

Was There a "Jerusalem School"? An Inquiry into the First Generation of Historical Researchers at The Hebrew University

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The history of historical writing, Herbert Butterfield announces in *Man on his Past*, "involves an enquiry into the manner in which men have changed their sentiment for the past, their feeling about the bonds which link one generation with another; their sense of time and their awareness that they are part of the long, unceasing stream of history."¹ This symposium marks a welcome, if somewhat belated, acceptance of Sir Herbert's challenge to study how and why perceptions and representations of the Jewish past have varied so widely over time. The urgency of such a task has only increased in the postmodern world, in which the most fundamental assumptions about literary and historical representation—for instance, the possibility of objectivity, the validity of authorial intent—are being called into question.² In fact, the intense scrutiny of, and attendant skepticism about, the authorial (or historiographical) claim to truth has produced a heightened sensitivity to the vagaries of interpretation, a sensitivity that is no doubt manifested in the essays comprising this volume.

Infused by this sensitivity, the history of modern Jewish historiography must trace the shifting sentiments that both link and divide generations in their views of the past. Toward that end, one would be well advised to take note of an apparent anomaly: namely, that the first generation of modern Jewish scholars, members of the Verein für Cultur und Wissenschaft der Juden, emerged in an era when that past was generally seen as following the contours of the *Volk*—the dignified nation whose cultural and political creativity was organically rooted in the soil of its homeland.³ Yet at a time when the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* was first being collected (with the declared mission of deepening love for the fatherland), the members of the Verein had fixed their gaze not on a material, territorial Jewish nation, but on the more ethereal spiritual force of Judaism. Their historical line of vision was shaped by, and mirrored, their own self-definition as Jews, as members of a *religious* community (*Religionsgemeinschaft*).

Conversely, when a new national sentiment began to excite European Jews later in the nineteenth century, the resulting reformulation of group identity seemed to warrant a realignment of historical vision. It now appeared that Jewish scholarship would conform to the model of historiography as the story of a nation. Indeed, this expectation inspired the proto-nationalist Peretz Smolenskin as early as 1869 in his call for a historical-ethnographic study of the "ways of the people."⁴ It later informed the autonomist Simon Dubnow in his "sociological" corrective of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, as well as Yiddishist scholars in their investigations of Jewish demography, and social and economic history.⁵ And it also undergirded the programmatic agenda of the first generation of scholars at the Institute of Jewish Studies (IJS) of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Yet before accepting uncritically the idea of an ideological and historiographical *bouleversement*, it seems sensible to recall that programmatic assertions of dramatic change are not always realized. The truism that revolutions often turn full circle to the original point of departure wisely recognizes that theory and praxis are rarely confluent. Nationalist movements that promise their adherents a transformation of objective reality do not necessarily effect that transformation. Nor do they embody an eternal and organic essence, as partisans often maintain. Indeed, students of nationalism have observed that the once-standard attributes of national status (land or language) may be less significant in defining a national group than are the shifting ideological or mythic constructs of elite propagandists.⁶ According to this argument, national identity is to a great extent a function of subjective imagining, of a concerted effort to invent a national history on which to base future action.

While important in challenging "foundationalist" claims to national identity, this mode of analysis is also significant for undermining the claims of nationalist ideologues that they speak in the name of a large and undifferentiated collectivity. There is, of course, a danger in such a leveling instinct, one that was apprehended before the current scholarly generation by a prescient, turn-of-the-century thinker with a special interest in Jewish nationalism: Max Nordau. It is not Nordau's close partnership with Theodor Herzl in Zionist affairs that merits attention here. It is rather his attempt to "deconstruct" the notion of objectivity in history and in group definition. In his *The Interpretation of History*, published in 1909, Nordau not only chastened the great Leopold von Ranke for his naive desire to "extinguish the Self" in order to render the reality of things; he also objected to an enterprise such as *Völkerpsychologie* (pioneered by two Jews, Moritz Lazarus and Heymann Steinthal), which grinds diverse individual psychologies into an undifferentiated mass.⁷ Nordau pointed out the idiosyncratic inheritances of every individual, each a knowing subject who observes and participates in the world. Though hardly the first or most persuasive exponent of this view, Nordau is significant precisely because he was able to see through his own identity as scholar and Zionist to the problematic nature of historical interpretation, especially when it involved assertions of group coherence.

Embedded in nineteenth-century historicist thought, his insights serve as a necessary, if sometimes banal, reminder of the complexity of group identity formation. When applied to the theme of this essay, Nordau's insights encourage a careful

evaluation of the "Jerusalem school," a term denoting the movement of Jewish nationalist scholars who assembled at the Hebrew University from the mid-1920s.

The term "Jerusalem school" has entered the parlance of contemporary Jewish historical research as the designation for a more or less coherent scholarly movement possessed of a set of shared assumptions and methodologies and inspired by a single ideological fundament: Zionism. For some observers (usually in the diaspora), affiliation with the "Jerusalem school" is regarded in censorious terms, as submission to a rigid and parochial interpretation of the past whose institutional embodiment is the Hebrew University.⁸ For others (usually those in Jerusalem), the designation is one of approbation, meant to herald a movement of objective and unapologetic historical research. Indeed, when celebrants of the sixtieth anniversary of the Institute of Jewish Studies gathered in Jerusalem in 1984, they spoke admiringly of the vanguard role played by the "Jerusalem school" in opening new vistas of interpretation and analysis onto the Jewish past.⁹

The relative ease with which the term is bandied about by Jewish researchers today belies its obscure origins. In a memorandum from December 23, 1926, the Galician-born scholar of Islam, L. A. Mayer, wrote of his ardent desire that a "Jerusalem scientific school" soon arise.¹⁰ In the midst of a pitched debate over the proper balance between research and teaching at the newly established Hebrew University, Mayer chose to emphasize neither the ideological conformity of such a school nor its prospective function in shaping a new national memory. Rather, he placed stress on the potential of a "Jerusalem school" to elevate the *wissenschaftliche* standards of Jewish scholarship. While this aspiration was widely shared by scholars in Jerusalem, Mayer's terminology was not. That is to say, researchers at the nascent university, regardless of their own sense of national mission, had precious little consciousness of belonging to a discrete "Jerusalem school." However, over the course of decades, the term was endowed by scholars and critics with a set of fixed meanings and a degree of coherence that it initially lacked.

If this brief *Rezeptionsgeschichte* reveals a greater complexity and multivalence in the term "Jerusalem school," then a useful task has been performed. As Max Nordau might have argued, the very appellation "school," connoting a uniform body of methods or assumptions, often conceals a considerable diversity of views. One need only think of the Prussian or *Annales* "schools" of historiography, or the "Yale school" of literary criticism, to be reminded of the imprecision involved in assembling different and even competing positions under one terminological roof. The "Jerusalem school" is no different. Its putative representatives reflect a vast array of opinions, methodologies, temperaments and cultural backgrounds that render the term somewhat nebulous. To reduce this profusion to a single Zionist voice—for instance, to that of Yudke, the legendary protagonist of Hayim Hazaz's short story, "Haderashah"—is to confuse undisguised propaganda with the manifold perspectives of distinct scholars, some of whom were extraordinarily sophisticated in method and conceptualization. Yudke's oft-quoted declaration that he "opposed Jewish history"—a history of passivity and oppression—does indeed resonate with prominent strains of Zionist thought, specifically those that advocated the "negation

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Beyond the rather prosaic observation that the term "school" tends to obscure meaningful differences lies a more specific, even counterintuitive insight. For almost all who have use for the term, the "Jerusalem school" represents a deliberate and radical break with previous generations of Jewish scholars, particularly with the adepts of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* in nineteenth-century Germany.¹³ The shift in the locus of Jewish scholarship from Europe to Palestine in the first half of the twentieth century was not simply geographic. A genuine paradigm shift, it would seem, had occurred. The object of research was no longer Judaism, the religious tradition, in its glorious literary evolution. It was now the Jewish nation, a decidedly material entity whose existence was measured in social, economic—even political—as well as intellectual terms. Researchers who came to Palestine in the 1920s, though they did not instantaneously regard themselves as a coherent school, nonetheless saw a therapeutic potential in the long-awaited return to Zion. Indeed, by returning to the ancient national homeland, they were, in a sense, effecting a fusion of the subject and object of Jewish history, of the critical observer and active participant. They were, as some imagined it, on the path of return to history *itself* after millennia of alienation in exile.¹⁴

In contemporary terms, it would appear that the scholars in Jerusalem were embarked on a mission to invent their national community. The shift from religious faith to *Volk* as the source of study and collective identity rested on their belated Romanticism, a perspective not fully developed in the *Verein für Cultur und Wissenschaft der Juden* of the early nineteenth century. As Gershom Scholem remembers, his colleagues succeeded where their predecessors had failed in articulating "a new attitude to the past, a celebration of the splendor and glory of the past in and of itself, an evaluation of sources in a new light and with due consideration of popular forces, and above all—a turn to the study of the people and nation."¹⁵

And yet the story of the Jerusalem scholars, as Scholem himself acknowledged, is a good deal more complicated than one of utter novelty. Often enough, unequivocal claims by those intent on establishing new paradigms of knowledge shield a fractious process of reformulation. Thomas Kuhn warns that "the road to a firm research consensus is extraordinarily arduous," oftentimes strewn with "old data that lie ready to hand."¹⁶ An examination of the Jewish scholars who migrated to Jerusalem in the 1920s confirms the complex nature of shaping new scholarly paradigms. While programmatically asserting radical innovations against a previous scholarly model, they were unable to disentangle themselves entirely from their past. With one exception (David Yellin), there were no native-born Jewish scholars to staff a national institution of Jewish learning and research in Palestine. Rather, the first generation of Jerusalem scholars came from Europe, where the vast majority had either studied or taught in German rabbinical seminaries—the very bastions of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. From these seminaries, they brought models of organization and disciplinary priorities that were subsequently reflected in the development of the Institute of Jewish Studies.

The link to these older models and priorities was reinforced by the prominent

role of diaspora Jews in overseeing the Hebrew University. It was not simply a matter of Zionist authorities such as Chaim Weizmann seeking to control university affairs from London.¹⁷ It was also the active involvement of non-Zionists (Adolph Büchler; the French Grand Rabbin, Israel Lévi; and Felix Warburg, for example) in supporting and administering the IJS. The involvement of these non-Zionists, and their potential to influence personnel appointments, prompted one frustrated Zionist to describe the Institute of Jewish Studies as a “proper ‘Gelus’ institution,” an ersatz rabbinical seminary in Jerusalem.¹⁸

In addition to the organizational and institutional links to the diaspora, there are other abiding continuities between the scholars in Jerusalem and their European forebears. Both generations, seemingly oblivious to their own ideological predisposition, manifested an anxious, even compulsive reliance on the standard of scientific objectivity. Indeed, Immanuel Wolf’s pronouncement in the opening pages of the *Zeitschrift für die Wissenschaft des Judentums* in 1822 that “*Wissenschaft* is alone above the partisanship, passions, and prejudices of the base life” was frequently reiterated over the course of a century—and beyond.¹⁹ The unrelenting allegiance to scientific validation suggests that no “crisis of historicism,” no exposé of the frailties of the historiographical medium per se, attended the move from diaspora to Zion.²⁰ The continuum is clearly illustrated in the nomenclature of Jewish studies. In Germany, Jewish scholars designated their labors *Wissenschaft des Judentums*; in Palestine, scholars intent on overcoming the biases and limitations of their predecessors chose a name, *mada’ei hayahadut*, reminiscent—in fact, it is a nearly literal translation—of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*.²¹

What this confluence reveals is yet another negative attribute (in the tradition of medieval theological proofs of the Divine) of the “Jerusalem school.” So far, it has been suggested that the “Jerusalem school” was *not* a term uniformly embraced by the first generation of Jewish historical researchers at the Hebrew University. Nor did these researchers ever produce a monolithic methodological or conceptual position. Nor, for that matter, did they represent a complete rupture with past generations of Jewish scholars. Indeed, to gain insight into the first generation at the IJS, it is essential to acknowledge the gap between their own programmatic assertions and actual scholarly practices—or alternatively, between the goal of national consciousness-raising and adherence to existing professional norms.

In exploring these gaps more fully, reference will be made not to a “Jerusalem school” but rather to a looser aggregate of “Jerusalem scholars”—a group born in Eastern and Central Europe in the last quarter of the nineteenth century who immigrated to Palestine in the 1920s and 1930s. These scholars represented the founding generation of professional Jewish historical research at the Hebrew University.²² They also constitute an intriguing mix of innovation and continuity that necessarily complicates any descriptive account. As such, the Jerusalem scholars shed important light on a broader historical context. For they offer a microcosmic view of the dialectical relationship to the past that has animated the Zionist movement throughout its historical development.²³

The idea of an institution of higher learning in Palestine that could provide a stable foundation for Jewish scholarship antedated the actual founding of the Hebrew

University by more than a century. The formal establishment of the Hebrew University as the official patron of the Jewish community in Palestine, Hermann Zvi Schapira, in the mid-life to become a prominent figure in the 1880s, Schapira began to develop the idea of a Jewish institution of higher learning, theology, theoretical science, and philosophy, a product of a man at the height of his Zionism, did not become a reality until subsequent plans spoke of a Jewish and/or rabbinical study in the matter of the proper name for the preferred German at the Hebrew University, a serious academic discourse, an indispensable agent of the Jewish university.

Despite Schapira’s vision of the idea of an institution of higher learning, the Congress in 1897. His vision, with thunderous applause, was translated into concrete action. Of the twentieth century, theocratic Faction, attempted to transform the Organization into a quasi-religious cultural matters.²⁷ But the Zionist Organization, which sought to explore the possibility of a Jewish university, argued that a place of refuge for access to higher education, a university in more proximity to Jewish culture, an expansive spectrum of Jewish university in Palestine, a process. Interestingly, in Palestine were Baron Edmond de Rothschild, Ehrlich. What elicited the potential to establish a general center of academic research.

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University by more than forty years.²⁴ It also preceded by a decade and a half the formal establishment of the World Zionist Organization, which would become the official patron of the university in its embryonic stages. The first proponent was Hermann Zvi Schapira, a Lithuanian-born rabbi who, remarkably, shifted careers in mid-life to become a professor of mathematics at Heidelberg University. In the early 1880s, Schapira began to advocate in the Russian Hebrew newspaper, *Hameliz*, the idea of a Jewish institute of higher learning in Palestine consisting of three faculties: theology, theoretical science, and applied science.²⁵ This particular conception, the product of a man at the crossroads of Lithuanian rabbinism, Haskalah and incipient Zionism, did not become the dominant paradigm for the Jerusalem university. Most subsequent plans spoke of a secular institution that deliberately excluded theological and/or rabbinical studies.²⁶ Schapira's plan also differed from those that followed in the matter of the proposed language of instruction. The Heidelberg mathematician preferred German at this stage, deeming Hebrew an unsuitable language for rigorous academic discourse. Later proposals routinely insisted that Hebrew, as an indispensable agent of Jewish national revival, be the language of instruction at a Jewish university.

Despite Schapira's somewhat archaic, *maskilic* notions, it was he who presented the idea of an institution of higher learning in Palestine to the inaugural Zionist Congress in 1897. His short speech was greeted, according to the official protocol, with thunderous applause. However, this spontaneous expression of support was not translated into concrete action by the fledgling Zionist movement. In the first years of the twentieth century, a small group of Zionist dissidents, known as the Democratic Faction, attempted to follow up on Schapira's call and prod the Zionist Organization into quicker action both on the matter of the university and on other cultural matters.²⁷ But it was not until 1913, at the Eleventh Congress, that the Zionist Organization as a body took significant steps by appointing a committee to explore the possibility of purchasing land for a Jewish university in Jerusalem.

Throughout its history, the stimuli behind the university idea were varied. Some supporters argued that the primary importance of a Jewish university was to serve as a place of refuge for students, especially from Eastern Europe, who were denied access to higher education in their native countries. Others saw the utility of a university in more proactive terms, as a vehicle to advance the ongoing nationalization of Jewish culture. The effort to generate a holistic national culture covered an expansive spectrum of activities including art, music, literature and scholarship. A university in Palestine, it was believed, could be of great value in hastening this process. Interestingly, among the supporters of a Jewish institution of higher learning in Palestine were a number of self-consciously non-Zionist figures such as the Baron Edmond de Rothschild and the German Nobel laureate in chemistry, Paul Ehrlich. What elicited the support of these non-Zionists was the perceived need and potential to establish both a world center of Jewish academic research and also a general center of academic research staffed by Jews.²⁸

An important affirmation of this impulse comes from another non-Zionist, Ismar Elbogen, a fixture in German Jewish scholarly circles in the early twentieth century. Elbogen, who was a professor of history and homiletics at the Hochschule/Lehranstalt für die Wissenschaft des Judentums in Berlin, joined efforts with two

colleagues in 1922 to create a new scholarly journal in Berlin in the Hebrew language. While both of Elbogen's coeditors, Jacob Nahum Epstein and Harry Torczyner, moved to Palestine, Elbogen himself turned down an offer in 1938 to teach at the Hebrew University, choosing instead to settle in the United States. Earlier, however, he had proclaimed the imperative of rooting Jewish scholarship in Palestine. Writing in a stiff Hebrew style in the second issue of the Berlin journal *Devir*, Elbogen announced:

Finally the time has arrived for the national consciousness of the Jewish people in the broadest and most refined sense of the word—to begin to honor the national literature. . . . The ultimate goal will be achieved with the opening of the Hebrew University and Academy in Eretz Israel, which gathers within it all of the spiritual aspirations of the Jewish people, and will shed much light and wisdom. With this change of status, the question for Jewish studies of using the Hebrew language becomes a question of survival. Only in [Hebrew] can the proper expression for the development of each and every discipline and science be found; and only through its aid can a natural connection to living Judaism be found.²⁹

Elbogen expressed the hope that contact with the ancient national homeland and language would render Jewish scholars and their work relevant to a vital, present-day Judaism. His optimism belied a deep frustration over the relegation of Jews, in general, and Jewish scholars, in particular, to the margins of gentile society, even in the cultured ambiance of Weimar Germany. Elbogen seemed to challenge the century-old social contract of Jewish emancipation that mandated the bifurcation of identities into religious and national, private and public realms. He was no longer convinced that Jewish scholarship could flourish in the private domain of the rabbinical seminary; consequently, it must forge its way into the public domain of a national university. It was there that the most comprehensive view of the Jewish past could be obtained. And it was only there, Elbogen seemed to imply, that the Jewish historian could overcome two millennia of alienation in the diaspora.

Such a set of suppositions is quite striking when issuing from the pen of a doyen of Wissenschaft des Judentums in Germany. These views may well have reflected Elbogen's encounter with scholars from Eastern and East Central Europe such as J. N. Epstein and Harry Torczyner, with whom he shared editorial responsibilities for *Devir*. The presence of these scholars and, more generally, Jewish writers and intellectuals from Eastern Europe, in postwar Berlin ignited a new interest in the idea of Jewish nationalism among German Jewish scholars. This was true not only of the best-known cases (Gershom Scholem and Ernst Simon, for example) but also of older and more established figures such as Ismar Elbogen and Julius Guttmann.³⁰ Frustration with the unrealized ideal of full social integration into German society spread beyond the circle of hardened Zionists to the less ideologically inclined. Elbogen's words in *Devir* are testimony that, even prior to Jerusalem, scholars had already begun to demonstrate a shift in ideological underpinnings. Indeed, the fleeting convergence of scholars from East and West in Berlin, with its clear "dis-simulatory" effects, anticipated a more lasting meeting in Jerusalem.³¹

The aspiration to unite East and West and, as Ismar Elbogen had urged, to return to the point of historical origins was in the air in Jerusalem on December 22, 1924.

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On that day, the Institute of Jewish Studies of the Hebrew University was formally inaugurated on barren Mount Scopus.³² The rhetoric of the opening speakers expressed their sense that a historic moment was upon them. Paradoxically, the rhetoric also resounded with powerful religious tones—a fact that not only underscores the primal tension in Zionism between secular national and religious impulses, but signals the often convoluted process by which a new model of Jewish scholarship was proposed in Jerusalem. Judah L. Magnes, the American-born rabbi and first chancellor of the university, spoke of the institute as “a holy place, a sanctuary in which to learn and teach, without fear or hatred, all that Judaism has made and created from the time of the Bible.” He further relied on religious imagery when he equated the scientific study of the past with the traditional study of Torah: “We exult in the ideal of pure science; and there is no place in the world with a *genius loci* as suitable for Torah as Jerusalem.”³³ This conflation of modern scholarship and the core text of Jewish tradition bespoke a desire to reach back to the glorious national past of the Jewish people, to forge a bond between past and present, as well as between the ancient and modern land of Israel.

Magnes’ enthusiasm was echoed by Max Margolis, one of three professors to offer courses at the IJS in its inaugural year. In his opening lecture, Margolis declared that the location on which the institute was established, Mount Scopus, “from which we can see the [remnants of the] Temple—is a sanctuary for us.”³⁴ Only in this sacred location could Jewish culture be restored to its pristine glory. This milieu was particularly therapeutic for the study of the Bible, Margolis’ own scholarly interest. He noted with enthusiasm that “here is the place in which we can detach ourselves from any external influence in interpreting the Bible, which has come to us through a sacred spirit that has served us only in this land.”³⁵

Until that point, Jewish scholars in Europe had tended to avoid systematic and critical analyses of the Bible for several reasons: first, because of the deeply ingrained resistance of religious Jews to a method of study that implied a challenge to the divine origins of the Bible; and second, because of the suspicion that devotees of higher biblical criticism were set on demonstrating that the Hebrew Bible was surpassed in ethical virtue and moral authority by the New Testament.³⁶ In the face of this longstanding reticence, Max Margolis called for a modern *Jewish* reassessment of the Bible. This call, it would seem, was fully consonant with the aims of the broader Zionist movement to which Margolis, and the audience assembled on Mount Scopus, owed allegiance.

With the dawn of Zionism, the Bible was invested with new meaning, as the symbol and source of restored national glory in the land of Israel. Ahad Ha’am declared in 1895 that the Jewish *Volksgeist* was forged in the biblical era, and he insisted somewhat hyperbolically that “the key to the solution to all of our problems” lay in it as well.³⁷ Even more symptomatic of the Zionist veneration of the Bible was David Ben-Gurion, the political leader of the dominant Labor movement in the prestate Yishuv and Israel’s first prime minister. Ben-Gurion routinely took time from his schedule to conduct study sessions with prominent Bible scholars in Israel.³⁸ Moreover, he often placed contemporary acts—ranging from *’aliyah* (immigration), to the Israeli parliamentary statute stipulating army conscription—within ancient biblical molds. This recourse to biblical typologies was not merely a

strategy of legitimation. It stemmed from his sincere belief that the Jewish people possessed a "miraculous vitamin that preserves its existence, independence, and uniqueness—a vitamin whose source is in the Bible."³⁹

Given the decades-old adulation of the Bible, it is both ironic and curious that no permanent professor of Bible was appointed at the IJS for more than a decade and a half. One explanation for the torpid pace of development was the dearth of qualified candidates, understandable in light of the limited engagement of nineteenth-century Jewish scholars with critical Bible study. A more compelling explanation was the opposition of important diaspora overseers of the institute to critical approaches to the Bible. The chief rabbis of France and England, Israel Lévi and Joseph Hertz, both of whom were members of the governing council of the IJS, rejected use of the analytical tools of modern biblical criticism, preferring the more reverential approach of medieval commentators. Their opposition surfaced in deliberations over the first candidate proposed for the Bible position, Hirsch Peretz Chajes (himself a religiously observant Jew). It persisted in subsequent discussions of candidates throughout the 1930s (who included H. L. Ginsberg, Benno Jacob, Yehezkel Kaufmann, and Shalom Spiegel). At various times, the idea was advanced that, in order to break the impasse, two positions in Bible should be created: one for a traditional scholar and the other for a scholar steeped in critical methodology.⁴⁰ This idea was never implemented, and as a result, instruction was restricted throughout the 1930s to the later Writings and Pseudepigrapha—to the great dismay of those students at the institute who were anxious to study the Pentateuch itself.⁴¹

Only in 1938, fourteen years after the IJS's establishment, was a full-time Bible professor appointed: Umberto (Moshe David) Cassuto. Cassuto was an Italian polymath who had studied under Hirsch Peretz Chajes in Florence as well as at various Italian universities. Though appreciative of the acuity of some of the higher critics, Cassuto rejected without qualification the documentary hypothesis that informed much of modern biblical criticism. He attempted to explain apparent discrepancies in language, style, and story line in the biblical text not as the product of distinct authors or redactors, but as the convergence of different cultural traditions that nonetheless yielded a literary and ideational unity.⁴² Cassuto did open new scholarly vistas, especially in his use of midrashic and talmudic literature to illuminate the Bible. Yet it was not he who fulfilled Max Margolis' hopes for biblical studies in Jerusalem. Instead, it was Yehezkel Kaufmann, twice rejected for positions in Jerusalem, who was called from the Reali High School in Haifa to teach at the Hebrew University in 1949.

In his eight-volume *Toledot haemunah hayisreelit* (*The History of Israelite Faith*), Kaufmann argued that the "Israelite religion is apprehended here as an original creation of the Israelite nation . . . [which] is utterly distinct from all previous pagan creations."⁴³ Building upon this supposition, Kaufmann proceeded to offer a detailed reconstruction of nearly a millennium of Jewish history—from pre-Israelite paganism to the Hellenistic period. Some of the methods used, such as source criticism, had been developed by Christian Bible scholars. However, the conceptual framework was not in the least derivative; Judaism was no longer situated on a ladder of evolutionary development.⁴⁴ Thus, Kaufmann insisted that the ethical monotheism of the Prophets was not to be seen as a refinement of a cruder Israelite

religion. Nor was Ch. monotheism. Rather the birth of the Israelite religion was a process, and ideological reasons to teach in Jerusalem.

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religion. Nor was Christianity to be regarded as a more developed mode of Israelite monotheism. Rather, the genius of the monotheistic tradition was fully formed at the birth of the Israelite religion. With this conclusion undergirding *Toledot haemunaḥ hayisreelit*, Kaufmann laid the foundation for a biblical scholarship at once modern and Jewish. However, it must be recalled that, for a number of institutional and ideological reasons, it took a quarter of a century before Kaufmann was invited to teach in Jerusalem.

The story of biblical studies at the Institute of Jewish Studies suggests that the formation of a national scholarship in Jerusalem, liberated from the biases and inhibitions of the diaspora, was not instantly achieved. This point becomes even clearer when juxtaposed to the fate of Talmud studies and rabbinics in Jerusalem. In popular Zionist consciousness, the Bible and the Talmud occupied diametrically opposed positions: the Talmud symbolized a way of life associated with Jewish existence in exile, a rigid devotion to religious laws whose rationale was no longer self-evident; the Bible, by contrast, embodied the authenticity of a vital and healthy existence in the Jewish national homeland.

This hierarchy, however, was not translated into concrete institutional norms in the early years of the IJS. The fields of Talmud and rabbinics were represented in the institute's opening semester by Michael Guttman, a visiting professor from the Jüdisch-Theologisches Seminar in Breslau. By the second semester, a permanent faculty position was offered to and accepted by Jacob Nahum Epstein, Ismar Elbogen's collaborator in Berlin. Epstein was not alone. In the summer of 1925, he was joined by Simha Assaf, a Russian-born rabbi already in Palestine, as instructor in geonic literature. Over the next three years, the IJS faculty made unsuccessful attempts to recruit a number of other scholars of rabbinics who taught in European seminaries such as Victor (Avigdor) Aptowitz and Chanoch Albeck.

The strong institutional emphasis on Talmud and rabbinics requires further comment. On first glance, it would seem that Jacob Nahum Epstein, celebrated by Gershom Scholem as "the most eminent member of the institute's faculty," adequately represented the field in Jerusalem.⁴⁵ At the same time, the extent of student interest in the field of Talmud outpaced Epstein's capacities.⁴⁶ This interest may well have been a function of the fact that Talmud studies and rabbinics were central features of the existing model of Jewish scholarship. After all, they consumed a major portion of the traditional yeshivah curriculum. But they were also important, even dominant, curricular priorities in the modern rabbinical seminaries in Germany, Austria and Hungary. Moreover, critical research in these areas, at least from the time of Zacharias Frankel in the mid-nineteenth century, was well developed. One consequence was that talmudic and rabbinic literature, unlike critical Bible studies, had no shortage of qualified professional scholars.

The desire to make use of this pool of scholars and to perpetuate a major priority of Wissenschaft des Judentums were important objectives of the institute's diaspora overseers. Leading members of the IJS's governing council, such as its chairman, Chief Rabbi Joseph Hertz, proved far more interested in providing a solid institutional base for extant scholarly traditions than in overturning them. The emphasis on continuity, surprisingly, also informed the work of some scholars in Jerusalem. In his opening lecture at the IJS, Jacob Nahum Epstein maintained that the most

immediate effect of Zionism on his field of research was to invite an inventory of previous scholarly emphases. The main task that he outlined in this lecture was thus a critical edition of the Mishnah.⁴⁷ Yet Epstein had first undertaken this task in 1915 in Berlin, and he had devoted himself to it both prior to and following his immigration to Palestine.⁴⁸

Were one to chart Epstein's career, it would be difficult to identify a significant transformation in his research, that is, one initiated by a shift in geography or political consciousness. His work manifests a high degree of institutional and intellectual continuity between diaspora and Zion that is rarely recognized in discussions of modern Jewish historiography. This said, it would be misleading either to take Epstein as representative or to deny any innovation to the Jerusalem scholars. In the first five years of the IJS, a number of fields of study were incorporated that clearly reflected the influence of Zionism.

The first of these was Palestinology, or Palestine studies, which embraced the history, geography and topography of the land of Israel. There may have been no other field of study that had as much appeal to the Zionist public in Palestine. A recent observer, Meron Benvenisti, has written of the cult-like obsession guiding exploration of the land; it was impelled by a "search for rootedness, the need to turn the *geographica sacra* of the Diaspora into tangible reality, to make Eretz Israel a natural, not only a spiritual, homeland . . . to possess it through the senses by bodily contact with its soil, mountains, deserts, and streams."⁴⁹ The sensuous craving to know the ancient homeland converged with the political objective of claiming historical rights to it. The latter objective, in particular, had real urgency in the British Mandatory period, when the question of territorial sovereignty over Palestine hung in the balance. At this critical juncture, scholarship was mobilized to the task of fusing nation to land. Beyond the walls of the Hebrew University, this objective stood behind the activities of the Jewish Palestine Exploration Society, as well as other projects such as the multivolume *Sefer hayishuv*, which aimed to anthologize all historical references to Jewish settlement in the land of Israel.⁵⁰

Within the Institute of Jewish Studies, Palestine studies assumed an important place. A permanent professorship was established at the institute's opening, and was held from 1924 to 1940 by Samuel Klein (excepting a three-year absence). Klein was a Hungarian rabbi and scholar whose religious observance and training made him acceptable to the more traditional members of the IJS governing council. In addition to his university education in Berlin and Heidelberg, Klein had also studied at the Budapest Rabbinical Seminary and at the Orthodox Rabbinerseminar in Berlin. In fact, it was at the Rabbinerseminar that Klein first developed an interest in the historical geography of Palestine through courses with Hirsch Hildesheimer.⁵¹

It is curious to note that even Palestine studies, like most of the disciplines in the institute, had originated as a field of Jewish scholarship in Europe. It is also interesting that some of Samuel Klein's most overtly political writings were Hebrew pamphlets asserting the Jewish right to Palestine *prior* to his emigration from Europe.⁵² Still, there can be little doubt that the field of Palestine studies received a prominence and institutional support in Jerusalem that it never enjoyed in Berlin or Vienna. In Klein's first semester of teaching, student demand was so great that he decided to offer three large lecture courses rather than one. Moreover, the scope of

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Klein's research shifted considerably following the move to Palestine. Rather than work on highly detailed monographic studies in German or on short Hebrew pamphlets for high-school students, Klein now attempted to present the Jewish attachment to the land of Israel in its widest historical sweep. He wrote a history of Jewish settlement in Palestine from the fifth to the nineteenth centuries, and he planned a three-volume general history of Palestine (only two of which appeared). In introducing the latter, Samuel Klein made explicit what it was that he hoped to provide in his research: "one large testimony to ourselves, and before the nations of the world, that we never surrendered the right of existence in our land, and also testimony to the justice of our demand to build an eternal home in it like any people residing in its land."⁵³

In this context, it is worthwhile to recall Boyd Shafer's point that the first identifying criterion of a nationalist movement is the claim to "a certain defined (often vaguely) unit of territory (whether possessed or coveted)."⁵⁴ A corollary might hold that one of the primary tasks of a nationalist historiography is the scholarly assertion of a group's historical claim to a particular territory. Under Samuel Klein's control, Palestine studies at the IJS filled that function, focusing both on the centrality of the land of Israel in Jewish history as well as on the past, present, and *exclusive* right of Jews to its possession.

Another field of study that was integrally and explicitly related to the Zionist effort was Hebrew literature, especially in its modern incarnation. In the process of constructing a mythic national identity, both language and literature are often seen as repositories of a collective consciousness and creativity.⁵⁵ In the Jewish case, the revival of Hebrew as a spoken tongue and literary language was important as an emblem of the return of a vital Jewish nation to history. Thus, it would seem quite logical that a nationalist scholarly enterprise devote considerable effort to the study of Hebrew literature and language.

One of the first three permanent professorships at the IJS (along with Talmud and Palestine studies) was the modern Hebrew literature position established in 1925. While this appointment would seem to confirm the importance of the national literature, it actually masked a rather ambiguous institutional posture. The incumbent of the position, Joseph Klausner, was a Russian-born scholar who received his Ph.D. *summa cum laude* in Semitics from Heidelberg. Despite the imprimatur of a distinguished German university, Klausner was plagued throughout his career by the charge that he was a base popularizer willing to subordinate scholarly standards to nationalist ends.⁵⁶ It was because of this reputation that Klausner was denied a position that he desperately coveted in the field for which he believed himself to be professionally trained: the history of the Second Temple period. Not even the intervention of his unlikely friend and political rival, Judah L. Magnes, could convince the diaspora overseers of the IJS that Klausner was worthy of the Second Temple post.⁵⁷ As a concession, Magnes was able to arrange a professorship for Klausner in modern Hebrew literature; this topic, according to one of Klausner's diaspora opponents, Adolph Büchler, was "almost nonexistent," and hence less "dangerous" in his hands than Second Temple history.⁵⁸

Having been relegated to his second love, as he described it, Klausner nonetheless set out to establish a new foundation for the study of modern Hebrew litera-

ture.⁵⁹ His lectures marked the first time that a regular course of study had ever been offered in this field. They were also, by far, the most popular given at the institute. Students were drawn by the clarity of Klausner's bio-bibliographical account of Hebrew authors—an approach short on aesthetic evaluation and long on historical contextualization. The cycle of lectures given by Klausner formed the basis of his six-volume history of modern Hebrew literature.⁶⁰ Interestingly, the periodization underlying this work (and thus Klausner's lectures) does not comport to what might be regarded today as modern Hebrew literature. For while Klausner commenced his study with Naftali Herz Wessely's *Divrei shalom veemet* of 1782, he concluded with Mendele Mokher Seforim (1835–1917), the great Yiddish and Hebrew author. These temporal contours actually demarcate the literature of the pre-Zionist Haskalah movement more than the literature of the Zionist period. In fact, referees who read the first volume of Klausner's history suggested that its name be changed either to *The History of the Haskalah and Modern Literature* or to *The History of Modern Literature and Haskalah*.⁶¹

Klausner's equation of Haskalah and modern Hebrew literature was not accidental. Rather, it was informed by an important principle: the Haskalah was not merely penultimate to the Zionist era in time; it was an integral part of the historical current conducting the Jewish people back to the land of Israel. This principle effectively blurred the boundaries between Haskalah and Zionism and, consequently, between the diaspora and Palestine. Through his scholarly work, Klausner advanced an instrumental scheme in which pre-Zionist Hebrew writers were heralded for their preservation and affirmation of the national will to live. At its most reductionist, this appreciation took the form of the maxim that whoever wrote Hebrew necessarily affirmed Jewish national consciousness.⁶²

In casting the Haskalah as a station on the teleological path to Zion, Klausner was undermining, perhaps unwittingly, the claim that the diaspora must be "negated." Moreover, in arguing that any and all Hebrew writing bore a kernel of national spirit, Klausner was depicting a Jewish national culture that was far more expansive, in temporal or spatial terms, than might have been imagined. To be sure, it was far more expansive than Klausner's own political ideology, a staunch Revisionist Zionism, would have allowed.⁶³

This observation calls into question the notion of a neat correspondence between an individual's political and scholarly personae. In Klausner's case, neither his scholarship nor his politics won him a legion of admirers in Jerusalem. He attributed his low regard to an "antinationalist" cabal, comprised of German Jewish professors, that allegedly conspired within the university to control its affairs and deny him his proper place.⁶⁴ One of the leading members of the German group, by all accounts, was Gershom Scholem. Though there is no evidence that Scholem possessed or exerted the power to harm Klausner, it is clear that his own background and politics were quite different from that of the Russian-born professor. Scholem was the product of a highly assimilated German Jewish heritage against which he rebelled in assuming the course of Zionism. Whereas Klausner moved from East to West to acquire professional academic training, the direction of Scholem's cultural journey ran from West to East, from Berlin to Jerusalem.⁶⁵ And whereas Klausner espoused a "maximalist" territorial agenda for Zionism (Jewish control over both

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Despite their many differences, Zionism in legitimating that heightened sense of Haskalah period. For the inhibitions of their mysticism was regarded as Wissenschaft des Judentums exploration might promote social integration. He rendered these objects of Jerusalem could overtake subject such as mysticism

Given this belief, it challenged prevailing theories of the genesis of the Kabbalah. In the opinion of the eminent scholar, it was a failed attempt at writing as that of the determinate with certain sections [of the book] in his own name."⁶⁸

A decade later, Scholem announced that "I have announced that 'I have announced that the Spanish Kabbalah Zohar.'" ⁶⁹ The earlier new institutional and ideological motives. In a decade's careful study, a rash urge to undercut scholarship.

This shift should indicate the field of Jewish studies as a fierce opponent of Judaism. His opposition was also to the dynamic of Judaism as a static, unchanging was a dynamic, some currents. His primary most dynamic current:

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sides of the Jordan River), Scholem adhered to a cultural Zionism that sought reconciliation and peaceful coexistence with the Arab population of Palestine. Ironically, the two men not only found their way to the same institution, the Hebrew University; they formally joined its faculty on the same day. In fact, with their opening lectures of November 1, 1925, the two men inaugurated the study of two fields that had never been regularly taught in an institution of higher learning, Klausner teaching modern Hebrew literature and Scholem, Jewish mysticism.

Despite their many differences, both scholars recognized the salutary effect of Zionism in legitimating their respective areas of study. For Klausner, it was Zionism that heightened sensitivity to the germination of modern Hebrew letters in the Haskalah period. For Scholem, it was Zionism that liberated Jewish scholars from the inhibitions of their predecessors. Specifically, Scholem maintained that Jewish mysticism was regarded as an unworthy topic of investigation by nineteenth-century *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, for it embodied a nonrational side of Judaism whose exploration might prove detrimental to the objectives of political emancipation and social integration. However, the passage of time and emigration from Europe had rendered these objectives irrelevant. Shorn of the desire to assimilate, scholars in Jerusalem could overcome the fear and bias of their predecessors and pursue a subject such as mysticism without concern for gentile approval.⁶⁶

Given this belief, it is not surprising that Scholem set out in his opening lecture to challenge prevailing scholarly views about Jewish mysticism—in particular, about the genesis of the Kabbalah and its core text, the Zohar.⁶⁷ Scholem challenged the opinion of the eminent nineteenth-century historian, Heinrich Graetz, that the Zohar was a failed attempt by the thirteenth-century Moses de Leon to pass off his own writing as that of the second-century Shimon bar Yohai. While Scholem could not determine with certainty the authorship of the Zohar, he was convinced that "large sections [of the book] were in the hands of R. Moses before he began to write books in his own name."⁶⁸

A decade later, Scholem reconsidered his position. In a lecture of 1938, he announced that "I have come to accept in substance the contention of Graetz . . . that the Spanish Kabbalist Moses de Leon must be regarded as the author of the Zohar."⁶⁹ The earlier Scholem was clearly intent on setting Kabbalah studies on a new institutional and conceptual course, an impulse inspired by both personal and ideological motives. The later and more mature Scholem not only had the benefit of a decade's careful study to reevaluate the material in question; he had also lost the rash urge to undercut Graetz—one of the founding fathers of modern Jewish scholarship.

This shift should in no way diminish Scholem's monumental and dramatic ordering of the field of Jewish mysticism. After all, Scholem remained throughout his career a fierce opponent of received wisdoms, both scholarly and popular, about Judaism. His opposition was not only to a singular, halakhic definition of Judaism. It was also to the dogmatism of nineteenth-century German scholars who cast Judaism as a static, unchanging religious essence.⁷⁰ Judaism, in Scholem's eyes, was a dynamic, sometimes explosive *mélange* of different religious and social currents. His primary scholarly mission was to uncover the centrality of one of the most dynamic currents in that *mélange*: mysticism. Not coincidentally, this mission

was closely related to the ideological inspiration that Scholem received from Zionism. Both mysticism and Zionism were, for him, dynamic agents of change in Jewish history. He once recalled in an interview that, as a young man, "I wanted to enter the world of *kabbalah* out of my belief in Zionism as a living thing."⁷¹

Scholem and his most bitter critics would agree that Zionism empowered him to study the largely unexplored terrains of Jewish mysticism and messianism (including their convergence in the Sabbatian movement).⁷² But this recognition of the influence of Zionism in charting new territory should not be mistaken for a classically nationalist rendering of the past. In one important regard, Scholem defied the nationalist mode through and through: he did not place the Jewish nation at the core of his academic research. His interest remained, as for his predecessors of *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, the evolution of Jewish religious and spiritual expression. To be sure, Scholem focused on aspects of that development that had not been highlighted in previous research, especially on the enormous psychic and social force expended on messianic expectations and activism. But his vast scholarly efforts hardly yielded a picture of a glorious or unified Jewish *Volk*.

The most important disciplinary branch yet to be mentioned, and one that did place the Jewish nation at the center of its inquiry, was Jewish history. With the exception of Bible, all of the fields described so far—Talmud, Palestine studies, modern Hebrew literature and Jewish mysticism—were incorporated into the Institute of Jewish Studies within the first two years of its creation. By the end of 1926, appointments in Jewish law (Asher Gulak) and medieval Hebrew literature had also been made.⁷³ In the next year, a bitter conflict broke out in Jerusalem over a proposed chair in Yiddish, which pitted Joseph Klausner and other East Europeans against Gershom Scholem and a group of German academics and intellectuals. One of the arguments that ultimately decided the case against accepting the Yiddish chair in 1927 was that a number of more important fields had yet to be established in Jerusalem.⁷⁴ Most significant among them was the field of Jewish history.

Although it was recognized as a central component of Jewish studies in Jerusalem, there was no full-time professor or regular courses of instruction in Jewish history until 1930. Until that year, no suitable or willing candidate could be found, a fact that attests to the relative paucity of professionally trained Jewish historians. Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Jewish studies had a strong orientation toward philology, the painstaking literary and linguistic analysis of texts.⁷⁵ Only at the beginning of this century were other methods (social and economic history) and sources (archives) associated with the field of history systematically applied to the Jewish past. A critical figure in effecting the transition between the philological and historical foundations of Jewish studies was Eugen Täubler, who was the founding director of both the *Gesamtarchiv der deutschen Juden* (1905) and the *Akademie für die Wissenschaft des Judentums* (1919) in Germany. More important for present purposes, Täubler was the revered mentor of the first two members of the Jewish history department at the Hebrew University: Yitzhak Baer and Ben-Zion Dinur (né Dinaburg).

Under Täubler's guidance, Baer began his professional career at the *Akademie für die Wissenschaft des Judentums* in Berlin. The German-born Baer was employed at this institution from 1919 until 1930, at which point he immigrated to Palestine and

assumed a professorial position. Baer arrived in Jerusalem in 1930. Russian-born Dinur, a student of Täubler at the Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums, joined Baer in 1931. Both Baer and Dinur brought with them the intellectual horizons of Jewish history and the *Literaturgeschichte* of the Jewish people. In 1931, Dinur announced in the first issue of the *Monographien des Judentums* that the monodimensional view of Jewish history was to be equated with the Jewish past. Here, it would seem, the development and the nineteenth century made frequent reference to qualities that obtained in the introduction of the commonwealth was nations, *the complete* Jewish state. Baer argued that the Jewish people "that first most advanced state" that he identified was uniquely egalitarian, undying faith of the Jewish people.

The methodological approach on a new concept in Jewish history stood at the center of the new Jewish history. Here, it would seem, the development and the nineteenth century made frequent reference to qualities that obtained in the introduction of the commonwealth was nations, *the complete* Jewish state. Baer argued that the Jewish people "that first most advanced state" that he identified was uniquely egalitarian, undying faith of the Jewish people.

Baer's and Dinur's approach stands somewhat at odds with the traditional Jewish view. Curiously, that same traditional incarnation of the Jewish people in the exploration of an individual's life, according to its own laws, poses problems for our interaction with other nations on the continuity and the "external" forces

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assumed a professorship in Jewish and general history at the IJS. Six years after Baer arrived in Jerusalem, a position in modern Jewish history was offered to the Russian-born Dinur, who was first introduced to the critical historical method by Täubler at the Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums in Berlin in 1911. Both Baer and Dinur shared Täubler's commitment to broadening the methodological horizons of Jewish scholarship, to moving beyond the predominant emphasis on *Literaturgeschichte* to a more expansive analysis of social, economic, cultural and political forces. In one of their earliest collaborative ventures, Baer and Dinur announced in the first issue of the historical journal *Zion* that they aimed to overturn the monodimensional "literary-theological character" of nineteenth-century scholarship.⁷⁶ And each man followed this methodological principle in his own work. Baer integrated social and economic historical approaches into a discussion of competing religious and intellectual trends in his pioneering study of the Jews in Christian Spain.⁷⁷ Dinur, meanwhile, sought to include as wide an array of aspects (social, economic, political, religious, intellectual) as possible in his multivolume anthology on Jewish life in the diaspora, *Yisrael bagolah*.⁷⁸

The methodological expansion that Baer and Dinur preached and practiced rested on a new concept in Jewish scholarship. It was no longer the Jewish religion that stood at the center of their study. Rather, as they proclaimed in *Zion*, Jewish history was to be equated with "the history of the Israelite nation (*haumah hayisreelit*)."⁷⁹ Here, it would seem, was the Jewish version of the multifaceted *Volk* that anchored the development and professionalization of national historiography in Europe during the nineteenth century. Consistent with this classical model, both Baer and Dinur made frequent reference to the organic unity and continuity of the Jewish nation, qualities that obtained throughout the long and difficult trek in dispersion. As Dinur observed in the introduction to *Yisrael bagolah*: "Even after the [ancient Jewish] commonwealth was destroyed and the Jews dispersed and absorbed among the nations, *the complete unity of the Hebrew nation did not cease*."⁸⁰ Baer also identified a continuous development in the nation's history even after the fall of the ancient Jewish state. In his seminal study of the medieval *kehillah* (community), Baer argued that the communal form was "an immanent creation in the history of our people" that first surfaced in the Second Temple period, and that reached its most advanced state in Christian Europe during the Middle Ages.⁸¹ The continuity that he identified was not merely formal. The communal form was suffused by a uniquely egalitarian, democratic spirit that drew strength from the humble piety and undying faith of the Jewish people.⁸²

Baer's and Dinur's belief in the continuity and immanence of Jewish history stands somewhat at odds with their professional charge to contextualize the past. Curiously, that same tension lies at the very heart of historicism as understood in its traditional incarnation. Historicism, in Friedrich Meinecke's classic account, is the exploration of an individual historical organism that can be understood only according to its own laws of development.⁸³ The *incomparability* of such an organism poses problems for one who seeks to comprehend it in comparative terms, or in its interaction with other historical organisms. For instance, one who places great stress on the continuity and immanence of Jewish history risks minimizing the impact of the "external" forces that shape the lives of Jews in a specific time or place. This

was a risk incurred not only by Baer and Dinur, but by modern Jewish scholars in general—from Leopold Zunz and Immanuel Wolf to the present. Affirmation of the continuity of Jewish history—of the very notion that it is a coherent subject of study—has been an a priori and instinctive act for Jewish historians devoted to the subject; as such, it has not only preceded, but often grated against, the trained impulse to contextualize.

The fact that Baer and Dinur shared in this affirmation of Jewish historical continuity meant that they did not attempt to excise the diaspora past from historical memory. Nor did they depict that past in uniformly negative terms (as characterized by powerlessness, for example). Even in the sphere of the political, the two Jerusalem historians observed the functioning of quasi-state diaspora communities that preserved the national culture and *Geist* under trying conditions. From his first major research project in Berlin to his later studies in Jerusalem, Baer investigated the *kehillah* as the manifestation of a well-developed political consciousness (shaped by a strong egalitarian orientation).⁸⁴ Dinur, for his part, identified two forces that sustained a Jewish national identity in diaspora communities: the static sociopsychological force that relied on the collective memories, rituals, habits and language of the Jews; and the more dynamic sociopolitical force that expressed “the living and conscious link with the land [of Israel].”⁸⁵ It was this latter force that stimulated the desire to “return to Zion,” an impulse that Dinur saw as ever-present in diaspora Jewish life.

Those individuals or small groups who acted upon the desire to return to Zion, previously considered marginal in Jewish historiography, were thrust to the forefront in Dinur’s historical scheme. Indeed, they were heralded as precursors of the national redemption and guaranteed a place in the pantheon of Zionist luminaries. And yet even this Zionist triumphalism did not require the obliteration of the diaspora past. Rather, as with Klausner’s understanding of the Haskalah, Dinur treated diaspora communities *instrumentally*, as repositories of the national will that served their function until the correct balance of forces was in place for redemption in Zion. Far from denying a political existence to the Jewish people in exile, Dinur (and Baer) uncovered an instinct for preservation and organization, as well as a certain political sagacity in surviving. Rarely have these qualities been attributed to Zionist historiography in its depiction of diaspora Jewry.⁸⁶

In Dinur’s case, this scholarly perspective did not coincide with his declared ideological position that “rebellion against the diaspora is the fundament.”⁸⁷ Nor did this perspective conform to the anti-diaspora sentiment of popular Hebrew authors, from M. J. Berdyczewski and Yosef Hayim Brenner to Yonatan Ratosh to A. B. Yehoshua. The narrative line of these authors often juxtaposed the vigor of the new Hebrew to the physical and spiritual decrepitude of the diaspora dweller, devoted to texts rather than territory, religion rather than nation.⁸⁸

There can be little doubt that such a mythology has helped to shape the historical, cultural and political identity of Jews in Palestine and, later, Israel. It is also clear that some Jerusalem scholars contributed to the propagation of this mythology through their work: for example, Samuel Klein in his studies of the Jewish presence in Palestine throughout the ages; Ben-Zion Dinur in his emphasis on the eternal link of Jews to Palestine; or Joseph Klausner in his volumes on the Second Temple

period, which celebrates the past. But it also signifies that it is not an obsessive compulsion to create a master narrative despite the multitude of disciplinary perspectives that comprised Jewish history. To reduce the past to a single and divergent direction is the most instructive problem; for Scholem, the movements, on the one hand, of a new cultural atmosphere.

After pointing out that what can be said about Jewish Studies? What to merit consideration?

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period, which celebrated the military valor and political instincts of the Hasmoneans. But it also seems clear that radical negation of the diaspora experience was not an obsessive concern of the Jerusalem scholars. Nor, for that matter, did a master narrative define a singularly coherent "Jerusalem school." There was a multitude of disciplinary and topical interests, methodologies and approaches that comprised Jewish historical scholarship in the first decades of the Institute of Jewish Studies. To reduce this multitude to a single "essence" is to ignore the idiosyncrasies and divergent directions of the Jerusalem scholars. It is also to violate one of the most instructive principles guiding Gershom Scholem's monumental scholarly labors; for Scholem, it was imperative to focus on the dynamic clash of ideas and movements, on the dialectical interplay of tradition and innovation, in the creation of a new cultural and intellectual moment.

After pointing out the diversity of the Jerusalem scholars, one must invariably ask: what can be said affirmatively of the first-generation researchers at the Institute of Jewish Studies? What thematic or biographical commonalities existed among them to merit consideration as a collective?

It can be noted that most of the first-generation scholars of the IJS were immigrants from Europe who believed that Zionism could effect a revolution in Jewish scholarship. Through a return to the locus of Jewish national vitality, they believed that "a new attitude to the past," as Gershom Scholem put it, could be achieved. In adopting this belief, the Jerusalem scholars expressed disappointment with, and even scorn for, their predecessors of nineteenth-century *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. Whether it be an overly spiritualized account of the Jewish past, or a cloying apologetic tendency, the earlier scholars were perceived as limited in their historical purview. The move to Palestine would open new vistas to the historical researcher. In echoing an age-old historiographical truism, Ben-Zion Dinur wrote that the mere passage of a generation "direct[ed] the vision of historians to areas of historical reality that earlier were overlooked."⁸⁹ How much more could be expected through the force of Zionism, which Dinur and other colleagues considered not merely as an ideology among competing ideologies, but as a force capable of altering the historical reality of the Jewish people.

In fact, the geographic and generational shift did bring a number of important innovations. Soon after Yitzhak Baer's appointment to the IJS, the field of history became a major component, if not the centerpiece, of Jewish studies in Jerusalem.⁹⁰ The significance of this development lay in the close association between history and nation. Unlike earlier philologically inclined scholars, Baer, Dinur and their prominent second-generation students (G. Alon, H. H. Ben-Sasson and S. Ettinger, for example) undertook to study the Jewish nation in broad terms—as possessing an economic, social, political, as well as intellectual, existence.

The result was, if not a master narrative, then a more dynamic and multidimensional portrait of the Jewish past. The intense interest in Jewish communal life in the diaspora reflected a desire to regard Jews as more than cloistered scholars unconcerned with the ways of the world. They were also to be seen as creative historical agents who skillfully adapted to the exigencies of Exile. This is not to suggest that scholars in Jerusalem altogether freed themselves from a "lachrymose" conception

of the Jewish past; Yitzhak Baer, for example, gave explicit support to this conception in 1938 in a review of Salo Baron's *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*.⁹¹ Likewise, Baer's picture of diaspora life in *Galut* and, to a certain extent, in *A History of the Jews in Christian Spain* was lugubrious.⁹² Nevertheless, his work identified an indomitable spirit that nourished communal institutions, cultural mores and social habits as well as religious texts. It was this spirit that rescued Jews from the rigors and travails of exile and provided them with a sense of communality that transcended time and space.⁹³ And it was this unique communal sense that defined the *national* identity of the Jewish people.⁹⁴

The new emphasis on a vital and multidimensional Jewish nation was not restricted to the field of history. It was also expressed in the institutionalization of, and prominent place accorded to, related fields such as Palestine studies, modern Hebrew literature and later Bible and archaeology.⁹⁵ Scholars in these fields explored different aspects of the Jewish past that had been only cursorily examined, if at all, by previous scholars. Uniting the diverse work of these scholars was the fundamental conviction that Jewish history exhibited a basic continuity, be it manifested in the persistence of Hebrew language in the diaspora or in the bond between Jews and *erez yisrael*. Indeed, it was organic growth rather than dramatic rupture, continuity rather than discontinuity, affirmation rather than negation of the diaspora experience, that characterized the Jerusalem scholars' view of the past.

This characteristic did not distinguish the Jerusalem scholars from their predecessors. After all, Heinrich Graetz, the great narrative historian of the nineteenth century, underscored the continuity of Jewish history and the Jewish nation in his historiographical and theoretical writings.⁹⁶ His ideological nemesis, Abraham Geiger, a fierce critic of rabbinic Judaism, understood Jewish history as constantly evolving in form, but with an inner essence at its core. The announced aim of Jerusalem scholars to distance themselves from their predecessors, which might be seen today as a necessary act of self-individuation, was not entirely realized. Neither the Wissenschaft nor the Jerusalem generation blotted out the diaspora from its historical line of vision. Both envisaged a continuous, if meandering, current of Jewish historical development.

It is imperative to add that neither generation forswore its sacred claim to scientific validation. Modern Jewish scholars have exhibited a great willingness to excoriate their predecessors for succumbing to bias. But very rarely have they acknowledged the presence in their own work of what Hans-Georg Gadamer has deemed a vital and affirmative element of historical interpretation—namely, prejudice.⁹⁷ For Gadamer, acknowledging one's own prejudices helps identify the interpretive accretions that stand between subject and historical object, and hence condition one's historical understanding. Actually, the Jerusalem scholars did aspire, in Gadamer's terms, to a fusion of interpretive horizons through their return to Palestine. That is, they hoped to blur the boundary between critical observation of, and active participation in, Jewish history—between subject and object. But they bore the unmistakable imprint of their predecessors and mentors in Europe. As with the older generation, they feared that to renounce their own objectivity was to admit to a subjective foray into identity formation. And such an admission required an unacceptable surrender of scholarly legitimacy.⁹⁸

This unwillingness of scholars. Historians of Jewish scholarship or prejudice missions. The participation in their work may be a Jewish condition. Most scholars edly confront the dilemmas of traditional norms of Greek ethical religion (fairness, the need of Jewish scholarship)—for validation.

This appeal is an appeal to the Institute of Jewish Studies. It can be little doubt that the effected considerable scholarship. The in research, as well as

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1. Herbert Butterfield, *History and Empire* (Boston: 1960), 1.

2. A seminal text, *Historical Imagination* for the application of Harlan, "Intellectual History," no. 3 (June 1989), 58.

3. The close link between the writings of J. G. Herder

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This unwillingness to question one's own prejudices is not unique to Jewish scholars. Historians in general have often regarded the acknowledgement of partisanship or prejudice as subversive of both their scholarly and political or theological missions. The particular failure of Jewish scholars to pose an "objectivity question" in their work may stem, one might speculate, from a sense of insecurity about the Jewish condition. Mirroring the broader population of Jews, Jewish scholars repeatedly confront the difficulty of fitting their concept of Jewish identity into conventional norms of group definition. Neither the celebration of Judaism as a sublime ethical religion (faith) nor the celebration of the Jewish nation (*Volk*) has obviated the need of Jewish scholars to appeal externally—to "science" (*Wissenschaft* or *mada'*)—for validation.

This appeal is an important part of the legacy that the first-generation scholars at the Institute of Jewish Studies inherited from previous Jewish scholarship. There can be little doubt that the transplantation of academics from Europe to Palestine effected considerable change in the institutional and intellectual history of Jewish scholarship. The institute provided a new material base for professional historical research, as well as inspiration for methodological and thematic innovation.

Yet the carry-over of personnel virtually assured the residual presence of organizational models, concepts and expectations transferred from the continent. John Pocock gave fair and sage warning when he noted that "to trace the history of a revolution is almost of necessity to start with a strawman."⁹⁹ In other realms of historical inquiry, scholars have urged caution in accepting at face value assertions of revolutionary innovation (in the cases of Renaissance humanism, the French Revolution, and modern historicism, to mention only a few disparate examples).¹⁰⁰ Similarly, in considering the claims to innovation of the Jerusalem scholars, a note of caution seems advisable.

Fortunately, this note has already been sounded by a first-generation Jerusalem scholar. In 1944, on the twentieth anniversary of the institute's founding, Gershom Scholem called attention to the fact that certain defects of *Wissenschaft* scholarship had reproduced themselves in Jerusalem. In a state of bitter despair (due in large part to the ongoing genocide of European Jews), Scholem memorably lamented his own European-born colleagues who had immigrated to Palestine. He announced simply: "We came to rebel, and ended up continuing."¹⁰¹ While this terse judgment need not be seen as the conclusive epitaph for the Jerusalem scholars, it should serve to encourage a more careful and refined understanding of them.

Notes

1. Herbert Butterfield, *Man on his Past: The Study of the History of Historical Scholarship* (Boston: 1960), viii. This quote appears in the new preface to the 1960 edition.

2. A seminal text in initiating this new questioning is Hayden White's *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore: 1973). A more recent call for the application of poststructuralist models to the historical discipline is found in David Harlan, "Intellectual History and the Return of Literature," *American Historical Review* 94, no. 3 (June 1989), 581–609.

3. The close link between history and nation received strong emphasis, of course, in the writings of J. G. Herder and J. G. Fichte, the progenitors of a Romanticist historiography.

Among the many works that treat the rise of a *Volk*-based historiography, see G. P. Gooch, *History and Historians in the Nineteenth Century* (London: 1952), 61, and Georg G. Iggers, *The German Conception of History: The National Tradition of Historical Thought from Herder to the Present* (Middletown, Conn.: 1983), 41.

4. Smolenskin elaborated his views on the need for a new historical reckoning of the Jewish people in a long review of Adolf Jellinek's *Der jüdische Stamm: Ethnographische Studien* in the journal *Hashaḥar* vol. 1, no. 3 (1869), 4–8; *ibid.*, no. 4 (1869), 3–8; *ibid.*, no. 6 (1869), 2–7; *ibid.*, no. 11 (1869), 72–91.

5. See Dubnow's introduction to his *Weltgeschichte des jüdischen Volkes*, vol. 1 (Berlin: 1925), xiv–xv. On the prominence of demographic, ethnographic and economic aspects in Yiddish scholarship, see Nahum Shtif's essay, "Vegen a yidishe akademishe institut" in *idem*, *Di organizatsiye fun der yidisher visnshaft* (Vilna: 1925), 13–17.

6. See, for instance, Boyd Shafer's *Nationalism: Myth and Reality* (New York: 1955); Elie Kedourie's *Nationalism* (London: 1966), and leading representatives of a new critical discourse on nationalism: Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: 1983); Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: 1983); and E. J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: 1990).

7. See Max Nordau, *Der Sinn der Geschichte* (Berlin: 1909), 6, 136–148.

8. Much of the following discussion is based on David Nathan Myers, "'From Zion will go forth Torah': Jewish Scholarship and the Zionist Return to History" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1991). Perhaps the most elaborate and embittered assault on the "Jerusalem school" was offered by the Israeli literary critic Barukh Kurzweil in *Bema'avak 'al 'arkhe hayahadut* (Tel-Aviv: 1969), 99–240. Pejorative judgments about the "Jerusalem school"—or Zionist historiography in general—are not always as detailed as Kurzweil's. For instance, in criticizing a tendency in Jewish scholarship to legitimize the diaspora experience, Todd Endelman recently explained this trend as a corrective to Zionist denigrations of the diaspora past. However, as this article suggests, the historical outlook of researchers in Jerusalem toward the diaspora was far more complex than one of unabashed rejection. See Todd M. Endelman, "The Legitimization of the Diaspora Experience in Recent Jewish Historiography," *Modern Judaism* 11 (May 1991), 197–198.

9. See, for instance, the remarks of Don Patinkin and Shmuel Ettinger in the proceedings of the sixtieth anniversary celebration in *Mehkarim bemada'ei hayahadut*, ed. M. Bar Asher (Jerusalem: 1986).

10. Mayer's memorandum is located in the Central Archives for the Hebrew University (hereafter: CAHU), file 178/II.

11. In elaborating on his opposition to Jewish history (which is to say, Jewish history in the diaspora), Yudke avers: "It is not we who made our history, but rather the *goyim* who made it for us. Just as they put out the lights for us on the Sabbath and milked the cows and heated our ovens, so they made our history according to their desires and ways. We only received it from them. Therefore, it is not ours, not ours at all." Hayim Hazaz, "Hade rashah," included in his *Avanim rothim* (Tel-Aviv: 1968), 222.

12. More generally, Eliezer Schweid has perceptively noticed the existence of two strains of Zionist opinion—one that was unrelentingly negative toward the diaspora (represented by Berdyczewski, Brenner and Klatzkin among others) and the other that was more positive toward certain aspects of Jewish culture in the diaspora (e.g., Ahad Ha'am, Hayim Nahman Bialik and A. D. Gordon). See his instructive article, "Shetei gishot lera'ayon 'shelila hagolah' baidiyologiyah ha'zionit," *Ha'zionut* 9 (1984), 21–44.

13. This point is made in one of the few scholarly examinations of the Jerusalem scholars, Efraim Shmueli's "The Jerusalem School (A Critical Evaluation)," *Proceedings of the American Academy of Jewish Research* 53 (1986), 147–178.

14. See Gershom Scholem's entry on "Judaism" in *Contemporary Jewish Religious Thought: Original Essays on Critical Concepts, Movements, and Beliefs*, ed. Arthur A. Cohen and Paul Mendes-Flohr (New York: 1987), 506. See also Eliezer Schweid, "Hashivah el hahistoriyah behagut hayehudit shel hameah ha'esrim," in *Hevrah vehistoriyah*, ed. Yehezkel Kohn (Jerusalem: 1979/1980), 673–683.

15. Gershom Scholem, *Hebetim historiyim*.

16. Thomas Kohn, *ibid.*

17. Myers, "'From Zion will go forth Torah'."

18. See Robert Kohn, *Briefwechsel aus der Zeit des Zionismus*. Klausner was troubled by the fact that his professors once again refused to give the impression of objectivity in his "Liftiḥat hamakhovim" (Jerusalem: 1925), 34.

19. Yitzhak Friedland, "The Open University in 1930: A Study in the Open University in 1930," *inayim* (Jerusalem: 1930). The *senshaft* does not refer primarily, a sense of community. Peter Novick, *The American Jewish Archives: The German Jewish Archives*.

20. Compared to the "objectivity" of the nineteenth-century historians, the "objectivity" of the nineteenth-century historians has been an overarching theme. Diltthey, Heinrich F. and others have written a "new history" since the American Revolution. For a discussion of the nineteenth-century historians' "objectivity" question, see the account in *The*.

21. One important factor for Jewish scholarship is the fact that it thereby captures the essence of Jacob Katz, *Leum*.

22. This essay is a response to the estimate, and deliberation, of Ben-Zvi and Zalm. The institutionalization of Jewish history. Underlying this effort is the belief that certain perspectives are needed for this kind of model for this kind of *sities of Strasbou*.

23. On the development of Zionism and History (New York: 1987), and *Movement*, trans.

24. See Myers, *ibid.* University, see also Vanderbilt University, 1925–1950, (Jeru

25. See Schapira, *ibid.* (June 1882), 526 (February 1884),

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ography, see G. P. Gooch, *ibid.*, 61, and Georg G. Iggers, *Of Historical Thought from*

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15. Gershom Scholem, "Mitokh hirhurim 'al hokhmat yisrael," in *Hokhmat yisrael: hebetim historyim ufilosofiyim*, ed. Paul Mendes-Flohr (Jerusalem: 1979), 156.

16. Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: 1962, rev. 1969), 15.

17. Myers, "'From Zion will go forth Torah,'" especially chs. 2 and 3.

18. See Robert Weltsch's letter to Martin Buber of 23 June 1924 in *Martin Buber: Briefwechsel aus sieben Jahrzehnten*, vol. 2 (Heidelberg: 1973), 195. In Jerusalem, Joseph Klausner was troubled by a similar prospect when he asked: "Will those who select [professors] once again be non-nationalist religious men . . . or will the Zionists wake up so as not to give the institute to their opponents?" See Klausner's polemic of Hanukah 1924, "Liftitah hamakhon lemada'ei hayahadut," in *idem, Hauniversitah ha'ivrit birushalayim* (Jerusalem: 1925), 34.

19. Yitzhak Fritz Baer, for instance, paid homage to the "fixed and scientific mode of study" in the opening of his inaugural lecture as professor of Jewish history at the Hebrew University in 1930. See Baer, *'Ikarim behakirat toledot yisrael: mavo litkufat yemei habeynaim* (Jerusalem: 1930/1931), 3. It has been noted by various scholars that the term *Wissenschaft* does not only connote a rigorous, scientific method, but also, and in some cases, primarily, a sense of disciplinary holism. See Iggers, *The German Conception of History*, 34; Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream: The "Objectivity Question" and the American Historical Profession* (Cambridge: 1988), 24; and Fritz K. Ringer, *The Decline of the German Mandarins: The German Academic Community, 1890–1933* (Cambridge, Mass.: 1969), 102–103.

20. Compared to its cyclical recurrence in the European and American historical professions, the "objectivity question" was almost never raised in Jewish historical scholarship, from nineteenth-century Berlin to twentieth-century Jerusalem. For instance, there has not been an overarching philosophic critique of the foundations of historiography à la Wilhelm Dilthey, Heinrich Rickert and Wilhelm Windelband; nor has there been a movement to create a "new history" similar to that initiated by James Robinson, Charles Beard and Carl Becker in America. For a discussion of the challenges to the positivist tradition of academic history in nineteenth-century Germany, see Iggers, *The German Conception of History*, 124–173. On the "objectivity question" in the American historical profession, see Peter Novick's exhaustive account in *That Noble Dream*.

21. One important grammatical difference separates the Hebrew from the German term for Jewish scholarship; the former is plural, referring to the "sciences of Judaism," and thereby captures the multidisciplinary nature of Jewish scholarship. This has been noted by Jacob Katz, *Leumiyyut yehudit* (Jerusalem: 1979), 194–195.

22. This essay focuses on professionally trained and employed Jewish scholars in Palestine, and deliberately excludes consideration of important amateur scholars such as Yitzhak Ben-Zvi and Zalman (Rubashov) Shazar. Throughout, attention is paid to the effects of institutionalization on the intellectual and ideological development of the Jerusalem scholars. Underlying this emphasis is the belief that institutionalization not only empowers or privileges certain perspectives, but also moderates and forces conformity on others. An excellent model for this kind of study is John E. Craig, *Scholarship and Nation Building: The Universities of Strasbourg and Alsatian Society, 1870–1939* (Chicago: 1984).

23. On the dialectical relationship of Zionism to the Jewish past, see Shmuel Almog, *Zionism and History: The Rise of a New Jewish Consciousness*, trans. Ina Friedman (New York: 1987), and Ehud Luz, *Parallels Meet: Religion and Nationalism in the Early Zionist Movement*, trans. Lenn J. Schramm (Philadelphia: 1988).

24. See Myers, "'From Zion will go forth Torah,'" 52–85. On the history of the Hebrew University, see also Aviva L. Dekel, "The Idea of the Jewish University" (Ph.D. diss., Vanderbilt University, 1984), and Manka Spiegel (ed.), *The Hebrew University of Jerusalem: 1925–1950*, (Jerusalem: 1950).

25. See Schapira's discussion in *Hameliz* 18, no. 22 (June 1882), 437–438; *ibid.*, no. 26 (June 1882), 526–528; *ibid.*, no. 36 (September 1882), 723; and *ibid.*, vol. 20, no. 6 (February 1884), 85.

26. There were, however, several attempts made in the 1930s to establish a rabbinical

seminary affiliated with the Hebrew University. The first attempt came in response to a proposed endowment from a New York developer, Harry Fischel, in 1929; the second was motivated by the desire to absorb the endangered faculty and student bodies of the modern rabbinical seminaries in Germany after the rise of Hitler. For a more detailed treatment of these attempts, see Myers, "'From Zion will go forth Torah,'" 132–136.

27. Three of the members of this dissident group, Martin Buber, Berthold Feiwel and Chaim Weizmann, authored a pamphlet in 1902, *Eine jüdische Hochschule*, which offered a detailed plan for a Jewish institution of higher learning.

28. On the discussions over the role of the proposed university from 1897 to 1913, see Myers, "'From Zion will go forth Torah,'" 58–68.

29. Ismar Elbogen, "Hokhmah yisrael: sekirah," *Devir* 2 (Tammuz-Elul 5683/1923), 15.

30. See Gershom Scholem, *From Berlin to Jerusalem: Memories of my Youth*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: 1980). For an important discussion of the encounter between East European and German Jews, including a chapter on the Weimar period, see Steven E. Aschheim, *Brothers and Strangers: The East European Jew in German and German Jewish Consciousness, 1800–1923* (Madison: 1982).

31. See Shulamit Volkov, "The Dynamics of Dissimilation: *Ostjuden* and German Jews," in *The Jewish Response to German Culture from the Enlightenment to the Second World War*, ed. Jehuda Reinharz and Walter Schatzberg (Hanover, N.H.: 1985), 195–211.

32. The formal opening of the broader Hebrew University took place three months later on April 1, 1925. By this date, three institutes—chemistry, microbiology, and Jewish studies—had already been established, forming the core of the university.

33. See Magnes' opening address in *Yedi'ot hamakhon lemada'ei hayahadut* 1 (Nisan 5685/1925), 4–5.

34. Max Margolis, "Yated bimkom hakodesh," *ibid.*, 20.

35. *Ibid.*, 24.

36. Max Margolis' successor as visiting Bible lecturer, the German rabbi and biblical scholar Felix Perles, observed that "there are still many [Jews], including many well-known people, who not only fear . . . biblical science, but also are waging an all-out battle against it in the belief that this science is liable to destroy the edifice of our religion." See Perles' 1927 published lecture, "Mahu lanu mada' hamikra?" (Jerusalem: 1927), 6. On Jewish scholarly approaches to the Bible, see Menachem Soloweitschik and Zalman Rubashov, *Toledot bikoret hamikra* (Berlin: 1924/1925).

37. See the third edition of Ahad Ha'am's *'Al parashat haderakhim*, vol. 1 (Berlin: 1924), 6.

38. See Michael Keren, *Ben-Gurion and the Intellectuals: Power, Knowledge, and Charisma* (DeKalb: 1983), 100–117.

39. See David Ben-Gurion, *Medinat yisrael hamehudesht*, vol. 1 (Tel-Aviv: 1969), 2. See also the collection of Ben-Gurion's essays, *Ben-Gurion Looks at the Bible*, trans. Jonathan Kolatch (Middle Village, NY: 1972).

40. This idea actually originated with Rabbi H. P. Chajes in the midst of discussions in July 1925 over the fate of the Bible position. It was formally endorsed by the Institute of Jewish Studies Faculty in February 1926, and again in 1929. See Myers, "'From Zion will go forth Torah,'" 189–190.

41. The instructor of these subjects was Moshe Segal, a Lithuanian-born and British-trained rabbi and scholar. Though Segal rejected "the hasty and rash criticism of modern scholars," he constantly labored for the introduction of Bible studies as a major field within the Institute of Jewish Studies. An important source of information regarding Bible studies at the Institute is Segal's internal memorandum from Purim 1936 in the Jewish National and University Library Archives (hereafter: JNULA), 4° 1453/17.

42. See Umberto Cassuto's *The Documentary Hypothesis and the Composition of the Pentateuch* (Jerusalem: 1961), a collection based on a series of lectures delivered in 1940.

43. See Yehezkel Kaufmann, *Toledot haemunah hayisreelit*, vol. 1, book 1 (Tel-Aviv: 1937), vii.

44. *Ibid.*, 44–46.

45. See the Heb 1982), 222.

46. Epstein's lec Hebrew literature (Jo 1926 academic year teacher," according t an IJS report from J Jewish Archives, bo

47. Jacob Nahur lemada'ei hayahadut

48. The ultimate introduction to a pr 1948, rev. 1963/196

49. Meron Benveni father, David, author He was also an alumn Klein, the dean of Pe Zali Gurevitch and (volume, 195–210.

50. Myers, "'Fr

51. An interestec with Samuel Krauss,

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55. *Ibid.*, 189–1' of Hebrew in particul since 1780, 54. Whil of Jewish (and other) not merely as a lang exchange.

56. For example, Klausner's provocativ products of that scier Adler: *Selected Lette* Hebrew University fa liche Unfähigkeit als Briefe, vol. 1 (König

57. Magnes went comparative judgmer future will say the sai is located in the Lou America, box 42–6.

58. See Klausner (Tel-Aviv: 1946/1947

59. *Ibid.*, 89.

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45. See the Hebrew version of Scholem's memoirs, *Miberlin lirushalayim* (Tel-Aviv: 1982), 222.

46. Epstein's lectures drew the third-highest number of students after lectures in modern Hebrew literature (Joseph Klausner) and Jewish mysticism (Gershom Scholem) in the 1925-1926 academic year. This was so despite the fact that Epstein was regarded as a "wretched teacher," according to Scholem (*ibid.*, 222). The figures on student enrollment are found in an IJS report from January 15, 1926 in the Judah L. Magnes Correspondence, American Jewish Archives, box 154.

47. Jacob Nahum Epstein, "Hamada' hatalmudi uzerakhav," in *Yedi'ot hamakhon lemada'ei hayahadut* 2 (Av 5685/1925), 5.

48. The ultimate fruits of his labors were not a critical edition itself, but rather an introduction to a projected critical edition, *Mavo lenusah hamishnah*, 2 vols. (Tel-Aviv: 1948, rev. 1963/1964).

49. Meron Benvenisti, *Conflicts and Contradictions* (New York: 1986), 20. Benvenisti's father, David, authored many guide books and primers on Palestine geography and history. He was also an alumnus of the Institute of Jewish Studies, where he studied with Samuel Klein, the dean of Palestine studies. For a fuller discussion of this theme, see the article by Zali Gurevitch and Gideon Aran, "The Land of Israel: Myth and Phenomenon," in this volume, 195-210.

50. Myers, "'From Zion will go forth Torah,'" 151-152, 157-159.

51. An interested student might also have studied Palestine geography and topography with Samuel Krauss, a professor at the Israelitische-Theologische Lehranstalt in Vienna.

52. See, for instance, Klein's *Erez yisrael: geografiyah shel erez yisrael levatei sefer tikhoniyim ule'am* (Vienna: 1921/1922), and *'Ever hayarden hayehudi* (Vienna: 1924/1925).

53. See Samuel Klein, *Erez yehudah mimei ha'aliyah mibavel 'ad hatimat hatalmud* (Tel-Aviv: 1938/1939), unpaginated introduction. See also Klein's earlier study, *Toledot hayishuv hayehudi beerez yisrael* (Tel-Aviv: 1934/1935).

54. Boyd C. Shafer, *Nationalism: Myth and Reality*, 7.

55. *Ibid.*, 189-190. For a view of national languages as "semi-artificial constructs," and of Hebrew in particular as a "virtual invent[ion]," see Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780*, 54. While Hobsbawm's critique has some value in exposing the invented nature of Jewish (and other) nationalist identity, he fails to comprehend the historical role of Hebrew not merely as a language of prayer, but also as a vehicle of epistolary and commercial exchange.

56. For example, the American scholar and administrator, Cyrus Adler, commented that Klausner's provocative 1922 book on Jesus, *Yeshu hanozri*, was "one of the first unfortunate products of that scientific and cultural revival" that Zionism sought to engender. See Cyrus Adler: *Selected Letters*, vol. 2, ed. Ira Robinson (Philadelphia: 1985), 93-94. Later, at a Hebrew University faculty meeting in 1937, L. A. Mayer spoke of "Klausners wissenschaftliche Unfähigkeit als Geschichtspräsident." See Schmu'el Hugo Bergmann, *Tagebücher und Briefe*, vol. 1 (Königstein: 1985), 454.

57. Magnes went to some lengths to advertise Klausner's virtues, offering the following comparative judgment: "But Graz (sic) was a great Historian . . . and I am confident the future will say the same of Klausner." Magnes' letter to Felix Warburg of November 9, 1924 is located in the Louis Ginzberg Papers, Archives of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, box 42-6, file 2.

58. See Klausner's autobiography, *Darki likrat hatehiyah vehageulah: autobiyografiyah* (Tel-Aviv: 1946/1947), 242.

59. *Ibid.*, 89.

60. Joseph Klausner, *Historiyah shel hasifrut ha'ivrit ha'hadashah*, 6 vols. (Jerusalem: 1929/1930-1949/1950). Before immigrating to Palestine in 1919, Klausner had published a short history of modern Hebrew literature in 1900, later revised for a Hebrew edition in 1920.

61. Leon Roth to Joseph Klausner, 28 November 1930, Joseph Klausner Archive, JNULA, 4^o 1086/519.

62. Joseph Klausner, *Historiyah shel hasifrut ha'ivrit ha'hadashah*, vol. 4 (Jerusalem: 1949/1950), 515.

63. Klausner's research on the Second Temple period was much more conventionally "Zionist." That is, it highlighted the military and political triumphs of the Hasmonean family, which were to serve as inspiration for contemporary Zionist activists. See, for instance, his *Habayit hasheni bigdulato* (Jerusalem: 1930), as well as his five-volume history of the Second Temple period, *Historiyah shel habayit hasheni* (Jerusalem: 1949/1950–1950/1951).

64. Klausner, *Darki likrat hatehiyah*, 298. It can hardly be denied that political differences and even conflicts accompanied the evolution of the IJS. One particularly illuminating case involved the chair in Yiddish, which was offered to the university by a New York publisher, David Shapiro, in 1927. Klausner mobilized fellow faculty, students and supporters of the university in Palestine against the new position. In this instance, Klausner held to a strict "negationist" view of the diaspora, with Yiddish to be excised as an ignominious mark of exile. Ironically, support for the new position came from those who were not native Yiddish speakers, the liberal German members of the university's faculty (including, most prominently, Gershom Scholem and Hugo Bergmann). On the controversy over Yiddish at the university, see Myers, "'From Zion will go forth Torah,'" 124–132, and Aryeh-Leib Pilovski, "Di polemik arum dem plan tsu shafn in 1927 a katedre in yidish in yerushalayim," *Di goldene keyt* 93 (1977), 181–220.

65. See Scholem, *From Berlin to Jerusalem*, *passim*.

66. Gershom Scholem, "Kabbala at the Hebrew University," *The Reconstructionist* 3, no. 10 (1937), 8–12.

67. It should be noted, however, that Scholem insisted in a letter to Hayim Nahman Bialik of July 1925 that "until this day, nothing has been done in the scientific study of Kabbalah." Scholem, *Devarim bego: pirkei morashah vetehiyah*, vol. 1 (Tel-Aviv: 1982), 59–63.

68. Scholem, "Haim hiber R. Moshe de Leon et sefer hazohar?" *Mada'ei hayahadut* 1 (1926), 28.

69. Scholem's lecture was part of the series that was later published as *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (New York: 1941), 159.

70. When once summarizing the phenomenon of Judaism, Scholem declared that "it cannot be defined according to its essence, since it has no essence." See Scholem's entry on "Judaism" in Cohen and Mendes-Flohr (eds.), *Contemporary Jewish Religious Thought*, 505–506.

71. See Muki Tsur's interview with Scholem in the latter's *On Jews and Judaism in Crisis: Selected Essays*, ed. Werner J. Dannhauser (New York: 1976), 18.

72. Among the many reverberations of Scholem's pioneering investigations, one of the most significant is his intriguing reappraisal of the *terminus a quo* of modernity in Jewish history. Through his seminal study of Shabbetai Zvi, he concluded that the tide generated by the seventeenth-century false messiah wiped away the existing edifice of rabbinic Judaism. Only in a post-Sabbatian world could such phenomena as Hasidism, Haskalah, Reform Judaism, even Zionism have emerged. It was not these later movements in and of themselves that demarcated modern Jewish history, as for previous scholars; rather, these movements were simply the consequences of the dramatic revolt against rabbinic Judaism generated by Shabbetai Zvi and his followers.

73. Myers, "'From Zion will go forth Torah,'" 147–150, 174–177.

74. Scholem, *From Berlin to Jerusalem*.

75. Myers, "'From Zion will go forth Torah,'" 6.

76. See the opening editorial statement of Baer and Dinur, "Megamatenu," *Zion* 1 (1936), 1. This series superseded the earlier *Measef ziyon*, which began publication in 1925 under the joint editorship of Samuel Klein, Simha Assaf and Dinur.

77. For instance, Baer argues that the tension between Spanish Jewish mystics and adherents of philosophy had important socioeconomic underpinnings. See his *Toledot ha-yehudim bisfarad hanozrit*, 2 vols. (Tel-Aviv: 1945).

78. See the review, 1972/73).

79. Yitzhak Baer.

80. *Yisrael bag*.

81. Yitzhak Baer, "inayim," *Zion* 15 (1936), 1.

82. *Ibid.*, 2, 2. Baer speculated, was captured in the English edition of *Zion*, which hinted at an underlying historical time and space. (Jerusalem: 1955), 117.

83. Friedrich Max Müller and Anderson (London: 1913). The argument that apparently emerged, however, for a more historical and historicism, see *Die Juden und die Wissenschaft* (Berkeley: 1977), 197–200, *klärung und Geschichte*.

84. Baer averred that the diaspora stemmed from a desire for a new community. Baer, "Gemeinde und Wissenschaft," *Korrespondenz für die Wissenschaft*.

85. Dinur, *Yisrael* (Tel-Aviv: 1936). For further explanation, see Dinur, *Zionist*.

86. More typical of the historical condition of the diaspora, see *and Powerlessness in the Diaspora*.

87. See Dinur's *'am yisrael 'al arzo*.

88. See, for instance, in his *Reshit hayamim*, the diaspora as manifested in *Bizkhut hanormaliyut*, a romantic yearning for a new future: *Trends and Values*.

89. Dinur, "Be'er ha-chayim," originally published in *idem* (Jerusalem: 1978), 4.

90. Yitzhak Baer, "The members of the Institute, knowingly or not, have loosened the bonds of the diaspora."

91. In reviewing *Zion*, Baer maintained that "the fact of the persecutions. . . ."

92. In describing the small book as "a work before their eyes a testament to Baer's comments are in the Archives for the History of the Jewish People."

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78. See the revised and expanded edition, *Yisrael bagolah*, 10 vols. (Jerusalem: 1958–1972/73).

79. Yitzhak Baer and Ben-Zion Dinur, "Megamatenu," *Zion* 1 (1936), 1.

80. *Yisrael bagolah*, vol. 1, book 1 (Tel-Aviv: 1926), 23–24; emphasis added.

81. Yitzhak Baer, "Hayesodot vehahathalot shel irgun hakehilah hayehudit bimei habeynaim," *Zion* 15 (1950), 3, 14.

82. *Ibid.*, 2, 22. The source of that faith was a providential force that, Baer once speculated, was capable of lifting the Jewish people out of the realm of mundane history. See the English edition of Baer's fascinating work, *Galut* (New York: 1947), 120. Baer also hinted at an underlying Jewish spirit—pietist, ascetic, and democratic in nature—that transcended time and space. See his book on the Second Temple period, *Yisrael ba'amim* (Jerusalem: 1955), 117.

83. Friedrich Meinecke, *Historism: The Rise of a New Historical Outlook*, trans. J. E. Anderson (London: 1972). Indeed, it was the principles of individuality and organic development that apparently set historicism apart from earlier Enlightenment notions of history. However, for a more nuanced treatment of the relationship between Enlightenment history and historicism, see Peter Hanns Reill, *The German Enlightenment and the Rise of Historicism* (Berkeley: 1975), and the essays collected in Hans Erich Bödeker et al. (eds.), *Aufklärung und Geschichte* (Göttingen: 1986).

84. Baer averred that his interest in studying the Jewish communal council of Cleve stemmed from a desire "to enlighten ourselves about the political capacity of Judaism." See Baer, "Gemeinde und Landjudenschaft. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des jüdischen Organisationswesens," *Korrespondenzblatt des Vereins zur Gründung und Erhaltung einer Akademie für die Wissenschaft des Judentums* 2 (1921), 17.

85. Dinur, *Yisrael bagolah*, vol. 1, book 1 (Tel-Aviv: 1958), 30–31 (Hebrew pagination). For further explication, see David N. Myers, "History as Ideology: The Case of Ben-Zion Dinur, Zionist historian par excellence," *Modern Judaism* 8 (May 1988), 167–193.

86. More typical is the assertion that Zionists (though not they alone) believed that "the historical condition of the Diaspora Jews is political powerlessness." See David Biale, *Power and Powerlessness in Jewish History* (New York: 1986), 5.

87. See Dinur's essay, "Hamered bagalut hu hayesod," in *idem*, *Bema'avak hadorot shel 'am yisrael 'al arzo mihurban betar 'ad tekumat yisrael* (Jerusalem: 1975), 284–290.

88. See, for instance, Yonatan Ratosh's manifesto to Jewish youth from 1943, reprinted in his *Reshit hayamim* (Tel-Aviv: 1982), 32. For a more recent psychoanalytic version of the diaspora as manifesting symptoms of collective Jewish neuroses, see A. B. Yehoshua, *Bizkhut hanormaliyut* (Tel-Aviv: 1980), 25–73. By contrast, Simon Halkin notes traces of a romantic yearning for the past in some Hebrew writers in his study, *Modern Hebrew Literature: Trends and Values* (New York: 1950).

89. Dinur, "Be'ayat halukatan shel toledot yisrael litkufot bahistoriyografiyah hayehudit," originally delivered as a lecture at the Fourth World Congress for Jewish Studies, and published in *idem*, *Dorot ureshumot: meḥkarim ve'iyunim bahistoriyografiyah hayisreelit* (Jerusalem: 1978), 49.

90. Yitzhak Baer acknowledged this when he declared to his colleagues that "all of us, members of the Institute of Jewish Studies, work in the field of the history of Israel; all of us are, knowingly or not, interested in it, and it is a big mistake on the part of those who want to loosen the bonds holding it together." See his *'Ikarim behakirat toledot yisrael*, 10.

91. In reviewing Baron's treatment of Spanish Jewry under Muslim rule, Baer maintained that "the fact remains that Jewish history in the Middle Ages was a relentless series of persecutions. . . ." See Baer's criticism in *Zion* 3 (1938), 290–291.

92. In describing his motivations for writing *Galut*, Baer admitted that he intended the small book as "a word of comfort and emotional encouragement to my brethren, who saw before their eyes a terrifying death"—that is, to German Jews suffering under the Nazi reign. Baer's comments are found in a letter of January 18, 1948 in the Baer papers, Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People, P163.

93. Baer concluded *Galut* with the enigmatic speculation that there is "a power which lifts the Jewish people out of the realm of all causal history." And in the epilogue to the English version, he claimed that "our history follows its own laws, maintains its innermost tendencies in the face of the outward dangers of dispersal, disintegration, secularization, and moral and religious petrification" (pp. 120, 122).

94. Baer here revealed a strong neo-Romanticist orientation. Consistent with that orientation, he emphasized that Jewish history could not be adequately comprehended without a good understanding of the Middle Ages. He further insisted that it was in this period that Jewish history became "the history of religion insofar as religion is the most exalted expression of the nation's life force" (*Ikarim behakirat toledot yisrael*, 7, 11, 14). The link between religion and nation—with a particular focus on the Middle Ages—anchors a classically Romantic view of the past.

95. Scholem's field of Jewish mysticism did focus on a vital and complex historical process, though the object of investigation was not explicitly the Jewish nation, but rather the religious traditions of Judaism.

96. See especially Heinrich Graetz's *The Structure of Jewish History*, translated and introduced by Ismar Schorsch (New York: 1975).

97. The importance of acknowledging prejudices is a central tenet of Hans-Georg Gadamer's hermeneutical system. Rather than flee from them, Gadamer insists that "we must raise to a conscious level the prejudices which govern understanding. . . ." See Gadamer, "The Problem of Historical Consciousness," in *Interpretive Social Science: A Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow and William M. Sullivan (Berkeley: 1979), 156.

98. When Joseph Klausner was at last permitted to lecture on the Second Temple period in 1944, he warned that "the historical researcher, the true man of science, must examine himself many times over to determine if perhaps he is interpreting historical events so that they suit his private desires or party line." Here, the imperative was to absolve oneself of prejudice, not acknowledge its ineluctability. Joseph Klausner, *Historiyah shel habayit hasheni*, 4th ed. vol. 1, (Jerusalem: 1953/1954), 11.

99. J.G.A. Pocock, "Languages and their Implications: The Transformation of the Study of Political Thought," in his collection *Politics, Language and Time: Essays on Political Thought and History* (Chicago: 1971. rpt. 1989), 4.

100. See, respectively, Wallace K. Ferguson, *The Renaissance in Historical Thought: Five Centuries of Interpretation* (Cambridge, Mass.: 1948); Simon Schama, *Citizens: A Chronicle of the French Revolution* (New York: 1989); and Donald R. Kelley, "Ancient Verses on New Ideas: Legal Tradition and the French Historical School," *History and Theory* 26, no. 3 (1987), 319–338. The last item, along with Kelley's work in general, is particularly germane to the subject matter of this essay.

101. Scholem, "Mitokh hirhurim 'al hokhmat yisrael," in Mendes-Flohr, *Hokhmat yisrael*, 167.