaspora alliance, and it was explored through private correspondence and backstage diplomacy, as well as the mobilization of American Jewish public opinion by means of English-language flyers and pamphlets aimed specifically at them.[49]

The board meeting of February 24, 1914, was a fateful one. The American representatives did prove instrumental in supporting the Yishuv's position and defeating that of the Hilfsverein. One immediate result was the establishment, in place of the projected German-language school, of the Hebrew Re'ali School in Haifa which would remain for many decades one of the city's prestigious institutions of secondary education. More substantively yet, that school, along with other gains that had accrued from the struggle, became the seeds of a significantly more established and coordinated Hebrew educational system, operated by the Yishuv's own representatives under the leadership of the Teachers' Association and with the support of the ZO. The age of non-Zionist philanthropic organizations as primary players in the Palestinian cultural and

educational arena had largely been brought to an end, and would be further sealed by the First World War and the dramatic changes in the Palestinian reality that came in its wake.

Even the Yishuv's relations with the ZO and the Odessa Committee, moreover, had been substantially altered—at once further fortified and recast so as to grant the Yishuv an unprecedented degree of autonomy and leadership. In July of 1914, after the events of the language war had largely subsided and the winds of a new, vaster war that would even more profoundly change the shape and image of Palestine were beginning to blow, educator Joseph Luria sent Odessa a letter on behalf of the Hebrew Teachers' Association, in which he summarized the consequences of the events of the preceding months. He was pleased, he wrote, that the Odessa Committee, "like us, are interested in liberating education in Palestine from external servitude." He protested, however, that the activists abroad continued to harbor "doubts [as to whether] Palestine is prepared for self-governance." Such suspicion, he wrote, could no longer be accepted in Palestine, where most educators and activists were unanimous in believing that the Yishuv already "has all of the necessary conditions for the establishment of such self-governance." Cultural self-rule, he wrote, would in any case "be far more suited to the conditions of the land than any administration that is seated outside of the country." Notwithstanding his professed appreciation of the importance of both Odessa and Berlin (seat of the ZO), Luria stressed that "the war" had been waged by and for the Yishuv, which had "no desire to accept the sponsorship [even] of Berlin" and had in fact, at certain times during the campaign, "stood firmly against some of Berlin's demands." The war, he insisted, had been won because "we maintained our own positions, which were the position of Palestine" itself.[50]

The unprecedented degree of unity notwithstanding, division was hardly a thing of the past for Palestine's Jews, although the nature of the dividing lines was plainly changing. Even the gains won by the Yishuv in some ways reflected lingering differences in visions of the Hebrew culture that seemed to have come out victorious, and pointed toward some of the struggle for hegemony within the Yishuv that would ensue in the interwar years. Ephraim Blumenfeld, at the time a central figure in the Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir leadership, argued that the language war had been a critical turning point in the history of Jewish Palestine since it had finally transformed the Yishuv from yet another site of Jewish exilic life into a true national center. Recalling his youthful longings for a proud Jewish existence in the Land of Israel, he wrote, he had "until recent days" met with profound disappointment in the face of Palestine's reality. Much of what passed for Zionist work—the bourgeois life of Tel-Aviv and the religious zealousness of Petah Tikva—Blumenfeld wrote, was in

fact continued exile. Only the language war, he argued, had fundamentally transformed the reality of the land itself, showing "that not only the Jews of exile live here in the land, [but also that] we are indeed in the Land of Israel."[51]

In the eyes of his social-democratic party's newspaper, the Yishuv had been victorious in an anticolonial struggle in which it had expelled what it viewed as a foreign occupier from the homeland. Striking a tone of virtual intoxication with victory, one editorial declared that "before our very eyes we are witnessing the very same spectacle that is to be found in the histories of all peoples who have been subjugated by foreign domination." Recalling the familiar experience of revolutionary efforts in Russia and connecting it, together with the recent struggle in Palestine, to a history of decolonization, *Ha-Ahdut* portrayed the campaign against the Hilfsverein and the Technikum's German as a war against cultural imperialism. Aggressive and oppressive governments, the editorial declared, "use all means to suppress the subjugated nation's independence, to strangle its vital forces." As a first step toward cultural, spiritual, and political subjugation, oppressors seek to "conquer the younger generation while still in the cradle." In order to do so they invariably "banish its language and culture from the schools" since they know that "the schools are the force that plants the elementary national feelings in the nation's members." The youth-led effort against what it deemed the Hilfsverein's cultural-imperialist designs, *Ha-Ahdut* argued, served to make Palestine and its native youth a vanguard of an independent national spirit.[52]

Although the right to claim the title of native youth would continue to be contested, the centrality of youth itself in the Yishuv's culture had been further reinforced. The young native generation of the New Yishuv's colonies and urban centers had carved a place for itself as a determined and independent factor in the formulation of a cultural agenda and in action on its behalf.[53] Faced at times with parental opposition to their combative stance and at least occasional attempts to bring them by force to their schools, "the striking students," as one Teachers' Association flier proudly proclaimed, "refused to return until their demand that all sciences be taught in Hebrew was met."[54]

The other claimants to the title of native youth—the increasingly established Labor-Zionist parties—had also begun to emerge as leaders of the Zionist undertaking in Palestine. Their growing alliance with the ZO's representatives there and in the Zionist centers in Europe had been an important factor in propelling the militancy of the language war and now emerged as a decisive element in a great deal of Zionist work in Palestine. By the time the Technikum conflict ended, the connection they were able to establish between the various branches of the struggle for "Hebrew"—education and labor—had

become a powerful rallying cry. The thrill of the "mass meetings [that are] reminiscent of the days of the [1905 Russian] 'revolution,' " as Ya'acov Zerubavel argued, must not obscure the fact that at the very same time dozens of Jewish workers remained unemployed. The twin campaigns for Hebrew education and Hebrew labor, he argued, were inseparable. "Even more than we are harmed by foreign languages," he cautioned, "our struggle for life is harmed by foreign labor [avoda zara]."[55]

Highlighting the points of continued internal friction in the Yishuv, Zerubavel took particular aim at what he described as the hypocrisy of Zichron Ya'akov—"the very same colony whose general assembly a mere few weeks ago was opposed to employing Hebrew guards, and which has always been hostile to Hebrew workers . . . is now also among the 'prophets' of Hebrew."[56] Writing shortly after the death of two Ha-Shomer members, Zerubavel rejected the self-congratulatory atmosphere that seemed to him to have taken hold "in the realm of the Hebrew 'spirit' " for its supposedly uncompromising determination in the face of "the enemies of the Yishuv" while at the same time "the enemy runs rampant in the field, felling soldiers."[57]

The language war was in many senses the culmination of the more-protracted effort to banish "foreign languages" (see chapter 4), and if German had now become the principal enemy, the long-standing enmity toward French and the Alliance schools, long deemed far more hostile to Zionism and Hebrew, was never far out of sight.[58] Language, at the heart of virtually all visions of the new culture, had from the outset had an important gendered component and a vital role to play in the gendering and engendering of the nation. Education too, moreover, had been a gendered field of cultural activity in the Yishuv, and the language war, which placed education and language together at the center of the campaign, also became an axis for the fashioning of new gender roles and images.

In the colony of Ness Ziona, language and gender were of a piece, inherently linked in the continuing struggle for the nation. As anti-German ferment began to mount in the country's urban centers, at least one of Ness Ziona's Hebraists remained concerned with what he perceived as the persistent threat of French. It was French and the francophone education of the Alliance, according to Ephraim Komerov, one of the colony's founders, that was a leading cause of the emigration of the colony's youth and an acute threat to the nationalization project in virtually every respect. The denationalizing effect was particularly strong among the colony's young women, whose francophone education, Komerov complained, led to "alienation . . . from their work in the home and in the yard." In the reality of Palestine, he contended, French was an overly cultural language, which, aside from encouraging emigration, also corrupted young

women and led them astray from their national roles. "The young woman who studies French," he wrote, "no longer considers it befitting her status to take care of the kitchen, to raise fowl, to milk cows and to work in the garden." This was a cause for concern at a national—and nationalizing—level since "work of this nature is one of the principal foundations upon which our agricultural colonies are founded, and the responsibility for it falls mostly upon women." Ness Ziona may have been a small and somewhat peripheral colony, but the linguistic threat, the letter cautioned, was hardly a localized one. "The French language," Komerov warned, "has the character of a contagious disease . . . and will interfere with our national and agricultural education."[59]

Back in the Jerusalem center, the Hilfsverein's "Jewish home for the Daughters of Israel" (see figure 10.2) became a stormy front in the war. By February of 1914, as the position of the Hebraists had emerged victorious on the Technikum board, Hanna Radovilsky, an educator in the home, wrote to inform Menahem Ussishkin that "the final and most fortified bastion of the *Hilfsverein* . . . has [also] fallen into our hands." In order to reach this point, however, the girls of the Hilfsverein home had had to "suffer torment and the violation of all that is sacred to them," brought upon primarily at the hands of the Hilfsverein itself but considerably exacerbated by indifference of the male Zionist establishment. The orphaned girls' "courage and beautiful comportment," which had proven them to be "devoted to their language and to their land with all the warmth of their hearts and souls," Radovilsky wrote, ought to place them in the national pantheon as "models for our 'courageous warriors.'" Overflowing with harsh images of all-out war, Radovilsky's letter laments that the girls had been left to their "destruction" by the men of the Palestine Office in the face of "the most dishonorable deeds and most violating tactics," which had been employed by the Jerusalem representatives of the Hilfsverein, who had set out to "inseminate the hearts of the young girls with their poison." The abandonment of the girls, she wrote, had been no less than a "moral and national sin" and an outright betrayal of the weak by those who should have acted as their principal defenders.[60]

We do not know what took place within the walls of the home for girls. It seems—and one hopes—that Radovilsky's use of the language of sexual defilement is only figurative. As if in response to Ben-Zion Taragan's call to the "Young Women of Jerusalem" a decade earlier, however, Radovilsky's presentation of the young women's role in this decisive national battle posits a new Hebrew femininity. Integral to it is a respectability and virtue that are uniquely those of the Hebrew woman and products of a national Hebrew culture, violated by the antinational culture of the Hilfsverein and the corroding influence of the "foreign" languages it represents.

FIGURE 10.2. Students at the Jerusalem "Jewish Home for the Daughters of Israel," the Hilfsverein's orphanage for young girls, on a trip outside the city walls. Their teacher, Hanna Radovilsky, is the second adult from the right.

Radovilsky's letter points to the impact of the campaign on the very private lives of these young girls. The language war was, however, a public struggle, and it was incorporated into the emerging national liturgy and pageantry as part of the surging cult of national heroics, becoming—for a time—an important building block in the construction of the Yishuv's public culture. The mass meetings that had been one of the core tactics in the campaign were joined by spectacles and ceremonies designed to fortify the symbolic power that could be educed from the events. Old and new holidays were once again reinterpreted and refigured in such a way as to give expression to the struggle's cultural and liturgical implications and to what the Yishuv's activists saw as a newly won cultural autonomy.

Hanukkah, which happened to coincide with the most heated period of the conflict, proved once again particularly conducive to the translation of the Yishuv's current events into national symbolism as it was recruited to the battlefield. The triumph over the Hilfsverein and its German cultural orientation could be comfortably metamorphosed into a commemoration of the ancient Hasmoneans' dual victory—the military conquest of the Seleucid Greeks, who desecrated the Temple with alien religious symbols, and the Hasmonean ascendancy in the internal Jewish civil war and Kulturkampf against the assimilating Hellenized Jews of their day. Among the many celebrations and festivities that marked the Yishuv's commemoration of the festival that winter, the one orchestrated by the Herzlia Gymnasium's senior class seemed to *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* to merit particular attention for its inclusion of "a rich program and a wide variety of songs, music, poetry, living scenes, and gymnastics." Most impressive to the journal's reporter was a particular *tableau vivant*, which, he recounted, "depicted the victory of the Hebrew language in its current war. It was portrayed as a young boy riding on the back of an eagle, whose wings sheltered a 'model' of the Jaffa Gymnasium. In one hand the boy held a blue and white flag, and in the other a victory wreath. At the edge stood a German, his eyes lifted up in wonder at the boy."[61]

A placard by the newly formed Committee for the Fortification of Hebrew Education in Haifa made this translation direct. Starting from the ancient Maccabean call, "Who is for the Lord and for his Torah, be with us," the poster then declaimed that "We will remain loyal to our nation and to our language" and cautioned "traitors" "not to touch our holy possessions."[62] One columnist in *Ha-Ahdut*, unsatisfied with the capacity of the Maccabean commemoration to contain the full sacred import of Hebrew's triumph, suggested that the "historic day" of victory merited a separate holiday of its own, one that would pass down the appropriate "reverence and sacred veneration" to future generations. Reciting scenes of determined Hebrew crowds facing "armed policemen

[who were] whipping them on their backs", he proposed that a new "Hilfsverein Day" ought to be placed in the calendar to mark "the fire of zealousness and national pride" that the struggle had revealed.[63]

It is difficult in retrospect to imagine such a proposal successfully evoking the emotional and symbolic power that would have made "Hilfsverein Day" a significant part of the national liturgy. In any event, the rapid sequence of dramatic events that followed—the World War, the ensuing crisis in the Yishuv, the expulsion of many of its residents, the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and the British conquest of Palestine, the Balfour Declaration—quickly removed the language war from its central place in the nascent nation's consciousness and national liturgy. Some of the fundamental elements of that national culture, however, had, by 1914, been sufficiently firmly established to serve as the foundation for the changing national culture that would grow during the mandate years. Refigured holidays, along with their altered meanings and the changing ways in which they were incorporated into a nascent public space and culture, proved a fundamental (and insufficiently recognized) foundation for the changing contours of the nation's culture.[64]

"Creating nations," as Anthony Smith has written, "is a recurrent activity, which has to be renewed periodically. It is one that involves ceaseless reinterpretations, rediscoveries and reconstructions."[65] The rapidly and dramatically changing circumstances that shaped the playing field in which Zionism operated in Palestine would indeed involve continuous reinterpretations, whether of traditional Jewish cultural tropes and praxis or of the Yishuv's own recently created and constantly changing cultural institutions. Continuous reinterpretation, however, in its very nature relies on some substance to reinterpret—what Smith has called "a definite tradition [that] is not made over entirely anew by each generation, but inherits the mythologies and symbolisms of previous generations."[66]

For a while in any case, the language war was a commanding focal point for Jewish Palestine's cultural evolution. Guardsmen killed in clashes in the Galilee were now widely seen as engaged in what was essentially the same war as the students striking in Hilfsverein institutions; young women and men were redefining their identities as individuals and as Jews in the context of the struggle; and the new leadership positions that had begun to emerge in the preceding years within the Yishuv and in its relations with others were now becoming permanent fixtures in the political, social, and cultural dynamics that would characterize Zionist work and its cultural undertaking in Palestine in the decades to come.

11

Conclusion

In July of 1914, as the Jewish year 5674 was coming to a close and the clouds of a world war that would profoundly affect the Zionist project in Palestine were beginning to gather, Eliezer Ben-Yehuda proposed that the passing months be designated the "Hebrew year." It had proven, he argued, that—small though it may be—a Hebrew nation had come into being in Palestine. Everywhere one turns, he wrote, there were now "thousands of boys and girls playing . . . in Hebrew; young men and women whispering to one another in Hebrew; the air itself is filled with the ringing of Hebrew." This, he contended, was clear evidence that "there is today a Hebrew nation."[1]

For Ben-Yehuda, this was a revolutionary assertion. It had been, after all, only a little more than a decade earlier that he had sounded the alarm and cautioned that the Jews were a people toward whom "the angel of national death has already turned his terrible gaze."[2] Much, however, had happened in the Yishuv in the intervening and strikingly transformative years, during which an overarching "Hebraization" seemed to Ben-Yehuda and many others to indicate the emergence of a new national form of modern Jewish existence. The Jew's very physical being seemed to have been redefined: The image of the Jew's body had changed; the relationship between Jews, nature, and land had been altered; and innovative means had been established for marking the passage of time and for hallowing a new kind of sacred time, replete with its own calendar, and the holidays and festivals that punctuated it. Rooted in an acute sense of crisis, ideas for

a transformation of Jewish life that had been born principally in Europe had been transported to Palestine, where they were given tangible form in the shape of a wide range of practices in the realms of language, ritual, modes of representation, and cultural institutions. In the process, the guiding ideas of this cultural project themselves underwent successive metamorphoses in their interplay with Palestine's changing realities.

The culture whose foundations had been laid in Palestine by the outbreak of the First World War was a product of these ideas and of very deliberate and calculated labors aimed at transforming them into a cultural reality by grounding them in concrete practices, customs, and rituals and in the social, political, educational, and other institutions that would generate and disseminate them. Like the revolutionaries in France a century before, who, in their effort to dismantle the ancien régime and the sacralities that had held it up, "borrowed" from that very language of the sacred,[3] so the Zionist effort to make the Hebrew national culture of Palestine a new and unprecedented departure contained a palpable element of continuity with the religious traditions of "exile" that it sought to trounce. The result was a culture that was at once unprecedented and even revolutionary in many meaningful ways, while at the same time resonating clearly with fragments of language, customs, and imagery that had been mobilized and adopted—while often dramatically transformed—from the traditional Jewish past (alongside other important sources of influence) to serve as central pillars of the nascent culture.

In the sweeping transformation of the Jews that this cultural project was designed to effect, geographical relocation and the literal and immediate change in the Jews' environment that it entailed served as the foundations for a thorough recasting of the ways in which they experienced and represented the very world they inhabited—the manner in which "they organized reality in their minds and expressed it in their behavior," to borrow a phrase from Robert Darnton.[4] The combined effect of changing both the objective conditions of life and their representations in such diverse fields of activity as education, journalism, literature, science, dress, language, music, art, drama, holiday celebrations, and religion—in sum, virtually every aspect of their lives—would, as the project was conceived, put an end to the root cause of Jewish disease—the existential condition of exile.

Like its contemporary kin in eastern Europe (whence many of the principal actors had arrived) the culture project in Palestine had at its root a formative cultural sensibility of deep alienation and painful internal rupture—expressed nowhere more eloquently than in Michah Yosef Berdichevsky's cry against the "fissure in the heart" that tore the modern Jew apart—and a resulting impulse to seek out the possibility of a life that would be at once Jewish,

whole, and wholly Jewish. The Zionist understanding of exile however, led to a self-conscious geographical and conceptual separation of the Palestinian project from Jewish cultural projects as they unfolded in eastern Europe. Whereas the latter tended to be plagued by the question of whether "a secular national culture could be sustained under conditions of statelessness,"[5] the central actors in the construction of a national culture in Palestine were often those who sought to solve that question by providing the national culture a territorial basis, if not necessarily a national state, and some of the institutional infrastructure of a quasi state.[6] If the emergent Jewish intelligentsia in eastern Europe sought to "reconstruct Jewish particularity through the distinctive forms of what elites across Europe called 'high culture,' "[7] for Palestine's Zionists, "culture" was by necessity a more all-encompassing concept and, as a result, arguably a more thoroughgoing project. Although a substantial reverence for "high culture"—in part transported with the immigrants from their European homes—continued to inform the cultural project in Palestine as well (although not unchallenged by certain anti-intellectual trends), the turn to a life on the soil of Palestine seems implicitly to have entailed a shifting of the focus from high culture to a culture of everyday life.[8]

The geographical change was in this sense only a prerequisite, the necessary condition for a particular conception of culture and for what was a wideranging project aimed at fundamentally reshaping the world as it existed in relation to the Jewish people and the Jewish individual. In another sense, however, geography was hardly incidental to the Zionist cultural vision, as the land was made not only a fortuitous soil for the new Jewish culture but a vital part of that culture itself and an important site of its new sacralities. At its very core, Palestine's nascent Zionist culture mobilized the animating power of the land's resonance in the Jewish imagination and the tension that seemed to inhere in it between a secularizing and a sacralizing impulse. As Barbara Mann has written regarding the establishment of Tel Aviv, the construction of the first Hebrew city was on one level "an attempt to secularize space, to make what had been the biblical Land of Israel . . . into an actual place."[9] And yet, at the very root of this same cultural project was an attempt to make that "actual place"—whether Tel Aviv or other parts of the country—into the site of a new sacrality. It was, as Mann writes, "at once a profanity and a reconfiguration of what sacred space could be."[10] With the Jews thus situated in this space remapped, the Zionist cultural project implicitly assumed, a fresh national cosmology could be plotted onto its new coordinates.

The full impact of this Zionist territorialization of Jewish culture is epitomized in such symbolic and rhetorical devices as the blood and fire slogan championed by Ha-Shomer. As I argue in chapter 10, it mattered little to this

ethos that Palestine at the time did not have much in the way of actual blood and fire. Even as the Jewish bond to the Land of Israel was to be redeemed from the realm of metaphor and implanted in the actual soil (something on which Zionists of such diverse temperaments and agendas as the members of Ha-Shomer or a Boris Schatz could agree), the blood and fire that really counted remained in the sphere of Zionist myth-making. Metaphorizing and concret-izing impulses were interwoven here: The fiery revival envisioned by Ha-Shomer was inherently rooted in an earthly Palestine and in their very real quasi-military activities. At the same time, however, it resonates, perhaps most loudly, with the primordial fire and blood of a distant mythological, even celestial, past. This fusion of mythological and tangible Palestines is evident in Meir Wilkansky's depiction of his experience of arrival in the (actual) land, when, on one of his first evenings there:

> All that was around me faded and dissolved. The future flickered and the past stabilized. One of the stars had absorbed the flames of the Temple. Roman horsemen marched along the Milky Way. The wind carried the lamentations of the fallen. The souls of the courageous hover incorporeal. Angels carry Jacob's ladder, and the holy spirits ascend and descend upon it.[11]

There is secularization here, in that Wilkansky's experience is contingent upon an actual presence in a demythologized land; but it is a secularization that is manifestly entangled in a sense of the sacred, as that land is re-introduced into the realm of myth and as past and present dissolve into one another. In modern, rational, disenchanted societies, Mircea Eliade argues, homes and territories serve strictly functional purposes, and are, as a result, interchangeable. For societies in which a sense of the sacred continues to pul-sate, on the other hand—or perhaps in one attempting to recapture it—"to settle in a territory, to build a dwelling, demand a vital decision for both the whole community and the individual. For what is involved is *undertaking the creation of the world that one has chosen to inhabit*". Establishing a home, he argues, consequently entails the creation of a liturgy and rituals that symbol-ically transform "dwelling place (whether the territory or the house) into cos-mos."[12] For Wilkansky, the Palestine on whose shores he landed in 1905 is an old-new home due to far more than its mere availability or its (questionable) economic and material prospects.[13]

As Wilkansky's mystical encounter with the land indicates, moreover, the duality inherent in the Zionist geographical relocation was accompanied by a correspondingly dual temporal transformation. Yael Zerubavel has argued that Zionist recastings of Jewish history sought to create "an appearance of

seamless continuity between Antiquity and the modern National Revival," thus undermining a strictly linear progression of historical time to suggest "some notion of historical recurrence."[14] Rather than indicating a pervasive "shift from the religious to the national,"[15] however, I would suggest instead that it points to a complex secular-sacred duality in the return to myth that was inherent in the Zionist response to modernity. The role of myth, to use Eliade's typology, is to "[relate] a sacred history, that is, a primordial event that took place at the beginning of time"[16]—moments of creation that are often conceived in classical mythologies as the violent victory of the gods over marine dragons or primordial giants, or, in the modern nationalized mythologies generated by Ha-Shomer or Wilkansky, that formative fiery moment in which national destruction and rebirth are fused. If mythological, sacred time is in this sense cyclical, distinct from the linear time of the rational industrial world, and if rituals and liturgies are enactments of return to those primordial moments, Ha-Shomer's slogan, and a great many of the rituals that came to characterize Yishuv culture and to shape its public spaces, can be seen as a return to these primordial moments of the nation's life.[17]

This liturgical dimension was hardly unique to Palestinian Zionism. Modern nationalism, as George Mosse has classically shown, created a political style, a new kind of liturgy whose object of worship was the nation itself.[18] While this was, of course, secularization in a certain obvious sense, there was also very clearly a new kind of religious thrust that stood at its core, a drive for the creation of new sacralities. Emerging from within such twinned yet conflicting drives, the multiple cultural clashes that went into the making of Zionist national liturgy in late Ottoman Palestine were pieces of a much broader struggle "between materialization and dematerialization in twentieth-century reconfigurations of Jewish culture in the wake of Jewish history."[19] The colossal nature of such a project helps explain the bold expectation that the new culture's rituals, customs, and linguistic habits would reconfigure the very essence, meaning, and experience of being Jewish in the modern world and serve as the foundational adhesive for a national Jewishness—the transformation of a "scattered mass into a single unit," as educator David Yudilovitz had hoped.[20]

Rather than the product of unequivocal processes of secularization, then, the Zionist culture that was created in Palestine in the prewar years owed much of its being to a complicated relationship between the secular and the sacred. It was forged through a multilayered interface between secularization on the one hand and an attempted reclamation of a language of myth and a politics of quasi-religious pathos, on the other hand, that seemed to many Zionists to have been forsaken in Jewish social and political life since the Haskalah.

This return to myth, the repossession and refiguration of the sacred, is evident in virtually every aspect of the Yishuv's cultural activity. It is present in the language used by Abraham Idelsohn to couch his musical project in the tradition of mystical ascent and his presentation of national music as the modern-day equivalent to prophecy, the only place in Jewish life where one might still find "a spark of the souls of the prophets." Boris Schatz's self-image as a latter-day Bezalel Ben-Uri devoted to the task of bringing a new Torah to a revived Israel equally employed the language and imagery of prophecy and revelation. And this imagery resonated well beyond the bounds of the specialized undertakings of uniquely talented individuals such as Schatz and Idelsohn, permeating the most basic components of the Yishuv's new culture, as is evident in so omnipresent an endeavor as the creation of a spoken Hebrew. The choice of Hebrew, as I have argued (in chapter 4), meant a decision to imbue every aspect of the Yishuv's life with a language that, to its proponents, pulsated with ancient cosmic cords binding the nation to its land. The concrete steps adopted in the re-creation of the Hebrew language—from its accent and mannerisms to the forms given to Hebrew education, holidays, and the Yishuv's public space—were designed quite self-consciously to re-gather those cords and replay their chords. If Peter Burke has cautioned cultural historians to be aware that at times "the façade of tradition may mask innovation,"[21] the opposite may at times be equally true. I have therefore made an effort also to penetrate the façade of innovation that was so common in the claims and self-image of many of Zionism's cultural activists and to determine where in fact it may mask a lingering influence of the traditional.

"Sacred symbols," Clifford Geertz suggests, "function to synthesize a people's ethos—the tone, character, and quality of their life, its moral and aesthetic style and mood—and their world view—the picture they have of the way things in sheer actuality are, their most comprehensive ideas of order."[22] It was in large measure toward the creation of precisely such a system of reshaping Jewish reality so as to allow Jewish individuals and the Jewish collective to regain a sacrality that had ostensibly been lost by previous generations of modern Jews that many of the cultural endeavors undertaken in Palestine in the years preceding the First World War were aimed. By generating a system of symbols expressed in new customs, rituals, and language, all of which were infused with new meanings, those bent on nationalizing the Yishuv played a pivotal part in the dramatic transformation of Jewish life in the twentieth century.

Given this resonance of a language of sacrality, it is not surprising that debates over the place of Jewish tradition and religion in the national culture of the Yishuv erupted virtually with the very birth of agricultural settlement in

Palestine in the final two decades of the nineteenth century and continued in the struggles over the contours of educational and cultural institutions in an increasingly Zionized Yishuv. In many ways, Israeli society in the early twenty-first century continues to live new renditions of these tensions. What I hope to have shown is that in seeking to understand them, the kinds of distinctions between attitudes toward "religion" on the one hand and toward "tradition" on the other that have been employed in the past[23] ought to be rethought and replaced with more nuanced and complex conceptualizations of religiosity, religion, and tradition in which a no less multifaceted spectrum of attitudes toward the sacred and the profane, and toward traditional Jewish pasts (however conceived) continually negotiate their places in the life of the budding nation.

Conceived in this way, it becomes evident that, notwithstanding the terms in which they are most often articulated, the social, cultural, and political conflicts of religion in Israel today continue to be struggles not only for the much-cited and notoriously fuzzy "status-quo" balance between a secular nation-state (and its "secular" representatives) and a (potentially) encroaching religious tradition (and its representatives). They also constitute an ongoing negotiation of a much more difficult kind—one that is hardly limited to Zionism or the Jewish world—over the limits of the mundane and the appropriate uses, boundaries, and essence of the sacred.

The two struggles that stand at either end of this period serve as an instructive framework by highlighting the scope of the metamorphosis that took place in Jewish Palestine between the beginning of the twentieth century and the outbreak of the Great War. The Uganda controversy at the outset of the period found a fractured and disunited Yishuv and a no less divided Zionist movement that could point to little consensus on even its most fundamental precepts. Already in a state of economic and moral crisis, the effect on the Yishuv of the emotional and bitter clash was to exacerbate differences and hinder (and, in the case of the conflict between the Great Assembly and the Va'ad ha-Agudot, completely obstruct) some of the work of cultural and institutional nationalization that was already under way.

At the other end, the language war and the closing months of the pre–World War I era found a very different Yishuv, more united than ever before under an emerging (and self-proclaimed) local-national leadership in its new struggle for a Palestinian Hebrew national culture. If Uganda had further atomized an already divided Yishuv, the language war came, on the contrary, as the stormy culmination of increasing institutional crystallization. In the process, Palestine's versions of Zionist nationalism had become a powerful

rallying force for a segment of the country's Jewish population that by now constituted a critical mass and had wrested enough control of important institutional and symbolic power bases to have made itself the kernel of a national and nationalizing entity (however much that kernel remained in other senses divided and its visions contested). The language war served also as an initial indication that the nationalization of Palestine's Jewish community had by 1914 become a well enough entrenched (if still partial and somewhat tenuous) reality to allow the Yishuv first to weather the profound disruptions wrought by the World War and later to act as the foundation when the work of national construction was resumed in the dramatically altered (and, from the Zionist perspective, far more favorable) conditions prevailing in Palestine after the war.

In attempting to understand how Zionists in Palestine went about actually creating this new nation (rather than merely conceiving it), an understanding of the Zionist undertaking as an almost exclusive drive for Jewish political sovereignty, with statehood as its principal manifestation and culture as a corollary (as Alain Dieckhoff has proposed, for example)[24] seems unsatisfyingly thin. Much of the Zionism that unfolded in Palestine in the years preceding the First World War, as I hope the preceding discussion has suggested, ought instead to be understood as an undertaking aimed not principally at the creation of a Jewish state—a goal that in any case seemed so distant a prospect in this autumn of Ottoman rule as to have become secondary in the thought of most of the Yishuv's engaged Zionists—but rather at the construction of this new Jewish national culture and a reconfigured Jewish cosmology and through them to the transformation of Jewish life.

Dieckhoff, moreover (following on the trail of a well established historiographical tradition), seems to identify the central pillar of modern Zionism and its principal revolutionary thrust in a "desacralization" of Jewish language and community that allowed the political to become the foremost aspect of life.[25] But if striving for statehood is to be understood as the sine qua non of the political and a necessary condition for nationalism, then pre-World War I Zionism, at least insofar as it was played out in its central laboratory in Palestine, would have to be judged as neither political at all nor a nationalist movement. In fact, however, the terms by which we understand nationalism and its political agendas ought to be significantly broadened. In place of the ostensibly distinct and bare-bones political sphere in whose service Zionism's territorial, cultural, linguistic, and educational resources were mobilized, I have adopted here a notion of politics that seems to me to be implied by much of the literature on modern Jewish politics, in which culture, ideology, language, and much more are all of a piece. "Politics and culture," as Eli

Lederhendler writes, "are both aspects of social interaction and they are experienced in tandem, like space and time."[26]

I would add only that even this formulation seems to make a somewhat excessively sharp distinction between the realms of culture and politics rather than positing them more explicitly—like time and space themselves, to use Lederhendler's compelling analogy—as aspects of a single continuum of human activity, whose distinctions are produced to a large extent by the observer and the act of observation. The story of Zionism in Palestine and of the creation of a Hebrew national culture there seems to underscore this unity and obliges the historian to try to understand these two seemingly distinct fields of human activity as varying refractions of light emanating from what is ultimately a single source. The cultural and the political, in this sense, are neither distinct forms of nationalism nor discrete stages in the development of a national movement.[27] Rather (at least insofar as this particular national movement seems to indicate), they are coterminous facets of a composite project for the shaping of human lives in the modern world. They are in this sense (to follow Lederhendler's analogy from physics) more akin to the wave-particle nature of light than to a graduated evolutionary development in which one supersedes and supplants the other.

I have therefore attempted in this book to conceive of these spheres of human activity as bound together by indissoluble bonds. The sweeping nature of the revolution envisioned by Palestine's activists allows for an examination of cultural change conceived in a way that seems to me more compelling since it employs an expansive notion of culture in which politics, social and economic activities, and much more are necessarily intertwined. As I hope the preceding chapters have demonstrated, in Zionist activity in Palestine, diplomacy and politics (vis-à-vis the Ottoman authorities, the Arabs of the land, and the European powers) were not at root separate from the educational and linguistic undertakings in the Yishuv, which were in turn inherently interwoven with the establishment of new festivals and ways of celebrating traditional holidays, modes of dress and speech, and the creation of a new music and national art.

The self-professed revolutionism of many of the leading protagonists in this drama was rooted not only in a particular picture of Jewish culture and its ailments but also in a broader conceptualization of culture as a principal constitutive element for the molding of human lives and hence as the key force that might reshape Jewish life. Through their focus on culture as a powerful historical force, the protagonists of this study seemed in some sense almost to be compelling me, in telling their story, to address head-on a number of challenges that confront the history of cultures and mentalities and to try to

sketch those ever-elusive lines that somehow make connections between people's images, ideas, and beliefs, the "objective" conditions of their lives, and their concrete (and observable) public and private behaviors. Studies of Zionism and of the culture of the Yishuv in particular have often fallen somewhat short in charting the progression that led from the founding sets of ideas to tangible social and political realities in Palestine, later Israel, and in finding a fitting place for the creation of the Yishuv's distinct culture as a salient component of that transformation. It was this ability to translate ideas into reality—indeed, to go beyond this and to literally *practice* them into reality[28] by giving them tangible expression in concrete cultural forms and new ways of living—that strikes me as one of the most remarkable aspects of the Zionist undertaking in these critical years.

This book has therefore sought to provide at least a partial map of that voyage—in this sense to heed the advice of Michel Vovelle and to conceive of a history of mentalities that is "the study of the mediations and of the dialectical relationship between the objective conditions of human life and the ways in which people narrate it, and even live it."[29] I have attempted to avoid the twin pitfalls of a history of ideas that is disconnected from the social reality in which those ideas develop and of a social history that relegates ideas to the position of epiphenomena. In piecing together the puzzle of national culture in Jewish Palestine and the routes taken to create it, I have cast ideas, images, and representations in two roles at once. They were both historical forces in their own right, serving to motivate the work of Palestine's activists and to shape the institutions they formed. And they were themselves products of the work that was undertaken by identifiable groups and individuals—created by real people in particular historical circumstances.

Seen in this light, the Zionist project in Palestine offers insight not only into the comprehensive refiguration of Jewishness that it undertook but also more broadly into the nature of culture as a historical force and its development in the modern world under the impact of the social and cultural earthquakes of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and of the revolutionary modernizing ideologies that so deeply influenced Jewish life first in Europe and later in Palestine. It seems, moreover, to bear important implications for our understanding not only of Jewish modernity but also of that modernity itself in whose problematics and crises of identity the Jews figured so prominently. It was, after all, a project aimed at once at bringing about internal transformations within Jewish society and culture and in many senses also at effecting a revolutionary change in the mutually constitutive relationship between "the Jew" and modern European cultures on one side and the cultures of "the Orient" on the other.

This potential to shed light onto so much that is integral to the modern brings to mind Adrian Hastings's lament over the relative scholarly neglect of Zionism as a part of the nationalist landscape. To be sure, there is much that is problematic in his analysis of Jewish history and nationalism (and perhaps of nationalism generally). Like some of the scholars he criticizes, Hastings too seems, for one thing, to oversimplify the interrelationship between the nation, nationalism, and the state, at least as they take shape in the Zionist case, when he argues (against a modernist view of nationalization from above) that "here, if anywhere, the basic order runs: nation, nationalism, nation-state."[30] Rather than this linear progression from primordial nationhood to nationalism and then to the state, it is instead precisely the elaborate oscillation between these three (particularly the first two) that lends importance to his call for greater attention to Zionism in the study of nationalism. In some senses the nation—or pieces of nationhood—seems indeed to have preceded Zionist nationalism and to have been there ready for use by nationalists. In other cases, Zionists themselves were acutely aware of what they deemed the absence of virtually any critical constitutive elements of nationhood. A principal goal of the foregoing chapters has been to examine these intricacies of Zionist nation-making in the hope that, as Hastings suggests, it may indeed teach us something about the emergence of modern nationalisms and their often complex relationships with the cultural identities and political-social groupings that preceded them.

Furthermore—and this seems critical in understanding both Zionism's goals and its historical path—it is not just the nation-state that awaits down the road as the ultimate fulfillment of both nation and nationalism but the national language and culture, and the revolution it envisioned in the very meaning of Jewishness. Zionism was in this sense much more—or perhaps at times less— than a nationalism whose "goal like theirs [other nationalisms] was the creation of a nation-state."[31] In some of its undertakings (such as the linguistic project) Zionism was not unlike many other nationalist movements. In other ways—in the depth of the transformation it sought to effect, for example—it was at least arguably different from most, a result of the particular circumstances and dilemmas of the modern European Jews who created it. Thus, Zionism may, on the one hand, present a story of nation making that was in one sense *more* creation out of thin cloth than in a case such as France, where rural peasants were not expected to uproot themselves physically and cross a sea in order to become "Frenchmen."[32] At the same time, Zionism's invention of culture and traditions involved the manifest and extensive use of very deeply entrenched traditional elements. In this sense, it seems to present a picture of cultural construction that was *less* invention ex nihilo than is often supposed and than was perhaps the case in some other nationalist movements.

If, as Anthony Smith argues, nationalism ought to be understood as a selective adoption, adaptation, and reinterpretation of selected "pre-existing symbolisms, mythologies, attachments, and beliefs of traditional religions and outlooks,"[33] the case of Zionism and its changing discourse and imagery is a revealing instance of the dynamic nature of a nationalist hermeneutics and its ongoing process of selection and adaptation. Hobsbawm and Ranger's notion of "the invention of tradition" may indeed be a useful one here, but it calls for qualification and modification in ways that will better point to the ramified and multifaceted relationship between past and present, between memory continually recast and amnesia repeatedly redeployed, so as to avoid the pitfalls of a fundamentally ahistoric deus ex machina image that emerges from some of the work that serves as the backbone of the modernization thesis of nationalism. Nationalists, as Geoff Eley and Ronald Suny write, "make their own history, but not entirely as they please; not with cultures of their own choosing, but with cultures directly encountered, given, and transmitted from the past."[34]

The story of the nationalization of the Jewish Yishuv of Palestine, however, poses a challenge to Anthony Smith's proposed model as well. Smith has suggested that the stress on an unproblematized secularization as a central component of nationalism is the result of a focus on "official nationalisms of secular elites," to whom such a model may be applicable. He contrasts this with the "popular nationalism of the lower classes," which, he argues, drew more deeply on an unmediated experience of religious traditions.[35] In early twentieth-century Zionism, however, this distinction does not seem helpful. The agents of nationalization in this case were in many senses a secularizing intellectual elite, of course, but they themselves not only had an unmediated experience of religious tradition but—however ambivalent their relationship with it was—they also very actively drew on that tradition, both consciously and unconsciously, in their efforts to shape a national culture. To be sure, they were invariably committed to what most would have comfortably termed a "secular" Jewish culture. In creating it, however, they relied substantially on religious motifs, symbols, and rituals in an effort, on one level, to thwart them but in so doing also to reclaim and recast them and thus to recapture a sacrality that Jewish modernity seemed to many of them to have lost. This tension—and the internal contradictions that it produced in the Yishuv's emerging culture—was one of the central inheritances that the prewar cultural project bequeathed to future generations in Palestine and later in Israel.

Indeed, whatever the revolutionary pretenses and intentions of many (although not all) of Palestine's activists, the culture that came to characterize the Yishuv drew with particular strength upon traditional Jewish cultures in a

number of crucial ways, while roundly rejecting it in many others. It was, perhaps, precisely this dialectical interplay that served as a central reason for the success of the cultural undertakings of 1903–1914 in forging a new national culture. Both the telling parallels to European nationalisms and the particularities of the Zionist case of the "nationalization of the masses"[36] in Palestine offer an illuminating glimpse into aspects of the birth of modern nations, the invention of national cultures, and especially, perhaps, the complex dialectic of radical innovation and lingering tradition that these "invented traditions" could accommodate.

Ernest Gellner has argued (influentially) for an utter arbitrariness that went into constructing the cultures of nationalism.[37] The story of cultural invention in Jewish Palestine, however, evokes Marc Bloch's caution against any history that assumes that "within a generation or two, human affairs have undergone a change which is not merely rapid, but total, so that no institution of long standing, no traditional form of conduct, could have escaped [it]." A society that could experience such radical transformation in so limited a period of time, Bloch adds, "would have to be a structure so malleable as to be virtually invertebrate."[38] Gellner's "preferred perspective of modernization from above" and its depiction of the nation as a social-political body that emerges virtually ex nihilo, with few or no links to a past of any kind not only makes it difficult "to pay adequate attention to the view from below," as Eric Hobsbawm (who himself tends toward an "invention" that seems excessively severed from historical moorings) has argued,[39] but also appears unconducive to a sense of historicity in any account of cultural change and of nationalist cultural undertakings in particular.

In their efforts, Palestine's Zionists drew on a large number of models provided by a Europe in the throes of nationalist (and other) inventions of cultural traditions, as Eric Hobsbawm and Terrence Ranger's now classic book has shown.[40] As I argue in the introduction to this book, however, it was invention of a very particular and composite kind that forged the new Hebrew nation in Palestine. Dialectical dialogue with Jewish traditional sources was often joined by no less strained and equivocal relationships with other cultural referents—whether in emulation or repudiation. These included what were understood to be the civilizations of "Occident" and "Orient," the heritages of various Jewish ethnic groups inside and outside of Palestine, and new European aesthetic sensibilities and movements, along with the imageries some of them often educed of the nation and the modern men and women who constituted it. Although the national entity that emerged in Palestine and its characteristic culture were unmistakably (and self-consciously) new, the liturgy and the sets of symbols, images, customs, and practices that gave them

their form were also firmly rooted in many ways in enduring images, language, and symbolisms (albeit often dramatically transformed) taken from a range of Jewish and non-Jewish sources.

In recounting the construction of that culture historically, I have attempted to strike a balance between the unity and multiplicity that are inherent in any culture, and certainly in one created jointly and so deliberately by individuals and groups who often differed deeply in their visions of that culture. On the one hand, as I have stressed, this is a history of transition from fragmentation to at least a degree of homogenization, as its central protagonists in fact wished for it to be. Indeed, a unifying impulse, as should be abundantly clear from the preceding pages, was among the principal beacons directing the work of Palestine's cultural activists. While the nature of this study has not allowed me to provide a significant platform for the voices of those who were the less enthusiastic subjects of nationalization—a field of study that remains relatively unexplored[41]—I have at the same time attempted also to highlight the multihued nature of the nationalizing impulse and the many rifts within it, along with the competition between distinct groups who claimed to be the nation's vanguard and the bearers of its national culture.

While a foundation of common national cultural motifs, practices, and self-imagery was created to a somewhat surprising degree in the Yishuv by the outbreak of the First World War, this should not blind one, of course, to the persistence of ideological diversity and cultural discord within the Zionist project in Palestine or to the continued political conflicts and many social fissures within the Yishuv and later in the state of Israel. In conceiving of the Zionist Yishuv's efforts to generate a national culture, I have attempted to write a cultural history that is at once the story of interaction among different, and at times competing, cultures that are engaged simultaneously, however, in an effort to forge a unifying and homogeneous life whose shared meanings would be generated through a range of cultural images and practices. Seen in this light, the cultural history of the Yishuv ought to be understood as one in which unity and diversity exist in conjunction and in dialectical tension with one another at virtually any historical moment and in each cultural artifact.[42]

This interplay between competition and commonalities among the contending national elites helped to catapult a particular version of the new Hebrew culture into a position of primacy in the Yishuv and to place a particular group, eventually composed predominantly of members of the second Aliya Labor-Zionist elite, into a position of cultural and political hegemony as the bearers and—as they successfully (if not entirely accurately) persuaded many of the Yishuv's historians—the creators of that culture. Yet, however powerful

a hold Labor-Zionism would turn out by the 1930s to have on the Yishuv—socially, politically, culturally, and ideologically—the nationalizing elite that in fact created the infrastructure of the culture they would later represent was, in its formative years, a very diverse group that included individuals who diverged from one another in their cultural outlooks and backgrounds, in their visions of the future Jewish nation, and in their approaches to creating it. What would soon be identified as the Hebrew culture of the Yishuv and the product of Labor-Zionism included much that had in fact been generated (and bequeathed) by such activists as Eliezer Ben-Yehuda and Hemda Ben-Yehuda, Boris Schatz, Abraham Zvi Idelsohn, Arthur Ruppin, David Yellin and Aviezer Yellin—individuals who were generationally and culturally distant from the world of the young labor "halutzim" (pioneers)—in addition, of course, to the important work of figures such as Rachel Yanait, Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, David Ben-Gurion, Yosef Aharonowitz, and A. D. Gordon.

The immigrant nature of the Yishuv, moreover, not only provided an important number of the masses (such as they were) who were to be nationalized but also brought to the shores of Jaffa and the country's growing Jewish centers a comparatively broad base of grassroots activists, whose motivations might be phrased in terms of a desire to "wet the soil of the land" with the sweat of one's brow, as some of the letters by young potential immigrants indicate, or in terms of the eyesore caused by the neighbors' non-Hebrew monogrammed linens hanging out to dry in Rosh Pinah (see chapters 5 and 6 respectively). These were people who might not be members of the nationalizing "elite" in any identifiable way but who undertook willingly and often participated actively in the project of becoming national—becoming Hebrews.[43]

The embryonic state of the Yishuv's nationalizing institutions, moreover, and the possibility of creating a wide range of new vehicles of national expression in a seemingly inchoate land facilitated the potential for this kind of broad-based participation since it appeared to make it possible for disparate groups to experiment in fashioning themselves into nationalizing institutions. Some of these met with greater success and longevity than others. Ha-Shomer would become a national myth in its own time, while the related Ha-Horesh would disappear as an organization, although many of its ideas (e.g., creating a class of Jewish peasants) would continue to pulsate within other expressions of popular longings for a new self-image. The Maccabi Athletic Association, whose first Jaffa branch was established in 1906, would go on in its later configuration as Tel-Aviv Maccabi to win Israel numerous European cups in basketball (first in 1977) and to become (or remain) a consequent source of national pride, while Simcha Ben-Zion's attempt to create a native Palestinian literature with the publication of *Ha-Omer* would be largely forgotten.

FIGURE 11.1. Students in "a Hebrew school" becoming Hebrews.

Pre–World War One Palestine was a dynamic place. Within the span of little more than a decade, the Yishuv's population experienced a severe economic and moral depression; an ideological crisis of the first degree; demographic decline and waves of emigration, followed by the arrival of renewed waves of young migrants to the country; political revolution and changes of regime; the erection of numerous new cultural and other institutions; repeated internal struggles and the early stirrings of a budding national conflict; and finally, the outbreak of a world war and the local crisis it spawned. One of the goals of this book has been to draw a dynamic picture of the Yishuv based in a cultural history that is in essence about "becoming" rather than mere "being." The preceding chapters, I believe, give a telling voice to the sense that it would indeed have been difficult at any given time to speak of a particular state of being in the Yishuv. It was a reality of tremendous flux and change—politically, demographically, ideologically, institutionally, and even linguistically—and the evolving project of cultural creation was both a catalyst in this dynamic and, inevitably, also its product.

The sense of "becoming"—of being in the midst of historical creation—seems to me not to be the wishful projection of a cultural historian. Rather, it reverberates loudly from the pages of private letters, diaries, and the folios of published materials alike. In pre–World War One Palestine, culture was very self-consciously something to be intentionally and deliberately invented, created, and generated through a kind of active work that demanded daily reengagement even as it was designed to transform everyday life. The emergence of this national culture consequently offers an extraordinarily rich opportunity to examine the processes by which culture can be generated through the directed efforts of a cadre of individuals devoted to the processes of nationalization and to the dissemination of that culture.

The shattering war that would soon engulf and then transform much of the world—and beget dramatic change in Palestine—was already raging in the summer of 1915, when the third graduating class prepared for the end of its schooling at the Hebrew Gymnasium in Tel Aviv. "A great responsibility has been placed upon the shoulders of the youth in our age," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* explained in its wishes to the graduating students. And the greatest burden of all, the journal continued,

> falls upon you, who have been raised and educated in the Land of Israel. A choice of two paths stands before us: Either a complete transvaluation of values in every aspect of our lives—and national rebirth; or continued traversal of the tried and beaten path—and

national death.... Your time has now come to make this choice—and may you choose the path of life![44]

High-school students in the Yishuv, it seems, were expected to be thinking of more than the next day's homework. They were seen as standing at a critical juncture, whose outcome was as yet uncertain. Those involved in this ambitious undertaking were, in their own minds, the critical generation, the turning point in Jewish history.

By the time war broke out, a set of initially haphazard and somewhat disparate cultural endeavors had become sufficiently harmonized to constitute the infrastructure of a new (albeit still small) Jewish national society in Palestine with its own distinct way of life. The world war and the dramatic transformations it brought about in Palestine led, of course, to significant changes in many of the components of that national liturgy, whose development would continue into the British mandatory period and then the statehood years. Contemporary Israeli society, with its ongoing bitter and divisive debates and seemingly continuous crises of identity, seems to shine a spotlight on Eugen Weber's appeal to see the nation not as a given reality but rather as "a work-in-progress."[45] Many of the roots of today's struggles can be plainly identified in the conflicts and predicaments that haunted the Yishuv in the early twentieth century, when the foundations of that work—still in progress— were laid.

Notes

NOTES TO CHAPTER I

1. Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, "Ma Hi ha-'Kultura' ha-Yehudit?" *Hashkafa* 5(34) (20 Sivan 5664/June 3, 1904), 312.

2. Anita Shapira, for example, writes of "the appearance of a native-born generation" in Palestine only in the late 1930s and its donning of a distinct "shape and image" in the 1940s. See her "Dor Ba-Aretz," in *Yehudim Hadashim Yehudim Yeshanim* (Tel Aviv, 1997), 122. Under the impact of this view, it is the mandate period that serves as the focus of most studies of cultural developments in the Yishuv and is granted the status of the formative period. See, for example, Yael Zerubavel, *Recovered Roots: Collective Memory and the Making of Israeli National Tradition* (Chicago, 1995); Oz Almog, *Ha-Tzabar: Dyukan.* (Tel Aviv, 1997); Anita Shapira, *Ha-Halicha al Kav ha-Ofek* (Tel Aviv, 1989); and *Herev ha-Yona: Ha-Tzionut ve-ha-Ko'ach 1881–1948* (Tel Aviv, 1992); Zeev Sternhell, *Binyan Uma O Tikun Hevra?: Le'umiut ve-Sotzializm bi-Tenu'at ha-Avoda ha-Yisre'elit, 1904–1940* (Tel Aviv, 1995).

An important step toward a corrective to this tendency can be found in Rachel Elboim-Dror, "'Hu Holech u-Va, Mi-Kirbenu hu Ba ha-Ivri he-Hadash': Al Tarbut ha-No'ar shel ha-Aliyot ha-Rishonot," *Alpayim* 12 (1996): 104–35.

3. These include Yaffa Berlovitz, *Le-Hamtzi Eretz le-Hamtzi Am* (Tel Aviv, 1996); Nurit Govrin, *Ha-Omer: Tenufato shel Ketav Et ve-Aharito* (Jerusalem, 1980); Nurit Govrin, *"Me'ora Brenner": Ha-Ma'avak al Hofesh ha-Bitui* (Jerusalem, 1985); and *Toledot ha-Yishuv ha-Yehudi be-Eretz Yisra'el me-Az ha-Aliya ha-Rishona: Beniyata shel Tarbut Ivrit*, ed. Zohar Shavit (Jerusalem, 1989).

4. Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, 1983), 125. While Gellner understands this break primarily in economic and technological terms—the emergence of an industrial society to replace the agrarian and the creation of a new division of labor—this is intimately linked in his presentation with the break with the religious world's ideas and structures, primarily in the form of what he refers to as the universalization of clerisies (14–18). Benedict Anderson's related sense that the emergence of nationalism is tied up with "the dusk of religious modes of thought" has been noticed far more than the implications of his concomitant suggestion of nationalism's "strong affinity with religious imaginings." Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London, 1983), 10–11.

5. Although Yael Zerubavel's important study, *Recovered Roots*, for example, explores this complexity in considerable and compelling depth, her choice of the three myths on which to focus continues to some extent to reflect a prevailing sense of a more unqualified rupture that separates the Yishuv's mythologizing from its Jewish past. Generally, even nuanced treatments of the place of religion in the secular pioneering culture of the Yishuv at times fall into the trap of dichotomy. David Cnaani's *Ha-Aliya ha-Sheniya ha-Ovedet ve-Yahasa la-Dat ve-la-Masoret* (Tel-Aviv, 1976) seeks to clear a path through this tangle by positing a distinction between Labor-Zionism's attitude toward "religion" proper and a more loosely defined "tradition." More recently and in a somewhat similar vein, Anita Shapira, although aware of "the ambivalence in the Labor [Zionist] Movement's attitude toward religion," attempts to solve this ambivalence by determining that "the content was revolutionary, the form was traditional." See "Ha-motivim ha-datiim shel Tenu'at ha-avoda," in *Tzionut ve-Dat*, ed. Shmuel Almog, Jehuda Reinharz, and Anita Shapira (Jerusalem, 1994), 301. Both Cnaani's and Shapira's resolutions seem to me overly categorical. Cnaani's distinction clearly falters in the face of the intricacy of traditional Jewish life (in which no clear distinction could be made between "religious" and nonreligious realms or between "religion" and "tradition"). Similarly, much as content and form cannot be quite as neatly distinguished as Shapira seems to suggest, neither can the impact of the secular (or "revolutionary"), as opposed to the traditional-religious, be quite as clearly sorted out. Rather than helping to explain the complexity of Zionism's troubled relationship with the Jewish traditional past, these distinctions instead neutralize what was in fact an explosively sensitive blend on the ideological and philosophical levels and in the realms of emotional life and personal and collective praxis.

6. Such studies include David A. Bell, *The Cult of the Nation in France: Inventing Nationalism, 1680–1800* (Cambridge, Mass., 2003); Robert E. Alvis, *Religion and the Rise of Nationalism: A Profile of an East-Central European City* (Syracuse, 2005); Anthony D. Smith, *Chosen Peoples: Sacred Sources of National Identity* (New York, 2003); Peter van der Veer and Hartmut Lehmann, eds., *Nation and Religion: Perspectives on Europe and Asia* (Princeton, N.J., 1999).

7. As Israel Bartal writes, what has emerged in Palestine/Israel in the past century or so is "a culture that had no precedent in the history of the Jewish people: a secular, Hebrew culture that fused rebellion against the old world with an avowed adherence to some of its components." See his "Mavo: Tarbut Yisra'el' o 'Tarbuyot

Yisra'el'?" in *Ha-Agala ha-Mele'a: Me'ah ve-Esrim Shenot Tarbut Yisra'el*, ed. Israel Bartal (Jerusalem, 2002), xii. Although I differ with some of its formulations, Zali Gurevitch and Gideon Aran's study of place and sacrality in Zionist and Israeli culture offers additional important and penetrating insights in this regard. See their "The Land of Israel: Myth and Phenomenon," in *Studies in Contemporary Jewry* 10 (1994): 195–210. The original Hebrew version appeared as "Al Ha-Makom (Antropologia Yisre'elit)," in *Alpayim* 4 (1992): 9–44. Adam Rubin's work has also shed important light on the complexities of tradition itself and of various Zionists' view of it. See his "From Torah to Tarbut: Hayim Nahman Bialik and the Nationalization of Judaism," PhD diss., (University of California–Los Angeles, 2000), and his "Hebrew Folklore and the Problem of Exile," in *Modern Judaism* 25(1) (2005): 62–83. In his casting of Zionist settlement plans and praxis as the creation/continuation of "covenantal societies," S. Ilan Troen offers important additional insights that complement the notion of the "exegetical" society (which I discuss later) and help to ground it in a social and institutional reality. See S. Ilan Troen, *Imagining Zion: Dreams, Designs, and Realities in a Century of Jewish Settlement* (New Haven, Conn., 2003), 3–14.

8. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 22. Anderson does, to be sure, make significant connections between this "thinking" and the concrete technological and economic realities that shaped peoples' lives. To a significant degree, however, the nation remains in Anderson's work very much something that is "thought" much more than it is manifested.

9. Homi K. Bhabha, "DissemiNation: Time, Narrative, and the Margins of the Modern Nation," in *Nation and Narration*, ed. Homi K. Bhabha (New York, 1990), 293.

10. See Bartal, *Ha-Agala ha-Mele'ah*, xiii.

11. I am thinking here in particular of Gur Alroey's *Imigrantim: Ha-Hagira ha-Yehudit le-Eretz Yisra'el be-Reshit ha-Me'ah ha-Esrim* (Jerusalem, 2004).

12. Paul Ricoeur, "Manifestation and Proclamation," in *Figuring the Sacred: Religion, Narrative, and Imagination*, ed. Mark I. Wallace (Minneapolis, 1995), 51.

13. Ibid., 53.

14. Yael Zerubavel's *Recovered Roots* remains one of the few (and certainly one of the most important) book-length treatments of Zionist myth and culture conceived in this manner.

15. On the bank see, for example, Nachum T. Gross, "The Anglo-Palestine Company: The Formative Years, 1903–1914," in *Ottoman Palestine 1800–1914: Studies in Economic and Social History*, ed. Gad G. Gilbar (Leiden, the Netherlands, 1990), 219–53; Amos Elon, *Herzl* (New York, 1975), 250–54; David Vital, *Zionism: The Formative Years* (New York, 1982), 38–40. On some of the excitement the bank elicited in Palestine see Haya Harel, "Herzl ve-Tzionei Eretz-Yisra'el, 1899–1904: Yahasei Gomlin" (master's thesis, Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 1979), 24–25. See also her "Ha-Tenu'a ha-Tzionit ve-ha-Yishuv be-Eretz Yisra'el be-Shelhei ha-Aliya ha-Rishona," in *Sefer ha-Aliya ha-Rishona*, ed. Mordechai Eliav (Jerusalem, 1982), 391, 398–99.

16. On the background and some of the implications of this step for the Yishuv and its colonies see Simon Schama, *Two Rothschilds and the Land of Israel*

(New York, 1978); Yisrael Margalit and Yaacov Goldstein, "Mif'alo shel ha-Baron Edmond de-Rothschild, 1882–1899," in *Toledot ha-Yishuv ha-Yehudi be-Eretz Yisra'el me-Az ha-Aliya ha-Rishona: Ha-Tekufa ha-Othmanit,* ed. Israel Kolat (Jerusalem, 1990), 419–501.

17. In her important study of Zionism in Palestine during the Herzl years, Haya Harel argues that support for Uganda in the Yishuv may have been less extensive than has been previously suggested. See her "Herzl ve-Tzionei Eretz-Yisra'el," 258–80. This argument is echoed by Shifra Schwartz, "Amadot ha-Yishuv ha-Yehudi be-Eretz Yisra'el be-Yahas le-Farashat Uganda ba-Shanim 1903–1905" (master's thesis, Ben-Gurion University, Beer Sheva, 1987), 139–43. While some of the qualifications these studies raise are of considerable importance and insight, they seem to me, in both cases, to have been overstated. See chapter 3, this volume, where I discuss this at greater length.

18. The best and most comprehensive study of this early organizational work remains Haya Harel's "Herzl ve-Tzionei Eretz-Yisra'el."

19. On the social, political, and religious background of the Yemenite immigration that began in the 1880s see Yehuda Nini, *Teiman ve-Zion: Ha-Reka ha-Medini, ha-Hevrati, ve-ha-Ruhani la-Aliyot ha-Rishonot mi-Teiman* (Jerusalem, 1982).

20. Vincent P. Pecora, *Secularization and Cultural Criticism: Religion, Nation, and Modernity* (Chicago, 2006), 20. Here, and throughout the book, my discussion focuses on what can be broadly termed "secular Zionism." The interplay of secular and religious in "religious Zionism" requires a study of its own.

21. Fernand Braudel, "History and the Social Sciences: The *Longue Durée*," in *On History* (Chicago, 1980), 26.

22. See Michael Fishbane, "Canonical Text, Covenantal Communities, and the Patterns of Exegetical Culture: Reflections on the Past Century," in *Covenant as Context: Essays in Honour of E. W. Nicholson,* ed. A. D. H. Mayes and R. B. Salters (New York, 2003), 135–61.

23. Ibid., 137.

24. Ithamar Gruenwald, "Midrash and the 'Midrashic Condition': Preliminary Considerations," in *The Midrashic Imagination: Jewish Exegesis, Thought, and History,* ed. Michael Fishbane (Albany, N.Y., 1993), 9.

25. Ibid.

26. Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism,* 56.

27. See Hobsbawm's introduction to *The Invention of Tradition,* ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terrence Ranger (New York, 1983), 7.

28. Ibid., 6–7.

29. Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (New York, 1990), 76.

30. Van der Veer and Lehmann, "Introduction," *Nation and Religion,* 7.

31. Hobsbawm, *Invention of Tradition,* 7–8.

32. "Bialik on the Hebrew University," in *The Zionist Idea: A Historical Analysis and Reader,* ed. Arthur Hertzberg (New York, 1977), 283–85.

33. Smith, *Chosen Peoples,* 5.

34. Bell, *Cult of the Nation in France*, 7, 21.

35. Adam Kuper, *Culture: The Anthropologists' Account* (Cambridge, Mass., 1999), xi, 245.

36. William H. Sewell Jr., "Geertz, Cultural Systems, and History: From Synchrony to Transformation," in *The Fate of Culture: Geertz and Beyond*, ed. Sherry B. Ortner (Los Angeles, 1999), 39.

37. Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York, 1984), 3.

38. The terms are E. P. Thompson's in "Folklore, Anthropology, and Social History," *Indian Historical Review* 3 (1977): 247–66. In a similar vein, William Roseberry argues that "To see culture as an ensemble of texts or as an art form is to remove culture from the process of its creation." In order to reinsert human agency, "we must ask who is (or are) doing the writing." See William Roseberry, *Anthropologies and Histories: Essays in Culture, History, and Political Economy* (London, 1989), 24.

39. Sander Gilman, *The Jew's Body* (New York, 1991), 128.

40. A classic overview of some of these changes can be found in Jacob Katz, *Out of the Ghetto: The Social Background of Jewish Emancipation, 1770–1870* (New York, 1973).

41. Shai Ish Hurwitz, "Le-she'elat kiyum ha-yahadut," *Ha-shilo'ah* 12 (Apr. 1904), 287–303. For an in-depth analysis of the ensuing literary polemics see Stanley Nash, *In Search of Hebraism: Shai Hurwitz and His Polemics in the Hebrew Press* (Leiden, the Netherlands, 1980), 112–48.

42. "Mr. Zangwill's Paper on Zionism and Charitable Institutions," *Jewish Chronicle* (Aug. 28, 1903): vi. This paragraph was later expunged by Maurice Simon from the published version of the speech. See *Speeches, Articles, and Letters of Israel Zangwill*, selected and ed. Maurice Simon (1937; repr., Westport, Conn., 1976), 167–80. For an expanded discussion of this imagery of death as a basis for the call for a Zionist rebirth, see my "Exorcising the 'Angel of National Death': National and Individual Death (and Rebirth) in Zionist Palestine," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 95(3) (Summer 2005): 557–78. For further compelling discussion of related themes as they appear across a wide spectrum of Jewish literature and thought, and in particular of the conceptual links between death and the Land of Israel, see Sidra DeKoven Ezrahi, *Booking Passage: Exile and Homecoming in the Modern Jewish Imagination* (Berkeley, 2002).

43. Micha Yosef Berdiczewski, *Kol Kitvei Berdiczewski* (Tel Aviv, 1960), 62–63.

44. Bell, *Cult of the Nation in France*, 153 and *passim*.

45. Cf. Ibid. "Nationalism has something inescapably paradoxical about it. It makes political claims which take the nation's existence wholly for granted, yet it proposes programs which treat the nation as something yet unbuilt" (5).

46. Ben-Avi, "Yarketon: Ha-Te'atron ha-Ivri," *Ha-Tzevi* 26(107) (2 First Adar 5670/Feb. 11, 1910), 1.

47. Menahem Ussishkin to Yehoshua Eisenstadt-Barzilai, 14 Tevet 5666/Jan. 11, 1906, Central Zionist Archives (CZA) A25 (Yehoshua Eisenstadt-Barzilai Papers), file 127. Ussishkin's use of language further highlights the still inchoate stage of the nationalization project at this point. In speaking of the need to "nationalize" the Jews

he uses the Hebrew term "le-amem" but adds a Russian-language translation since the word was in fact nonexistent at this point in the development of the Hebrew language (indeed, the word did not catch on, and later Hebrew would replace it with the alternative "le-hal'im").

48. M. Barucov, "Seridim," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 7(8–9) (Dec. 11, 1913): 4–10.

49. Ahad Ha'am, "Sach Ha-Kol," *Ha-Shilo'ah* 26 (Jan.–June 1912): 279.

50. Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, "Ha-Pera'ot be-Homel" [The Pogrom in Gomel], *Hashkafa* 5(3) (25 Tishrei 5664/Oct. 16, 1903): 17.

51. Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, "Ha-Shana ha-Ivrit," *Ha-Or* 5(1) (15 Tamuz 5674): 1.

52. Contemporaries and historians alike have used the term "New Yishuv" to refer to the modernizing, Hebraist, and Zionist-inclined segment of Jewish Palestine, in contrast with the Orthodox and traditionalist "Old Yishuv." On the emergence and some of the problematics of this terminology, see Israel Bartal's now classic " 'Yishuv Yashan' ve-'Yishuv Hadash'—ha-Dimuy ve-ha-Metzi'ut," *Kathedra* 2 (1977): 3–19; Shmuel Ettinger and Israel Bartal, "Shorshei ha-Yishuv he-Hadash be-Eretz Yisra'el," in *Sefer ha-Aliya ha-Rishona,* ed. Mordechai Eliav (Jerusalem, 1981), 1–24; Yehoshua Kaniel, "Ha-Yishuv ha-Yashan ve-ha-Hityashvut ha-Hadasha," *Sefer ha-Aliya ha-Rishona,* ed. Mordechai Eliav (Tel Aviv, 1981), 269–88; and Yehoshua Kaniel, *Hemshech u-Temura: Ha-Yishuv ha-Yashan ve-ha-Yishuv he-Hadash bi-Tekufat ha-Aliya ha-Rishona ve-ha-Sheniya* (Jerusalem, 1982).

NOTES TO CHAPTER 2

1. David Yudilovitz, "Gan ha-Yeladim ha-Ivri ha-Rishon," in *Sefer ha-Yovel shel Histadrut ha-Morim be-Eretz Yisra'el* (Jerusalem, 1929), 155.

2. Precursors to the Zionist Organization in 1897, groups of Hovevi Zion were established following the wave of anti-Jewish pogroms in Russia in the early 1880s. Their central goals included resettlement of Palestine in a Jewish-nationalist spirit and a revival of Jewish culture, with the Hebrew language taking center stage. Yudilovitz was among the earliest of Hibbat Zion immigrants to Palestine.

3. The Hebrew acronym BILU stood for "Beit Ya'acov Lechu ve-Nelcha"— "House of Jacob, let us arise and go" (Isaiah 2:5). Founded in 1882 in reaction to the wave of pogroms that had broken out in the Russian Empire, the small BILU group— composed largely of young students—was the first to understand the idea of Jewish settlement in Palestine as calling for a personal commitment to do so. On BILU see Shulamit Laskov, *Ha-Biluyim* (Jerusalem, 1981).

4. Mordechai Eliav, "Yihuda shel ha-Aliya ha-Rishona: Mavo," in *Sefer ha-Aliyah ha-Rishona,* ed. Mordechai Eliav (Jerusalem, 1981), ix, gives the 26,000 figure. The figure of 30,000 is found in Yehoshua Ben-Arieh, "Ha-Nof ha-Yishuvi shel Eretz Yisra'el Erev ha-Hityashvut ha-Tzionit," in *Toledot ha-Yishuv ha-Yehudi be-Eretz Yisra'el me-Az ha-Aliya ha-Rishona: Ha-Tekufa ha-Otmanit, Helek Rishon,* ed. Yisrael Kolat (Jerusalem, 1989), 79.

5. On Jaffa's emergence as a center of modern Jewish cultural life see Ruth Kark, "Aliyata shel Yaffo ke-Merkaz ha-Yishuv he-Hadash: Hebetim Hevratiim ve-Tarbutiim," in *Sefer ha-Aliya ha-Rishona,* 297–318.

6. A good survey of the rise and activities of Hibbat Zion can be found in David Vital, *The Origins of Zionism* (Oxford, UK, 1975), 3–200. Late-nineteenth-century Ottoman Palestine saw a general upsurge of new educational institutions, which would prove formative for Palestinian-Arab national identity as well. See Muhammad Y. Muslih, *The Origins of Palestinian Nationalism* (New York, 1988), 48–49; Rashid Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness* (New York, 1997), 46–53.

7. This is the title of a book on the literature of the period. See Yaffa Berlovitz, *Le-Hamtzi Eretz, le-Hamtzi Am* (Tel Aviv, 1996).

8. See Shulamit Laskov, "Ha-Moshavot she-Beli Temicha ve-she-bi-Temichat Hovevei Zion, 1882–1890," in *Toledot ha-Yishuv ha-Yehudi be-Eretz Yisra'e*, 351–417.

9. There is substantial dispute as to when full-fledged Hebrew speech began to be heard in the Yishuv. Benjamin Harshav, for example, has argued for a relatively late date, while others suggest it may have been earlier. See Harshav, *Language in Time of Revolution* (Los Angeles, 1993), 85, 91–92, 101–103. For an opposing view see Haramati, "Tehiyat ha-Dibur ha-Ivri ba-Moshavot," in *Sefer Ha-Aliya Ha-Rishona*, 427–46; Bar-Adon, "Al Terumata Shel ha-Aliya ha-Sheniya li-Tehiyat ha-Lashon ha-Ivrit: Dimuy u-Metzi'ut," in *Divrei ha-Kongress ha-Olami ha-Teshi'i le-Mada'ei ha-Yahadut* 4(1): 63–70; Shor, "Binui Uma ve-Lashon Le'umit: Mytos Ben-Yehuda u-Felugatat ha-Safot be-Miflegot ha-Po'alim," in *Lashon ve-Ivrit* 7 (Mar. 1991): 42–52. For further discussion of the question of Hebrew speech in this period and the significance of these historiographical discrepancies see chapter 4.

10. On the capitulations agreement, Ottoman displeasure with it, and its importance in structuring Jewish life in Palestine see David Kushnir, "Ha-Dor ha-Aharon le-Shilton ha-Oth'manim be-Eretz-Yisra'el, 1882–1914," in *Toledot ha-Yishuv ha-Yehudi be-Eretz Yisra'el*, 45–48; Isaiah Friedman, *Germany, Turkey, and Zionism, 1897–1918* (Oxford, UK, 1977), 32–49; Mordechai Eliav, *Be-Hasut Mamlechet Austria: Mivhar Te'udot me-Archion ha-Konsulia ha-Austrit bi-Yerushalayim, 1849–1917* (Jerusalem, 1985), 1–4.

11. See Michael Graetz, *The Jews in Nineteenth-Century France: From the French Revolution to the Alliance Israélite Universelle* (Stanford, 1996); Aron Rodrigue, *French Jews, Turkish Jews: The Alliance Israélite Universelle and the Politics of Jewish Schooling in Turkey, 1860–1925* (Bloomington, 1990); Rodrigue, *Jews and Muslims: Images of Sephardi and Eastern Jewries in Modern Times* (Seattle, 2003).

12. On the Hilfsverein's work in Palestine see Moshe Rinot, *Hevrat ha-Ezra le-Yehudei Germania ba-Yetzira u-va-Ma'avak* (Jerusalem, 1972). On the Esra Verein see Jehuda Reinharz, "The Esra Verein and Jewish Colonization in Palestine," in *Leo Baeck Yearbook* 24 (1979): 261–89.

13. See Vital, *Origins of Zionism*, 3–200.

14. On religious tensions between the new settlers and the Old Yishuv in general and on the debate surrounding the sabbatical year see Yehoshua Kaniel, "Ha-Yishuv ha-Yashan ve-ha-Hityashvut ha-Hadasha," in *Sefer ha-Aliya ha-Rishona*, 269–88; Kaniel, *Hemshech u-Temura: Ha-Yishuv ha-Yashan ve-ha-Yishuv he-Hadash bi-Tekufat ha-Aliya ha-Rishona ve-ha-Sheniya* (Jerusalem, 1982), 129–39; Ehud Luz, *Makbilim Nif-*

gashim: Dat u-Le'umiut ba-Tenu'a ha-Tzionit be-Mizrach Eiropa be-Reshita (1882–1904) (Tel Aviv, 1985), 100–12, 138–46.

15. Eliav, "Yihuda shel ha-Aliya ha-Rishona," xiii.

16. Chaim Malil, letter to the editor, *Hashkafa* 4(38) (1 Tamuz 5663/June 26, 1903), 289. Sephardic Jews, in broad terms, are those of Spanish descent, usually from Middle Eastern and North African countries in this context. The term is used at times to denote any Jews of Middle Eastern or North African descent. Ashkenazi Jews are those of northern and, particularly in this context, primarily eastern European, origin.

17. [Itamar] Ben-Avi, "Ha-Shavu'a," *Hashkafa* 4(10) (19 Kislev 5663/Dec. 19, 1902), 74. Emphasis in the original.

18. See Eliav, "Yihuda shel ha-Aliya ha-Rishona," xv–xvi; Simon Schama, *Two Rothschilds and the Land of Israel* (New York, 1978), 88–137.

19. Yehoshua Eisenstadt, "Be-Eretz Yisra'el," *Ha-Shilo'ah* 11 (Jan.–June 1903), 497–98.

20. Yehoshua Eisenstadt, "Me-Eretz Yisra'el," *Ha-Shilo'ah* 12 (July–Dec. 1903), 174.

21. Ben-Avi, "Gan ha-Yeladim ha-Ivri be-Yaffo," *Hashkafa* 3(14) (11 Nissan 5662/Apr. 18, 1902), 109.

22. Yosef Weitz at the Second General Assembly of the Palestine Federation (28 Kislev 5665/Dec. 6, 1904), CZA, A24 (Menahem Ussishkin Papers), file 491.

23. Yehoshua Eisenstadt-Barzilai to Menahem Ussishkin, 27 Tamuz 5664/July 10, 1904, CZA A24, file 68/5/1.

24. Ussishkin, *Michtav Hozer*, Jaffa, July 1903, in CZA A24, file 48.

25. See Moshe Rinot, "Ha-Hinuch be-Eretz Yisra'el, 1882–1918," in *Toledot ha-Yishuv ha-Yehudi be-Eretz Yisra'el*, 682–83; Rachel Elboim-Dror, *Ha-Hinuch ha-Ivri be-Eretz Yisra'el*, vol. 1, *1854–1914* (Jerusalem, 1986), 195–202.

26. See Kark, "Aliyata shel Yaffo," 311. On Joffe's later role as Herzl's trusted representative in Palestine (notwithstanding substantive differences between the two) see Haya Harel, *Herzl ve-Tzionei Eretz-Yisra'el, 1899–1904: Yahasei Gomlin* (master's thesis, Hebrew University in Jerusalem, 1979), 44–46, and passim. The comparatively extensive correspondence between Herzl and Joffe in the latter's memoirs, Hillel Joffe, *Dor Ma'apilim: Zichronot, Michtavim ve-Yoman* (Jerusalem, 1971), sheds light on the complex relationship and mutual respect between the two men.

27. Elboim-Dror, *Ha-Hinuch ha-Ivri*, 202.

28. On the establishment and career of *Va'ad ha-Agudot* see also Haya Har-El, *Herzl ve-Tzionei Eretz Yisra'el*, and her "Ha-Tenu'a ha-Tzionit ve-ha-Yishuv be-Eretz Yisra'el be-Shelhei ha-Aliya ha-Rishona," in *Sefer Ha-Aliya ha-Rishona*, 394.

29. Yossi Goldstein, *Ussishkin: Biographia: Ha-Tekufa ha-Russit*, vol. 1, *1863–1919* (Jerusalem, 1999), 136.

30. Ussishkin to Barzilai, 26 Adar 5663/Mar. 25, 1903, CZA A25, file 116.

31. Quoted in Harel, *Herzl ve-Tzionei Eretz Yisra'el*, 144.

32. See the minutes in CZA A352 (Pesach Yapu papers), file 3, and the discussion in Harel, *Herzl ve-Tzionei Eretz Yisra'el*, 60.

33. Harel, *Herzl ve-Tzionei Eretz Yisra'el*, 145–47.

34. Ussishkin, *Michtav Hozer*, Jaffa, July 1903, in CZA A24, file 48.

35. Ibid.

36. Hillel Joffe to Emil Meirson, Jan. 19, 1904, in Joffe, *Dor Ma'apilim*, 250–51.

37. Harel, *Herzl ve-Tzionei Eretz Yisra'el*, 153, also points this out but stops short of exploring the significance of Joffe's retrospective reconstruction. For further discussion of the "Uganda controversy" see chapter 3.

38. Ahad Ha'am to Yehoshua Eisenstadt-Barzilai, 7 Heshvan 5664/Oct. 28, 1903, CZA A25, file 101.

39. *Totza'ot me-Hahlatot ha-Knessia*, CZA A24, file 48.

40. Protocol, 29 Adar 5664/Mar. 16, 1904, CZA A24, file 491. See also Goldstein, *Ussishkin*, 161.

41. Hermoni, "Michtav Galuy le-Ehai ve-Ahayotai ha-Tze'irim be-Eretz Yisrael," *Hashkafa* 5(4) (2 Heshvan 5664/Oct. 23, 1903), 27.

42. Yehoshua Eisenstadt-Barzilai, "Amitot u-Melitzot me-ha-Knesset ha-Artzi Yisre'elit," CZA A25, file 106.

43. See Yosef Salmon, "Ha-Yishuv ha-Ashkenazi ha-Ironi be-Eretz-Yisra'el, 1880–1903," in *Toledot ha-Yishuv ha-Yehudi be-Eretz Yisra'el*, 616–17.

44. Ze'ev Gluskin to Ussishkin, 2 Heshvan 5664/Oct. 23, 1903, CZA A24, file 48.

45. See Haya Harel, "Ha-Tenu'a ha-Tzionit ve-ha-Yishuv," in *Sefer Ha-Aliya ha-Rishona*, 400–401.

46. See, for example, Yehoshua Eisenstadt-Barzilai to Ussishkin, 15 Tevet 5664/Jan. 3, 1904, CZA A24, file 68/5/1; Va'ad ha-Aguda Bi-Rehovot [The Organizational Committee in Rehovot], "Meha'a Rishmit," *Hashkafa* 5(12) (6 Tevet 5644/Dec. 25, 1903), 96; members of the Zionist committee of Yavne'el, "Meha'a mi-Yavne'el," *Hashkafa* 5(22) (10 Adar 5664/Feb. 26, 1904), 168. Cf. Goldstein, *Ussishkin*, 162–63.

47. Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1983), 38.

48. Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (New York, 1990), 23.

49. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London, 1983), 36.

50. Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870–1914* (Stanford, 1976), 485.

51. See, for example, Nelson Moe, "'This Is Africa': Ruling and Representing Southern Italy, 1860–61," in *Making and Remaking Italy: The Cultivation of Identity around the Risorgimento*, ed. Albert Russell Ascoli and Krystyna von Henneberg (New York, 2001), 119–53.

52. David Bell, *The Cult of the Nation in France: Inventing Nationalism, 1680–1800* (Cambridge, Mass., 2003), 5.

53. David Yudilovitz, "Gan ha-Yeladim ha-Ivri ha-Rishon," in *Sefer ha-Yovel shel Histadrut ha-Morim be-Eretz Yisra'el* (Jerusalem, 1929), 155.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 3

1. Johann Gottfried von Herder, *Outlines of a Philosophy of the History of Man*, trans. T. Churchill (London, 1800), 348. On Herder and nationalism see Royal J. Schmidt, "Cultural Nationalism in Herder," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 17(3) (June

1956): 407–17; Carlton J. H. Hayes, "Contributions of Herder to the Doctrine of Nationalism," *American Historical Review* 32(4) (July 1927): 719–36.

2. Probably the most thorough treatment is that in David Vital, *Zionism: The Formative Years* (New York, 1982), 267–364. See also the collected documents and introduction in Michael Heymann, ed., *The Uganda Controversy: Minutes of the Zionist General Council*, vol. 1 (Jerusalem, 1970), and vol. 2 (Jerusalem, 1977), as well as Heymann's introductory essays: vol. 1, 14–39; vol. 2, 5–93.

3. The one sustained treatment of the Yishuv and the Uganda controversy is Shifra Schwartz, "Amadot ha-Yishuv ha-Yehudi be-Eretz Yisra'el be-Yahas le-Farashat Uganda ba-Shanim 1903–1905" (master's thesis, Ben-Gurion University, Beer Sheva, 1987). Haya Harel's master's thesis also devotes a section to the dispute. See her "Herzl ve-Tzionei Eretz-Yisra'el, 1899–1904: Yahasei Gomlin" (master's thesis, Hebrew University in Jerusalem, 1979), 258–80. See also Yosef Lang, "Itonut E. Ben-Yehuda ve-Amadoteiha be-Inyanei ha-Yishuv ha-Yehudi ve-ha-Tenu'a ha-Le'umit ba-Shanim 1884–1914" (PhD diss., Bar-Ilan University, Ramat Gan, 1993), 188–222. Published studies, including those that devote substantial space to Uganda, offer far more meager treatments of the position of the Yishuv in the struggle.

4. Ben-Yehuda, "Ha-Medina ha-Yehudit," *Hashkafa* 5(40) (18 Tamuz 5664/July 1, 1904), 374. Emphasis added.

5. See also Shmuel Noah Eisenstadt, "Did Zionism Bring the Jews Back to History?" *Jewish Studies* 38 (1998): 9*–29*, for further discussion of this aspect of Zionist nationalism.

6. On the nation-land relationship in Zionism and in other varieties of Jewish nationalism see Shmuel Almog, "Al Am va-Aretz ba-Le'umiut ha-Yehudit ha-Modernit," in his *Le'umiut, Tzionut, Antishemiut: Masot u-Mehkarim* (Jerusalem, 1992), 61–75.

7. Within the Zionist context, this dictum can be attributed (rather ironically) to Israel Zangwill, who later established the Jewish Territorial Organization, in part due to his conviction by 1904–1905 that Palestine was in fact not "a land without a people." See Israel Zangwill, "The Return to Palestine," *New Liberal Review* 2 (London, 1901): 627. It seems, however, that Zangwill adopted the phraseology from the Earl of Shaftesbury, who had coined it some two decades earlier. See, for example, Be'eri, *Reshit ha-Sichsuch Yisra'el-Arav, 1882–1911* (Tel Aviv, 1985), 35–37.

8. Harel, "Herzl ve-Tzionei Eretz-Yisra'el, 1899–1904," and Schwartz, "Amadot ha-Yishuv."

9. Yitzhak Horwitz to David Yudilovitz, 24 Sivan 5665/June 27, 1905, CZA A352 (Pesach Yapu Papers), file 50.

10. See, for example, Metman to Ussishkin, 19 Sivan 5665/June 22, 1905, CZA A24, file 42II.

11. Yosef Lang shows that Ben-Yehuda's personal commitment to a Palestino-centric nationalism was coupled early on with an openness to territorial alternatives in the event Palestine might prove unavailable as the soil for the national-linguistic revival. See Lang, "Itonut E. Ben-Yehuda," 188–92. And cf. Shmuel Almog, *Tzionut ve-Historia* (Jerusalem, 1982), 200–203.

12. Mordechai Ha-Yehudi (Ben-Yehdua), "Hirhurei Purim," *Hashkafa* 3(10) (12 Second Adar 5662/Mar. 21, 1902), 85.

13. Eliezer Ben-Yehuda (unsigned), "Ma Hi ha 'Kultura' ha-Yehudit?" *Hashkafa* 5(34) (20 Sivan 5664/June 3, 1904), 312.

14. See, for example, Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, untitled *Hashkafa* 4(50) (19 Elul 5664/ September 11, 1903), 376.

15. Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, "Ha-Pera'ot be-Homel," *Hashkafa* 5(3) (25 Tishrei 5664/ Oct. 16, 1903), 17. Emphasis added.

16. Eliezer Ben-Yehuda (unsigned), "Hithazkut ha-Hishtadlut bi-Devar ha-Yishuv be-Eretz Yisra'el," *Hashkafa* 5(7) (23 Heshvan 5664/Nov. 13, 1903), 46.

17. Harari (Simcha Vilkomitz), letter to the editor, *Hashkafa* 5(10) (15 Kislev 5664/Dec. 4, 1903), 69.

18. Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, "Hag Petihat ha-Machon ha-Germani le-Hakirat Atikot Eretz Yisra'el," *Hashkafa* 5(8) (1 Kislev 5664/Nov. 20, 1903), 53. Rashid Khalidi points to a similar frustration on the part of some Arab intellectuals in Palestine at the lack of Arab scholarship on the land as a formative impetus in the early stirrings of Palestinian nationalism. See Rashid Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness* (New York, 1997), 42–46.

19. Ben-Yehuda (unsigned) "Le-Harari va-Haverav," *Hashkafa* 5(11) (22 Kislev 5664/Dec. 11, 1903), 77–78.

20. Hemda Ben-Yehuda, "Af-Al-Pi-Chen," *Hashkafa* 7(63) (8 Sivan 5666/June 1, 1906), 3. Although written after the Uganda controversy had come to an end, this passage reflects the notions of Palestine's importance as a cultural link between the Jewish past and the Jewish future that figured consistently in the writings of both Ben-Yehudas.

21. See, for example, Hemda Ben-Yehuda's quasi-theatrical "R. Yoel," in *Hashkafa* 5(7) (23 Heshvan 5664/Nov. 13, 1903), 48; and Itamar Ben-Avi, "Ha-Sheleg (Bi'ato le-Eretz Yisra'el)" *Hashkafa* 4(15) (24 Tevet 5663/Jan. 23, 1903), 119.

22. Hemda Ben-Yehuda, "Af-Al-Pi-Chen," 3.

23. Ben-Yehuda, "Ha-Pera'ot be-Homel," 17.

24. Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, "Ha-Medina ha-Yehudit," *Hashkafa* 5(5) (9 Heshvan 5664/Oct. 30, 1903), 29.

25. Ben-Yehuda, "Ha-Pera'ot be-Homel," 19

26. Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, "Ha-Medina ha-Yehudit," 29.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid., 29–30.

29. Schwartz, "Amadot ha-Yishuv," 63–73. Equally unconvincing is Yosef Lang's claim that "it was not long before Ben Yehuda understood [sic] that his support for Uganda had been a mistake." See Lang, "Itonut E. Ben-Yehuda," 219. Ben-Yehuda's writings clearly indicate that not only was the change in his position considerably more gradual but also that it came in response to changing circumstances (as Lang himself seems to suggest in his subsequent pages).

30. Harel, *Herzl ve-Tzionei Eretz-Yisra'el*, 268.

31. Eretz Yisra'el Association circular, 5 Elul 5664/Aug. 16, 1904, CZA A352, file 12.

32. Eretz Yisra'el Association (signed by Eliezer Greenhut, Menahem Mendel Susnizki, Yitzhak Horwitz, Yosef Goldberg) to Yosef Reznik, 29 Sivan/July 2, 1905, CZA A352, file 50.

33. Alter Weidberg to Menahem Ussishkin, 18 Tamuz 5664/July 1, 1904, CZA A24, file 115/3. Emphasis added.

34. Protocols of the meeting in CZA A352, file 12. See also Yosef Goldberg in the name of the Eretz Yisra'el federation to Va'ad ha-Agudot, 19 Sivan 5664/June 2, 1904, in which he writes that "nearly all of our members agree with the Uganda proposal." CZA A352 file 12.

35. "Proclamation of the Zionists of the Land of Israel," CZA A352, file 50.

36. Pesah Yapu to the "Committee of Political Zionists in Odessa," 18 Sivan 5665/June 21, 1905, CZA A352, file 50.

37. Va'ad ha-Agudot to Herzl, 12 Adar 5664/Feb. 12, 1904, CZA A352 file 3.

38. See Yehuda Metman-Cohen to Menahem Ussishkin, 19 Sivan 5665/June 22, 1905, CZA A24, file 42II.

39. David Yudilovitz to Dov Lubman, Nov. 1, 1903, Rishon Le-Zion Archives, Dov Lubman Collection (A1), file 2/3.

40. Sander Gilman, *Freud, Race, and Gender* (Princeton, N.J., 1993), 106.

41. John M. Efron, *Defenders of the Race: Jewish Doctors and Race Science in Fin-de-siècle Europe* (New Haven, Conn., 1994), 73–74.

42. Yudilovitz to Lubman, Nov. 1, 1903 (see note 39, this chapter).

43. For an expanded discussion of this imagery see Arieh Bruce Saposnik, "Succor for the Ailing Jewish Body: Images of Jewish Racial Degeneracy and Zionist Cultural Work in Palestine," in *Erasing Public Memory: Race, Aesthetics, and Cultural Amnesia in the Americas*, ed. Jana Evans Braziel and Joseph Young (Macon, Ga., 2007), 187–208.

44. Paula E. Hyman, *Gender and Assimilation in Modern Jewish History: The Roles and Representation of Women* (Seattle, 1995), 9. See also Daniel Boyarin, "Goyim Naches, or, Modernity and the Manliness of the *Mentsch*," in *Modernity, Culture, and "The Jew*," ed. Bryan Cheyette and Laura Marcus (Stanford, 1998), 63–87.

45. Yudilovitz to Lubman, Nov. 1, 1903 (see note 39, this chapter).

46. See also Arieh Bruce Saposnik, "Europe and Its Orients in Zionist Culture before the First World War," *Historical Journal* 49(4): 557–78.

47. Avraham Elmaliach, "Ha-Pera'ot be-Marocco," *Hashkafa* 5(21) (26 Shevat 5664/Feb. 12, 1904), 160.

48. Protocol of the Zionist meeting held in Rishon Le-Zion on 15 Sivan 5665 (June 18, 1905), CZA A25, file 122.

49. Yehoshua Eisenstadt-Barzilai to Ussishkin (Tevet 5665/Dec. 1904–Jan. 1905), CZA A24, file 68/5/1.

50. Moshe Smilansky, "Uganda," *Hashkafa* 5(15) (20 Tevet 5664/Jan. 8, 1904), 112.

51. See Vital, *Zionism, the Formative Years*, 273–90.

52. Leo Metman-Cohen to Menahem Ussishkin, undated (approximately 1905), CZA A24, file 42II.

53. Pesach Yapu to unidentified recipient, 18 Sivan 5665/June 21, 1905, CZA A352, file 50. See also Yitzhak Horwitz to David Yudilovitz, 24 Sivan 5665/

June 27, 1905, in ibid., in which Horwitz details specific actions allegedly taken by Zionei Zion to deceive or intimidate Jerusalemites into supporting their cause.

54. Eliezer Ben-Yehuda to Yehoshua Eisenstadt-Barzilai, 7 Adar 5664/Feb. 23, 1904, CZA A25, file 120.

55. Chaim Michl Michlin to Pesah Yapu, 30 Sivan 5665/July 3, 1905, CZA A352, file 50.

56. Eliezer Ben-Yehuda to Yehoshua Eisenstadt-Barzilai, 7 Adar 5664/Feb. 23, 1904, CZA A25, file 120.

57. See, for example, the implied accusation in a letter from the colony of Kastina to the Zionist Bureau, 26 Tamuz 5664/July 9, 1904, in CZA A352, file 44; the more direct accusation—"the traitor caused the death of our leader"—in the protocols of the general meeting of the Eretz Yisra'el and Jerusalem federations, 11 Elul 5664/Aug. 22, 1904, CZA A352, file 12; finally, the blatant accusation sent directly to Ussishkin in the form of a postcard from Palestine, CZA A24, file 84 (see figure 3.3).

58. *Hashkafa* 5(41) (22 Tamuz 5664/July 5, 1904), 385.

59. George L. Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars* (New York, 1990), 87–90, 109.

60. See Ernst Pawel, *The Labyrinth of Exile: A Life of Theodor Herzl* (London, 1990), 388.

61. See, for example, Hayyim Schauss, *The Jewish Festivals: History and Observance* (New York, 1962), 272–80; *Encyclopedia Judaica* (Jerusalem, 1972), vol. 15, 1419.

62. H. L. (Hayim Aryeh [Leib]) Zuta, "Hamisha-Assar B'Shvat," *Hashkafa* 5(19) (19 Shevat 5664/February 5, 1904), 144–45. Cf. the sustained discussion of the reciprocal rebuilding of the land and the Jew as a formative Zionist trope in Eric Zakim, *To Build and Be Built: Landscape, Literature, and the Construction of Zionist Identity* (Philadelphia, 2006).

63. On the persistence of the *tiyul* as an important instrument in effecting connections between land, people, and national culture in contemporary Israel, see Orit Ben-David, "*Tiyul* (Hike) as an Act of Consecration of Space," in *Grasping Land: Space and Place in Contemporary Israeli Discourse and Experience,* ed. Eyal Ben-Ari and Yoram Bilu (Albany, N.Y., 1997), 129–45.

64. Yehoshua Kanterowitz, "Tiyul Talmidei Beit ha-Midrash le-Morim," *Hashkafa* 5(36) (1 Tamuz 5664/June 14, 1904), 340.

65. Yehoshua Eisenstadt-Barzilai to Ussishkin (Tevet 5665/Dec. 1904–Jan. 1905), CZA A24, file 68/5/1.

66. See Shlomo Zemach, *Shana Rishona* (Tel Aviv, 1952), 176–83.

67. Leo Metman to Ussishkin, undated (approximately 1905), CZA A24, file 42II.

68. Ibid.

69. Ibid.

70. Metman to Ussishkin, 8 Elul 5665/Sept. 8, 1905, CZA A24, file 42II.

71. Letter to Ussishkin from the Committee for a National Hebrew Education, 7 Tishrei 5666/Oct. 6, 1905, CZA A24, file 42I.

72. Ussishkin to Eisenstadt-Barzilai, 14 Tevet 5666/Jan. 11, 1906, CZA A25, file 127.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 4

1. Iris Parush, "Another Look at 'The Life of "Dead" Hebrew': Intentional Ignorance of Hebrew in Nineteenth-Century Eastern European Jewish Society," *Book History* 7 (2004): 171–214 (quote on p. 201).

2. Tudor Parfitt, "The Use of Hebrew in Palestine, 1800–1882," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 17 (1972): 237–52; and Parfitt, "The Contribution of the Old *Yishuv* to the Revival of Hebrew," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 29(2) (1984): 255–65.

3. Shlomo Haramati, *Ivrit Safa Meduberet* (Israel, 2000), 118.

4. Benjamin Harshav, *Language in Time of Revolution* (Los Angeles, 1993), 85–86, 101–12.

5. See Nathan Efrati, *Mi-Leshon Yehidim Li-Leshon Uma: Ha-Dibur ha-Ivri be-Eretz Yisra'el ba-Shanim 1882–1922* (Jerusalem, 2004), 108–26.

6. See the comments in ibid., 124.

7. Ron Kuzar makes some penetrating and very suggestive observations regarding the ideological paradigms within which these and a number of other scholars of Hebrew have operated. This broader ideological context, he argues, is indispensable for understanding the divergent views of the history of Hebrew speech, the roles of Eliezer Ben-Yehuda and others, and questions of rupture and continuity in modern Hebrew (the name of which is itself, as he argues, fraught with ideological implications). See Ron Kuzar, *Hebrew and Zionism: A Discourse Analytic Cultural Study* (New York, 2001), passim.

8. A recent proponent of this position is Ghil'ad Zuckermann, who goes so far as to reject the term "Hebrew" altogether in reference to the language spoken by Israelis, preferring to call it "Israeli." See Ghil'ad Zuckermann, *Language Contact and Lexical Enrichment in Israeli Hebrew* (New York, 2003). For a succinct summary of his approach see his "The Genetics of the Israeli Language: *mosaic* or *Mosaic?*" *Midstream* 50(4) (May–June 2004): 30–32.

9. Protocol of the First Conference of the Association of Hebrew Teachers of Palestine, 1903, second session, 13, Aviezer Yellin Archives of Jewish Education in Israel and the Diaspora (hereafter Education Archives), 9.1, box 1. See also an earlier article in which Ben-Yehuda reported on "our Hebrew assets." While he was hardly yet pleased with the spread of Hebrew speech, he wrote, "in comparison with the past, we are wealthy." Ben-Yehuda, "Rechushenu," *Hashkafa* 3(19) (23 Iyar 5662/May 30, 1902), 145.

10. See David Yellin in Protocol of the First Teachers' Association Conference, first session, 10, and the nearly unanimous acceptance of this view (e.g., 6).

11. Uzzi Ornan, "Hebrew in Palestine before and after 1882," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 29(1) (1984): 229.

12. Ben-Yehuda, "Dor ha-Palaga," *Hashkafa* 3(9) (5 Second Adar 5662/Mar. 14, 1902), 70.

13. Ben-Yehuda renders the foreign language expressions throughout the play in Hebrew letters, lending them an increased air of falsehood and ridiculousness.

14. Hemda Ben-Yehuda, "Mi-Mahazot ha-Hayim shel ha-Dor ha-Ba: I: Bein Ish le-Ishto," *Hashkafa* 3(10) (12 Second Adar 5662/Mar. 21, 1902), 80.

15. Kenneth Benjamin Moss, "'A Time for Tearing Down and a Time for Building Up': Recasting Jewish Culture in Eastern Europe, 1917–1921" (PhD diss., Stanford University, 2003), 11. On some of the social and demographic bases of linguistic change throughout the nineteenth century among Jews in the Russian Empire see Benjamin Nathans, *Beyond the Pale: The Jewish Encounter with Late Imperial Russia* (Los Angeles, 2002), 83–122. In Petersburg, for example, Nathans points out, between 1869 and 1910 "the declared native language of nearly half the city's Jews shifted from Yiddish to Russian" (110). Steven J. Zipperstein's *Jews of Odessa: A Cultural History, 1794–1881* (Stanford, 1985), 96–113, sheds further light on some of the complexities in the relationship between language, education, social class, demographics, and urbanization. On the importance of language as a defining factor in modern Jewish social and political movements and ideologies see Eli Lederhendler, "Language, Culture, and Politics" in his *Jewish Responses to Modernity: New Voices in American and Eastern Europe* (New York, 1994), 9–22; Ezra Mendelsohn, *On Modern Jewish Politics* (New York, 1993), passim.

16. See, for example, my discussion of this in chapter 8.

17. See, for example, Avi Tzela, "Ha-Aretz Ma Hi?" *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 6(14) (Dec. 31, 1912), 11–12, in which the author discounts concerns that Arabic culture might have too powerful an influence on the budding nation since, as he argues, the Jews of Palestine are of a higher cultural level than the Arabs and cultural influence flows from the high to the low. See also Ya'acov Rabinowitz, "Tehiya Meduma," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 6(18) (Jan. 31, 1913), 7–9, in which the author all but rejects the notion that there is an Arabic culture that might be of any influence. Even at this comparatively late date, when clashes between Arabs and Jews in Palestine were growing in frequency and ferocity and beginning to show early signs of a national conflict, Rabinowitz criticized those in the Yishuv who were starting to point to an emerging Arab national movement. What they were seeing was in fact nothing but an "imagined renaissance" since, as far as he could tell, there was no true Arab culture in Palestine or in any other part of the Moslem world. A similar view is expressed by Ben ha-Dor, "Tenu'ah she-Lo bi-Zemana," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 6(31) (May 23, 1913), 6–7, although this piece is, interestingly, accompanied by editorial reservations: "The Arab movement," writes editor Yosef Aharonowitz, "ought to be examined from all angles. It is for this reason that we have allocated space to this article as well, even though the author views it [the movement] negatively."

18. Protocol of the First Teachers' Association Conference, first session, 4.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid., 6. A similar sensibility is also expressed in Zalman David Levontin to Ussishkin, 28 Nissan 5665/May 3, 1905, CZA A24, file 89/1.

21. Protocol of the First Teachers' Association Conference, first session, 10; third session, 17.

22. On the emergence of this enmity in the Turkish capital see Esther Benbassa, *Ha-Yahadut ha-Ottmanit bein Hitma'arvut le-Tzionut, 1908–1920* (Jerusalem, 1996), 107–27; Aron Rodrigue, *French Jews, Turkish Jews: The Alliance Israélite Universelle and the Politics of Jewish Schooling in Turkey, 1860–1925* (Bloomington, 1990), 121–44.

23. Yellin to Ussishkin, 12 Nissan 5664/Mar. 28, 1904, CZA A24, file 50.

24. Israel Belkind to Bezalel Jaffe (undated, approximately 1902), CZA A46 (Bezalel Jaffe Papers), file 17. In spite of this sentiment, some cooperation continued between nationalist educators and the Alliance Israélite Universelle. See, for example, Eliezer Ben-Yehuda's approval of the extent of "study of the Hebrew language and Hebrew speech" in the organization's school in Jerusalem. *Hashkafa* 5(4) (2 Heshvan 5664/Oct. 23, 1903), 24.

25. Isaiah Press at the second general conference of the Hebrew Teachers' Association in 1904, in *Zichronot ha-Devarim la-Asefa ha-Kelalit ha-Shenit le-Agudat ha-Morim be-Eretz Yisra'el* (Jerusalem, 1905), 40, Education Archives, 9.1, box 1.

26. Sander Gilman, *The Jew's Body* (New York, 1991), 12.

27. Leshoni, "Eich Nedaber?", *Haskafa* 8(66) (11 Sivan 5667/May 24, 1907), 4.

28. Israel Halevi Teller, "Eich Nedaber ve-Eich Nichtov?" *Haskafa* 8(68) (18 Sivan 5667/May 31, 1907), 5–6.

29. Protocol of the First Teachers' Association Conference, second session, 15. Wilkomitz, of course, overestimated the successes of European nationalist movements. See, for example, Eugen Weber's *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870–1914* (Stanford, 1976), 485, on the continued cultural and linguistic disunity in that country. According to at least one estimate, in the case of Italy, only about 2.5 percent of the total population in 1861 could actually speak Italian. Cited in Geoff Eley and Ronald Grigor Suny, "Introduction: From the Moment of Social History to the Work of Cultural Representation," in *Becoming National: A Reader*, ed. Geoff Eley and Ronald Grigor Suny (New York, 1996), 7. Indeed, even some of the leading figures of the Risorgimento "had an imperfect knowledge of Italian," according to Denis Mack Smith in *Italy: A Modern History* (Ann Arbor, 1969), 20. Well into the twentieth century, moreover, as Mack Smith writes, the "wide variety of local idiom" posed a significant obstacle to the advance of Italian language and literature (ibid., 251).

30. Ben-Yehuda at the teachers' conference, in Protocol of the First Teachers' Association Conference, second session, 13. See also Parfitt, "Use of Hebrew," 246–47.

31. Wilkomitz at the teachers' conference, in Protocol of the First Teachers' Association Conference, second session, 15.

32. Ben-Yehuda at the teachers' conference, in ibid., 13. Cf. Ismar Schorsch, "The Myth of Sephardic Supremacy," *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* 34 (1989), 47–66; John M. Efron, "Scientific Racism and the Mystique of Sephardic Racial Superiority," *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* 38 (1993), 75–96.

33. See, for example, Gilman, *Jew's Body*; John M. Efron, *Defenders of the Race: Jewish Doctors and Race Science in fin-de-siècle Europe* (London, 1994); Daniel Boyarin, *Unheroic Conduct: The Rise of Heterosexuality and the Invention of the Jewish Man* (Los Angeles, 1997).

34. Ben-Avi, "Ma Natna Lanu Eretz Yisra'el?" *Hashkafa* 9(18) (13 Kislev 5668/Nov. 19, 1907), 2 (for further discussion of this piece, see chapter 5 in this volume).

35. Naomi Seidman, *A Marriage Made in Heaven: The Sexual Politics of Hebrew and Yiddish* (Berkeley, 1997), 4.

36. For extensive treatments of this social division and some of its impact see ibid., as well as Iris Parush, *Nashim Kor'ot: Yitrona shel Shuliut ba-Hevra ha-Yehudit be-Mizrach Eropa ba-Me'ah ha-Tesha Esreh* (Tel Aviv, 2001).

37. Hayim Leib Zuta, *Be-Reshit Darki (Le-Toledot Beit ha-Sefer ha-Ivri)* (Jerusalem, 1934), 136.

38. Mordechai Krishevski to Yitzhak Feinberg (28 Sivan 5666/June 21, 1906), CZA A39 (Mordechai Krishevski-Ezrahi Papers), file 3/1.

39. Recent studies include the collected essays in *Ha-Ivriot ha-Hadashot: Nashim ba-Yishuv u-va-Tzionut Bi-r'i ha-Migdar*, ed. Margalit Shilo, Ruth Kark, and Galit Hazan-Rokem (Jerusalem, 2001); Margalit Shilo, "The Double or Multiple Image of the New Hebrew Woman," *Nashim: A Journal of Jewish Women's Studies and Gender Issues* 1 (1998): 73–94; Gerald M. Berg, "Zionism's Gender: Hannah Meisel and the Founding of the Agricultural Schools for Young Women," *Israel Studies* 6(3) (Fall 2001): 135–65; *Pioneers and Homemakers: Jewish Women in Pre-State Israel*, ed. Deborah Bernstein (Albany, N.Y., 1992); Gilat Gofer, " 'Ha-Element ha-Yoter Mat'im le-Tafkid shel Ikarot u-Fo'a lot Hakla'iyot': Nashiyut Tzionit ba-Moshavot bi-Tekufat ha-Aliya ha-Sheniya," *Yisra'el: Ketav Et le-Heker ha-Tsiyonut u-Medinat Yisra'el* 5 (2004), 123–50.

40. Ben-Yehuda, "Rechushenu," *Hashkafa* 3(19) (23 Iyar 5662/May 30, 1902), 145. cf. Parush, *Nashim Kor'ot*, 86–92.

41. See Edward J. Bristow, *Prostitution and Prejudice: The Jewish Fight against White Slavery, 1870–1939* (New York, 1982); Lloyd P. Gartner, "Anglo-Jewry and the Jewish International Traffic in Prostitution, 1885–1914," *AJS Review* 7–8 (1983): 129–78. See also Margalit Shilo, "Women as Victims of War: The British Conquest (1917) and the Blight of Prostitution in the Holy City," *Nashim: A Journal of Women's Studies and Gender Issues* 6 (2003): 72–83. Although Shilo treats a later period, the elements of continuity are evident. She touches on prostitution in the prewar years in her *Nesiha o Shevuya: Ha-havaya ha-Nashit shel ha-Yishuv ha-Yashan bi-Yerushalayim, 1840–1914* (Haifa, Israel, 2001), 230–35.

42. On *Tze'irei Yerushalayim* and some of its early activities see, for example, *Hashkafa* 5(26) (30 Nissan 5664/Apr. 15, 1904), 228; Yehoshua Kantrowitz, "El Tze'irei u-tze'irot Eretz Yisra'el," *Hashkafa* 5(33) (13 Sivan 5664/May 27, 1904), 297. A previous attempt to establish a Hebrew-speaking women's organization had taken place some time earlier as well; see *Hashkafa* 3(15) (2 Iyar 5662/May 9, 1902), 120.

43. *Hashkafa* 5(29) (7 Iyar 5664/Apr. 22, 1904), 257.

44. See "Letters to the Editor," *Hashkafa* 5(31) (28 Iyar 5664/May 13, 1904), 274.

45. The kindergarten's teachers were all women, and the physical site consequently became, in a certain sense, a women's space. Compare this with the situation in eastern Europe in the nineteenth century, where in at least one case described by Iris Parush, traditionalist opposition to the opening of a modern school forced it to open in the women's section of the synagogue. "Not only was their metaphorical or symbolic space free of supervision because of its inferiority," she writes, "but their

physical space was as well." This allowed women, as Parush argues, to become leaders in the creation of a modern readership in eastern European Jewish society. See Parush, *Nashim Kor'ot*, 74.

46. Ben-Uri, "Ha-Tum'a," *Hashkafa* 5(32) (5 Sivan 5664/May 19, 1904), 286.

47. Ben-Zion Taragan, "Devarim Ahadim le-Tze'irot Yerushalem," *Hashkafa* 5(46) (10 Av 5664/July 22, 1904), 423.

48. Bar-Nash, "Ha-Isha ha-Ivriya," *Hashkafa* 7(18) (24 Kislev 5664/Dec. 13, 1903), 5.

49. Committee for the Establishment of a Hebrew Kindergarten to the Hilfs-verein der deutschen Juden, Feb. 25, 1903, CZA, A153 (David Yellin Papers), file 115.

50. See Rachel Elboim-Dror, *Ha-Hinuch Ha-Ivri be-Eretz Yisra'el*, vol. 1 (Jerusalem, 1986), 159.

51. Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, "Ha-Issur al Gan ha-Yeladim ha-Ivri," *Hashkafa* 4(27) (26 Nissan 5663/Apr. 23, 1903), 211.

52. Elisheva Gissin at the second teachers' conference; *Zichronot ha-Devarim la-Asefa ha-Kelalit ha-Shenit le-Agudat ha-Morim*, 96–97.

53. Yellin in ibid., 97–98. On kindergartens as an arena for the changing role of women see Ann Taylor Allen, "Gardens of Children, Gardens of God: Kindergartens and Day-Care Centers in Nineteenth-century Germany," *Journal of Social History* 19(3) (Spring 1986): 433–50.

54. Shlomit (Freda) Flaum, *Bat Yisra'el Nodedet: Zichronot, Masa'ot u-Fegishot* (Jerusalem, 1936), 72–73.

55. Shoshana Levana [Hemda Ben-Yehuda], "Ha-Ofna," *Hashkafa* 5(36) (1 Tamuz 5664/June 14, 1904), 342.

56. A. Tzioni [Yitzhak Vilkansky], "Gilgulei Neshamot (le-Olei ha-Gola ha-Rishonim)," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 3(15) (May 26, 1910), 6–8. See also Shlomo Zemach, *Shana Rishona* (Tel-Aviv 1952), 77, where he derides the women of Rishon Le-Zion of the time, who "dressed as though they were going to a ball" since they were "sewn up according to the patterns/decrees of Hemda Ben-Yehuda, writing in her fashion columns . . . from the heights of Jerusalem." For a discussion of the labor journals' view of the Ben-Yehuda papers as "sensationalist" (and their implication in this of Hemda Ben-Yehuda in particular) see Uzi Elyada, "Itonut ha-Sensatzya be-Eretz Yisrael, 1908–1917," *Kesher* 12 (1992), 76–85.

57. Shoshana Levana [Hemda Ben-Yehuda], "Ha-Ofna," *Hashkafa* 5(39) (15 Tamuz 5664/June 28, 1904), 371.

58. Ha-Havatzelet, "Ha-Ofna," *Hashkafa* 5(41) (22 Tamuz 5664/July 5, 1904), 389.

59. Hemda Ben-Yehuda, "Kidmat ha-Ivrit," *Hashkafa* 4(11) (26 Kislev 5663/Dec. 26, 1902), 81.

60. See Parush, *Nashim Kor'ot*, 86–92.

61. See Allen, "Gardens of Children."

62. The rabbinic broadside is quoted in Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, "Ha-Issur al Gan ha-Yeladim ha-Ivri," *Hashkafa* 4(27) (26 Nissan 5663/Apr. 23, 1903), 211.

63. David Yellin, Isaiah Press, and Leib Levi, "Michtav La-Rabanim," *Hashkafa* 4(27) (26 Nissan 5663/Apr. 23, 1903), 212–13.

64. Petahia, "Tzidduk ha-Din," *Hashkafa* 4(27) (26 Nissan 5663/Apr. 23, 1903), 213.

65. "Oleh Regel," "Be-Vo'i Li-Yerushalayim (b)," *Hashkafa* 4(27) (26 Nissan 5663/Apr. 23, 1903), 217.

66. Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, "Hom ha-Ganuz la-Adam le-Atid La-vo: Od Pesi'ah," *Hashkafa* 4(27) (26 Nissan 5663/Apr. 23, 1903), 214.

67. Yehoshua Kaniel argues for an earlier date for the emergence of a full-fledged struggle for power and hegemony between modernizers and the conservative Old Yishuv in Palestine and in Jerusalem in particular. While this is undoubtedly true in many senses, the early years of the twentieth century constitute an important turning point since it is then that the New Yishuv clearly began to consider itself an ascendant power rather than an embattled minority. See Kaniel, *Hemshech u-Temura: Ha-Yishuv ha-Yashan ve-ha-Yishuv he-Hadash bi-Tekufat ha-Aliya ha-Rishona ve-ha-Sheniya* (Jerusalem, 1982). See in particular his introduction, 3–17.

68. *Hashkafa* 5(27) (30 Nissan 5664/Apr. 15, 1904), 225.

69. Sbi'g, letter to the editor, *Ha-Or* 3 (30)34 (30 Heshvan 5672/Nov. 21, 1911), 3.

70. Shlomit Flaum, *Bat Yisra'el Nodedet*, 41.

71. Protocol of the First Teachers' Association Conference, second session, 18, Education Archives, 9.1, box 1.

72. Mordecai Krishevski, "Hatza'a al Devar Yissud Beit-Sefer le-Morim Bi-Yerushalayim," lecture at the first conference of Hebrew teachers of Palestine, Education Archives, 9.1, file 1.

73. *Zichronot ha-Devarim la-Asefa ha-Kelalit ha-Shenit le-Agudat ha-Morim*, Education Archives, 9.1, box 2, 35.

74. Ibid. A similar picture is presented in a letter to the editor asking the kindergarten's founders to extend their initiative to additional neighborhoods in the city given the impact of the school on parents whose young children attended. "Question to the Founders of the 'Kindergarten,'" *Hashkafa* 6(21) (21 Kislev 5664/Nov. 29, 1904), 5.

75. Ibid., 71–74.

76. Allen, "Gardens of Children," 443.

77. Protocol, 15 Elul 5662/Sept. 17, 1902. CZA A39, file 5–4.

78. Ibid.

79. L., "Me-ha-Bama ha-Ivrit bi-Yerushalayim," *Ha-Ahdut* 2(9) (22 Kislev 5671/Dec. 23, 1910), 21.

80. The Hebrew title reflected the replacement of the Yiddish-sounding name of Kuni Leml in Goldfaden's original with biblical names, making the play that much more "Hebrew." Decades later, ironically, when ethnic cinema ("borekas" and "gefilte fish" films, as they came to be known) became a part of Israeli society's rediscovery of Jewish ethnicity, Goldfaden's play would be resurrected in the form of a series of Kuni Leml films—in Hebrew, but with the central character's original Yiddish name reclaimed.

81. Ben-Avi, "Joktan Jokshan be-Mikveh Yisra'el," *Hashkafa* 3(3) (23 Shevat 5662/Jan. 31, 1902), 21–22.

82. Ben-Moshe, "Me-ha-Bama ha-Ivrit bi-Yerushalayim," *Ha-Ahdut* 3(19) (28 Shevat 5672/Feb. 16, 1912), 18.

83. Ibid., 21.

84. This was the troupe's original name, which was later changed to "Lovers of the Hebrew Stage" in 1908–1909, when it made a commitment to an exclusively Hebrew repertoire. See Shimon Lev-Ari, "Hitpathut ha-Te'atronim," in *Toledot ha-Yishuv ha-Yehudi be-Eretz Yisra'el me-az ha-Aliya ha-Rishona: Beniyata shel Tarbut Ivrit*, ed. Zohar Shavit (Jerusalem, 1999), 343–44. Lev-Ari includes a brief discussion of the early debates within the group over the language of their productions.

85. See the admission ticket in CZA A25, file 133. The advertisement appeared in *Hashkafa* 8(17) (11 Kislev 5667/Nov. 28, 1906), 1, and stressed that the Hebrew language of the production had received a "government permit."

86. Broadsides quoted in "Ha-Shavu'a," *Hashkafa* 8(19) (18 Kislev 5667/Dec. 5, 1906), 4.

87. Barzilai, "Yehatzu," *Hashkafa* 8(19) (18 Kislev 5667/Dec. 5, 1906), 1–2.

88. Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, "Ha-Yehudim," *Hashkafa* 8(19) (18 Kislev 5667/Dec. 5, 1906), 3–4; Mendel Kramer, "Ha-Shavu'a," in ibid., 4.

89. Ben-Yehuda, "Ha-Yehudim," *Hashkafa* 8(19) (18 Kislev 5667/Dec. 5, 1906), 3–4.

90. Pnimi, "Bifnim ha-Aretz," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 2(12) (Apr. 23, 1909), 15. For another example of complaints against non-Hebrew (in this case, Yiddish) theater as late as 1914, see "Ha-Shavu'a," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 7(35) (June 19, 1914), 18–20.

91. On language and nationalism see, for example, Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1983); Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (New York, 1990), 51–63, 93–100; Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen*, 67–94, 310–15. On Irish nationalism's similar effort to revive a nonspoken language see Lawrence J. McCaffrey, "Components of Irish Nationalism," in *Perspectives on Irish Nationalism*, ed. Thomas E. Hachey and Lawrence J. McCaffrey (Lexington, Ky., 1989), 1–19; R. V. Comerford, "Nation, Nationalism, and the Irish Language," in ibid., 20–41.

92. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York, 1991), 36.

93. See Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, 51–63.

94. See, for example, Emanuel S. Goldsmith, *Modern Yiddish Culture: The Story of the Yiddish Language Movement* (New York, 1997); Max Weinreich, *History of the Yiddish Language* (Chicago, 1980), 274–314.

95. See, for example, Josef Stern, "Language," in *Contemporary Jewish Religious Thought: Original Essays on Critical Concepts, Movements, and Beliefs*, ed. Arthur A. Cohen and Paul Mendes-Flohr (New York, 1987), 544; Lewis Glinert, "Hebrew," in ibid., 325–30.

96. See Moshe Idel, *Hasidism: Between Ecstasy and Magic* (Albany, N.Y., 1995), 57–58. For modern reflections on a similar notion of language as a medium for world making see Ernst Cassirer, *Language and Myth* (New York, 1953).

97. Cited in Glinert, "Hebrew," 327.

98. Parush, "Another Look," 199–200.

99. Here I differ from Ghil'ad Zuckermann, who argues that modern "Israeli" is in fact so distinct from "Hebrew" as to constitute a new language (to which he consequently gives the different name of "Israeli"). Zuckermann contrasts, for example, the language of S. Y. Agnon (who apparently wrote in "Hebrew," according to Zuckermann's definition) from that of the contemporary Israeli writer Etgar Keret (who writes in "Israeli"). Although the styles, the language, and the cultural soil of these two writers are indeed markedly different in many ways, it seems a difficult historiographical hurdle to identify a meaningful watershed that would neatly separate them as two distinct languages. (See Zuckermann, "Genetics").

100. Hemda Ben-Yehuda to Yehoshua Eisenstadt-Barzilai, May 9, 1907, CZA A25, file 135.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 5

1. Avshalom Feinberg to Sonia Belkind, May 1, 1908, in *Avshalom: Ketavim u-Michtavim shel Avshalom Feinberg*, ed. Aharon Amir (Haifa 1971), 155.

2. Menahem Wiener to Yehoshua Eisenstadt-Barzilai, Sept. 4, 1902, in CZA A25, file 101.

3. Michael Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture and West European Jewry before the First World War* (New York, 1993), 188–90.

4. Yaffa Berlowitz, "Model ha-'Yehudi he-Hadash' be-Sifrut ha-Aliya ha-Rishona," *Alei Si'ah* 17–18 (1983), 54–70; Yaffa Berlowitz, *Le-Hamtzi Eretz le-Hamtzi Am: Sifrut ha-Aliya ha-Sheniya* (Tel Aviv, 1996), 15–79.

5. Ben-Avi, "Ma Natna Lanu Eretz Yisra'el?" *Hashkafa* 9(18) (13 Kislev 5668/Nov. 19, 1907), 2.

6. On Ben-Avi as predecessor to the Canaanites see Yaacov Shavit, *The New Hebrew Nation: A Study in Israeli Heresy and Fantasy* (London, 1987), 16–17. On the "Young Hebrews" movement see also James S. Diamond, *Homeland or Holy Land?: The "Canaanite" Critique of Israel* (Bloomington, 1986); Yehoshua Porat, *Shelah ve-Et be-Yado: Hayav shel Yonatan Ratosh* (Or Yehuda, Israel, 1989). For reflections on the impact of this intellectual trend and the presence of similar intellectual tensions in a spectrum of Zionist and Israeli thought, see Yosef Gorni, "Ha-Liberalism ha-Betar Kena'ani: Gishot Achshaviot bi-She'elat ha-Normalizatzia shel ha-Kiyum ha-Le'umi bi-Medinat Yisra'el," *Kivunim: Ketav-Et Le-Tzionut u-le-Yahadut* 1 (38) (Mar. 1990), 45–57.

7. Ben-Avi, "Ma Natna Lanu Eretz Yisra'el?"

8. "Hadashot be-Yisra'el," *Hashkafa* 5(4) (2 Heshvan 5664/Oct. 23, 1903), 25.

9. MaSchatz, "Me-ha-Moshavot," *Hashkafa* 5(5) (20 Tevet 5664/Jan. 8, 1904), 110.

10. Zvi Strachilowitz, "Petach Tikva," *Hashkafa* 7(20) (2 Tevet 5666/Dec. 30, 1905), 3.

11. The numbers are based on Muki Tzur, "Anshei ha-Aliya ha-Sheniya: Tipusei ha-Olim u-Deyukanam ha-Hevrati-Tarbuti," in *Ha-Aliya ha-Sheniya—Mehkarim*, ed. Israel Bartal (Jerusalem, 1997), 282.

12. Jonathan Frankel, *Prophecy and Politics: Socialism, Nationalism, and the Russian Jews, 1862–1917* (New York, 1981), 135, 144.

13. Ibid., 133.

14. Cf. Zeev Tzahor, *Ba-Derech le-Hanhagat ha-Yishuvv: Ha-Histadrut be-Reshita* (Jerusalem, 1982), 9. David Ben-Gurion would recall his despair with the Zionist Movement, with the European labor movements, and with the existing Yishuv. See David Ben-Gurion, "Be-Hag Hatzi ha-Yovel," in *Sefer ha-Aliya ha-Sheniya*, ed. Bracha Habas (Tel Aviv, 1947), 17. Berl Katznelson echoes this sentiment: "It was not with faith and self-confidence" that the immigrants decided to come to Palestine "but rather with the energy that stemmed from the thought that we might be the very last." See his "Ness ha-Aliya ha-Sheniya," in Habas, *Sefer ha-Aliya ha-Sheniya*, 12.

15. Shimon Mintz to Ussishkin (undated), CZA A24, file 87.

16. David Talisman to Boris Schatz, Nov.–Dec. 1906, CZA L42 (Archives of the Bezalel School and Museum), file 53.

17. Mintz to Ussishkin.

18. David Green to Ussishkin, 13 Second Adar, eighth year since the [Zionist] Congress/Mar. 20, 1905, CZA A24, file 125/30.

19. Mordechai Shimshon Rabinowitz to Ussishkin (undated), CZA A24, file 87.

20. "Megamateinu," *Ha-Ahdut* 1(1) (July 1910), 14.

21. Yitzhak Nissenbaum to Eisenstadt-Barzilai, 9 Adar 5666/Mar. 6, 1906, CZA A25, file 127.

22. Levontin to Ussishkin, first day of Passover 5666 (Apr. 11, 1906), CZA A24, file 89/1. Emphasis in the original.

23. Levontin to Yehoshua Eisenstadt-Barzilai, Nov. 29, 1908, CZA A25, file 145.

24. See, for example, Rehovoti, "Rehovot," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 2(9) (Shevat 5669/Jan.–Feb. 1909), 9–10.

25. Satat, "Zichron Ya'akov," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 2(4) (Kislev 5669/Nov.–Dec. 1908), 6–7.

26. Elem, "Zichron Ya'akov," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 2(23–24) (Sept. 14, 1909), 17–18; see also Mimela, "Me-Assefat ha-Morim ha-Kelalit ha-Shishit," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 2(23–24) (Sept. 14, 1909), 8–13.

27. See, for example, "Ha-Shavu'a," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 7(30) (May 15, 1914), 15–16.

28. Weitz at the second assembly, CZA A24, file 491.

29. Benjamin Harshav, *Language in Time of Revolution* (Los Angeles, 1993), 85, 112. See also Michael Grünzweig, "Ha-Lashon ha-Ivrit bi-Tekufat ha-Aliya ha-Sheniya," in *Ha-Aliya ha-Sheniya: Mehkarim*, ed. Israel Bartal (Jerusalem, 1997), 406–18. Anita Shapira has presented the conflict between the workers of the second Aliya and the farmers in the colonies as stemming in large measure from the workers' commitment to Hebrew. In addition to the religious conflicts in the traditionalist Petah Tikva, she writes, "no shared language could be found between the farmers, who spoke Yiddish and Arabic, and the young [workers], who insisted on speaking Hebrew, and in a Sephardic accent." Anita Shapira, *Berl: Biographia* (Tel-Aviv, 1980)

vol.1, 51. While this does seems often to have been characteristic of the dynamic in Petah Tikva, the situation was often quite different in other parts of the country.

30. This included, for example, most of the founding members of the soon-to-be legendary watchmen's association, Ha-Shomer (see chapter 8), which would come to be seen in later years as "Hebrew" to its core. Yaacov Goldstein reports that the group was composed of working-class Jewish immigrants who had little schooling and "very few [of whom] could speak Hebrew. Mostly they spoke Yiddish or Russian." Yaacov N. Goldstein, *From Fighters to Soldiers: How the Israeli Defense Forces Began* (Portland, Ore., 1998), 23.

31. Eisenstadt-Barzilai to Ussishkin, 16 Tamuz 5668/July 15, 1908, CZA A24, file 68/5/1.

32. See partial protocol of the third conference of Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir, May 1907 (manual attachment to *Ha-Po'el ha-Tza'ir* 1(1), in CZA A192 (Papers of David Yudilovitz).

33. "Parti-Kol ha-Asefa ha-Kelalit shel Histadrut ha-Po'el ha-Tza'ir," *Ha-Po'el ha-Tza'ir* 1(2) (June 1907), 8–11.

34. Netz (Aaron Turknitz), "Binyan u-Setira," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 1(2) (Oct. 1908), 4–5.

35. A. (Yosef Aharonowitz), "Me'ora'ot u-Ma'asim," *Ha-Po'el ha-Tza'ir* 3(13–14) (May 10, 1910), 21–22.

36. Hozeh, "Yaffo," *Hashkafa* 7(43) (23 Adar 5666/Mar. 20, 1906), 4.

37. Ibid. This concern over non-Hebrew public events and celebrations was echoed in the same issue by Meir Wilkansky. See his "Ha-Jargon be-Yaffo" in ibid. For further discussion of the Ben-Yehuda papers as a forum for struggle against the Yiddish of some second Aliya sectors see Yosef Lang, "Itonut E. Ben-Yehuda ve-Amadoteiha be-Inyanei ha-Yishuv ha-Yehudi ve-ha-Tenu'a ha-Le'umit ba-Shanim, 1884–1914" (PhD diss., Bar-Ilan University, Ramat Gan, Israel, 1993), 294–98.

38. Golani, "Korespondentziot: Hadera," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 2(9) (Feb. 1909), 7–8.

39. Penimi, "Bifnim ha-Aretz," *Ha-Po'el ha-Tza'ir* 2(12) (Apr. 23, 1909), 15–16.

40. Shlomo Zemach, *Dapei Pinkas* (Jerusalem, 1972), 131–33. Cf. Nathan Efrati, *Mi-Leshon Yehidim Li-Leshon Uma: Ha-Dibur ha-Ivri be-Eretz Yisra'el ba-Shanim 1882–1922* (Jerusalem, 2004), 108.

41. Yehoshua Eisenstadt-Barzilai to Ussishkin, 26 Elul 5667/Sept. 5, 1907, CZA A24, file 68/5/1.

42. Ben-Avi, "Ha-Hashkafa be-Basel," *Hashkafa* 6(91) (7 Av 5665/Aug. 8, 1905), 1. Emphasis added.

43. Ibid.

44. Ibid.

45. Ibid.

46. While his son's reports from Basel indicated an important new trend in the Ben-Yehuda papers, Ben-Yehuda himself did not make the final shift until the initiation of the Jewish Territorialist Organization's "Galveston movement," which he

thought truly marked "the end of territorialism." See Ben-Yehuda, "Hadashot be-Yisra'el: Ha-Artziyut," *Hashkafa* 8(31) (29 Tevet 5667/Jan. 15, 1907), 6.

47. Y. H. Rawnitzky, "Te'udat ha-Tzioniut," *Ha-Shilo'ah* 17 (July–Dec. 1907), 316–23. Emphasis added.

48. Ibid.

49. Yishai Geva, "Yosef Aharonovitz," in *Ha-Aliya ha-Sheniya: Ishim*, ed. Zeev Tzahor (Jerusalem, 1997), 3.

50. Yosef Aharonowitz, "Michtavim me-Eretz-Yisra'el," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 1(3) (Kislev 5668/Dec. 1908), 13–14.

51. Yosef Aharonowitz, "Heichal ha-Kultura ha-Ivrit (Hemshech)," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 2(16) (June 17, 1909), 8–10. Compare this with the famous words of another of the immigrants of these years, Nobel Laureate Shmuel Yosef Agnon, who in his Nobel speech in 1966 explained that "[a]s a result of the historic catastrophe in which Titus of Rome destroyed Jerusalem and Israel was exiled from its land, I was born in one of the cities of the Exile. But always I regarded myself as one who was born in Jerusalem." *Nobel lectures, including presentation speeches and laureates' biographies: Literature, 1901–1967*, ed. Horst Frenz (Amsterdam, 1969), 614.

52. See also Rachel Elboim-Dror, " 'Hu Holech u-Va, Mi-Kirbenu hu Ba ha-Ivri he-Hadash': Al Tarbut ha-No'ar shel ha-Aliyot ha-Rishonot," *Alpayim* 12 (1996), 104–35.

53. Ahat ha-Meholelot, "Me-ha-moshavot: Rehovot," *Hashkafa* 9(66) (7 Iyar 5668/May 8, 1908), 2.

54. Advertisement in *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 6(27) (Apr. 18, 1913), 1.

55. Compare this with the discussion of the changing Passover Haggada in Daniel Boyarin, *Unheroic Conduct: The Rise of Heterosexuality and the Invention of the Jewish Man* (Los Angeles, 1997), 33–80.

56. Ahat ha-Meholelot (note 53).

57. On the exhibition see Doctor Moscowitz and Y. Gorodinsky letter to the editor, *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 6(23) (Mar. 14, 1913), 15. On the excursions (and their destinations) see "Ha-Shavu'a," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 6(26) (Apr. 11, 1913), 15–16.

58. "Me'ora'ot u-Ma'asim," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 3(6) (Dec. 27, 1909), 16.

59. See Pnimi, "Bifnim ha-Aretz," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 2(12) (Apr. 23, 1909), 15–16, for a listing of some of the celebrations throughout the country that year. The ad for the play appears in *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 2(11) (Adar 5669/Feb.–Mar. 1909).

60. "Me'ora'ot u-Ma'asim," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 3(6) (Dec. 27, 1909), 16.

61. I thank Rabbi Michael Wasserman for sharing his insights with me on this point.

62. "Me'ora'ot u-Ma'asim," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 3(6) (Dec. 27, 1909), 16.

63. Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, "Me-Inyanei ha-Yom: Kzat Divrei ha-Yamim," *Hashkafa* 9(24) (6 Tevet 5668/Dec. 11, 1907), 1. Emphases in the original.

64. Ibid. For discussion of this notion of Jewish tradition as prohibiting art as "graven images," see Kalman Bland, *The Artless Jew: Medieval and Modern Affirmations and Denials of the Visual* (Princeton, N.J., 2000); Margaret Olin, *The Nation without Art: Examining Modern Discourses on Jewish Art* (Lincoln, Neb., 2001).

65. Yadid, "Le-Av'i," *Ha-Or* 4(72) (6 Tevet 5673/Dec. 16, 1912), 1. See also the article by Ben-Yehuda that sparked the debate: "Ba-Yamim ha-Hem u-va-Zeman ha-Zeh," *Ha-Or* 4(68) (30 Kislev 5673/Dec. 10, 1912), 1; and Ben-Yehuda's response to this criticism: "Teshuva le-Yadid Mochi'ah," *Ha-Or* 4(73) (7 Tevet 5673/Dec. 17, 1912), 1.

66. See Palit, "Hag ha-Yeladim be-Fetah Tikva," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 2(12) (Apr. 23, 1909), 14.

67. A. (Yosef Aharonowitz), "Me'ora'ot u-Ma'asim," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 3(13–14) (May 10, 1910), 21–22.

68. Rachel Yana'it Ben-Zvi, preface to *Milhemot ha-Hashmona'im*, undated (1965) pamphlet reproducing Yitzhak Ben-Zvi's 1910–1911 writings on Modiin and Hanukkah, issued by the Jewish National Fund and Yad Yitzhak Ben-Zvi.

69. A-R. (Yitzhak Ben-Zvi), "Ness Hanukkah," *Ha-Ahdut* 2(10) (29 Kislev 5671/Dec. 30, 1910), 3–13.

70. Ibid.

71. Hashmonai Tza'ir, "Me-Inyanei ha-Yom: Neshef 'Maccabee,'" *Ha-Or* 3(61) (1 Tevet 5672/Dec. 22, 1911), 2.

72. Arthur Ruppin, *Pirkei Hayai: Reshit Avodati ba-Aretz*, vol. 2 (Tel Aviv, 1968), 58.

73. On the earlier idea see Rachel Elboim-Dror, *Ha-Hinuch ha-Ivri be-Eretz Yis-ra'el*, vol. 1 (Jerusalem, 1986), 242. On the Teachers' Association's discussions see, for example, protocols of the first meeting of the Hebrew Teachers' Association, fourth session, Education Archive, 9.1/1, 2.

74. Elboim-Dror, *Ha-Hinuch ha-Ivri*, 244.

75. See, for example, the articles composing the first section of *Yerushalayim ba-Toda'a u-va-Assiya ha-Tzionit: Kovetz Ma'amarim*, ed. Hagit Lavsky (Jerusalem, 1989), 7–136; Yehoshua Kaniel, "Ha-Ma'avak bein Yerushalayim ve-Yafo al ha-Hegemonia ba-Yishuv ha-Yehudi bi-Tekufat ha-Aliya ha-Rishona ve-ha-Sheniya (1882–1914)," *Shalem* 3 (1981), 185–212; Ruth Kark, "Aliyata shel Yaffo ke-Merkaz ha-Yishuv he-Hadash: Hebetim Hevratiim ve-Tarbutiim," in *Sefer ha-Aliya ha-Rishona*, ed. Morde-chai Eliav (Jerusalem, 1981), 297–318.

76. In Jerusalem this had been an animating factor in Zionist efforts at least as early as 1902. See Protocol, 15 Elul 5662/Sept. 17, 1902, CZA A39, file 5–4, and the discussion in chapter 4 of this volume). There were other such suggestions as well. Maoz Azaryahu, for example, refers to a 1904 initiative by Ben-Yehuda. See Azaryahu, *Tel Aviv: Mythography of a City* (Syracuse, 2007), 36. Azaryahu mistakenly takes this to be the first such proposal. Moreover, initiatives to expand both Jerusalem and Jaffa in line with a Hebraist-Zionist orientation have earlier roots in a less ideological trend toward urban expansion, which had been taking place in both cities since the mid-nineteenth century. On Jerusalem's expansion see, for example, Ruth Kark, *Jerusalem and Its Environs: Quarter, Neighborhoods, Villages, 1800–1948* (Detroit, 2001), 74–136; Israel Bartal, "Ha-Yetzi'ah min ha-Homot—Hitpashtut ha-Yashan O Reshit he-Hadash?" in *Yerushalayim ba-Toda'ah u-va-Asiyah ha-Tzionit—Kovetz ma'amarim*, ed. Hagit Lavsky (Jerusalem, 1989), 31. On the growth of Jaffa see Kark, *Jaffa: A City*

in *Evolution, 1799–1917* (Jerusalem, 1990), 53–134; Mark LeVine, *Overthrowing Geography: Jaffa, Tel Aviv, and the Struggle for Palestine, 1880–1948* (Los Angeles, 2005), 51–59 and passim.

77. This latter point is absent in LeVine, *Overthrowing Geography*, which casts the founding of Tel Aviv exclusively in terms of a European colonial project, contrasted with Arab Jaffa, and hence based in "Orientalist" terms that Zionism ostensibly adopted. While LeVine is undoubtedly correct that a Zionist adoption of some of Europe's least complimentary views of "the Orient" and the Arab must constitute part of the explanatory framework for the founding of Tel Aviv, it cannot be understood without the context of the Zionist struggle to reshape Europe's own "orientalized" other—the Jews themselves. On this point, the discussion in Azaryahu, *Tel Aviv*, 58–63, is more compelling. (The question of Zionist notions of the Orient is, indeed, far more complex and complicated; see my discussion in chapter 7).

78. On the centrality of these Zionist cultural motifs in the founding of Tel Aviv see also Yossi Katz, "Ideology and Urban Development: Zionism and the Origins of Tel-Aviv, 1906–1914," *Journal of Historical Geography* 12(4) (1986): 402–24; Barbara E. Mann, *A Place in History: Modernism, Tel Aviv, and the Creation of Jewish Urban Space* (Stanford, 2006), 1–123.

79. Ussishkin, in Protocols of the first meeting of the Hebrew Teachers' Association, fourth session, Education Archive, 9.1/1, 2.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 6

1. Theodor Herzl, *The Jewish State* (New York, 1946), 154.

2. Ahad Ha'am, "The Jewish State and the Jewish Problem", in *The Zionist Idea*, ed. Arthur Hertzberg (New York, 1984), 264, 267.

3. See Arieh Bruce Saposnik, " 'Will Issue Forth from Zion'? The Emergence of a Jewish National Culture in Palestine and the Dynamics of Yishuv-Diaspora Relations," *Jewish Social Studies* 10(1) (Fall 2003): 151–84.

4. Ussishkin to Eisenstadt-Barzilai, 25 Tishrei 5664/Oct. 16, 1903 (the letter is dated 5663, but this is clearly an error), CZA A25, file 116. On the question of Ussishkin's intentions for the assembly as a potential competitor to the Zionist Organization see also Yossi Goldstein, *Ussishkin: Biographia: Ha-Tekufa ha-Russit, 1863–1919*, vol. 1 (Jerusalem, 1999), 162–63.

5. Ben-Zion Mossinson, Chaim Bugrashov, and S. Rabikovitz to Ussishkin, Feb. 17, 1906, CZA A 24, file 81/2/20.

6. Ibid. See also Mordechai Eliav, *David Wolffsohn: Ha-Ish u-Zemano: Ha-Tenu'a ha-Tzionit ba-Shanim 1905–1914* (Jerusalem, 1977), 65–75.

7. Max Weinreich, *History of the Yiddish Language* (Chicago, 1980), 293–99. The text of the resolution itself is on 293. Emphasis added.

8. Mordechai Ben-Hillel Ha-Cohen, "Yerushalayim ve-Czernowitz," *Ha-Zevi* 25(14) (1 Heshvan 5669/Oct. 26, 1908), 1, 3.

9. Even Weinreich makes the partially anachronistic assumption that "historically, [Zionist] ideology went hand in hand with Hebrew." See Weinreich, *History*,

293. While there was certainly a strong Hebraist trend within Zionism and Hibbat Zion from their outset, this inseparability was in fact a function of the developments of this period.

10. Here, of course, Taubes was entering into the fray of another of Zionism's stormy debates—the question of *Gegenwartsarbeit*, or "work of the present," the term by which Zionist work for Jewish rights and culture outside of Palestine was known.

11. Weinreich, *History*, 293. Taubes's stance in this regard provides some hint of the complexity of this space-time matrix as a factor in determining the divergent positions in the Jewish language debate. It is striking that for Taubes, a Hebrew-speaking nation in Palestine was a matter for a future that he deemed still distant. Ben-Yehuda, by contrast, who argued for the exclusivity of Hebrew (increasingly of a piece with the exclusivity of Palestine), deemed the kernel of the Hebrew-speaking nation an already-tangible reality. It was not merely differing prescriptions for future and present that were being contested, in other words, but also conflicting estimations of the present and the distance to the envisioned future.

12. Ben-Yehuda, "Hurban Le'umi," *Ha-Tzevi* 25(15) (3 Heshvan 5669/Oct. 28, 1908), 1.

13. Yosef Vitkin, *Ha-Hinuch ha-Ivri* (Cracow, 1908), 9.

14. Levontin to Ussishkin, Barabash, and Goldberg (3 Heshvan 5667/Oct. 22, 1906), CZA A24, file 89/1.

15. Circular of the Teachers' Union Central Committee, 4 Shevat 5666/Jan. 30, 1906, in CZA A25, file 125.

16. On the influence of then-current German political discourse in this conceptualization and the differences in the ways in which this was understood by the figures involved, see Inka Bertz, "Trouble at the Bezalel: Conflicting Visions of Zionism and Art," in *Nationalism, Zionism, and Ethnic Mobilization of the Jews in 1900 and Beyond*, ed. Michael Berkowitz (Boston, 2004), 260–61. Dalia Manor stresses the eastern European models on which this conception was based. See Manor, *Art in Zion: The Genesis of Modern National Art in Jewish Palestine* (London, 2005), 29.

17. Schatz to the Odessa committee, 2 Nissan 5666/Mar. 28, 1906, CZA L42, file 10.

18. Ussishkin to Schatz, July 9, 1906, CZA L42, file 54.

19. On the many tensions in this relationship see Bertz, "Trouble at the Bezalel."

20. Ibid.

21. Boris Schatz, "Beit ha-Nachot Bezalel," *Hashkafa* 8(6) (30 Tishrei 5667/Oct. 19, 1906), 1. See also Boris Schatz, *Bezalel: Tochnito u-Matrato* (Jerusalem, 1906).

22. Cf. Yael Guilat, "Bezalel and Ben-Shemen: The Revival of the 'Botega' and of the Guilds," *Ariel* 7 (2002): 115–38.

23. See, for example, Schatz to Chaim Hissin, 3 Kislev 5667/Nov. 20, 1906, CZA L42, file 10; Hissin to Schatz, 29 Shevat 5667/Feb. 13, 1907, CZA L42, file 98.

24. Teachers' Association (Krishevsky and Bugrashov) to Schatz, 10 Tevet 5667/Dec. 26, 1906, CZA L42, file 55.

25. Asher Erlich to Schatz, Succot 5668/Oct. 1908, CZA L42, file 57.

26. David Talisman to Schatz, 5667/1906–07, CZA L42, file 53.

27. This task was apparently one reason for the delayed establishment of Bezalel despite Herzl's positive response when Schatz presented the idea to him during their 1903 Vienna meeting. See Naomi Feuchtwanger, "Baruch (Boris) Schatz," in *Ha-Aliya ha-Sheniya: Ishim*, ed. Zeev Tzahor (Jerusalem, 1997), 394. On Schatz's Bulgarian period and its importance for shaping his views on nationalism and art see Margaret Olin, *The Nation without Art: Examining Modern Discourses on Jewish Art* (Lincoln, Neb., 2001), 37–40.

28. On the search for and uses of folk traditions and literature in national movements see, for example, Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (New York, 1990), 103–105; Anthony Smith discusses the nationalist search for a romantic past in literary and other forms in *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (New York, 1986), 174–208. For a discussion of some of the broader cultural aspects of the "discovery of the people," in which this was partly rooted, see Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* (New York, 1978), 3–22.

Particularly noteworthy Zionist or Zionist-related efforts included Hayim Nachman Bialik and Yehoshua Hana Rawnitzky's *Sefer Ha-Aggada* (Krakow, 1908–1911) and Michah Yosef Berdiczewsky's *Me-Otzar ha-Aggada* (Berlin, 1913). See also Israel Bartal, "Kibbutz Galuyot Textu'ali: Ha-Antologia ha-Tzionit be-Sheirut ha-Umma," in *Nof Moladeto; Mehkarim be-Ge'ographia shel Eretz-Ysra'el u-ve-Toldoteha* (Jerusalem, 2000), 478–89.

29. The news of their imminent arrival appeared as early as October 1905. See "Yerushalem," *Hashkafa* 7(1) (25 Tishrei 5666/Oct. 24, 1905), 4.

30. "Bezalel: Ki mi-Zion Yetzeh Yofi ve-Omanut mi-Yerushalayim," *Hashkafa* 7(19) (28 Kislev 5666/Dec. 26, 1905), 1.

31. "Talmidei Bezalel," *Hashkafa* 7(34) (21 Sevat 5666/Feb. 16, 1906), 2.

32. Boris Schatz, "Bet ha-nechot Bezalel," *Hashkafa* 8(6) (30 Tishrei 5667/Oct. 19, 1906): 1.

33. Ibid. Emphasis added.

34. See Boris Schatz, "The Bezalel Institute," *Zionist Work in Palestine*, ed. I. Cohen (London, 1911), 64. Cf. Nurit Shilo-Cohen, ed., *Bezalel Shel Schatz, 1906–1929* (Jerusalem, 1983); Richard I. Cohen, *Jewish Icons: Art and Society in Modern Europe* (Berkeley, Calif., 1998), 213–18. On Jerusalem and death, see Sidra DeKoven Ezrahi, *Booking Passage: Exile and Homecoming in the Modern Jewish Imagination* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2002).

35. The message from Kook is cited in Kalman Bland, *The Artless Jew: Medieval and Modern Affirmations and Denials of the Visual* (Princeton, N.J., 2000), 33–34. See also Olin, *Nation without Art*, 52–53.

36. Schatz, "Bezalel Institute," 64.

37. Ibid., 60.

38. On the history of this image see Bland, *Artless Jew*; Olin, *Nation without Art*.

39. See, for example, Ziva Amishai-Maisels, "The Jewish Awakening: A Search for National Identity," in *Russian Jewish Artists in a Century of Change, 1890–1990*, ed. Susan Tumarkin Goodman (New York, 1995), 54–70.

40. Schatz, "Beit ha-Nachot Bezalel," *Hashkafa* 8(6) (30 Tishrei 5667/Oct. 19, 1906), 1.

41. Ibid.

42. Anthony D. Smith, *Chosen Peoples: Sacred Sources of National Identity* (New York, 2003), 15.

43. See also the discussion of new and traditional holy places in Manor, *Art in Zion*, 46–52; Sidra DeKoven-Ezrahi, " 'Zion halo Tish'ali?': Yerushalayim ke-Metafora Nashit," in *Rega shel Huledet:Mehkarim be-Sifrut Ivrit u-ve-Sifrut Yiddish Lichvod Dan Miron*, ed. Hanan Hever (Jerusalem, 2007), 674–85.

44. See also Cohen, *Jewish Icons*, 214–19.   .

45. Schatz, "Beit ha-Nachot Bezalel", 1.

46. Schatz to Bezalel Jaffe, 13 Heshvan 5667/Nov. 1, 1906, CZA L42, file 10. Emphasis in the original.

47. Schatz to Ussishkin, 21 Heshvan 5667/Nov. 9, 1906, CZA A24, file 60/8.

48. Ibid.

49. Levontin and Sheinkin to Wolffsohn, Oct. 25, 1906, CZA A24, file 60/8.

50. Theodor Herzl, *The Complete Diaries of Theodor Herzl*, ed. Raphael Patai (New York, 1960), vol. 2, 745–46.

51. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, 71.

52. See, for example, Grazovsky and K. L. Silman (for the Teachers' Association) to Schatz, 10 Second Adar 5668/Mar. 13, 1908, CZA L42, file 74.

53. Bugrashov and Mossinson to Schatz, 29 Tamuz 5668/July 28, 1908, CZA L42 file 72.

54. I. Dushman to Schatz, Heshvan-Kislev 5667/Oct.–Nov. 1906, CZA L42, file 57.

55. Ibid.

56. Schatz to I. Dushman, 8 Kislev 5667/Nov. 25, 1906, CZA L42, file 10.

57. Bezalel Jaffe to Schatz, 12 Kislev 5667/Nov. 29, 1906, CZA L42, file 55.

58. K. L.-Man (Kadish Yehuda Silman), "Al 'Bezalel' ve-al Yotzro," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 3(18) (July 6, 1910), 7–9.

59. M. Epstein to Schatz, Sept. 19, 1907, and Oct. 3, 1907, CZA L42, file 98.

60. See also Cohen, *Jewish Icons*, 215–19, where he discusses Schatz's complex relationship with Diaspora artistic traditions; Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture*, 115, discusses Bezalel's role in creating images and iconography for the Diaspora.

61. David Wolffsohn to Schatz, Aug. 22, 1906, CZA L42, file 56.

62. At the same time, Deinard is emblematic of the fluidity between these two increasingly distinct cultural centers and foci of identity. Born in Latvia, Deinard spent significant time in Odessa before immigrating to the United States. In 1913 he immigrated to Palestine, only to be expelled by the Ottomans in 1916, when he returned to the United States.

63. The reference in the Yiddish paper's report may have been to Shmuel Hirshenberg's "Eternal Jew," which was on prominent display at Bezalel.

64. Ephraim Deinard to Boris Schatz, Nov. 12, 1906, CZA L42, file 57. Emphasis added.

65. The ubiquity and at times almost unconscious nature of this kind of imagery seems to me to suggest a deeper resonance of messianic language than the mere instrumental "oratory" that Eli Lederhendler believes it to have represented. See his "Interpreting Messianic Rhetoric in the Russian Haskalah and in Early Zionism," in Lederhendler, *Jewish Responses to Modernity: New Voices in America and Eastern Europe* (New York, 1994), 23–46.

66. Margalit Shilo, *Nisyonot be-Hityashvut: Ha-Misrad ha-Eretz Yisre'eli 1908–1914* (Jerusalem, 1988), 33.

67. Sheinkin to Ussishkin, 11 Tevet 5669/Jan. 4, 1909, CZA A24, file 52/1. Other letters in this folder reflect similar concerns.

68. Jacob Thon, "Jewish Schools in Palestine," in Cohen, *Zionist Work in Palestine*, 89–90.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 7

1. On the revolution see Feroz Ahmad, *The Young Turks: The Committee of Union and Progress in Turkish Politics* (Oxford, UK, 1969); Ernest Edmondson Ramsaur Jr., *The Young Turks: Prelude to the Revolution of 1908* (Princeton, N.J., 1957); Aykut Kansu, *The Revolution of 1908 in Turkey* (New York, 1997); Aykut Kansu, *Politics in Post-revolutionary Turkey, 1908–1913* (Leiden, the Netherlands, 2000).

2. Indeed, at least one scholar has argued that as of July 1908, it becomes appropriate to speak of "Turkey" rather than (or at least in addition to) "the Ottoman Empire" in a way that is not applicable under the ancien régime. See Kansu, *Politics in Post-revolutionary Turkey*, 1–2 (note 3 in particular).

3. See Ahmad, *Young Turks*, 24.

4. Ibid., 156.

5. On the impact of the revolution on Zionist political and diplomatic efforts see Hanna Weiner, "Ha-Mediniut ha-Tzionit be-Turkia ad 1914," in *Toledot ha-Yishuv ha-Yehudi be-Eretz Yisra'el Me-Az ha-Aliya ha-Rishona: Ha-Tekufa ha-Otmanit*, ed. Israel Kolatt (Jerusalem, 1989), 257–349; Mordechai Eliav, *David Wolffsohn: Ha-Ish u-Zemano: Ha-Tenu'a ha-Tzionit ba-Shanim 1905–1914* (Jerusalem, 1977), 144–49; Isaiah Friedman, *Germany, Turkey, and Zionism 1897–1918* (Oxford, UK, 1977), 140–53.

6. For a small sampling of this work see Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York, 1979); Yehoshua Ben-Arieh, *The Rediscovery of the Holy Land in the Nineteenth Century* (Jerusalem, 1979); Naomi Shepherd, *The Zealous Intruders: The Western Rediscovery of Palestine* (London, 1987); Roger Benjamin, *Orientalist Aesthetics: Art, Colonialism, and French North Africa, 1880–1930* (Los Angeles, 2003); John M. Mackenzie, *Orientalism: History, Theory, and the Arts* (New York, 1995).

7. See in particular the important *Orientalism and the Jews*, ed. Ivan Davidson Kalmar and Derek Penslar (Hanover, N.H., 2004). See also Paul Mendes-Flohr, "Fin-de-siècle Orientalism, the *Ostjuden*, and the Aesthetics of Jewish Self-affirmation," in *Divided Passions: Jewish Intellectuals and the Experience of Modernity* (Detroit, 1990), 77–132; Ivan Kalmar, "Moorish Style: Orientalism, the Jews, and Synagogue Architecture," *Jewish Social Studies* 7(3) (Spring/Summer 2001): 68–100; Jonathan M. Hess,

"Johann David Michaelis and the Colonial Imaginary: Orientalism and the Emergence of Racial Antisemitism in Eighteenth-century Germany," *Jewish Social Studies* 6(2) (Winter 2000): 56–101.

8. Quoted in Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford, 1994), 354. For an account that takes issue with some of Wolff's specifics but confirms much of the imagery associated with the concept of "eastern Europe" see Ezequiel Adamovsky, "Euro-Orientalism and the Making of the Concept of Eastern Europe in France, 1810–1880," *Journal of Modern History* 77(3) (September 2005): 591–628.

9. Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*, 6.

10. Ibid. Wolff's book has numerous such accounts.

11. See Steven E. Aschheim, *Brothers and Strangers: The East European Jew in German and German-Jewish Consciousness, 1800–1923* (Madison, 1982), 20.

12. Ibid., 80–99, 185–214 (the quote is on p. 187).

13. Rachel Elboim-Dror, *Ha-Mahar shel ha-Etmol* (Jerusalem, 1993), 115–17.

14. Said, *Orientalism*, 306.

15. Amnon Raz-Krokotzkin, "The Zionist Return to the West and the Mizrahi Jewish Perspective," in Penslar and Kalmar, eds., *Orientalism and the Jews*, 166. A similar cast on the relationship between Zionism and Orientalism (albeit with a focus on a later historical period) is presented by Aziza Khazoom, in "The Great Chain of Orientalism: Jewish Identity, Stigma Management, and Ethnic Exclusion in Israel," *American Sociological Review* 68(4) (Aug. 2003): 481–510.

16. Yaron Peleg, *Orientalism and the Hebrew Imagination* (Ithaca, N.Y., 2005).

17. Theodor Herzl, *Altneuland: Old-New Land*, trans. Paula Arnold (Haifa, 1960), 19.

18. Ibid., 31.

19. Ibid., 32.

20. Ibid., 33.

21. Ibid., 54.

22. Ibid., 92.

23. Ibid., 19.

24. Ibid., 50 (emphasis added).

25. Ibid., 23.

26. Ibid., 101–102.

27. Ben-Avi, "Ha-Zekena," *Ha-Tzvi* 25(204) (6 Tamuz 5669/June 25, 1909), 1.

28. Said, *Orientalism*, 42. Cf. the important and nuanced discussion in Derek Jonathan Penslar, "Zionism, Colonialism, and Post-Colonialism," *Journal of Israeli History* 20 (2–3): 84–98.

29. "Ha-Shinui ha-Medini be-Tugrema ve-ha-Tzionut ha-Rishmit," *Hashkafa* 9(97) (29 Av 5668/Aug. 26, 1908), 2. Emphasis added.

30. M-Y., "Me-ha-Hayim ha-Politiim," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 2(13) (May 2, 1909), 14–15.

31. "Yerushalayim," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 1(10) (Aug. 1908), 17–19. The terminology of "north" and "south," which was frequently employed as synonymous with "West" and "East" respectively, betrayed an acute redemptive anticipation associated

with the revolution and with Zionist prospects in the rising East. Readers of *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* would have been intimately familiar with God's biblical promise, in the words of the prophet Jeremiah: "I will bring them from the land of the North and gather them from the ends of the earth... in a vast throng they shall return here" (Jeremiah 31:8).

32. H., "Feuilleton Katan," *Ha-Ahdut* 2(7) (8 Kislev 5671/Dec. 9, 1910), 13–15. A similar contrast between dilapidated Arab villages and orderly Jewish settlements could serve as a rallying cry in early Palestinian-Arab nationalism as well, where it was mobilized to point to the threat Zionism was held to pose to Arab Palestine. See Rashid Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness* (New York, 1997), 135.

33. A. Goldman, letter to the editor, *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 2(3) (Oct. 1908), 13.

34. Yosef Haver (Yosef Haim Brenner), "Be-Hayenu u-ve-Itonutenu," *Ha-Ahdut* 3(5) (26 Heshvan 5672/Nov. 17, 1911), 8–11. Said identifies the claim of a particular European virtue, in contrast to the "depraved" and "childlike" nature of the "Oriental," as a central element in what he identifies as "Orientalism." See, for example, Said, *Orientalism*, 40. This was indeed often the case, although European images of the Orient (and the concomitant moral value of each) were often more complex than Said allows. In the Zionist context, sentiments such as Brenner's provide a further indication of the difficulty of fitting Zionist thought neatly into Said's categories of Orientalism.

35. A. Ludvipol, "Goyim u-Mamlachot III: Aharei ha-Shalom," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 6(10) (Nov. 29, 1912), 6–7.

36. M. Asia (Moredechai Berachyahu-Baruchov), "Seridim," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 7(8–9) (Dec. 11, 1913), 4–10.

37. See, for example, Friedman, in *Germany, Turkey, and Zionism*, 39, who speaks of "the image of Turkey projected by Jews throughout the centuries as one of the most hospitable and tolerant countries in the world."

38. Aharonowitz, "Michtavim li-Yedida," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 3(5) (Dec. 7, 1909), 11.

39. On Wilkansky, see Yaffa Berlowitz, "Meir Wilkansky," in *Ha-Aliya ha-Sheniya: Ishim*, ed. Zeev Zahor (Jerusalem, 1997), 154–58.

40. Meir Wilkansky, "Mi-Yemei ha-Aliya," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 4(23–24) (Sept. 20, 1911), 18–22.

41. MacKenzie, *Orientalism*, 58–59.

42. Itamar Ben-Avi, "Ma Natna Lanu Eretz Yisra'el?" *Hashkafa* 9(18) (13 Kislev 5668/Nov. 19, 1907), 2.

43. "Hartza'at ha-Dr. Bugrashov ba-Asefa ha-Shelishit shel Agudat ha-Gimnasia," CZA A24, file 42II. The lecture was also reproduced in "Me-Hartza'ato shel Menahel ha-Gymnasia," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 5(22–23) (Aug. 16, 1912), 13–14 (emphasis added).

44. Here I take issue with Mark LeVine's presentation of the founding of the city—and through it, of the Zionist enterprise as a whole—as unproblematically "modern" and "European," responsible for ushering in "the gradual hegemony of Euromodernity." See Mark LeVine, *Overthrowing Geography: Jaffa, Tel Aviv, and the Struggle for Palestine, 1880–1948* (Los Angeles, 2005), 5–14, 60–83. The quotation is from

p. 11. Barbara Mann's study of Tel Aviv establishes a more nuanced and compelling foundation for the founding of the city. Tel Aviv, she writes, was conceived and envisioned "as an expressly 'European' endeavor" on the one hand and as a "clearly . . . Mediterranean city on the sea" on the other. See Barbara Mann, *A Place in History: Modernism, Tel Aviv, and the Creation of Jewish Urban Space* (Stanford, 2006), 17–18.

45. Arye Yaffe, "Ha-Sepharadiya (Perek mi-Roman), *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 2(2), 8–9.

46. Tal, "Haifa," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 1(4) (Tevet 5668/Jan.–Feb. 1908), 13–14.

47. Nahum Twersky, "Ha-Mishtar he-Hadash be-Turkiya," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 2(2) (Heshvan 5669/Oct.–Nov. 1908), 1–2.

48. Ya'acov Rabinowitz, "Reshimot," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 7(38) (July 17, 1914), 8–9. Emphasis in the original.

49. Ya'acov Rabinowitz, "Al ha-Hinuch ha-Eretz-Yisre'eli," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 6(8) (Nov. 15, 1912), 5–7.

50. Ibid.

51. Abraham Zarzovsky, "Al Ha-Mishmar," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 6(37) (July 4, 1913), 9–10.

52. Yohanan, "Bitul ha-Kapitulatziot al-yedei Turkia," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 7(43) (Sept. 18, 1914), 9–10.

53. Ben-Yehuda, "Beit Midrash Elyon le-Mada'im bi-Yerushalem," *Hashkafa* 9(55) (24 Second Adar 5668/Mar. 25, 1908), 1.

54. Cf. Margaret Olin, *The Nation without Art: Examining Modern Discourses on Jewish Art* (Lincoln, Neb., 2001), 43–53.

55. Malcolm Warner, "The Question of Faith: Orientalism, Christianity, and Islam," in *The Orientalists: Delacroix to Matisse*, ed. Maryanne Stevens (London, 1984), 32. For the influence of such thinking on Schatz and the artists of Bezalel see also Yigal Zalmona and Nurit Shiloh-Cohen, "Signon ve-Iconographia shel Heftzei 'Bezalel,' " in *Bezalel Shel Schatz, 1906–1929*, ed. Nurit Shiloh-Cohen (Jerusalem, 1983), 220.

56. Ibid.

57. See ibid.

58. David Yellin, "The Renaissance of the Hebrew Language in Palestine," in *Zionist Work in Palestine*, ed. Israel Cohen (London, 1911), 146.

59. A good example of this is in Z. Cohen, "Ba-Keramim," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 1(3), 5, where he consciously incorporates Arabic colloquial words such as "Yalla" and "Hallas," which have in fact made their way firmly into contemporary spoken Hebrew.

60. See Joseph Klausner, "Hashash," *Ha-Shilo'ah* 17 (July–December 1907), 574–76. Klausner expressed grave concerns regarding the influence of Arab and Bedouin culture on the Jews who were growing up in Palestine.

61. Benjamin Harshav, *Language in Time of Revolution* (Los Angeles, 1993), 164.

62. See Yehoash Hirshberg, "Hitpathut ha-Gufim ha-Mevatz'im ba-Musica: Pe'ilut Mekomit," in *Toledot ha-Yishuv ha-Yehudi be-Eretz-Yisra'el Me-Az ha-Aliya ha-Rishona: Beniyata shel Tarbut Ivrit be-Eretz-Yisra'el*, ed. Zohar Shavit (Jerusalem, 1989), Vol. 1, 263–70.

63. See, for example, Iris Parush, *Nashim Kor'ot: Yitrona shel Shuliut ba-Hevra ha-Yehudit be-Mizrach Eropa ba-Me'ah ha-Tesha Esreh* (Tel Aviv, 2001), 75–100.

64. Yosef Aharonowitz, "Ra'ayon ha-Avoda," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 6(1) (Sept. 18, 1912), 3–4. See also Hirshberg, "Hitpathut," 267.

65. Y. S. "Bein ha-Teimanim," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 5(9–10) (Feb. 11, 1912), 24–25.

66. Hirshberg, "Hitpathut," vol. 1, 263–70.

67. (Unsigned), "Chronica," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 1(7–8) (Apr.–May 1908), 29–30.

68. Cited in Hirshberg, "Hitpathut," 270.

69. Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, "Ha-Nissayon ha-Rishon," *Ha-Or* 1(140) (18 Av 5670/ Aug. 23, 1910), 1.

70. Abraham Zvi Ben-Yehuda, "Shir Zion!" *Ha-Or* 1(37) (3 Nissan 5670/Apr. 12, 1910), 1.

71. Ben-Yehuda, "Ha-Nissayon ha-Rishon," 1.

72. Ibid.

73. Idelsohn, "Negginot ha-Sephardim" [Sephardic Music], *Hashkafa* 9(69) (18 Iyar 5668/May 19, 1908), 3.

74. Ibid.

75. Abraham Zvi Ben-Yehuda, "Negina Ivrit: Negina Le'umit," *Hashkafa* 9(7) (3 Heshvan 5668/Oct. 11, 1907), 1. Emphasis added.

76. Said, *Orientalism*, 79.

77. See Hirshberg, "Hitpathut," 271.

78. "Beit Sefer Le-Negina," *Ha-Or* 2(14–189) (2 Heshvan 5671/Nov. 4, 1910), 1.

79. On Engel, see Yehoash Hirshberg, *Music in the Jewish Community of Palestine, 1880–1948: A Social History* (New York, 1996), 79–83.

80. On this search for the folk as a centerpiece of nationalism see, for example, George L. Mosse, *The Nationalization of the Masses: Political Symbolism and Mass Movements in Germany from the Napoleonic Wars through the Third Reich* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1991), 2; Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (New York, 1990), 103–104. The spontaneity of such outbursts of song and dance among groups of young immigrants is examined by Natan Shahar, "Tafkido ha-Hevrati shel ha-Zemer ha-Ivri bi-Tekufat ha-Aliyot ha-Rishonot," in *Binui Uma*, ed. Danny Jacoby (Jerusalem, 2000), 81.

81. Rachel Yanait Ben-Zvi, *Coming Home* (Tel Aviv, 1963), 23.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 8

1. Among the most prominent proponents of this view is Ella Shohat. See the following articles by her:, "Sephardim in Israel: Zionism from the Standpoint of Its Jewish Victims," *Social Texts* 19/20 (Autumn 1988): 1–35; "The Invention of the Mizrahim," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 29(1): 5–20; and "Rethinking Jews and Muslims: Quincentennial Reflections," *Middle East Report* 178 (Sept.–Oct. 1992): 25–29. See also Yehouda Shenhav, *The Arab Jews: A Postcolonial Reading of Nationalism, Religion, and Ethnicity* (Stanford, 2006); Aziza Kahzoom, "The Great Chain of Orientalism: Jewish Identity, Stigma Management, and Ethnic Exclusion in Israel," *American Sociological Review* 68(4) (Aug. 2003): 481–510.

2. Ismar Schorsch, "The Myth of Sephardic Supremacy," *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* 34 (1989), 47–66; John M. Efron, "Scientific Racism and the Mystique of Sephardic Racial Superiority," *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* 38 (1993), 75–96.

3. See, for example, Sander L. Gilman, *Freud, Race, and Gender* (Princeton, N.J., 1993), 72–73. A good comprehensive source on this brand of scientific thinking in its broader context is Paul Weindling, *Health, Race, and German Politics between National Unification and Nazism 1870–1945* (New York, 1989), 1–154.

4. Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, "Hotem ha-Yehudi," *Hashkafa* 3(7) (21 First Adar 5662/ Feb. 28, 1902), 56–57.

5. Efron, "Scientific Racism," 77.

6. Ben-Yehuda, "Hotem ha-Yehudi."

7. See also John M. Efron, *Defenders of the Race: Jewish Doctors and Race Science in Fin-de-siècle Europe* (New Haven, Conn., 1994), 117–19, 157–58.

8. Ploni, "Ha-Sefardim bi-Tzefat," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 4(13) (Apr. 12, 1911), 10–12.

9. Ibid.

10. This point is an important one that has often been missed in earlier historiography, particularly as it pertains to these issues. Thus, Gabriel Piterberg has argued, for example, that "Zionist historiographic discourse accepted the underlying assumptions, values, and concepts of knowledge and culture of the dominant historiography of the nineteenth century" and its Orientalist premises to produce a picture of Oriental Jews that was "much more brutal and bigoted" than anything that was said about European Jews. See Gabriel Piterberg, "Domestic Orientalism: The Representation of 'Oriental' Jews in Zionist/Israeli Historiography," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 23(2) (1996): 125–45; quotes are on 131, 135.

The evidence, however, seems to suggest not only that the picture was more nuanced, but that in fact the reverse of Piterberg's claim was, at least in this earlier period, quite salient and that the Zionist critique of the European Diaspora was often harsher than that of the Islamic dispersion. It was based, moreover, not on an unproblematic acceptance of European "concepts of knowledge," but on a tension between acceptance and rejection.

11. Yadid, "Michtavim mi-Yaffo," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 3(9) (Feb. 29, 1910), 13.

12. Ploni, "Ha-Sefardim bi-Tzefat."

13. Dan, "Me-ha-Bama ha-Ivrit Bi-Yerushalem," *Ha-Ahdut* 2(20–21) (15 Adar 5671/Mar. 15, 1911), 28.

14. Ya'acov Rabinowitz, "Al ha-Hinuch ha-Eretz-Yisre'eli," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 6(8) (Nov. 15, 1912), 5–7.

15. Ibid.

16. See also Nitza Druyan, *Be-Ein Marvad Kesamim: Olei Teiman be-Eretz Yisra'el 1881–1914* (Jerusalem, 1981), 134–48; Herbert S. Lewis, *After the Eagles Landed: The Yemenites of Israel* (Boulder, Colo., 1989), 44–49; Yehuda Nini, *He-Hayit o Halamti Halom: Teimanei Kinneret: Parashat Hityashvutam ve-Akiratam, 1912–1930* (Tel Aviv, 1996), 39–49.

17. "Gorem Hadash," *Ha-Ahdut* 3(31) (1 Sivan 5672/May 17, 1912), 4–5.

18. Yehuda Nini also writes of a Janus-faced approach to the Yemenites, although he seems to some degree to have oversimplified the picture and to have misappropriated the notion of the "noble savage" in this context. See Nini, *He-Hayit o Halamti Halom*, 30–38.

19. Zichron Ya'acov Colony Committee to the Palestine office, 19 Av 5673/Aug. 22, 1913; and Thon's reply, Aug. 31, 1913, CZA L2 (Archive of the Palestine office), file 166.

20. Zecharyahu Gluska, letter to the editors, *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 6(33–34) (June 13, 1913), 21.

21. Palestine Office to Rishon Le-Zion Colony Committee, Sept. 26, 1913, CZA L2, file 166.

22. Rishon Le-Zion Colony Committee to the Palestine Office, Sept. 30, 1913, CZA L2, file 166.

23. "Parti-kol shel Asefat ha-Tzirim mi-Hag ha-Shavu'ot 1908," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 1(10) (July–Aug. 1908), 13–14. Indeed, additional complaints regarding the employers' poor treatment of Yemenite workers abound not only in the files of the Palestine Office, but on the pages of *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* as well. See, for example, "Ha-Shavu'a," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 6(33–34) (June 13, 1913), 22–24; Penimi, "Al ha-Na'aseh ve-ha-Nishma," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 6(38–39) (July 18, 1913), 12–14.

24. See Druyan, *Be-Ein Marvad Kesamim*, 134–38.

25. Hadera Workers' Committee to the Palestine Office's Committee on Yemenites, 16 Sivan 5673/June 21, 1913, CZA L2, file 165.

26. Y. Feldman to the Palestine Office, 28 Av 5673/Aug. 31, 1913, CZA L2, file 166.

27. There is extensive correspondence on matters of health care and a range of social and economic measures taken on behalf of the Yemenite communities in various colonies in CZA L2, files 164, 165, 166.

28. For some of the workings of Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir support and sponsorship see, for example, Yosef Shprinzak to Aviezer Yellin, 24 Second Adar 5673/Apr. 1, 1913, Archives of the Lavon Labor Institute, IV-402-1-183.

29. "Ha-Shavu'a," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 7(21) (Mar. 16, 1914), 15.

30. In this sense they anticipated later processes that would reshape the understanding of ethnicity in Israeli society. See Harvey Goldberg, "The Changing Meaning of Ethnic Affiliation," *The Jerusalem Quarterly* 44 (Fall 1987): 39–50.

31. "Ha-Shavu'a," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 7(21) (Mar. 16, 1914), 15.

32. Ibid., 15–16. On the mixed reception within the Yemenite community see "Ha-Shavu'a," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 6(43–44) (Aug. 18, 1913), 23–24.

33. See, for example, Mark Levene, "Port Jewry of Salonika: Between Neo-colonialism and Nation-state," in *Port Jews: Jewish Communities in Cosmopolitan Maritime Trading Centres, 1550–1950*, ed. David Cesarani (Portland, Ore., 2002), 125–54.

34. Ben-Zvi to Ussishkin, 4 Nissan 5674/Mar. 31, 1914, CZA A24, file 68/4.

35. Ben-Zvi to Ussishkin and the Odessa Committee, 28 Heshvan 5674/Nov. 28, 1913, CZA A24, file 68/4.

36. On the postwar developments of this project see Zachary Lockman, *Comrades and Enemies: Arab and Jewish Workers in Palestine, 1906–1948* (Berkeley,

1996), 198–99, 401n43. Lockman mistakenly places Ben-Zvi's original arrival in Salonika in 1914 rather than 1913.

37. Ben-Zvi to Ussishkin, 4 Nissan 5674/Mar. 31, 1914, CZA A24, file 68/4.

38. A. B. Eliezri, "Ivrim Histadru!" *Ha-Zevi* 25(90) (6 Shevat 5669/Jan. 28, 1909), 1.

39. H. M. Michlin, "Agudat Ha-Yehudim Ha-Ottomanim," *Hashkafa* 9(100) (4 Elul 5668/Aug. 31, 1908), 1.

40. See, for example, R. Yehuda, "Michtavim me-Hayei Yerushalayim I," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 3(9) (Feb. 29, 1910), 11–12; Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, "Tarbut Medinit," *Ha-Or* 1(1) (17 First Adar 5670/Feb. 26, 1910), 1.

41. On the growing presence of Zionism within Ottoman Jewry see Esther Benbassa, *Ha-Yahadut ha-Ottmanit bein Hitma'arvut le-Tzionut, 1908–1920* (Jerusalem, 1996), 77–174; Esther Benbassa, "Associational Strategies in Ottoman Jewish Society in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," in *The Jews of the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Avigdor Levy (Princeton, N.J., 1994), 457–84; İlber Ortaylı, "Ottomanism and Zionism during the Second Constitutional Period, 1908–1915," in ibid., 527–37; Aron Rodrigue, *French Jews, Turkish Jews: The Alliance Israélite Universelle and the Politics of Jewish Schooling in Turkey, 1860–1925* (Bloomington, Ill., 1990), 126–37.

42. Abraham Elmaliach, "Tehiyat Mamlachtenu" [Renaissance of Our State], *Hashkafa* 9(92) (10 Av 5668/Aug. 7, 1908), unnumbered special appendix.

43. Michelle U. Campos, "Between 'Beloved Ottomania' and 'The Land of Israel': The Struggle over Ottomanism and Zionism among Palestine's Sephardi Jews, 1908–13," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 37 (2005): 461–83, especially 466.

44. Ibid., 461–62.

45. See Isaiah Friedman, *Germany, Turkey, and Zionism, 1897–1918* (Oxford, UK, 1977), 93–94.

46. Campos, "Between 'Beloved Ottomania' and 'The Land of Israel,'" 472.

47. See ibid., 462–63.

48. Examples abound. This particular phrase is taken from an unsigned editorial titled "Ha-Sakana ha-Gedola" [The Great Danger], *Ha-Herut* 3(6) (Nov. 4, 1910), 1. See also HB'R [Haim Ben-Attar], "Sakanat ha-Moledet: Benei Shem neged Benei Shem," *Ha-Herut* 3(125) (July 7, 1911), 1. An earlier editorial cautioned that the anti-Semitic rhetoric of the Arab national movement was equal to that of French anti-Semite "[Edouard] Drumont and his clan." See "Sakana!" *Ha-Herut* 1(24) (July 23, 1909), 1.

49. Yosef Sprinzak, "Tekufat ha-Ma'avar be-Avodat ha-Misrad ha-Eretz Yisre'eli (Hemshech)," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 7(41) (Aug. 7, 1914), 3–7. Emphasis added.

50. See, for example, Yehoshua Porath, *The Emergence of the Palestinian-Arab National Movement, 1918–1929* (London, 1974), 23; Rashid Khalidi, *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness* (New York, 1997), 89–144.

51. Yardeni, "Zichron Ya'akov," *Hashkafa* 8(11) (18 Heshvan 5667/Nov. 6, 1906), 3; Satat, "Zichron Ya'akov," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 2(4) (Kislev 5669/ Nov.–Dec. 1908), 6–7. Joseph Klausner made this colony the focus of his repeated expressions of concern over the Arabic influence on Yishuv culture. See his "Hashash," *Ha-Shilo'ah* 17 (July–Dec. 1907), 574–76, and "Hamon ve-Uma," *Ha-Shilo'ah* 26 (Jan.–June 1912), 459–68.

52. Ya'acov Rabinowitz, "Reshimot," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 6(30) (May 16, 1913), 4–7.

53. "Hafirot be-Eretz Yisra'el ba-Zeman ha-Aharon," *Hashkafa* 3(12) (26 Second Adar 5662/Apr. 4, 1902), 91.

54. Ben-Avi, "Ma Natna Lanu Eretz Yisra'el?" *Hashkafa* 9(18) (13 Kislev 5668/Nov. 19, 1907), 2.

55. Alan Dowty, *The Jewish State: A Century Later* (Berkeley, 1998), 48. I differ with Dowty's assessment that "Such ideas did not strike a chord" among Jews. Indeed, they were for a time quite pervasive, and their eventual (and never complete) demise in Zionist circles seems to have had more to do with the escalating conflict between Arabs and Jews in Palestine than with a preordained miscarriage. Nor do I think it entirely useful or convincing to view these approaches as coping mechanisms designed to "deny the reality of any underlying conflict" rather than an impulse motivated by a sincere (if admittedly naïve) belief in such kinship at a time when the conflict was in its infancy.

56. R. Binyamin, "Av-Elul (Mi-Rigshot ha-Lev)," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 2(1), Tishrei 5669/Sept.–Oct. 1908.

57. See, for example, "Be-Toch ha-Ereg IX," *Ha-Po'el ha-Tza'ir* 3(3) (Nov.12, 1909), 8–10.

58. Ben-Avi, "Ha-Sheleg (Bi'ato le-Eretz Yisra'el)," *Hashkafa* 4(15) (24 Tevet 5663/Jan. 23, 1903), 119.

59. Yitzhak Epstein, "She'ela Ne'elama," *Ha-Shilo'ah* 17 (July–Dec. 1907), 193–206.

60. These include Heruti (Moshe Smilansky), "Me-Inyanei ha-Yishuv," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 1(4/5) (First Adar 5668/Feb.–Mar. 1908), 5–10; Hillel Joffe, "Ha-Avoda ha-Karka'it shel ha-Yehudim be-Eretz Yisra'el," does not address Epstein's article directly but appeared on the pages immediately following Smilansky's response and argued that the need for greater numbers of Jews in Palestine stemmed in part from the danger that the Arabs might express growing objections to the Zionist enterprise. See also Nehama Puhatchevsky, "She'elot Geluyot," *Ha-Shilo'ah* 18 (Jan.–June 1908), 67–69. In addition, A. D. Gordon complained that Epstein's views were not regarded with sufficient seriousness, although he did not accept all that Epstein had argued. See Gordon, "Pitron Lo Ratzionali," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 2(17) (July 1, 1909), 5–8.

61. Karman, "Walad al-Mitti (La-Hag be-Rishon Le-Zion)," *Hashkafa* 8(83) (12 Av 5667/July 23, 1907), 5.

62. Israel Giladi, recalling the founding impetus in "Divrei Yemei ha-Aguda," in *Kovetz Ha-Shomer* (Tel Aviv, 1947), 5.

63. Shohat to Ussishkin, 25 Sivan 5667/June 7, 1907, CZA A24, file 60/20.

64. The most comprehensive historical study of the founding and evolution of Ha-Shomer is Yaacov N. Goldstein, *From Fighters to Soldiers: How the Israeli Defense Forces Began* (Portland, Ore., 1998).

65. Alexander Zaid, "Perek Haim," in *Kovetz Ha-Shomer*, 86, 89.

66. Giladi, "Divrei Yemei ha-Aguda," 6.

67. Israel Bartal, "Kozak u-Vedu'i: Olam ha-Dimuyim ha-Le'umi he-Hadash," in *Ha-Aliya ha-Sheniya: Mehkarim* (Jerusalem, 1997), 482–93.

68. G. Fleischer, "Ba-Mir'eh," in *Kovetz Ha-Shomer*, 275.

69. Ibid. Yaacov Goldstein cites numerous additional sources that attest to this latter motivation, such as a letter by Israel Shohat written in the 1950s, in which he stated that "it was clear the Arabs were against us, therefore we wanted to learn their ways of fighting so as to gain knowledge of the foe in his home." Goldstein, *From Fighters to Soldiers*, 99–100. It seems to me, however, that Goldstein underestimates the salience of the romantic impulse to integrate into an imagined Bedouin Orient as another important motivation for this emulation of Arab ways, which one could find among the youth of the first Aliya colonies as well. (Indeed, written in the 1950s, the letter from Shohat that Goldstein cites is surely colored by the reality of Israeli-Arab relations at that time.)

70. Moshe Zlodin, "Be-Ashan u-va-Mahasor," in *Kovetz Ha-Shomer*, 282.

71. See, for example, Menahem Sheinkin to Menahem Ussishkin, 21 Second Adar 5668/Mar. 24, 1908, and Sheinkin to Ussishkin, 1 Nissan 5668/Apr. 2, 1908, both in CZA A24, file 52/1.

72. See, for example, "Note sur les incidents du 16 mars 1908," in CZA A25, file 145. For a brief summary of the affair see Be'eri, *Reshit ha-Sichsuch Yisra'el-Arav*, 115–18; Eliav, "Me'ora'ot Yaffo be-Furim 1908," 152–74; Eliav, *Be-Hassut Mamlechet Austria 1849–1917*, documents 154–56, 339–45.

73. Sheinkin to Ussishkin, 12 Iyar 5669/May 3, 1909, CZA A24, file 52/1. Emphasis added.

74. See the first circular of the Union of Judean Colonies, Heshvan 5674/Nov. 1913, CZA A24, file 60/9.

75. Dov Lubman-Haviv and M. Meirowitz to Ussishkin, 3 Heshvan 5674/Nov. 3, 1913, CZA A24, file 60/9.

76. Zerubavel, "Ha-ta'arucha ba-galil," *Ha-'ahdut* 3(40–41) (26 Av 5672/Aug. 29, 1912), 12–16.

77. Ibid.

78. N. Twersky, "Ha-Mishtar he-Hadash be-Turkiya," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 2(2) (Heshvan 5668/Oct.–Nov. 1908), 1–2.

79. One Zionist involved in discussions with Arabs concluded that they "do not care a rap about the 'common Semitic spirit.'" Quoted in Neville J. Mandel, *The Arabs and Zionism before World War I* (Los Angeles, 1976), 187.

80. Kalvarisky to Ussishkin, May 24, 1913, CZA A24, file 68/25.

81. Kalvarisky to Ussishkin, Nov. 16, 1913, CZA A24, file 68/25. Kalvarisky's was not an isolated idea but rather a part of broader efforts on the part of the Zionist Organization. The picture was already complicated enough, however, that a "Muslim-Jewish alliance," which here indicated joint Arab-Jewish opposition to the Ottoman Empire, could also mean efforts at a broader Ottoman-Arab-Jewish alliance. See Mandel, *Arabs and Zionism*, 165–85.

82. Kalvarisky to Ussishkin, May 28, 1913, CZA A24, file 68/25.

83. On the broader context in which these negotiations took place and the general involvement of the Zionist Organization see Mandel, *Arabs and Zionism*, 141–64, 186–207.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 9

1. For an extensive study of the journal's history and goals see Nurit Govrin, *"Ha-Omer": Tenufato shel Ketav Et ve-Aharito* (Jerusalem, 1980). The effort to establish a literary organ with a distinctly Palestinian voice did not die with *Ha-Omer*. It was repeated in 1912, with Itamar Ben-Avi's (abortive) efforts to launch a journal he hoped to title *Kidron*. It seems likely that his choice of name reflects a response to *Ha-Shilo'ah*, the preeminent Hebrew-language Zionist journal (both were named for Jerusalem-area streams). In its substance, it was likely also envisioned as a counter-voice to the success of the Labor-Zionist journals, in which Ben-Avi's competing version of an authentic, native Palestinian youth culture would be expressed.

2. *Zichronot Devarim shel ha-Aguda ha-Meditzinit ha-Ivrit be-Yafo* 2–3 (Iyar 5673/ May–June 1913), 46.

3. Ussishkin to Ben-Zion Mossinson, Sept. 25, 1908, CZA A45 (Ben-Zion Mossinson Archive), file 36.

4. Daniel Pasmanik, "Lifnei ha-Kongress ha-Teshi'i," *Ha-Shilo'ah* 21 (July–Dec. 1909), 193–95. Emphasis added.

5. Ussishkin to Mossinson, Mar. 1, 1908, CZA A45, file 36.

6. See Rachel Elboim-Dror, *Ha-Hinuch ha-Ivri be-Eretz Yisra'el*, vol. 1 (Jerusalem, 1986), 245.

7. See Mordechai Eliav, *David Wolffsohn: Ha-Ish u-Zemano: Ha-Tenu'a ha-Tzionit ba-Shanim 1905–1914* (Jerusalem, 1977), 203–205.

8. Shmaryahu Levin, "Avoda u-Sechara," *Ha-Shilo'ah* 25 (July–Dec. 1911), 646.

9. Ibid., 648.

10. Steven J. Zipperstein, *Elusive Prophet: Ahad Ha'am and the Origins of Zionism* (Berkeley, 1993), 22.

11. Bugrashov to Mossinson, 24 Heshvan 5670/Nov. 8, 1909, CZA A45, file 5.

12. Ibid.

13. Yitzhak Nissenbaum to Mossinson, 9 Tishrei 5670/Sept. 24, 1909, CZA A45, file 5. Emphasis in the original.

14. Ibid.

15. Ish Ivri (Joseph Klausner), "Hashash," *Ha-Shilo'ah* 17 (July–Dec. 1907), 574–76.

16. Ibid., 574–75.

17. Joseph Klausner, "Ha-Ivri ha-Tza'ir," *Ha-Shilo'ah* 20 (Jan.–June 1909), 401.

18. Ibid. Emphasis in the original.

19. Ibid., 402.

20. Ibid. Emphasis in the original.

21. See, for example, ibid., 403.

22. Ibid., 404. Emphasis in the original.

23. Ibid., 405. Emphasis in the original.

24. Ibid., 406. Emphases in the original. The use of festivals and the creation of a national liturgy were important activities for many national movements, and some of Klausner's critiques reveal a self-consciousness about this that comes close to sounding as much like a scholarly analysis as the ideological program of a nationalist ideologue. Compare his comments, for example, with George Mosse's analysis of German nationalist efforts to "appeal to historical myth and symbol" in order to make their festivals and liturgy efficacious. George L. Mosse, *The Nationalization of the Masses: Political Symbolism and Mass Movement in Germany from the Napoleonic Wars through the Third Reich* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1975), 92.

25. See, for example, Yosef Haim Brenner, "Regashim ve-Hirhurim," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 2(17) (July 1, 1909), 4–7; Eliezer Pepper, "Al ha-Datiyut be-Vatei ha-Sefer," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 2(23–24) (Sept. 14, 1909), 13–14.

26. Y. A. (Yosef Aharonwitz), "Heichal ha-Kultura ha-Ivrit," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 2(17) (July 1, 1909), 3–5.

27. Moshe Smilansky, "Me'at Canossa," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 2(19) (July 29, 1909), 7–9.

28. Ibid., 7.

29. Ibid.

30. Ibid. Emphases in the original.

31. Ibid.

32. See, for example, Moreh Tza'ir, "Ha-Hinuch ha-Dati be-Veit ha-Sefer ha-Ivri," *Ha-Shilo'ah* 28 (Jan.–June 1913), 97–106, 289–98, 481–86.

33. Smilansky, "Me'at Canossa," 9.

34. "'Hag ha-Ivrit' bi-Yerushalayim," *Ha-Or* 2(16–191) (5 Heshvan 5671/Nov. 7, 1910), 1–3.

35. Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (New York, 1989), 4.

36. Zalman Epstein, "Ha-Gymnasia ha-Ivrit be-Yaffo (Divrei Shalom ve-Emet)," *Ha-Shiloa'h* 25 (July–Dec. 1911), 351–60.

37. Ahad Ha'am, "Bein ha-Ketzavot," *Ha-Shilo'ah* 25 (July–Dec. 1911), 653.

38. Ahad Ha'am, "Sach Ha-Kol," *Ha-Shilo'ah* 26 (Jan.–June 1912), 279.

39. Ibid., 277.

40. Ahad Ha'am, "Bein Ha-Ktzavot," 649.

41. Ibid., 651.

42. Ibid., 653.

43. Ibid., 659. Emphases in the original.

44. Ibid. For another discussion of the debates surrounding the Gymansium, see Allan Arkush, "Biblical Criticism and Cultural Zionism Prior to the First World War," *Jewish History* 21(2) (June 2007): 121–58.

45. Rachel Yanait, "Le-She'elat ha-Kultura be-Eretz Yisra'el," *Ha-Ahdut* 2(15) (5 Shevat 5671/Feb. 3, 1911), 12–15.

46. A. D. Gordon, "Pitron lo Ratzionali," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 2(16) (June 17, 1909), 5–8.

47. Nurit Govrin, *"Me'ora Brenner": Ha-Ma'avak al Hofesh ha-Bitui* (Jerusalem, 1985).

48. See Shmuel Refaeli (unsigned; identification based on Govrin, *Me'ora Brenner*) "Kefira o Hasata?" *Ha-Herut* 3(18) (Dec. 2, 1910), 1.

49. Yosef Haver (Brenner), "Ba-Itonut u-va-Sifrut," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 4(3) (Nov. 24, 1910), 6–8.

50. See Govrin, *"Me'ora Brenner,"* 22–53; Zipperstein, *Elusive Prophet,* 240–44; Goldstein, *Ussishkin,* 241–42.

51. See Zipperstein, *Elusive Prophet,* 240.

52. "Ba-Histadrut u-va-Avoda: Teshuva," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 4(11) (Mar. 13, 1911), 16–17.

53. A. D. Gordon, *Michtavim u-Reshimot* (Jerusalem, 1954), 44–50.

54. Ish Ivri (Joseph Klausner), "Heirut ve-Epikorsut," *Ha-Shilo'ah* 24 (Jan.–June 1911), 88–91.

55. Y. H. Brenner, "Le-Veirur ha-Inyan," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 4(12) (Mar. 31, 1911), 13–16.

56. Govrin, *"Me'ora Brenner,"* 12.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 10

1. Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, "Yedid Eretz Yisra'el," *Hashkafa* 9(25) (8 Tevet 5668/Dec. 13, 1907), 1. See also his earlier and no less sympathetic report on Nathan's visit: "Dr. Paul Nathan" *Hashkafa* 9(6) (1 Heshvan 5668/Oct. 9, 1907), 1.

2. Ben-Yehuda, "Beit Midrash Elyon le-Mada'im bi-Yerushalem," *Hashkafa* 9(55) (24 Second Adar 5668/Mar. 27, 1908), 1. Emphasis in the original.

3. On the Hilfsverein's desire to distance itself from Zionism, see Eiloni, "Zionei Germania u-'Milhemet ha-Safot,' " *Ha-Tzionut* 10 (1985), 53–86. The leadership of the Zionist Organization, which had been seeking avenues of greater activity in the Yishuv, found the alliance with the Hilfsverein a convenient medium for providing for cultural work in Palestine without upsetting the delicate political balance within the movement, which stemmed from the Orthodox Zionists' bitter opposition to Zionist involvement in educational or cultural activities. Isaiah Friedman, *Germany, Turkey, and Zionism, 1897–1918* (Oxford, UK, 1977), 173–75.

4. "Yerushalem," *Hashkafa* 5(5) (9 Heshvan 5664/Oct. 30, 1903), 32. For similar praise of Cohn-Reiss and the Hilfsverein see "Yerushalem," *Hashkafa* 5(6) (16 Heshvan 5664/Nov. 6, 1903), 40; see also Ben-Yehuda's laudatory survey of the Hilfsverein's work in Palestine, "Hevrat ha-'Ezra,' " *Hashkafa* 8(49) (5 Nissan 5667/ Mar. 20, 1907), 3.

5. A[braham] Elmaliach, "Mahshavot Tza'ir Ivri bi-Yerushalayim," *Hashkafa* 5(7) (23 Heshvan 5664/Nov. 13, 1903), 50. See also Margalit Shilo, "Milhemet ha-Safot ki-Tenu'a Amamit," *Kathedra* 74 (1994), 87–119.

6. Even Binyamin, "Paul Nathan (Sirtutim)," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 1(4) (Teveth 5668/Dec. 1907–Jan. 1908), 8–9.

7. Ezrah, "Yerushalem," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 1(4) (Teveth 5668/Dec. 1907–Jan. 1908), 12–13.

8. E. Pepper, "Michtav Galuy le-Va Ko'ach 'Hevrat ha-Ezra' Mar Ephraim Cohen," *Hashkafa* 9(68) (14 Iyar 5668/May 15, 1908), 3.

9. Bezalel Jaffe, "Michtavim la-Ma'arechet," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 3(17) (June 22, 1910), 14–15.

10. Bar-Yohai, "Gam Eleh Anahot Sofer," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 5(18) (June 21, 1912), 11–12. See also Jonathan Frankel, "The 'Yizkor' Book of 1911: A Note on National Myths in the Second Aliya," in *Religion Ideology and Nationalism in Europe and America* (Jerusalem, 1986), 355–84. Other commentaries on the book include Zerubavel, " 'Yizkor' (Shivrei Ra'ayonot)," *Ha-Ahdut* 3(11–12) (12 Tevet 5672/Jan. 2, 1912), 29–34; 3(13) (19 Tevet 5672/Jan. 9, 1912), 16–22. Also see R. Binyamin, "Al Odot 'Yizkor,' " *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 5(8) (Jan. 24, 1912), 12; Bar-Yohai, "Gam Eleh Anahot Sofer," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 5(18) (June 21, 1912), 11–12; A. M. Kolar, "Al Ha-Anahot," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 5(21) (Aug. 1, 1912), 6–7.

11. Ben-Avi, "Ha-Shavu'a," *Hashkafa* 4(8) (5 Kislev 5663/Dec. 5, 1902), 53.

12. On the background to this focus, see Bernard Wasserstein, *Divided Jerusalem: The Struggle for the Holy City* (New Haven, Conn., 2002), 50–53. For some of its workings, see for example Inger Marie Okkenhaug, *The Quality of Heroic Living, of High Endeavour and Adventure: Anglican Mission, Women, and Education in Palestine, 1888–1948* (Leiden, the Netherlands, 2002), 14–23.

13. "Ha-Shavu'a," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 6(28–29) (May 9, 1913), 21.

14. See Rachel Simon, "Jewish Female Education in the Ottoman Empire, 1840–1914," in *Jews, Turks, Ottomans: A Shared History, Fifteenth through the Twentieth Century*, ed. Avigdor Levy (Syracuse, N.Y., 2002), 131.

15. Ploni, "Michtav mi-Tzefat," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 4(8) (Jan. 30, 1911), 12–13.

16. "Me'ora'ot u-Ma'asim," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 5(7) (Jan. 9, 1912), 19–20.

17. Ibid.

18. Ha-Tzofeh, "Michtav mi-Yerushalayim," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 6(12–13) (Dec. 19, 1912), 21–22.

19. Yehuda Burla, "Al ha-Avoda ha-Zara," *Ha-Herut* 5(9) (Sept. 24, 1912), 1.

20. E[phraim] Komerov, "Matzav ha-Hinuch be-Moshavtenu: Michtav mi-Ness Ziona," *Ha-Herut* 5(206) (May 29, 1913), 1.

21. Gur Alroey, *Imigrantim: Ha-Hagira ha-Yehudit le-Eretz Yisra'el be-Reshit ha-Me'ah ha-Esrim* (Jerusalem, 2004).

22. Ibid., 231–33.

23. Y. Yisraeli "Hashkafa Mekomit," *Ha-Ahdut* 5(1–2) (14 Tishrei 5674/Oct. 15, 1913), 34.

24. "Ha-Shavu'a," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 6(32) (May 30, 1913), 15–16.

25. For a survey of the development of the festival see Yael Zerubavel, *Recovered Roots: Collective Memory and the Making of Israeli National Tradition* (Chicago, 1995), 96–101. The one point on which I differ with Zerubavel is in the implicit late dating of the holiday's transformation: She focuses on the mandate period, whereas the evidence seems to me to clearly suggest that the transformation was well under way before the First World War.

26. "Ha-Shavu'a," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 6(32) (May 30, 1913), 15–16.

27. Ya'acov Rabinowitz, "Ha-Technikum ve-ha-Ivrit," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 6(35) (June 20, 1913), 6–8.

28. See the letter to Ahad Ha'am, Shmaryahu Levin, and Yehiel Tchlenow by Palestine's high-school students, 17 Sivan 5678/June 22, 1913, CZA A20 (Shmaryahu Levin Papers), file 54. The letter was published in *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 6(37) (July 4, 1913), 15.

29. Dov Hoz, Moshe Shertok, and Zerubavel Haviv to Shmaryahu Levin, 29 Sivan 5673/July 4, 1913, CZA A20, file 54.

30. See Margalit Shilo, "Milhemet ha-Safot ki-Tenu'a Amamit," 87–94; Rachel Elboim-Dror, *Ha-Hinuch ha-Ivri be-Eretz Yisra'el*, vol. 1(Jerusalem, 1986), 320–29, 346–50.

31. Pinhas Cohen to Shmaryahu Levin, 30 Tishrei 5674/Oct. 31, 1913, CZA A20, file 51.

32. Aharonowitz to Levin, 14 Heshvan 5674/Nov. 14, 1913, CZA A20, file 54.

33. Zerubavel, "Me-Inyanei De-Yoma," *Ha-Ahdut* 5(7) (28 Heshvan 5674/Nov. 28, 1913), 5. Emphasis added.

34. Decisions of the meeting, CZA A24, file 421. See also the report on the meeting in Shafan, "Haifa," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 7(6) (Nov. 21, 1913), 15–16.

35. "Ha-Shavu'a," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 7(6) (Nov. 21, 1913), 16.

36. Zerubavel, "Me-Inyanei De-Yoma," *Ha-Ahdut* 5(7) (28 Heshvan 5674/Nov. 28, 1913), 5.

37. Jaffe to Levin, Dec. 8, 1913, CZA A20, file 56.

38. N. Wegman, "Ha-Nitzahon," *Ha-Ahdut* 5(20) (1 Adar 5674/Feb. 27, 1914), 2.

39. The sequence of events has been described in Moshe Rinot, *Hevrat ha-Ezra le-Yehudei Germania ba-Yetzira u-va-Ma'avak* (Jerusalem, 1972); Zeev W. Sadmon, *Die Gründung des Technions in Haifa im Lichte deutscher Politik, 1907–1920* (Munich, 1994); Elboim-Dror, *Ha-Hinuch ha-Ivri*, vol. 1, 309–50. See also Eiloni, "Zionei Germania u-'Milhemet ha-Safot'"; Shilo, "Milhemet ha-Safot ki-Tenu'a Amamit," 87–119. For a survey of the diplomatic side of the events see Friedman, *Germany, Turkey, and Zionism*, 171–88.

40. "Hartza'at ha-Dr. Shmaryahu Ha-Levi," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 6(46) (Sept. 5, 1913), 3–5. Emphasis added.

41. Ibid.

42. Ahad Ha'am to Shmaryahu Levin, Dec. 30, 1913, CZA A20, file 56. Emphasis in the original.

43. Levin to board members from the United States, Nov. 3, 1913, CZA A20, file 56.

44. The central committee of the Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir organization, "Le-Havrei Histadrutenu," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 7(6) (Nov. 21, 1913), 3. Emphases in the original.

45. Pinhas Cohen to Elias Auerbach, 30 Tishrei 5674/Oct. 31, 1913, CZA A20, file 51.

46. Ibid.

47. J. L. Magnes to Jacob Schiff, Nov. 11, 1913. CZA A20, file 56.

48. Shmaryahu Levin to the American members of the Kuratorium [board of trustees], Nov. 3, 1913. CZA A20, file 56.

49. See CZA A20, file 56.

50. Luria (for the Hebrew Teachers' Association) to the members of the Odessa Committee, 20 Tamuz 5674/July 14, 1914, CZA A24, file 50.

51. Ephraim Blumenfeld, "Zichronot u-Reshamim (Mukdashim la-Talmidim ha-Shovtim)," *Ha-Ahdut* 5(8) (6 Kislev 5674/Dec. 5, 1913), 3–10.

52. "Al Ha-Perek," *Ha-Ahdut* 5(6) (21 Heshvan 5674/Nov. 21, 1913), 1–3.

53. See, for example, the Teachers' Association Central Office (signed by Luria and Mossinson) to the members of the Kuratorium of the Haifa Technical Institute, 29 Tamuz 5673/Aug. 3, 1913, CZA A20, file 54.

54. Teachers' Association flier, 3 Kislev 5674/Dec. 2, 1913, CZA A 20, file 54.

55. Zerubavel, "Me-Inyanei De-Yoma," *Ha-Ahdut* 5(7) (28 Heshvan 5674/Nov. 28, 1913), 4–9. See also N. Goldberg in "Le-She'elat ha-Avoda," *Ha-Ahdut* 5(10–11) (27 Kislev 5674/Dec. 26, 1913), 10–16.

56. During the war years, Zichron Ya'akov would in fact become a center of bitter and even violent conflict between some of its native sons, especially those who formed the NILI underground (whose name was an acronym for *Netzah Yisra'el lo Yeshaker*—the glory of Israel does not deceive [I Samuel 15:29]) and Ha-Shomer, to whom Zerubavel was close.

57. Zerubavel, "Me-Inyanei De-Yoma," *Ha-Ahdut* 5(7) (28 Heshvan 5674/Nov. 28, 1913), 9.

58. Earlier expression of concern regarding French include: Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, "*Hevrat 'ha-Ezra,'*" *Hashkafa* 8(49) (5 Nissan 5667/Mar. 20, 1907), 3; Hemda Ben-Yehuda, "She'at Ha-Kosher," *Ha-Tzevi* 25(16) (4 Heshvan 5669/Oct. 29, 1908), 1; (unsigned), "She'elot (Me'et Po'el she-Nit'aker)," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 1(6) (Second Adar 5668/Mar.–Apr. 1908), 5–8; Yanait, "Le-She'elat ha-Kultura be-Eretz Yisra'el," *Ha-Ahdut* 2(18) (26 Shevat 5671/Jan. 26, 1911), 14–17. Alter Druyanov to Ussishkin, Nov. 19, 1907, CZA A24, file 41.

There is also an extensive body of correspondence on the Alliance and its schools, with a palpable surge during the two years prior to the outbreak of hostilities against the Hilfsverein in CZA A46, file 17. The only substantial defense of the Alliance came from some of the editorials in *Ha-Herut*, which at times considered the general hostility an indication of excessive and somewhat chauvinistic zeal. See "Misterei Torat ha-Kana'ut," *Ha-Herut* 1(10) (June 11, 1909), 1.

59. Ephraim Komerov to Ussishkin, 6 Heshvan 5674/Nov. 6, 1913, CZA A24, file 44.

60. Hanna Radovilsky to Menahem Ussishkin, 19 Shevat 5674/Feb. 15, 1914, CZA A24, file 44.

61. "Ha-Shavu'a," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 7(13) (Jan. 9, 1914), 16.

62. The Committee for the Fortification of Hebrew Education in Haifa, "Kol Koreh," CZA A192, file 1271.

63. Talmid, "'Yom Ezra,'" *Ha-Ahdut* 5(9) (13 Kislev 5674/Dec. 12, 1913), 19–21.

64. One study that has examined this reshaping of the public sphere through festivals and celebrations is Yaacov Shavit and Shoshana Sitton, *Staging and Stagers in Modern Jewish Palestine: The Creation of Festive Lore in a New Culture, 1882–1948* (Detroit, 2004).

65. Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (New York, 1986), 206.

66. Ibid.

NOTES TO CONCLUSION

1. Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, "Ha-Shana ha-Ivrit," *Ha-Or* 5(1) (15 Tamuz 5674/July 9, 1914), 1.

2. Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, "Ha-Pera'ot be-Homel" [The Pogrom in Gomel], *Hashkafa* 5(3) (25 Tishrei 5664/Oct. 16, 1903), 17. See chapter 1, this volume.

3. See Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (New York, 1989), 9; cf. Mona Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution*, trans. Alan Sheridan (Cambridge, 1988), 268: "To replace was first of all to imitate.... The new religion, like the old, had to have its sacred center, the altar of the fatherland...."

4. Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York, 1984), 3.

5. Kenneth Benjamin Moss, "'A Time for Tearing Down and a Time for Building Up': Recasting Jewish Culture in Eastern Europe, 1917–1921" (PhD diss., Stanford University, 2003), 1.

6. This, of course, helps to explain the profound weight of the Uganda affair for the Yishuv's Zionists and the reasons why it had such shattering (and eventually defining) implications for this process of culture making in Palestine.

7. Moss, "A Time for Tearing Down," 8–9. See also Kenneth Benjamin Moss, "Jewish Culture between Renaissance and Decadence: *Die literarishe Monatsshriften* and Its Critical Reception," *Jewish Social Studies* 8(1) (Fall 2001): 153–54.

8. The irony in this distinction, of course, is that the apparent elitism of the eastern European look to high culture was accompanied there by a turn to "the folk" that was manifested, for example, in the frequent emphasis on Yiddish as the language of the folk and on folklore as the would-be expression of the people's spirit, and hence the source of new quasi-sacral authority. As the Yiddish playwright and folklorist S. Ansky would see it, for example, the importance of the ethnographic expeditions he led throughout the Russian Empire between 1910 and 1914 lay in their unearthing of new Jewish oral traditions which were "like the Bible, the product of the Jewish spirit." (See David G. Roskies, introduction to S. Ansky, *The Dybbuk and Other Writings*, ed. David G. Roskies (New York, 1992), xxiv. This bottom-up approach to the reconstruction of Jewish culture stands in marked contrast to the Zionist project of nationalizing would-be masses through the two principal vehicles of a land in which those masses did not reside and a language that was in fact the language of the Jewish elite.

9. Barbara Mann, *A Place in History: Modernism, Tel Aviv, and the Creation of Jewish Urban Space* (Stanford, 2006), 5.

10. Ibid., 6.

11. Meir Wilkansky, "Mi-Yemei ha-Aliya", *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir*, 4(23–24) (September 20, 1911): 18–22.

12. Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, trans. Willard R. Trask (San Diego, 1959), 51–52. Emphasis in the original.

13. This mystical standing of the land in Zionist liturgy as it would develop in these years seems a principal distinguishing marker setting it apart from territorialism as a rival Jewish nationalism and a competing understanding of Jewish modernity. It is one piece in explaining the divisions between Ugandists and Paletinocentrists at the outset of the period. Cf. Eliezer Schweid, *The Land of Israel: National Home or Land of Destiny*, trans. Deborah Greniman (New York, 1985), 110–111: "The two images of the land of Israel to which Zionism, as a modern nationalist movement had given rise, appeared antithetical rather than complementary. The image of the people's home, associated with the unity of the national past, stood opposed to the territorial image associated with political independence, representing the perspective of the future."

Ancient Jewish conceptions which, as Moshe Idel argues, were long suppressed in Rabbinic sources and reemerged in medieval Kabbalah, cast the Jewish relationship to the Land of Israel as one of a mystical, sexualized bond. It seems plausible to see the sexualized imagery of mystical bond to the land in Palestinian Zionism as emerging, at least in part, from this ancient tradition. See Moshe Idel, "The Land of Israel in Medieval Kabbalah," in *The Land of Israel: Jewish Perspectives*, ed. Lawrence A. Hoffman (Notre Dame, Ind., 1986), 170–87. For an elaboration of some related themes, see also Arieh Bruce Saposnik, "Exorcising the 'Angel of National Death': National and Individual Death (and Rebirth) in Zionist National Liturgy in Palestine, 1903–1914," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 95(3) (Summer 2005): 557–78.

14. Yael Zerubavel, *Recovered Roots: Collective Memory and the Making of Israeli National Tradition* (Chicago, 1995), 33–34; cf. Yosef Salmon, " 'Hadesh Yameinu ke-Kedem': Mitos Tzioni," in *Ha-Mitos ba-Yahadut: Historia, Hagut, Sifrut*, ed. Moshe Idel and Itamar Gruenwald (Jerusalem, 2004), 207–21.

15. Ibid., 24.

16. Eliade, *Sacred and the Profane*, 95.

17. Karl Löwith argues that modern historical understanding is in any case a quasi-secularized adaptation of Hebrew and Christian traditions of historical telos in which redemption, conceived at least at times as a return to the primordial, stands at the end of the road. "The secular messianism of Western nations," he writes, "is in every case associated with the consciousness of a national, social, or racial vocation which has its roots in the religious belief of being called by God to a particular task of universal significance." Karl Löwith, *Meaning in History* (Chicago, 1949), 225.

18. George L. Mosse, *The Nationalization of the Masses: Political Symbolism and Mass Movements in Germany from the Napoleonic Wars through the Third Reich* (Ithaca, 1991), 2.

19. Sidra DeKoven Ezrahi, *Booking Passage: Exile and Homecoming in the Modern Jewish Imagination* (Berkeley, 2002), 16. Stephen A. McKnight has argued that these tensions between secular and sacred and between the material and de-materialized are inherent in the very project of modernity, beginning with its early stirrings in the Renaissance. The reconceptualizations of time, history, and geography that characterized Renaissance thinking and that, as he argues, would shape modern conceptions reflected not "a breaking away of the secular from the sacred", but rather "an immanentization that blurs the fundamental distinctions between the sacred and the secular." Stephen A. McKnight, *Sacralizing the Secular: The Renaissance Origins of Modernity* (Baton Rouge, 1989), 15.

20. David Yudilovitz, "Gan ha-Yeladim ha-Ivri ha-Rishon," in *Sefer ha-Yovel shel Histadrut ha-Morim be-Eretz Yisra'el* (Jerusalem, 1929), 155. Cf. the conceptualization of Zionist thought as rooted in a modern Gnosticism in Yotam Hotam, *Gnosis Moderni ve-Tzionut: Mashber ha-Tarbut, Filosofiyat ha-Hayim ve-Hagut Le'umit Yehudit* (Jerusalem, 2007).

21. Peter Burke, *Varieties of Cultural History* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1997), 189.

22. Clifford Geertz, "Religion as a Cultural Symbol," in *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York, 1973), 89.

23. See, e.g., David Cnaani, *Ha-Aliya ha-Sheniya ha-Ovedet ve-Yahasa la-Dat ve-la-Masoret* (Tel Aviv, 1976), 32.

24. Alain Dieckhoff, *The Invention of a Nation: Zionist Thought and the Making of Modern Israel* (New York, 2003).

25. See, for example, ibid., 26.

26. Eli Lederhendler, *Jewish Responses to Modernity: New Voices in America and Eastern Europe* (New York, 1994), 2. See also Ezra Mendelsohn, *On Modern Jewish Politics* (New York, 1993), 5. Mendelsohn's typology makes it clear that Jewish "politics"—within the Zionist context and beyond it—was an attempt to shape Jewish life in all of its aspects.

27. Dieckhoff, for example, while critical of Hans Kohn's classical distinction between a Western political nationalism and an Eastern cultural form, nevertheless perpetuates a notion that the political and the cultural are "two separate stages... in any national movement." See Dieckhoff, *Invention of a Nation*, 100.

28. I am grateful to Don Handelman for this formulation.

29. Michel Vovelle, *Ideologies and Mentalities*, trans. Eamon O'Flaherty (Chicago, 1990), 12.

30. Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion, and Nationalism* (New York, 1997), 187.

31. Ibid.

32. See Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870–1914* (Stanford, 1976). Of course, the processes of modernization (of which this transformation was a part) did at times entail the geographical uprooting of many of them from rural areas to Paris and other urban centers.

33. Anthony D. Smith, *Chosen Peoples: Sacred Sources of National Identity* (New York, 2003), 6.

34. See the editors' introduction in Geoff Eley and Ronald Grigor Suny, eds., *Becoming National: A Reader* (New York, 1996), 23.

35. Smith, *Chosen Peoples*, 16.

36. Mosse, *Nationalization of the Masses.*

37. See Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1983), 56, and the introduction to this book.

38. Marc Bloch, *The Historian's Craft* (New York, 1953), 39–40.

39. Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (New York, 1990), 10–11.

40. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (New York, 1983). See in particular Hobsbawm's chapter in that volume, "Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870–1914," 263–307.

41. An important recent effort in this direction is Gur Alroey's *Immigrantim: Ha-Hagira ha-Yehudit le-Eretz Yisra'el be-Reshit ha-Me'ah ha-Esrim* (Jerusalem, 2004).

42. Cf. Eley and Suny, *Becoming National*, 22.

43. The phrase "becoming national" is adopted from the anthology edited by Eley and Suny, *Becoming National.*

44. Y. L-N., "Be-Olamenu," *Ha-Po'el Ha-Tza'ir* 8(19–20) (Aug. 24, 1915), 6–7.

45. Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen*, 493.

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