

Philip Earl Steele

**On Theodor Herzl's encounters
with Zionist thought and efforts
prior to his conversion
in the spring of 1895**



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Polish, German, and Austrian Jews and the modern idea of Israel

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The Zionist movement, leading as it did to the creation of the State of Israel, is one of the most significant developments in Jewish history of the past millennium. Polish, German, and Austrian lands were home to numerous outstanding Zionist figures who may justly be called “fathers of modern Israel”. This series of books, published by the Centre for Historical Research, Polish Academy of Sciences, Berlin, presents monographs and translations of sources on Zionism in the context of the history of Polish, German, and Austrian Jews in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Volume 1

Reviewers:

Prof. Derek Penslar, Harvard University

Dr. Steven Beller, independent scholar, WA DC

Photograph on the cover: Herzl with his bicycle, August 1900

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*To Bonny Lloyd,
a steadfast Lover of Zion – and a beloved, steadfast Aunt*

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Acknowledgements

This is one of those works that wasn't intended, but rather is a by-product of other research. For there I was, digging into 19th-century Zionist history, trying to grasp the fitful interplay between the Jewish national revival and Christian Zionism (vel Restorationism), when I began to come across cases of Theodor Herzl being exposed to Zionist thought and efforts in the period during which – according to the entire literature going back over a century – he is to have been totally unaware of his predecessors. After a few years the list I was keeping at home near Warsaw had grown considerably, and so I started elaborating particular cases. As that went quite well, I decided to write a paper – and what resulted is this little book.

I am deeply grateful to Professor Igor Kąkolewski, director of the Centre for Historical Research at the Polish Academy of Sciences, Berlin, for his assurance that the Centre would be interested in my research findings – and for the subsequent publication of this monograph. Profound thanks also go to Professor Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of “Artes Liberales”, University of Warsaw, who regularly tapped her contacts in Europe and Israel to help me access indispensable materials. And I am honored that two of the world's most outstanding Herzlian scholars – his biographers Dr. Steven Beller, who long hung his hat at the University of Cambridge, and Professor Derek Penslar, Harvard University – agreed to review my manuscript, and gave positive appraisals.

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My adult children Amber and Marcus were regular consultants as my work progressed, and my wife Agnieszka was my first sounding board in everything. Gratitude to them all for their insights and steady encouragement. My six-year-old son Timothy also took an interest in Dad's project, even drawing the picture on the adjacent page. I would have proposed it as the cover of this book if it weren't for the fact that Tim modeled it on the cover of Steven Beller's biography *Herzl*, for months prominently poised on my desktop.

Podkowa Leśna, March 2023



On Theodor Herzl's encounters with Zionist thought and efforts prior to his conversion in the spring of 1895

Philip Earl Steele

Abstract

The book challenges the long-standing canonical view among scholars that Theodor Herzl was unaware, until after his conversion to Zionism in the spring of 1895, of the Zionist thought and efforts that had preceded him. It begins by noting that Eugen Dühring, whose book Herzl read in early 1882 and often drew upon in subsequent years, discusses the idea of the Jews' return to Palestine and thrice uses the very term "Judenstaat". Next explored is the young Herzl's cognizance of the Zionist student fraternity Kadimah in Vienna, the hub of Zionism in Western Europe in the 1880s. Thereafter the book traces Herzl's earliest encounters with the works of Leon Pinsker, George Eliot, and Moses Hess – and with the career of Laurence Oliphant. The subsequent sections establish Herzl's real-time awareness of the Blackstone Memorial and the Lovers of Zion Petition (both from 1891), indicate his familiarity with two Zionist utopian novels (ones published in 1885 and 1893), and examine two pre-1895 reviews he penned of works that highlighted Zionist precepts. Whereas all of these inquiries yield positive results, a small minority is not fully conclusive, although these instances do convincingly describe a willful ignorance on Herzl's part. A suggestion from the realm of Herzl's discernible psychology is offered as to why this was. Annex 1 discusses the possible presence of the Zionist rabbis Yehuda Alkalai and Joseph Natonek in Herzl's youth; Annex 2 argues that Herzl's contribution to the Dreyfus myth was probably an American interpolation.

Key words: Theodor Herzl, early Zionism, Kadimah, Leon Pinsker, *Daniel Deronda*, Laurence Oliphant, Blackstone Memorial, Zionist utopian novels, Yehuda Alkalai, Dreyfus Affair

1. Introduction

Theodor Herzl (1860-1904) placed the venerable idea of the Jews restored to the Land of Israel at the Western world's front and center stage. He did this so boldly and with such panache that he swiftly outshone all Zionists who had labored before him. Soon he came to be hailed as "the father of Zionism", with a myth of veritable parthenogenesis rising up around him. As if it had all begun with him alone.

Herzl himself keenly observed this process. As early as July 15, 1896 – barely five months after the publication of *Der Judenstaat*, and over a year before the First Zionist Congress was convened – Herzl noted in his *Diaries*: "A light fog is beginning to rise around me, and it may perhaps become the cloud in which I shall walk... This is perhaps the most interesting thing I am recording in these notebooks – the way my legend is being born"¹.

For well over a century, those writing on Theodor Herzl's pivotal accomplishments, vast oeuvre, and extraordinary charisma have consistently held as true what Herzl's friend rabbi Ozjasz Thon of Kraków stated in a biography published in 1917: "Herzl did not in truth know that there had been many, very many Zionists before him"². Repeated endlessly ever since, this has long been canonical. A cursory list of such pronouncements includes that of Jacob de Haas, another of Herzl's colleague-biographers, who in 1927 asserted, "[Herzl] was not even aware, until after he was engulfed in his task, that others had thought of the same idea"³. The numerous editions of Alex Bein's *Theodor Herzl: A Biography* cite such pre-Herzlian Zionists as Max Bodenheimer, Nathan Birnbaum, rabbi Isaac Rülff, Moses Hess, and Leon Pinsker and then state: "Herzl did not know a single of these names at the time he first put down his ideas"⁴. In his biography of Herzl from 1959, Israel Cohen

¹ Theodor Herzl, *The Complete Diaries of Theodor Herzl* [hereafter, CD], vol. 1, Raphael Patai (ed.) & Harry Zohn (translator), Herzl Press and Thomas Yoseloff, New York 1960, p. 421-422.

² Ozjasz Thon, *Teodor Herzl*, Wydawnictwo Akademickiej Młodzieży Syjonistycznej, Warszawa, 1917, p. 23 – translation mine. Cf. the still earlier biography of Herzl, Adolf Friedemann, *Das Leben Theodor Herzls*, Jüdischer Verlag, Berlin, 1914, p. 29.

³ Jacob de Haas, *Theodor Herzl: A Biographical Study*, vol. 1, The Leonard Company, Chicago – New York, 1927, p. 63.

⁴ Alex Bein, *Theodor Herzl: A Biography*, The Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia 1940 pp. 181-182; Ibidem, Atheneum, New York, 1962, also pp. 181-182.

declared, “Never did any movement owe more than did political Zionism to the fact that its founder was totally ignorant of his predecessors”⁵. Thirty years later, Ernst Pawel wrote: “In discovering Zionism, Herzl in fact reinvented the wheel ... He knew nothing about his precursors”⁶. Jacques Kornberg’s seminal work from 1993 *Theodor Herzl: From Assimilation to Zionism* did not even raise the existence of Zionists prior to Herzl, treating his conversion as the idiosyncratic resolution of “a lengthy inward struggle”⁷. In 1995 Robert S. Wistrich assured us that Herzl “was wholly unaware in the 1880s” of Moses Hess, Leon Pinsker – and even of his fellow Viennese Peretz Smolenskin and Nathan Birnbaum⁸. In this century, Shlomo Avineri has reiterated Herzl’s ignorance of Leon Pinsker and Hovevei Zion, the movement Pinsker co-led⁹, though Derek Penslar (2020) has guardedly conceded that Herzl’s claims not to have known Pinsker’s *Autoemancipation!* from 1882 do warrant “a quantum of suspicion”¹⁰. Wistrich had also voiced veiled suspicion: “this ignorance is all the more striking, since the ‘Jewish Question’ had become a popular issue in Austria in the 1880s”¹¹.

Of course, it was not rabbi Thon who gave birth to the belief that not until the summer of 1895, when Herzl was feverishly conceiving what became *The Jewish State*, did he begin to learn about Zionism’s rich, European-wide development over the preceding decades. Rather, it was Herzl himself.

⁵ Israel Cohen, *Theodor Herzl: Founder of Political Zionism*, Thomas Yoseloff, New York-London, 1959, p. 90.

⁶ Ernst Pawel, *The Labyrinth of Exile: A Life of Theodor Herzl*, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, New York, 1989, pp. 214-215. Compare also Steven Beller’s biography, *Herzl*, first published by Peter Halban, London, in 1991. In the reprint from 2004, see pp. 36 & 77.

⁷ Jacques Kornberg, *Theodor Herzl: From Assimilation to Zionism*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1993.

⁸ Robert S. Wistrich, “Theodor Herzl: Zionist Icon, Myth-Maker and Social Utopian”, in *The shaping of Israeli identity: myth, memory, and trauma*, Wistrich & Ohana eds., Routledge, London, 1995, p. 10.

⁹ Shlomo Avineri, *Herzl’s Vision: Theodor Herzl and the Foundation of the Jewish State*, Bluebridge, Katonah, NY, 2013, pp. 135-136.

¹⁰ Derek Penslar, *Theodor Herzl: The Charismatic Leader*, Yale University Press, New Haven/London, 2020, p. 94.

¹¹ Wistrich, op. cit. p. 10.

2. The question stated

"[...] the question needs to be explored if and at what point in time Herzl had been confronted with his predecessors' writings. Was it at some point during the writing of *The Jewish State* or was it already beforehand?" – Julius H. Schoeps, 2013¹².

It was in Paris during the first days of June 1895 that Theodor Herzl began his famous *Diaries*, their expressed purpose to enable him to explore the idea that had so forcefully possessed him in late April/early May – namely, that “the solution to the Jewish Question”¹³ rested with the Jews removing themselves from Europe and establishing their own homeland elsewhere. Already on the second page of his *Diaries*, Herzl asks himself, “When did I actually begin to concern myself with the Jewish Question?”, before vaguely answering:

Probably ever since it arose; certainly from the time that I read Dühring's book. In one of my old notebooks, now packed away somewhere in Vienna, are my first observations on Dühring's book and on the Question. At that time I still had no newspaper as an outlet for my writings—it was, I believe, in 1881 or 1882; but I know that even today I repeatedly say some of the things that I wrote down then. As the years went on, the Jewish Question bored into me and gnawed at me, tormented me and made me very miserable¹⁴.

Herzl refers here to the German philosopher Eugen Karl Dühring (1833-1901), who in 1881 published the inflammatory antisemitic work *The Jewish Question as a Racial, Moral, and Cultural Question*¹⁵. About two weeks (and over 100 pages) later in his *Diaries*, Herzl clarified he had read the tome in 1882: “Thirteen years is my estimate of the period during which this idea took shape in my mind. For my first notes date from 1882, the year in which I read Dühring's book. Now that every-

¹² Julius H. Schoeps, *Pioneers of Zionism: Hess, Pinsker, Rülff, de Gruyter*, Berlin, 2013, p. 74.

¹³ CD vol. 1, p. 118.

¹⁴ Ibidem p. 4.

¹⁵ Literally from the German. The published adaptation in English is entitled *Eugen Dühring on the Jews*, trans. Alexander Jacob, Nineteen Eighty Four Press, Brighton, 1997.

thing is so clear in my mind, I marvel at how close to it I frequently was and how often I passed by the solution”¹⁶.

Herzl, nothing short of frenetic that June and July, had apparently written or telegraphed his parents, asking them to check his college reading journal, which confirms that Dühring’s was among the 40 titles he devoured in the first half of 1882. Just a single other concerned Jewish matters. This was Wilhelm Jensen’s *The Jews of Cologne*, which recounts the mass killings inflicted on the community during the Plague of the mid-fourteenth century. Herzl doesn’t recall *The Jews of Cologne* in his *Diaries*, and the nearly 22-year-old Herzl noted merely *en passant* that Jensen’s work, published in 1869, made a “preliminary protest against the Jew-hunts” then occurring in Europe¹⁷. Thus, neither elaborating on the stark parallel between the tragic events unfolding in contemporaneous Russia and those in *The Jews of Cologne*, nor mentioning anything whatsoever about the First Aliyah, i.e., the swelling push to Palestine then underway, Herzl instead comments on Jensen’s concept of Jews as “an aristocratic race, reduced by history” and then at relative length philosophizes on the ghetto’s debilitating effect on Jewish character, how it impedes proper eugenics and so on [sic] – before surmising optimistically that once the “cage of the ghetto” is removed, the Jews “will bestir themselves industriously for the honest good of humanity”¹⁸.

Of these two books it was Dühring’s that remained with Theodor Herzl – and more so than is usually realized. That is, in the chapter entitled “Weg zur Lösung” [Toward a solution] Dühring thrice used the term “Judenstaat”, defining it as “a Palestine newly populated with Jews”¹⁹. Dühring rejects the proposition as ludicrous, but it is ironic that amongst the numerous demonstrable cases I’ve found of Herzl’s

¹⁶ CD vol. 1, p. 111, June 16, 1895. Herzl’s reaction to Dühring’s book runs over 1,700 words – see Leon Kellner, *Theodor Herzls Lehrjahre (1860-1895)*, R. Löwit Verlag, Wien und Berlin, 1920, pp. 127-134.

¹⁷ Alex Bein provided a translation of the young Herzl’s remarks on Jensen (dated Feb. 8, 1882) in “From Herzl’s Early Diary”, *Herzl Year Book*, ed. Rafael Patai, Herzl Press, New York, 1958, pp. 331-332.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 331-332.

¹⁹ Eugen Dühring, *Die Judenfrage. Als Racen-, Sitten- und Culturfrage*. Verlag von H. Reuther, Karlsruhe und Leipzig, 1881, pp. 110-111 – “Judenstaat, also etwa ein neu mit Juden besiedeltes Palästina“.

pre-1895 exposure to the idea of a restored Jewish polity in Eretz Israel, the earliest should concern a rabid Jew-hater.

Parenthetically, there may have been an even earlier such case. On June 24, 1878 the antisemite MP Győző Istóczy delivered a speech in the Hungarian Diet entitled “The Restoration of the Jewish State in Palestine”. Istóczy’s proposal was for Europe’s Jews to be forcibly transferred to Palestine to re-establish a homeland there. Andrew Handler argued that the 18-year-old “Dori”, as Theodor was then known, may well have been familiar with the widely remarked on speech, which was made whilst Dori was sitting his high-school graduation exams right there in Budapest. Handler’s case rests on this and two additional lines of probability. Some scholars have been dismissive of the hypothesis – others receptive²⁰.

3. Vienna, the hub of Zionism in Western Europe

What strikes the person trying to answer professor Schoeps’ question is that throughout the retrospective accounts Herzl offers on the gestation of his “solution”, he fails to provide anything substantive. It arose “from the realm of the Unconscious”, he writes²¹, consistently neglecting to make connection with outside events²². In an article for

²⁰ Andrew Handler, *An Early Blueprint for Zionism: Győző Istóczy’s Political Antisemitism*, East European Monographs, Boulder, 1989, pp. 155-159. Jacques Kornberg was dismissive (even caustic) – see his review of Handler’s earlier book, *Dori* from 1983, in *Modern Judaism*, vol. 6, no. 1, Feb., 1986, Oxford University Press, pp. 102-104. Among receptive scholars – see Ernest Pawel, op. cit., pp. 40-41 and Robert S. Wistrich, *The Jews of Vienna in the age of Franz Joseph*, The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, Oxford, 1989, pp. 424-425.

²¹ CD vol 1, p. 13.

²² The ostensible exception is of course that of Herzl’s remarks “For what made me into a Zionist was the Dreyfus case” and “I wrote ... my book *The Jewish State* in 1895, under the shattering impressions of the first Dreyfus trial”, both contained in his article “Zionism”, submitted in English to *The North American Review* in early September, 1899. The NAR in fact never published the piece: it first appeared in German six years later in Leon Kellner’s compilation of Herzl’s works *Zionistische Schriften*, Jüdischer Verlag, Berlin-Charlottenburg, 1905, pp. 119-133. However, Henry J. Cohn’s analysis in “Theodor Herzl’s Conversion to Zionism” (*Jewish Social Studies*, vol. 32, no. 2, Apr., 1970, pp. 101-110) showed this and the surrounding passage in Herzl’s article to be counterfactual. Cohn’s argument has since been

The Jewish Chronicle in January, 1898, Herzl perhaps gave a partial explanation for this, confessing that until he took up the post of the *Neue Freie Presse*'s Paris correspondent in early October 1891, "I had detested and despised politics"²³. Nonetheless, 1881-82 was a dramatic watershed in the history of Zionism, as that is exactly when the Jewish national revival first coalesced as a movement in what we know as Hovevei Zion (Lovers of Zion) and the First Aliyah. Yet neither in his notebook from 1882 nor thereafter in other writings (letters, etc.) prior to his adoption of Zionism in 1895 did Herzl ever divulge any awareness of those tumultuous events²⁴, ones directly involving his own Vienna. After all, one of the chief proponents of Hovevei Zion was – albeit "unbeknownst to Herzl"²⁵ – Vienna's Peretz Smolenskin, editor-in-chief since 1868 of *Ha-Shahar*. True, a Hebrew-language periodical – and Herzl's Hebrew was practically non-existent. But then so was the Hebrew of Laurence Oliphant, who despite the fact he was a Christian Scotsman well knew of Smolenskin and thus famously arranged to meet with him in the

accepted virtually everywhere by scholars (e.g., Desmond Stewart, *Theodor Herzl: Artist and Politician*, Double Day & Co. Inc., Garden City, New York, 1974, pp. 163-167; Beller, op. cit., p. 16 & 31; Kornberg, op. cit., pp. 190-200; Wistrich, *ibid*, pp. 441-443; Avineri, op. cit., pp.71-72; Penslar, op. cit., pp. 68-70), who then table explanations ranging from Herzl's flawed memory and unconscious self-invention – to "tweaking" the story for an American audience and even a lapse in candor. I strongly suspect that there is another explanation, one Cohn himself alluded to, but did not directly assert – namely, that the text prof. Kellner possessed had been edited, the material on Dreyfus interpolated. This seems altogether probable in light of the fact that in the years immediately following Herzl's submission to the NAR, Richard Gottheil (through whose hands the manuscript passed to the American journal) along with such confidants as Jacob de Haas, Max Nordau, Lucien Wolf, and Asher Myers all wrote works regarding Herzl that evince no awareness of the contention that the Dreyfus case had caused his conversion. See Annex 2 for my fuller discussion of the matter.

²³ Theodor Herzl, "An Autobiography", *The Jewish Chronicle*, January 14, 1898, pp. 20-21.

²⁴ See Theodor Herzl, *Briefe und Tagebücher, Erster Band: Briefe 1866-1895*, Propyläen, Germany, 1983. Herzl's earliest reference to Hovevei Zionism seems to be that of a diary entry from the first days of June, 1895, where he writes that in the fall of 1893 he had entertained the idea of visiting "the localities where the vagaries of history had strewn Jewish communities: particularly Russia, Galicia, Hungary, Bohemia; later, the Orient, the new Zion colonies; finally, Western Europe again" – see *CD* vol. 1, p. 12.

²⁵ Pawel, op. cit. p. 269.

Austrian capital in early April 1882. This occurred when Oliphant and his wife, emissaries of Mansion House – that is, the Lord Mayor of London – were en route to Lviv and Brody in Habsburg eastern Galicia, where the Jewish refugees fleeing the widespread Russian pogroms were finding sanctuary²⁶.

One also needs to bear in mind that in late 1882, at Herzl's own university, arose the renowned chapter of Hovevei Zion formed by Ruben Bierer, Moritz Schnirer, and Nathan Birnbaum under the tutelage of Smolenskin²⁷. Indeed, it was Smolenskin who proposed the group's name – *Kadimah*, a Hebrew word which means both eastward and forward. *Kadimah's* debt to Leon Pinsker's foundational Zionist tract *Auto-emancipation!*, published in German in September 1882, was also enormous. *Kadimah* soon established direct contact with Pinsker in Odessa, who "in the autumn of 1883... placed 150 copies of his *Auto-emancipation* at the disposal of *Kadimah*"²⁸. The group's indebtedness to Pinsker was underscored in the very name "Selbst-Emancipation", as the young men dubbed "the first Jewish nationalist periodical in the German language"²⁹ they began publishing in February 1885, enjoying the Odessan's "frequent advice"³⁰ in support of their efforts. Following Pinsker's death in December 1891, *Selbst-Emancipation* was one of many periodicals that printed obituaries of the man³¹. Notably, it was also in

²⁶ See Philip Earl Steele, "Syjoniści chrześcijańscy w Europie środkowo-wschodniej (1876-1884): Przyczynek do powstania Hibbat Syjon, pierwszego ruchu syjonistycznego" [Christian Zionists in Central-Eastern Europe (1876-1884): Their role in the Birth of Hibbat Zion, the First Zionist Movement], in *Żydzi Wschodniej Polski, Seria VII, Między Odessą a Wilnem: Wokół Idei Syjonizmu*, eds. Jarosław Ławski, Ewelina Feldman-Kołodziejuk, Uniwersytet w Białymstoku, 2019, p. 105-138. This paper has been adapted into English, see Philip Earl Steele, *Birthing Zionism – Studies of 19th-century British Christian Zionists: George Eliot, Laurence Oliphant and Rev. William Hechler*, Fathom, London and Jerusalem, 2023 – see <https://fathomjournal.org/fathom-ebook-birthing-zionism-studies-of-19th-century-british-christian-zionists-george-eliot-laurence-oliphant-and-rev-william-hechler/> [accessed June 16, 2023].

²⁷ On the birth of *Kadimah*, see Jess Olson, *Nathan Birnbaum and Jewish Modernity: Architect of Zionism, Yiddishism, and Orthodoxy*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, California, 2013, pp. 23-46.

²⁸ Wistrich, *The Jews of Vienna...* op. cit. p. 358.

²⁹ Olson, op. cit., p. 5. *Selbst* is the German equivalent of auto/self.

³⁰ Wistrich, *The Jews of Vienna...* p. 359.

³¹ Schoeps, op. cit., p. 46. The obit in *Selbst-Emancipation* (which was the front-page story) appeared on Jan. 5, 1892.

Selbst-Emancipation in the spring of 1890 that Birnbaum coined the term ‘Zionist’ and then six weeks later ‘Zionism’³², words that entered common usage almost at once.

Hence it is bewildering that Herzl should have been oblivious to this, all the more so as he and Birnbaum were studying together at the 6-year law faculty, if even in different cohorts – Herzl graduated in 1884, Birnbaum in 1888. Nor was Nathan Birnbaum the sole member of Kadimah among Herzl’s fellow law students. “Within only two years”, writes Dieter J. Hecht, “[Kadimah] attracted fifty-eight members. More than half of these were students of medicine or law”³³. Among the latter were the future Zionist leaders David Alkalai, who was two years behind Theodor, and Oser Kokesch, who was one year ahead of him³⁴. Kadimah surrounded the young Herzl. Indeed, Birbaum’s biographer Jess Olson explains that Kadimah hardly kept a low-profile, but drew “membership through activities such as meetings, public lectures and debates, and a reading room stocked with Judaica and Jewish nationalist literature on the Judenplatz, creating »an assembly place for all like-minded«, as Birnbaum described it. Like other university societies and fraternities, Kadimah held festival celebrations, banquets, and even ritualized beer-

³² Olson, op cit., footnote 101, p. 328.

³³ Dieter J. Hecht, “Jewish (Vacation) Fraternities in the Habsburg Monarchy. Kadimah and Geullah — Forward to Redemption”, trans. Victoria Martin, in *Austrian Studies*, Vol. 24, *Jews, Jewish Difference and Austrian Culture. Literary and Historical Perspectives* (2016), p. 33.

³⁴ David Alkalai (1862-1933) was the grandnephew of the early Zionist rabbi Yehuda Alkalai of Zemun, Serbia (1798-1878). In 1897 David attended the First Zionist Congress with his wife (and second-cousin) Rachel Alkalai (their portraits are included on the famous collage of participants). Alkalai became the Zionist movement’s leader in Serbia and later in Yugoslavia. He features as Alladino in Herzl’s utopian novel from 1902 *Altneuland* – see *Encyclopaedia Judaica ed. II* [hereafter *EJ*], ed. Fred Skolnik, Michael Berenbaum, MacMillan Reference, Detroit 2007, vol. 1, p. 663. Oser Kokesch (1859-1905) from Brody, Galicia, is sometimes described as a co-founder of Kadimah – see *EJ* vol. 12, pp. 269-70. Kokesch quickly entered Herzl’s innermost circle in 1896 and became the treasurer of the Zionist Organization’s Action Committee. He figures over 300 times in Herzl’s *Briefe und Tagebücher, Fünfter Band*, op. cit. Cancer cut his life short – see Max Bodenheimer, “Fünfzehn Jahre Nationalfond: Ein Rückblick”, in: *Erez Israel: Mitteilungen Des Hauptbüros Des Jüdischen Nationalfonds*, Heft 2, Jüdischer Verlag, Berlin, 1917, p. 113; and Jacob de Haas, “Death of Dr. Kokesch”, *The Menorah: A Monthly Magazine for the Jewish Home*, vol. XXXIX, no. 4, Oct. 1905, p. 288.

drinking sessions (Kneipen), the most famous (or notorious) hallmark of the central European fraternity"³⁵.

Having officially incorporated itself in March, 1883, "In May 1883 [Kadimah] made itself public to the Vienna University community through posters placed throughout the university and the Hochschule (technical college), with text prepared by Birnbaum and Schnirer"³⁶. The message targeted those "who still have a Jewish heart beating in their breast"³⁷, a challenge that rankled especially the assimilated students, among whom Herzl was most assuredly to be counted. The timing in regard to the young Theodor's fitful Jewish identity should have made him all the more likely to note he was an addressee of Kadimah's announcement. For it was on March 7, 1883 that Herzl had formally, via letter, resigned his membership in the German-nationalist fraternity *Albia* for the reason that it had previously barred the further admission of assimilated Jews, and was now striding heedless towards unabashed Jew-baiting³⁸. That in the immediate wake of publicly asserting his Jewish identity that semester Herzl could have failed to register Kadimah's "coming-out" right under his nose strains all credulity. Even more so, as in a letter from June, 1895 Herzl reflected i.a. on his exit from *Albia* thus: "I was indifferent to my Jewishness; let us say that it was beneath the level of my awareness. But just as anti-Semitism forces the half-hearted, cowardly, and self-seeking Jews into the arms of Christianity, it powerfully forced my Jewishness to the surface"³⁹.

Yet nowhere in his writings does Herzl openly admit to any awareness then of Kadimah or the incubation of "Palestinophilic" efforts in Vienna⁴⁰. Rather, as concerns the Jewish question Herzl ever evinces an "inward struggle", to again borrow Jacques Kornberg's phrase: "I kept coming back to it whenever my own personal experiences – joys and

³⁵ Olson, op cit., p. 37.

³⁶ Ibidem, p. 25.

³⁷ Ibidem, p. 26, from the poster itself.

³⁸ See Kornberg, op. cit., chapter 2 "Herzl as German Nationalist", pp. 35-58. Nota bene: Herzl joined *Albia* in the fall of 1880, and was active only until the end of that academic year. That is, nearly two years prior to his resignation, Herzl had suspended his membership over the decision to disallow assimilated Jews from further admission.

³⁹ Ibidem, p. 109.

⁴⁰ See CD and Theodor Herzl, *Briefe und Tagebücher, Erster Band*, op. cit.

sorrows – permitted me to rise to broader considerations”⁴¹. Among the multiple such examples from over the years is Herzl’s stated motive for writing “a Jewish novel” in the summer of 1891, when – as will be discussed in section 5 – the renewed outbreak of anti-Jewish repressions in Russia had prompted American and British diplomatic initiatives to create a Jewish homeland in Palestine, ones that enjoyed extensive press coverage. But no, Herzl discloses no cognizance of this, and explains instead that he was thinking of his beloved friend Heinrich Kana, who had killed himself in February of that year: “I believe that through the novel I wanted to write myself free of his ghost”⁴². Also telling are the examples Herzl gives of how antisemitism drove the metamorphosis of his thinking, for they too are personal, not communal. Cases include someone having once shouted “Hep, hep” at him in Mainz, and someone else “Dirty Jew” in the dark of night at Hinterbrühl near Vienna⁴³. Conversely, the infamous blood libel scandal from Tiszaeszlár in his native Hungary, a story from his student years that dominated both Austro-Hungarian and European news in 1882-1883⁴⁴, is nowhere raised in any of Herzl’s voluminous writings, though “he was certainly aware” of it⁴⁵.

In concluding this point, it must be underlined that, while there is no basis for presuming that Herzl and Birnbaum had ever personally met in Vienna before Herzl’s Zionist career began – on the contrary, the record of their contacts and clashes makes it plain that they first met on March 1, 1896 at Herzl’s home, two weeks after *Der Judenstaat* appeared⁴⁶ – the same certainty cannot be extended to Alkalai and Kokesch. And by no means to Kadimah generally. Herzl’s direct proximity to the fraternity and its fellows, along with his assertion of his Jewishness in the spring of 1883, compel one toward concluding that he had been furtively aware of Kadimah – and thereby perhaps of *Ha-Shahar*, Leon Pinsker, and *Selbst-Emancipation*, as well.

⁴¹ CD vol. 1, p. 4.

⁴² Ibid. p. 5.

⁴³ Ibid. pp. 5-6. He tells the second story again, more fully, on pp. 10-11.

⁴⁴ See https://yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Tiszaeszl%C3%A1r_Blood_Libel [accessed Feb. 25, 2023].

⁴⁵ Wistrich, *The Jews of Vienna...* p. 425.

⁴⁶ CD vol. 1, p. 307; and Mathias Acher, *Die Jüdische Moderne: Vortrag gehalten in akademischen Vereine “Kadimah” in Wien*, Literarische Anstalt, Leipzig, 1896.

Herzl surreptitiously discloses as much in a diary entry from March 17, 1898, when in a flight of fantasy he jotted down a couple pages on an idea for a novel in “three volumes, like acts”. As in *Altneuland*, his utopian novel of 1902, Herzl barely conceals that he himself is the main character. Although of a rabbinical background, the imagined Viennese hero’s life follows a trajectory from assimilation to Zionism that clearly makes him Herzl’s doppelgänger: “a Jewish newspaperman ... at the university, member of a students’ association, German songs, ribbons, black-red-and-gold assimilation”. While studying, Herzl’s “hero hears about a small, crazy band of Neo-Hebrews (Smolenski, Bierer), who strike him as peculiar Asiatics” – and “laughed at the crazy members of Kadimah”.

This mockery notwithstanding, “Now and then, a sound of the group growing in obscurity is heard...”⁴⁷.

The novice to Zionist history, having learned that from the early 1880s the Habsburg capital was the epicenter of Zionist activity in Western Europe, and that its very focus was the University, might assume that Theodor Herzl’s Zionism was the organic outcome of that activity. The consensus of adepts, in turn, is that to Herzl fell “the role of *deus ex machina*”⁴⁸. The latter view requires thorough re-evaluation.

4. The learning curve beginning in 1895

By the time *The Jewish State* was published – February 14, 1896 – various of Herzl’s acquaintances had recommended works of Zionist thinkers who had preceded him. The most prominent among those figures are Leon Pinsker and George Eliot (Mary Anne Evans). As Herzl’s *Diaries* record, both were brought to his attention in the months when he was crafting his Zionist text. Moses Hess is another such figure, however the sources indicate Herzl was introduced to him somewhat later, not until February, 1896. Laurence Oliphant poses a further case, yet – differently than with Pinsker, Eliot, and Hess – Herzl never referred to him in his *Diaries*, nor anywhere else it seems⁴⁹. Nonethe-

⁴⁷ CD vol. 2 pp. 618-619 – “black-red-and-gold assimilation” refers to the German flag.

⁴⁸ Meyer W. Weisgal, “Editor’s Foreword”, in *Theodor Herzl: A Memorial*, The New Palestine, USA, 1929, p. 14.

⁴⁹ See CD and Theodor Herzl, *Briefe und Tagebücher, Erster Band*, op. cit.

less, Herzl did learn about Oliphant's remarkable Zionist career, and from a range of diverse sources.

Der Judenstaat's opening words are these: "The idea which I have developed in this pamphlet is a very old one: it is the restoration of the Jewish State". Just one sentence thereafter Herzl adds: "I wish it to be clearly understood from the outset that no portion of my argument is based on a new discovery. I have discovered neither the historic condition of the Jews nor the means to improve it"⁵⁰. This might imply Herzl knew his readers were already well aware that Zionist ideas had been swirling for decades, engendering real, organizational effort – and that could explain why he goes on to say nothing more about the matter. Instead, he begins a relatively lengthy, pre-emptive defence against the charge he had conjured a "utopia". As examples of utopian authors he mentions Thomas More and Theodor Hertzka. Writing in a similar vein in his *Diaries* during this period, Herzl additionally mentions Edward Bellamy, spurning the utopian novel's "unmanly form" as "beneath my dignity"⁵¹. This is significant above all because it bespeaks Herzl's inner resistance to recognizing that his Zionist dream was in fact a sublimation of traditional Jewish longings for the messianic age, i.e., a utopia. What is also relevant is that the evidence indicates Herzl was acquainted at the time with two Zionist utopian novels he fails to cite. I shall discuss this issue below in section 6.

In chapter two of *The Jewish State* is a subchapter entitled "Previous Attempts at a Solution". Though it soon turns to "petty ... attempts at colonization"⁵², Herzl is not referring here to the First Aliyah/Hovevei Zion, but rather to Baron Maurice de Hirsch's plans commenced in late 1891 to create Jewish agricultural colonies in Argentina⁵³. Herzl makes

⁵⁰ Theodor Herzl, *The Jewish State* [hereafter, *JS*], trans. Sylvie D'Avigdor; revised, Dover Publications, Inc. New York, 1988.

⁵¹ *CD*, op. cit. pp. 75 (June 11, 1895), 119, and 122 (both from a letter to Bismarck of June 19, 1895).

⁵² *JS*, p. 88.

⁵³ In his fourth letter to Hirsch, dated June 19, 1895, Herzl wrote: "But the petty solutions – your 20,000 Argentinians, or the conversion of the Jews to socialism – I will not accept", *CD*, op. cit. p. 116. Baron de Hirsch's biographer, Matthias Lehmann, writes that at the time of Hirsch's death (April, 1896) the total number of Jews at the Argentinian colonies was just one-third of the figure Herzl cited (6,757) – see Matthias Lehmann, "Baron Hirsch, the Jewish Colonization Association and the Future of the Jews", *Jewish Studies Quarterly*, vol. 27 no. 1, 2020, p. 76.

this clear by adding, “We have already discussed these attempts to divert poor Jews to fresh districts”, whereby he refers to a passage concerning South America in chapter one⁵⁴. The subsequent portion of “Previous Attempts...” then takes an obscure turn, castigating “attempts to convert the Jews into peasants in their present homes”⁵⁵.

Herzl's introduction to earlier Zionists following his conversion in the spring of 1895 did not lead him to refer to any of those figures in either “A Solution of the Jewish Question” (his English-language overview of his upcoming book⁵⁶) or in *Der Judenstaat* itself. This is also true of the First Zionist Congress, though during the final session on August 31, 1897 Herzl did say, “Of course, we also want to remember the Jewish Zionists who worked on this project before us. Their names are known to us all, and permit me to embrace them all with our gratitude”⁵⁷. This no doubt struck a gracious chord with many attendees. Even so, it is telling that Herzl gave not a single name (David Gordon, Kalischer, Hess, Smolenskin, Pinsker, Mohilever...), though just seconds prior he had thanked “the Christian Zionists” by name, among them

⁵⁴ JS, p. 82: “But the attempts at colonization made even by really benevolent men, interesting attempts though they were, have so far been unsuccessful. I do not think that this or that man took up the matter merely as an amusement, that they engaged in the emigration of poor Jews as one indulges in the racing of horses”. First of all, Edmond de Rothschild would be mistakenly included among those “benevolent men”, as “HaBaron” was not making “attempts at colonization”, but generously supporting pre-existing attempts – and hence not in “fresh districts”. Nor could Rothschild's support be appropriately labeled “unsuccessful”.

More importantly, Hirsch avidly raced horses. In his *Diaries* Herzl twice criticizes him for this. The first instance is in a letter to the Rothschild family of June 15, 1895 (CD vol. 1, p. 153). The second is in a scathing letter to Hirsch himself, dated July 27, 1895. The relevant passage reads, “The legend in circulation about you is obviously false. You engage in the Jewish cause as a sport. Just as you make horses race, you make Jews migrate. And this is what I protest against most sharply. A Jew is not a plaything” (CD vol. 1, p. 218). Two days later Herzl writes that he had decided not to post the letter. And this change of mind is what is expressed in *Der Judenstaat*.

⁵⁵ JS, p. 88.

⁵⁶ Theodor Herzl, “A Solution of the Jewish Question”, *The Jewish Chronicle*, January 17, 1896, pp. 12-13.

⁵⁷ Michael J. Reimer, *The First Zionist Congress: An Annotated Translation of the Proceedings*, State University of New York Press, 2019, p. 305.

Henry Dunant of Red Cross fame, despite his not being in attendance⁵⁸. Naturally, other speakers at the First Congress had already recounted previous Zionist strivings and paid homage to eminent figures – and this foremost pertains to the address of rabbi Armand Kaminka given at the afternoon session on day three⁵⁹. Herzl’s own reluctance to refer to his predecessors did however repeatedly cause consternation amongst the reinvigorated movement’s adherents. For instance, following Herzl’s public meeting in London with the Maccabæans in July 1896, *The Jewish Chronicle* ran a complaint that Herzl had made no nods in his speech to Pinsker and Hovevei Zion⁶⁰. And as we shall see in the close of this section, rabbi Isaac Rülff at this very time sternly rebuked Herzl for his “gross violations” in this regard⁶¹.

But before turning to Pinsker being recommended to Herzl in 1895, it must be pointed out that Herzl was not thinking of Hirsch alone when he raised “petty ... attempts at colonization”. He also had in mind his dear friend from university days, Oswald Boxer, who too had gone into journalism, and from 1886 was stationed in Germany’s capital, where he wrote for three newspapers. In June 1891 Boxer was sent to Brazil by

⁵⁸ Philip Earl Steele, “Henry Dunant: Christian Activist, Humanitarian Visionary, and Zionist”, *Israel Journal of Foreign Affairs* 2018, pp. 81-96. Soon after the Congress, *Die Welt* published a feature article on Dunant. See the edition of October 29, 1897, pp. 6-7.

⁵⁹ See Reimer, *op. cit.*, pp. 170-175.

⁶⁰ *The Jewish Chronicle*, July 17, 1896, p. 13.

⁶¹ Appearing in the July 16, 1897 edition of *Die Welt* was Herzl’s article “Protestrabbiner” (Protest Rabbis), in which he scathingly reproached the five-man Executive Committee of the Association of Rabbis in Germany for having publicly anathematized Zionism (and forced the choice of Basel over Munich as the site for the First Zionist Congress). Here, as counter examples to the Protest Rabbis, Herzl does cite three Zionist rabbis important during the Hovevei Zion period – namely, Moses Gaster, Isaac Rülff, and Samuel Mohilever. Herzl had been in touch with all three men for roughly a year then, and each of them appeared in *Die Welt*’s first issues – the paper published a piece on Mohilever in the June 18 edition, Rülff wrote the lead story for the June 25 edition, and on July 23, 1897 the paper ran a piece that Gaster had sent from London on July 11. Nonetheless, Herzl’s use of the men’s names in “Protestrabbiner” is purely *ad hominem*, his case presentist. He includes nothing on their roles in Hovevei Zionism, and characteristically refuses to broach any of the religious argumentation at the core of the rabbis’ dispute. See “Protestrabbiner” in Leon Kellner (ed.), *Zionistische Schriften*, *op. cit.*, pp. 211-217.

a special committee in Berlin having contacts with a bank in Rio de Janeiro in order to make explorations and select a site for an agricultural colony for Jews escaping persecution in Russia. By December Boxer had devised a “comprehensive plan of action for what he calls an experimental colony”, initially for 200 Jewish families. Sadly, in January 1892 Boxer lost his life to yellow fever in São Paulo, and the committee’s endeavor was never resumed⁶². Herzl had corresponded with Boxer during the latter’s sojourn in Brazil, and shortly after his passing Herzl composed a moving obituary of his friend that contained passages from Boxer’s final message to him. Herzl also recalled Heinrich Kana’s suicide the preceding year, and how he and Oswald had grieved. For our purposes what is most salient is that Boxer was no longer “only to determine whether Brazil is suitable for immigration”, as he informed “Theo”, for in the meantime he had been chosen “to take over the management of the entire future colony, including its establishment and administration”. Herzl praised Boxer as having had “the talent to command and organize” and declared he had been the right man “to solve the colossal task” of founding the Brazilian colony⁶³.

This provides a clear case of Theodor Herzl, over three years ante-conversion, being intimately cognizant of Jewish colonization efforts. Far more meaningfully, it reveals him envisioning the scope of Herculean tasks involved in establishing a new homeland for Jews. It also begs the question if Herzl, Boxer, and Kana (all three, Jews) had ever discussed dreams of a Jewish polity as fellow students back in Vienna,

⁶² The quotation is from Frieda Wolff, “A Jewish settlement project in Brazil in 1891: The mission of Oswald Boxer”, in: *Proceedings of the World Congress of Jewish Studies, Division B: The history of the Jewish People, Vol. III, Modern Times*, 1993, pp. 311-316; see also Leon Kellner, *Theodor Herzl's Lehrjahre (1860-1895)*, op. cit., pp. 141-144 – this sketch is the fullest account of Oswald Boxer I have found.

⁶³ *Neue Freie Presse*, February 4, 1892, p. 1 of *Abendblatt*. Another story on colonization efforts from that very month is cited by Bein, op. cit. p. 84 – i.e., an article (“perhaps the work of Herzl himself”) in the February 23, 1892 edition of the *Neue Freie Presse* that reports on Baron von Hirsch’s newly-forming Jewish colonies in Argentina. The date of 23.II.92 is however mistaken, and I am uncertain what article Bein had in mind. Interestingly, the Feb. 24 edition contains a large article on the plan of one Paul Friedmann to resettle Russian Jews in northwest Arabia (“Madian”, in *Abendblatt* pp. 2-3) – as does the Feb. 27 edition (pp. 1-2 *Abendblatt*). That lengthy follow-up piece includes passing mention of Hirsch in the sardonic style of Herzl – and about Friedmann states he wished to establish a “Judenstaat” (sic). There is no byline.

“along whose small streets we used to stroll together on many a spring evening of our youth”⁶⁴. After all, that was a dream two of them went on to pursue⁶⁵.

4.1 Leon Pinsker

As emphasized above, Pinsker’s *Autoemancipation!* from September 1882 was a widely acclaimed work that fueled Zionist aspirations across Europe, and certainly in Vienna. Published in German, and at once translated into Russian, Yiddish, and Hebrew⁶⁶, it elevated Leon Pinsker to a position of leadership in the Hovevei Zion (Lovers of Zion) movement. This stature was formalized when together with rabbi Samuel Mohilever, Pinsker became the co-chairman of Zionism’s first international conference, held Nov. 6-11, 1884 in today’s Katowice, Poland.

According to his *Diaries*, Herzl initially heard of Pinsker in September 1895 when Narcisse Leven from the *Alliance Israélite* met with him in Salzburg. Leven told Herzl his ideas “were by no means original”, at which Herzl chuckled to himself and claimed, “I don’t want to be an innovator. The larger the number of people who share my universal idea, the better I shall like it”. He then penned this paragraph:

Leven thought that especially in Russia I would find many adherents. In Odessa, for example, there had lived a man named Pinsker who had fought for the same cause, namely, the regaining of a Jewish national home. Unfortunately, Pinsker was already dead. His writings are said to be worthwhile. Shall read them as soon as I have time⁶⁷.

The time arrived not until February 10, 1896, just four days before *The Jewish State* came out in print. Noteworthy is that not Leven, but

⁶⁴ *Neue Freie Presse*, February 4, 1892, p. 1 of Abendblatt.

⁶⁵ I venture to add that, unless it can be believed that Heinrich and Oswald during their student days could also have been oblivious to Hovevei Zionism and its manifestations in their city, one might well imagine the three lads spending at least one evening conversing on those topics, as well.

⁶⁶ Marc Volovici, “Leon Pinsker’s *Autoemancipation!* and the Emergence of German as a Language of Jewish Nationalism”, *Central European History* 50 (2017), pp. 34–58.

⁶⁷ CD vol. 1, pp. 242-243. In the original German manuscript, Herzl both times misspelled ‘Pinsker’ as ‘Pinsger’ – see Conclusion.

rather rabbi Joseph Samuel Bloch – Austrian parliamentarian and editor of the weekly *Österreichische Wochenschrift*⁶⁸ – had given Herzl a copy of *Autoemancipation!*. Here is Herzl's famous entry:

Read today the pamphlet entitled *Auto-Emancipation* which Bloch gave me. An astounding correspondence in the critical part, a great similarity in the constructive one. A pity that I did not read this work before my own pamphlet was printed. On the other hand, it is a good thing that I didn't know it – or perhaps I would have abandoned my own undertaking. At the first opportunity I shall speak about it in public, and possibly write an article about it in *Zion*⁶⁹.

The two Zionist blueprints are truly alike in argument and proposal. Both forego a positive, messianic yearning for *Geula* (Redemption), in-

⁶⁸ Leven and Bloch were but two of Herzl's acquaintances who were familiar then with *Autoemancipation!*. Of course, virtually all of the Zionists who rushed to Herzl's flag following *Der Judenstaat's* release – most certainly those from Kadimah and the Zionist Federation based in Cologne – knew Pinsker's work well. Among the latter, Max Bodenheimer, who had exchanged letters with Pinsker in 1891, recalled that his correspondence with Herzl in the fall of 1896 began thus: "First of all I gave him certain data concerning the early history of Zionism, as I had the impression from Wolffsohn's report that Herzl knew little about it" – Max Bodenheimer, *Prelude to Israel; the memoirs of M. I. Bodenheimer*, ed. Henriette Hannah Bodenheimer, trans. Israel Cohen, Thomas Yoseloff, New York, 1963, pp.74 & 84. Another case is that of Rev. William Hechler, who had visited Pinsker in Odessa in June, 1882 and pressed him to choose Palestine as the site for a new Jewish homeland. Though neither Herzl's *Diaries* nor Hechler's writings record any discussion of theirs on the topic, the loquacious Hechler in all likelihood did tell his friend about having met Pinsker – see Steele, "Syjoniści chrześcijańscy...", pp. 130-134. This paper has been adapted into English in three parts – see "British Christian Zionism (Part 3): Reverend William Hechler – from Hovevei Zion to Herzl and beyond", *Fathom Journal*, April 2022, see <https://fathomjournal.org/british-christian-zionism-part-3-reverend-william-hechler-from-hovevei-zion-to-herzl-and-beyond/> [accessed Feb. 25, 2023].

⁶⁹ *CD* vol. 1, p. 299. Herzl does not divulge in his *Diaries* precisely when Bloch had given him Pinsker's work. He does however record having met with him on Nov. 5 and 11, 1895, then again in succession on Feb. 2, 4, and 9, 1896 (see *ibidem* p. 263, 271; 288, 293, and 297). Nor does Chaim Bloch (no relation) make the date clear – see p. 159 in "Theodor Herzl and Joseph S. Bloch", *Herzl Year Book*, ed. Rafael Patai, Herzl Press, New York, 1958, pp. 154-164.

Secondly, Herzl never managed to speak publicly or write any such article about Pinsker.

stead building their case on the insurmountability of antisemitism. Both propose the convening of a European-wide congress tasked with establishing a Jewish homeland, and both propose the creation of a “company” to handle the immense transactions. Tellingly, both documents are also undecided as to where the new homeland should be. Pinsker expresses tentative favor for Palestinophilism, but argues that somewhere in North America would be just as fitting. Herzl too prefers Palestine, but (in a foreshadowing of Uganda) says Argentina is also a favorable option⁷⁰. Needless to say, *Der Judenstaat* does not betray any plagiarist borrowings from *Autoemancipation!*, which is perhaps the more cogent, though far less inspiring of the two documents. Herzl’s ideological rival Ahad Ha’am would later quip, “Pinsker was the originator of the gospel of political Zionism, and Herzl its apostle”⁷¹.

But did Herzl know of Pinsker pre-1895? We have already reviewed Pinsker’s strong presence in Vienna beginning in 1882, albeit having left out one further important matter: his public denunciation – in German – by Vienna’s Chief Rabbi, Adolf Jellinek. In the spring of 1882 Pinsker had made a tour of Western European metropolises (Vienna, Berlin, Frankfurt, Paris, London) in order to describe to Jewish leaders the nature and extent of the ongoing pogroms in Tsarist lands – and above all to discuss his solution: the creation of a Jewish homeland outside Europe. Almost nowhere did Pinsker meet with approval of his plan, least of all in Vienna from rabbi Jellinek, who was so upset that he excoriated Pinsker’s idea in a series of articles published between March 31 and April 14 in the liberal Jewish weekly *Die Neuzeit*⁷².

⁷⁰ Conversely, on June 13, 1895 in a letter to the Rothschild family preserved in his *Diaries*, Herzl had written, “I am assuming that we shall go to Argentina”, *CD* vol. 1, p. 134.

⁷¹ Ahad Ha’am, “Pinsker and Political Zionism: To the memory of Dr. Pinsker, on the tenth anniversary of his death [1902]” *The Zionist*, London, 1916, pp. 26-27. Herzl himself once complained that Birnbaum “acts the part of Columbus and martyr of Zionism, while I am Amerigo Vespucci and the usurper”, see *CD* vol. 2, p. 625, April 11, 1898.

⁷² Wistrich, *The Jews of Vienna...* p. 243-246; and above all his “Zionism and its religious critics in fin-de-siècle Vienna”, in *Jewish History*, vol. 10, no. 1, spring 1996, pp. 93-111. The British parliamentarian Arthur Cohen, in contrast, encouraged Pinsker to publish his thoughts – see *Leo Pinsker, Road to Freedom: Writings and Addresses, with an introduction by B. Netanyahu*, Scopus Publishing Company, New York, 1944, p. 49. Worth adding is that rabbi Jellinek had just become the editor-in-chief of *Die*

Thus, the more valid question here is: how could Herzl *not* have known of Pinsker (Smolenskin, Kadimah, etc.) before 1895? Wistrich offered this reflection: “It almost seemed as if Herzl was deliberately evading the ‘Jewish question’ at the very moment that it became a major issue of contention in Austria”⁷³.

4.2 George Eliot

Heinrich Teweles was the director of a German-language theater in Prague. He had staged Herzl’s play “Seine Hoheit” (His Highness) in February 1888, and it was he whom Herzl records as having recommended George Eliot’s famous Zionist novel *Daniel Deronda* from 1876. One of Herzl’s diary-entries from June 7, 1895 states: “[I need to] read *Daniel Deronda*. Teweles talks about it. I don’t know it yet”⁷⁴.

Teweles raised Eliot’s novel in an exchange of letters that began three weeks earlier on May 14. Herzl had reached out in a bid to pitch his latest play *The New Ghetto*, imploring Teweles to allow him to remain anonymous during the review process. On May 19 the playwright confided, “For some time now I have believed that there is no greater purpose for my life than to take up the Jewish cause, but in a different way than heretofore – more freely, more loftily, and more originally”. One suspects it is exactly this remark that caused Teweles to flash on the figure of Daniel Deronda and then to mention him in a letter, one Herzl replied to at once on June 6. In his response Herzl does not directly refer to his friend’s recommendation of Eliot’s work, but did note, “I am very interested in what you write about the Jewish question. I cannot go into more detail today”⁷⁵.

Neuzeit, following the death in January of his ally Simon Szántó, who had run the weekly since 1861 – see *EJ* vol. 15, p. 126.

⁷³ Wistrich, *The Jews of Vienna...* p. 432. Benjamin Netanyahu recently offered the traditional view with acuity: “You can compare [Herzl and Pinsker] to Newton and Leibniz, each inventing calculus without knowing about the other” – “Netanyahu: The Figures who formed him, and the Duties of Jewish Leadership”, an interview with Benjamin Netanyahu by Gadi Taub, translated by Avi Woolf and Neil Rogachevsky for *Mosaic Magazine*, Dec. 21, 2021, see <https://mosaicmagazine.com/observation/israel-zionism/2021/12/netanyahu-the-figures-who-formed-him-and-the-duties-of-jewish-leadership/> [accessed Feb. 25, 2023].

⁷⁴ CD vol. 1, p. 36.

⁷⁵ Herzl’s letters to Teweles were preserved by Leon Kellner in op. cit. pp. 149-160. Alex Bein provided English translations of the latter two letters on pp. 302-306 in “Some early Herzl letters”, *Herzl Year Book*, op. cit., pp. 297-329.

Four days and 36 pages later in his *Diaries*, the febrile Herzl wrote: "(Addendum to Teweles' letter): I must read *Daniel Deronda*. Perhaps it contains ideas similar to mine. They cannot be identical ones, because it took a concatenation of many specific circumstances to bring my plan into being"⁷⁶.

Eliot's tale comes up again – now with open familiarity – in Herzl's *Diaries* several months thereafter when he visits England. On November 23, 1895 the Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi Hermann Adler received Herzl at his home in the City. Herzl records that following dinner "I expounded my project" before rabbi Adler, his brother-in-law, brother, and an unnamed other or others. Once he had finished, "the Chief Rabbi said that this was the idea of *Daniel Deronda*", a novel he had lectured on⁷⁷. Without missing a beat Herzl retorted, "I wouldn't even want the idea to be a new one. It is 2,000 years old". He then listened to "the familiar objections" to Zionism, ironically noting in conclusion, "During all this talk, we were drinking a light claret produced in a Zion colony"⁷⁸.

Two days later Herzl was in Cardiff, where he met Colonel Albert Goldsmid, whose credentials as a Zionist went back to a leadership role in Britain's Hovevei Zion. The two men at once developed a rapport, with Herzl writing "we understood, we understand, each other. He is a wonderful person"⁷⁹. He next adds:

After dinner, while the ladies and the other English colonel in the party were in the drawing room, I went to the smoking room with Goldsmid. And then came the remarkable story. "I am Daniel Deronda", he said. "I was born a Christian. My father and mother were baptized Jews. When I found

⁷⁶ Ibidem p. 72.

⁷⁷ Soon after *Daniel Deronda*'s publication in 1876, rabbi Adler had lectured on Eliot's novel before the Jewish Working Men's Club and Institute. Haim Guedalla moderated – see "The Rev. Dr. Hermann Adler on *Daniel Deronda*", *The Jewish Chronicle*, Dec. 15, 1876, p. 586.

⁷⁸ *CD* vol. 1, p. 278-279. It bears noting that Herzl had badly flawed intelligence, and visited the wrong Chief Rabbi: it was the *Sephardic* Chief Rabbi he ought to have met with, as that was none other than Moses Gaster of Romania, who had been one of the leaders of Hovevei Zion. This mistake was corrected not until Herzl's subsequent trip to England in July the next year, thanks to Jacob de Haas – see *ibidem*, "Reminiscences of Zionism in England. Third Paper" in *The Maccabean*, vol. III, no. 1, July 1902, Federation of American Zionists, New York, pp. 20-23.

⁷⁹ *Ibid* p. 282-284.

out about this as a young man in India, I decided to return to the ancestral fold. While I was serving as a lieutenant, I went over to Judaism.”

Thus begins the central Jewish plot of Eliot's novel⁸⁰, the culmination being that Daniel and his bride Mirah, having committed themselves to restoring their people in the Land of Israel, prepare to sail off together for the eastern Mediterranean. A stock motif, to be sure, and one that closely resembles the conclusion Herzl imagined for the novel he ultimately shelved in favor of *The Jewish State*. In that novel's final scene, as Herzl described in his *Diaries*, the shipboard Zionist hero “gives the command for departure. Then he stands at the bow of the boat and stares fixedly into the distance where the Promised Land lies”⁸¹.

Herzl's colleague-biographer Jacob de Haas asserted: “Although he had read English literature, he had not even heard of *Daniel Deronda*”⁸². Just recently, Michael J. Reimer offered absolution for this, claiming: “But there is no evidence that Eliot's novel had any influence on

⁸⁰ The Polish Jew and Zionist Nahum Sokolow (1859-1936) – attendee at the First Zionist Congress in Basel, luminary of Hebrew journalism, and president of the World Zionist Congress from 1931 to 1935 – wrote this of Eliot's novel: “Among English writers who have understood the [Zionist] idea in all its depth and breadth, the place of honour belongs unquestionably to George Eliot (1819-1880) ... In *Daniel Deronda* ... the Jew demands the rights pertaining to his race, and claims admittance into the community of nations as one of its legitimate members. He demands real emancipation, real equality. The blood of the prophets surges in his veins, the voice of God calls to him, and he becomes conscious, and emphatically declares that he has a distinct nationality; the days of levelling are over. Where calumny and obtuseness see nothing but *dissecta membra*, the eye of the English poetess perceives a complete national entity destined to begin life afresh, full of strength and vigour ... In the Valhalla of the Jewish people, among the tokens of homage offered by the genius of centuries, *Daniel Deronda* will take its place as the proudest testimony to the English recognition of the Zionist idea” – Nahum Sokolow, *History of Zionism*, vol. 1, Longmans, Green and Co., New York, 1919, pp. 210 and 212.

⁸¹ *CD* vol. 1, p. 13.

⁸² Haas, *op. cit.* p. 63. Writing in 1904 de Haas had been less categorical: “[Herzl] was in the main unconscious in the winter of 1895 of the parentage of his thoughts; for those who had labored before him, excepting George Eliot, were comparatively obscure, and their words had only found acceptance amongst eclectic bands of enthusiasts in Eastern Europe” – see his Preface to Theodor Herzl, *A Jewish State: An Attempt at a Modern Solution of the Jewish Question*, revised translation by Sylvie D'Avigdor, Maccabean Publishing Co., New York, 1904, p. v.

immigrant-settlers who began to arrive [in Eretz Israel] in 1881”⁸³. On the contrary, there is a mountain of evidence that *Daniel Deronda* outright ignited the imagination of the Diaspora from Britain to Russia, was thereby a weighty factor in the coalescence of Hovevei Zion, and remained a mantelpiece of Zionist thought for long decades⁸⁴.

Daniel Deronda, published in 1876, was rapidly translated into numerous languages – there were *three* translations into Russian within a year⁸⁵. In 1877 *Daniel Deronda* also appeared in German and Dutch, and in 1878 Calmann Lévy published it in French. By 1883 there was an Italian translation. The #1 Hebrew-language weekly *Ha-Magid* from today’s Efk, Poland began printing Hebrew-language installments at the close of 1876⁸⁶. In addition to rabbi Adler and Albert Goldsmid in the UK (and Emma Lazarus in the US⁸⁷) the novel inspired important figures throughout Europe. Among them is the financier Haim Guedalla (a trusty nephew of Moses Montefiore), who in 1876 was drafting plans to finance Ottoman debt and, enthused by the installments of *Daniel Deronda* he was avidly reading, revised his plans in the aim of persuading the Turks to sell vast expanses of “Syria” for Jewish settlement. That autumn he even initiated correspondence with George Eliot⁸⁸. Others include rabbi professor David Kaufmann of Budapest, who published a sparkling tract on Eliot’s opus in German in 1877, with an English version coming out that same year⁸⁹, and Moritz Schnirer, co-founder of

⁸³ Reimer, op. cit., p. 323, footnote 13.

⁸⁴ See Steele, “Syjoniści chrześcijańscy...”, pp. 105-117. This work has been adapted into English in three parts – see “British Christian Zionism (Part 1): George Eliot’s *Daniel Deronda*”, *Fathom Journal*, June 2019, see <https://fathomjournal.org/british-christian-zionism-and-george-eliot-daniel-deronda/> [accessed Feb. 25, 2023].

⁸⁵ Boris M. Proskurnin, “George Eliot’s *Daniel Deronda* and the Jewish Question in Russia of the 1870s–1900s”, *Literature Compass*, vol. 14, no. 7, July 2017.

⁸⁶ *The Edinburgh Evening News*, December 9, 1876, p. 4.

⁸⁷ *EJ* vol. 12, p. 560.

⁸⁸ For broader information on Haim Guedalla’s endeavors, see Michael K. Silber, “Alliance of the Hebrews, 1863–1875: The diaspora roots of an ultra-Orthodox proto-Zionist utopia in Palestine”, in: *The Journal of Israeli History*, Vol. 27, No. 2, 2008, pp. 132-134; Abigail Greene, *Moses Montefiore: Jewish Liberator, Imperial Hero*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. 2010, p. 400. Guedalla’s correspondence with Eliot was published not until after her death – see *The Jewish Chronicle*, Jan. 7, 1881, p. 5. See also footnote 77.

⁸⁹ David Kaufmann, in: *Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums* 26 Jahrgang, 1877 – in English, *George Eliot and Judaism: An attempt to appreciate ‘Daniel*

Kadimah, who lauded the novel as the first of his early inspirations⁹⁰. Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, the father of modern Hebrew, and Peretz Smolenskin, the publisher/editor of Vienna's *Ha-Shahar* were also impacted by Eliot's novel⁹¹. Among the uncounted readers who came later were such authors as Isaac Leib Peretz⁹² and Abraham Goldfaden⁹³, the prominent Hamburg businessman Gustav Gabriel Cohen⁹⁴, and none other than the fathers of modern Israel David Ben-Gurion⁹⁵ and Chaim Weizmann, who kept the novel "within easy reach" in his bedroom⁹⁶.

On the basis of Eliezer Ben-Yehuda's Hebrew-language autobiography "A *Dream Come True*", Shalom Goldman wrote:

Ben Yehuda ... tells of the rabbinic education he rejected and of the secular Jewish nationalist vision that replaced it. His life task ... would be "the restoration of Israel and its language on the land of its ancestors". To his dismay, Perlman/Ben-Yehuda's Orthodox yeshiva teachers and fellow students rejected his Zionist ideas. One yeshiva friend, though, did not reject him. Rather, he told Perlman of "an English story he had read in the

Deronda, William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh and London, 1877. A 2nd edition came out in 1878 (sic!). In 1877 Eliot contacted Kaufmann in order to thank him – see Gertrude Himmelfarb, *The Jewish Odyssey of George Eliot*, Encounter Books, New York-London, 2012, p. 124

Worth noting is that rabbi Kaufmann translated into German Herzl's article on his upcoming book *Der Judenstaat*, published in *The Jewish Chronicle* on January 17, 1896 – see CD, op. cit. p. 294. That translation (not Herzl's original German-language text) is what appeared in Joseph S. Bloch's Vienna-based weekly not until *Der Judenstaat* had come out – see *Österreichische Wochenschrift*, February 21, 1896, pp. 1-4 (145-148).

⁹⁰ Moritz Schnirer, "The Days of Early Zionism", in: Nahum Sokolow, *Hibbath Zion*, Rubin Mass Jerusalem, 1935, p. 380.

⁹¹ See *EJ* vol. 6, p. 349.

⁹² *Ibidem* – also http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Peretz_Yitskhok_Leybush [accessed Feb. 25, 2023].

⁹³ See *EJ* vol. 7, p. 704 – also http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Goldfadn_Avrom [accessed Feb. 25, 2023].

⁹⁴ G.G. Cohen (1830-1906), a leading Zionist activist in Hamburg, was inspired by *Daniel Deronda* to write his 1891 text "Die Judenfrage und die Zukunft" [The Jewish Question and the Future] – see Richard Gottheil, "Zionism", *Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. XII, Funk and Wagnalls Co., 1905, p. 670.

⁹⁵ Tom Segev, *One Palestine, Complete: Jews and Arabs under the British Mandate*, Metropolitan Books, Ontario, 2000, p. 382.

⁹⁶ Norman Rose, *Chaim Weizmann: A Biography*, Penguin Books, 1986, p. 248.

monthly Russian journal *Vestnik Evrope* in which a man was described who had a vision similar to [Perlman's] own ... It was the novel *Daniel Deronda*, by George Eliot. "After I had read the story a few times", Perlman wrote, "I made up my mind and I acted: I went to Paris ... in order to learn and equip myself there with the information needed for my work in the Land of Israel"⁹⁷.

As with Pinsker's *Autoemancipation!*, we are again left to wonder how Herzl could not have known of *Daniel Deronda* before Teweles urged him to read the Victorian masterpiece in May 1895⁹⁸. And in fact I have found evidence dating to 1893. This is discussed in section 7 below.

4.3 Moses Hess

Herzl's accounts do not specify when or how he originally became aware of Moses Hess, author of the classic Zionist text *Rome and Jerusalem*, a German-language work published in Leipzig in 1862. He records first having read the work aboard train whilst on a trip from Vienna to the resort town of Aussee and back over April 30 and May 1, 1901. Here is what his diary entry from May 2, his 41st birthday, reports:

The 19 hours of this round-trip were whiled away for me by Hess with his *Rome and Jerusalem*, which I had first started to read in 1898 in Jerusalem, but had never been able to finish properly in the pressure and rush of these years. Now I was enraptured and uplifted by him. What an exalted, noble spirit! Everything that we have tried is already in his book. The only bothersome thing is his Hegelian terminology. Wonderful the Spinozistic-Jewish and nationalist elements. Since Spinoza, Jewry has brought forth no greater spirit than this forgotten, faded Moses Hess!⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Shalom Goldman, *Zeal for Zion*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 2009, p. 20. Ben-Yehuda traveled to Paris in 1878, and from there went to Jaffa in October, 1881 – see *EJ* vol. 3, pp. 386-388.

⁹⁸ The "Palestine speech" of the Magyar antisemite Győző Istóczy delivered on June 24, 1878 in the Hungarian Diet comes to mind again here. Handler in op. cit. is unable to identify the source of Istóczy's sudden plan, but regarding both the substance and the timing of the speech, one wonders if Istóczy had not encountered the Zionist idea in the German translation of *Daniel Deronda* (1877), maybe its German-language analysis by Budapest's rabbi David Kaufmann (1876), or (most likely) in some press review of Eliot's popular novel.

⁹⁹ CD vol. 3, p. 1090.

Herzl had been in Jerusalem in the fall of 1898 as part of his only trip to *Eretz Israel*. His purpose was to gain the public support of the German Emperor, Wilhelm II, for the Zionist movement. On October 28 Herzl briefly met the Kaiser in front of the Jewish agricultural school at Mikveh Israel, and then on November 2 he and his team – comprised of Max Bodenheimer, Moritz Schnirer, David Wolffsohn, and Joseph Seidener¹⁰⁰ – were received by Wilhelm in his sprawling tent in Jerusalem. Herzl informs us that this is when he first sought to read *Rome and Jerusalem*. Inasmuch as Bodenheimer was precisely then preparing the tract for re-publication (which came to fruition the next year¹⁰¹), it is clear that it was he who made it available to Herzl. In his memoirs completed in Mandate Palestine, Bodenheimer explains that he himself had encountered the book in 1891 and found it “intoxicating” and “irrefutable”¹⁰².

Nonetheless, Herzl's earliest mention of Moses Hess – who before becoming a Zionist was a prominent socialist with close ties to Karl Marx¹⁰³ – occurred over a year prior on May 15, 1897, when he was planning the launch of the new Zionist weekly *Die Welt* with some lieutenants. Among them was Leon Kellner from Tarnów, Poland, whom Herzl asked to produce “a series of literary profiles of representative exponents of the Zionist idea: Disraeli, G. Eliot, Moses Hess, etc.”¹⁰⁴. Kellner agreed, and promised to begin with Disraeli – and this he did in *Die Welt*'s pilot issue of June 4, 1897, which ran part one of his piece “Lord Beaconsfield” over pages 13-15. The second, final part was printed in the next edition – June 11, 1897 – also over pages 13-15.

Consequently, Herzl had gained an appreciation of Moses Hess's standing somewhere prior to mid-May 1897. Julius Schoeps has opined

¹⁰⁰ The Rev. William Hechler was also a member of Herzl's team on the trip to Palestine – however, he did not participate in the meeting with the Kaiser, as attitudes in the Yishuv at the time were wont to see in him a missionary, and this could have jeopardized the PR success of Herzl's audience with Wilhelm II. Hechler therefore was acting as a vital behind-the-scenes liaison – see *CD*, vol. 2, p. 742-750.

¹⁰¹ *EJ* vol. 9, p. 76.

¹⁰² Max Bodenheimer, op. cit., p. 78. Bodenheimer had been introduced to *Rome and Jerusalem* by the scholar of Jewish literature, Gustav Karpeles, then editor of the Berlin newspaper *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums* – see *EJ* vol. 11, p. 816.

¹⁰³ Leszek Kołakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism*, W.W. Norton & Co., New York/London, 2005, pp. 89-93.

¹⁰⁴ *CD* vol. 2, p. 548.

that in 1894 Herzl may have read the series on Hess written by the then Vienna-based Zionist Mordechai (Marcus) Ehrenpreis, published in Nathan Birnbaum's *Jüdische Volkszeitung*, which had succeeded *Selbst-Emancipation*¹⁰⁵. Yet if only because Herzl was living in Paris in 1894, it is far easier to picture rabbi Ehrenpreis, who became a staunch supporter of Herzl at once upon *The Jewish State's* appearance, presenting Herzl with a copy of his series on Hess in the fall of 1896 when they began corresponding¹⁰⁶. Be that as it may, David Wolffsohn's account of his first direct encounter with Herzl, at his home in Vienna that same fall¹⁰⁷, informs us that Herzl professed knowledge of Hess, but admitted he had not read *Rome and Jerusalem*¹⁰⁸. Wolffsohn does not tell us when Herzl had heard of Hess, nor from whom – and the possible “suspects” must number in the dozens.

One suspect, however, is worth pausing over: Nathan Birnbaum. For on February 24, 1896¹⁰⁹ – just 10 days after *Der Judenstaat* appeared, and 2 days after *Die Zeit* published Birnbaum's generally favorable review of the work – Birnbaum mailed Herzl a copy of his remarkable *The National Rebirth of the Jewish People in Its Own Land*¹¹⁰. The nearly 50-page brochure from 1893 includes a brief synopsis of Zionism's emersion that credits both the Jewish and Christian luminaries (among the latter, Eliot and Oliphant). Naturally, Birnbaum does not neglect to raise Moses Hess and his *Rome and Jerusalem* – in fact, he does so four times. Above all, Birnbaum's tract – an appeal to both Jews and Christians – builds

¹⁰⁵ Schoeps, op. cit., p. 32. Stephen Fruitman writes that, after his series had appeared, Ehrenpreis “learned from a Russian classmate that these essays had been collected, translated and published in brochure form in Yekaterinoslav by one Me-nahem Ussishkin, leading to the development of a friendship between author and translator, who would soon emerge as one of the firebrands of Jewish colonization efforts in Palestine” – *Creating a New Heart: Marcus Ehrenpreis on Jewry and Judaism*, Department of Historical Studies, University of Umeå, Sweden, 2001, p. 27.

¹⁰⁶ Fruitman, op. cit., pp. 31-31. Fruitman adds that this occurred about the time *Ha-Shiloah's* first volume came out, i.e., October, 1896.

¹⁰⁷ In his diary entry for November 14, 1896, Herzl refers to having met Wolffsohn “some months ago”, and so September would seem the likely month for that visit.

¹⁰⁸ Abraham Robinsohn, *David Wolffsohn: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Zionismus*, Jüdischer Verlag, Berlin, 1921, p. 17.

¹⁰⁹ Olson, op. cit., p. 74-75, f. 13.

¹¹⁰ Nathan Birnbaum, *Die Nationale Wiedergeburt Des Jüdischen Volkes In Seinem Lande*, Wiener Allgemeine Zeitung, Vienna, 1893.

a powerful case for the reassertion of Jewish agency in Palestine: "The Jews are a nation ... And thereby the first condition for the success of Jewish national aspirations is provided"¹¹¹.

It is therefore unsurprising that Herzl's attitude toward Birnbaum was poisoned from the beginning. For differently than with *Rome and Jerusalem, Autoemancipation!*, and so on, the author of *The National Rebirth* was alive – moreover, the brilliant young Birnbaum (not quite 32) had been an ardent Zionist for almost 14 years already, and harbored leadership ambitions for the future of the movement. Thus, their first face-to-face meeting on March 1, 1896 at Herzl's home was a fiasco. Present were two other Zionists, and about this threesome Herzl wrote, "It is downright disheartening to observe their rank hostility toward one another", adding "Birnbaum is unmistakably jealous of me"¹¹² – though of course the opposite was at least as true. Herzl did not, after all, repeat to Birnbaum his words about *Autoemancipation!*: "it is a good thing that I didn't know it – perhaps I would have abandoned my own undertaking". Indeed, at this early juncture in his Zionist career Herzl's insecurities vis-à-vis his predecessors were never more evident than when Nathan Birnbaum was concerned. In what shines harsh light on his unwillingness to share the stage of the Jewish national revival, within the next months Herzl managed to have Birnbaum removed to Berlin¹¹³.

About Herzl listing Disraeli alongside Eliot and Hess at that *Die Welt* staff meeting, he was of course referring to Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881), Britain's Prime Minister in 1868 and again in 1874-80. From a Sephardic family, Benjamin was baptized at age twelve into the Anglican church. His novel *Tancred* from 1847 expressed a desire for a British-Jewish synthesis involving not only esteem for Judaism, but also a stalwart attachment to the Holy Land. Relevantly, when in the fall of 1880 Herzl joined *Albia*, the German-nationalist *Burschenschaft* (fraternity) at the *Universität Wien*, and adopted the name "Tancred", Disraeli had just left the world stage as Prime Minister; moreover, since 1879 Disraeli had been publicly supporting the mission of Laurence Oliphant to obtain a *firman* from the Sultan by which to create a huge Jewish colony in the

¹¹¹ Ibidem p. 15.

¹¹² CD vol. 1, p. 307. Herzl goes on to write, "I regard Birnbaum as envious, vain, and dogmatic" and to claim Birnbaum had "gone over to Socialism".

¹¹³ See the subchapter "Birnbaum and Herzl" in Olson, op. cit., pp. 70-92.

Levant¹¹⁴. Dismissing these presentist associations and the reference to Disraeli in May, 1897, several of Herzl's biographers have inclined toward the view that Herzl took the moniker from a work he may have read at school as a teen: *Gerusalemme Liberata* by the 16th-century Italian poet Torquato Tasso¹¹⁵.

4.4 Laurence Oliphant

The Christian Zionist Laurence Oliphant (1829-1888), who played a galvanizing role in the emergence of Hovevei Zion, is a further such figure warranting examination. Though hailed by Russian and Romanian Jews as “a savior”, “a second Cyrus”, and even “a messiah for Israel” (Lilienblum) – and by Smolenskin in Vienna as “if not a Messiah, then a Samson”¹¹⁶ – Herzl seems never to have mentioned him. Nonetheless, a large number of Herzl's associates did inform him about Oliphant. Among them are the Romanian leaders of Hovevei Zion, Karpel Lippe (1830-1915) and rabbi Moses Gaster (1856-1939). In his review of *Der Judenstaat* that appeared in *Zion* on August 30, 1896, Lippe (who a year later gave the opening address at the First Zionist Congress) counted Oliphant as the first of the “old trinity” of great Zionists, along with David Gordon and... himself. Herzl closely monitored his press, and doubtless read the review holding Oliphant in such marked esteem. Gaster, in turn, told Herzl about Oliphant somewhere between July 1896 (when the two men met in England¹¹⁷) and the run-up to the First Zionist Congress in August 1897, when they were in regular contact. Gaster and Oliphant had worked arm-in-arm in 1882 in Gaster's native Romania during Hovevei Zion's heady early days. Years afterward, Gaster wrote about their co-operation as follows: “[In 1882] I invited [Oliphant] to come to Jassy, where we held a big meeting, and then

¹¹⁴ See Laurence Oliphant, *The Land of Gilead, with excursions in the Lebanon*, William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh – London, 1880.

¹¹⁵ This includes Bein, op. cit. p. 40; Israel Cohen, op. cit. p. 29; Amos Elon, *Herzl*, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1975, p. 55. Most scholars treat the two sources of Herzl's choice of ‘Tancred’ as having relatively equal relevance.

¹¹⁶ On Oliphant see Philip Earl Steele, “British Christian Zionism (Part 2): the work of Laurence Oliphant”, *Fathom Journal*, January 2020, see <https://fathomjournal.org/british-christian-zionism-part-two-the-work-of-laurence-oliphant/> [accessed Feb. 25, 2023].

¹¹⁷ CD vol. 1, p. 419.

to come to Bucarest, where he met with an enthusiastic reception. He promised every help and advice, and he went to Constantinople to obtain a Charter for establishing a Jewish colony near Tiberias. This was the origin of the famous Charter of a later kind, when Dr. Herzl was informed by me of the steps taken by Laurence Oliphant, and of the means by which he had hoped to establish an autonomous Jewish colony in Palestine”¹¹⁸.

Earlier still, for in late February 1896, Herzl had read the widely reported Zionist proposal of William Holman Hunt, the celebrated English pre-Raphaelite painter¹¹⁹. A week later Herzl familiarized himself with Holman Hunt's endorsement of *Der Judenstaat*¹²⁰, whose ideas the painter (who had lived for extended periods in Palestine) compared to those of Oliphant. On July 26, 1896, while delivering his address to the London Maccabæans, Herzl boasted Holman Hunt's backing¹²¹.

The list goes on. Nahum Sokolow made Oliphant's acquaintance in the spring of 1882 in Lviv and Brody during the refugee crisis; in 1885 he published his Hebrew translation of large portions of Laurence's Zionist plan, *The Land of Gilead*, from late 1880¹²². Sokolow maintained a lifelong fascination with Oliphant; indeed, in his last year Sokolow was preparing to write a biography of the Scotsman¹²³. One picture shows Sokolow regaling Herzl with his memories of Oliphant following the First Congress, when he accompanied Herzl back to Vienna and stayed several days with him there. Samuel Montagu, a prominent English Jew we'll have more to say about, had also met Oliphant in Lviv and Brody, where they both represented Mansion House. Less than three years later, Montagu “arranged for the Christian-Zionist Laurence Oliphant

¹¹⁸ Moses Gaster “Pinsker's Auto-emancipation – A Jubilee”, *Views: A Jewish Monthly*, vol. 1, no. 1, London, April 1932, pp. 17-25 – the quoted passage is on p. 21.

¹¹⁹ CD vol. 1, p. 306, where in his entry from Feb. 27, 1896 Herzl refers to the February 21, 1896 issue of *The Jewish Chronicle*, p. 9.

¹²⁰ *The Jewish Chronicle*, Feb. 28, 1896, p. 10; republished i.a., in *The London Evening Standard*, Feb. 29, 1896, p. 2 and *The Tablet*, Feb. 29, 1896, p. 4.

¹²¹ See De Haas, op. cit. vol. 2, pp. 305-313 for the full address.

¹²² Nahum Sokolow, *History of Zionism, 1600-1918*, vol. 1, Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1919, pp. 207-209; ibidem vol. 2, pp. 289; 306-307 – and Nahum Sokolow, *Hibbath Zion (The Love of Zion)*, Rubin Mass, Jerusalem, 1935, pp. 275-279; 341.

¹²³ Florian Sokołów (Nahum's son), *Nahum Sokołów: Życie i Legenda*, (opracowanie Andrzeja A. Zięby), Księgarnia Akademicka, Kraków, 2006, pp. 72-73.

to advise the [London-based Hovevei Zion] society on colonization problems”¹²⁴, and thus can readily be assumed to have told Herzl about him in November 1895, during their time together in England¹²⁵. A sixth example is Nathan Birnbaum, whose above *Die Nationale Wiedergeburt*, sent to Herzl a week before the two men’s discussion on March 1, 1896, raised Oliphant, and whose *Selbst-Emancipation* had run a dozen stories concerning Oliphant (“the well-known friend of the Jewish nation and tireless agitator for the Jewish colonization of Palestine”¹²⁶) between 1885 and 1892¹²⁷.

These six individuals are obviously all from Herzl’s post-conversion milieu. Which is to admit that none of my prosopographical digging into Herzl’s earlier milieu (from Hugo Wittmann to Bertha von Suttner, and Moriz Benedikt to Arthur Levysohn¹²⁸) has revealed any link to Oliphant or other Zionist figures/events from the Hovevei period. Nonetheless, as with George Eliot’s *Daniel Deronda*, I have uncovered evidence concerning Oliphant that dates to 1893 – this too is discussed in section 7 below¹²⁹.

¹²⁴ Cecil Bloom, “Samuel Montagu and Zionism”, *Jewish Historical Studies*, vol. 34, 1994-1996, Jewish Historical Society of England, p. 22 – Bloom here cites *The Jewish Chronicle*, Feb. 20, 1885, p. 6.

¹²⁵ See CD vol. 1, pp. 277 & 280 (Nov. 22 & 24, 1891).

¹²⁶ *Selbst-Emancipation*, June 2, 1885, p. 6.

¹²⁷ Also noteworthy is that Oliphant is mentioned in *Die Welt*’s article on rabbi Samuel Mohilever – see the June 18, 1897 issue, p. 6.

¹²⁸ About Levysohn, for instance, my search to date through his *Berliner Tageblatt*, where from late 1886 to the end of 1888 Herzl had a column entitled “Reise um die Woche” (A trip around the week), found no references anywhere to Pinsker, Eliot, Hess, Oliphant, Jewish colonization schemes, and so on. I did however come across a book review by one Otto Neumann-Hofer (not a Jew) that ridicules its subject as a chaotic mess peddling in “phantasmagorias” like “Eldorado, a Monkey Kingdom, and a new Jewish state in Palestine” [der neue Judenstaat in Palästina] – see *Berliner Tageblatt*, January 13, 1888, p. 1-2.

¹²⁹ Correspondence from 1900 exists between Herzl and Oliphant’s second wife, Rosamond Oliphant-Templeton. On May 4 of that year Oliphant-Templeton wrote to Herzl (in French) thanking him for a letter to her that is preserved neither in Theodor Herzl, *Briefe und Tagebücher (Briefe 1898-1900), Fünfter Band*, Propyläen Verlag, Berlin 1991 nor at the CZA. In her response running over eight small handwritten pages, Laurence Oliphant’s widow strongly advises Herzl against pursuing a charter with the current Ottoman government, stressing that all such efforts (her late husband’s being an example) have proven futile. She proposes that properties be

* * *

Before leaving behind Vienna, Pinker, Eliot, Hess, and Oliphant in order to address further cases in which Herzl was exposed to the Zionist idea, we need recount the reactions of two of Herzl's illustrious Zionist contemporaries to his blithe ignorance regarding his predecessors, along with those of two perceptive later biographers.

Shortly after the above-noted meeting between Herzl and Birnbaum in early 1896, Kadimah held a general council at which Birnbaum unveiled a new, lengthy iteration of his thoughts on the Jewish national revival. The speech soon appeared under his pseudonym "Mathias Acher" as *Die Jüdischer Moderne*. In it Birnbaum remarks on the "absurdity" (*Unding*) of "small-scale colonization" and on the bleak chances for ever proceeding more quickly than at "a snail's pace" given Ottoman "active and passive resistance". Harboring no illusion that the current situation could "excite the masses" of Jews, he complains of an "embarrassment", adding, "A newcomer [*Neuling*], of distinguished name and equipped with all the unpreparedness of the newcomer, had to come. His book, *The Jewish State*, because its author is famous, has thus been discussed much and in detail"¹³⁰. Which is to stress that Birnbaum – again, Herzl's fellow student at the University of Vienna's Law Faculty – seems not to have doubted Herzl's innocence. Herzl was a *Neuling*.

Matters were likewise with rabbi Isaac Rülff, from today's Klaipėda on Lithuania's Baltic coast, who also played a surpassing role in pre-Herzlian Zionist history¹³¹. David Wolffsohn, who succeeded Herzl as the head of the Zionist Organization, was a disciple of Rülff's. After

acquired for Jewish settlement under the names of non-Jews, this secure, as she states, arrangement to be suitably rectified once more propitious circumstances arise, as foretold in the Bible. Herzl responded (in English) with but a few perfunctory lines over half a year later, on Nov. 26, 1900. This letter is held at the CZA (H1 \2655), but is not found in *Briefe 1898-1900*. The Special Collections at Leeds University Library hold several dozen items from Rosamond's correspondence (MS 1313), but none relate to Herzl – I am grateful to Joseph Massey at LUL for his kind help. Rosamond's autobiography does not mention Herzl – see Rosamond Dale Owen, Mrs. Laurence Oliphant, the owner of Armageddon, *My Perilous Life in Palestine*, George Allen & Unwin, London, 1928.

¹³⁰ Mathias Acher, *Die Jüdische Moderne...* op. cit., 1896.

¹³¹ See https://yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Rulf_Isaak [accessed Feb. 25, 2023].

reading *The Jewish State* in early 1896 Wolffsohn felt he had become “a different person” and in his “unqualified enthusiasm” wrote to his master about the work. Firstly having read it himself, Rülff answered Wolffsohn as follows: “My dear Wolffsohn, how can this man presume to want to bring salvation to the Jewish people! You know what our sages have said: He who communicates a word in the name of its proclaimer brings salvation to the world – but not he who conceals his predecessors, to whom he owes his ideas”¹³². Wolffsohn’s biographer adds that Rülff then “enumerated to Wolffsohn all the books and essays to which priority is due concerning the idea of the Jewish state”, before declaring to him, “As you see, Herzl has grossly violated this commandment”. Wolffsohn shared rabbi Rülff’s criticism with Bodenheimer and their fellow Zionists in Cologne, and it was jointly agreed that Wolffsohn would personally visit Herzl to find out more about his intentions, as well as “why he did not mention his antecessors and like-minded contemporaries with so little as a single word”. When Wolffsohn arrived at Herzl’s home in Vienna in the autumn of 1896¹³³, a meeting was underway with several Zionist activists, including Oser Kokesch, but he was asked to join the group. Once the discussions were over, writes Wolffsohn, “I asked Herzl if I could speak to him privately. He led me into an adjoining room, and I told him unreservedly that the great impression his book had made on me, as on numerous other Hovevei Zion [Lovers of Zion], had been greatly impaired by the unfortunate circumstance that he had passed over his predecessors with disdainful silence. I was then astonished to learn that he was hearing the name Rülff for the first time. He had read Pinsker’s *Autoemancipation*, though only after he had already completed his *Jewish State*. »If I had known this work earlier, my book would probably have gone unwritten«. Moses Hess, in turn, he knew – though *Rome and Jerusalem* he had not read”¹³⁴.

Next is a remark made by Herzl’s biographer Israel Cohen in 1959. It remains stinging: “There can, indeed, be little doubt that, had [Herzl] been acquainted beforehand with Pinsker’s publication and with other similar writings of earlier date, he would not have undergone the acute

¹³² Abraham Robinsohn, op. cit., p. 17.

¹³³ Probably in September – see footnote 107.

¹³⁴ Robinsohn, pp. 18-19. See also the somewhat earlier account (1914) of this matter in Adolf Friedemann, op. cit. p. 29. On Oct. 8, 1897 *Die Welt* ran a nice piece on rabbi Rülff with a portrait – see p. 7.

and feverish mental pangs nor undertaken the laborious and meticulous lucubration that found an outlet in his own historic work"¹³⁵. On the other hand, as Derek Penslar recently observed: "If a professional trained in twenty-first-century psychiatry had assessed Herzl at this time, she might well have determined that Herzl was experiencing a manic episode and that he suffered from bipolar disorder"¹³⁶.

5. The Blackstone Memorial of 1891

On November 24 & 25, 1890, the "Conference on the Past, Present, and Future of Israel" was held across the Atlantic in Chicago at the First Methodist Episcopal Church¹³⁷. Attended by leading Christians and Jews, the gathering was organized by William Eugene Blackstone (1841-1935), a lay Christian Evangelical who had become absorbed with Biblical prophecy under the influence of John Nelson Darby's teachings known as dispensationalism¹³⁸. In 1878 Blackstone's eschatological work *Jesus is coming* was published. Within twenty years the volume had sold over one-million copies in tens of languages¹³⁹.

In 1888 Blackstone sailed to England to attend a missionary conference, after which he and his daughter Flora journeyed to the Holy Land, where they traveled about on horseback, visiting not only the Christian pilgrimage sites¹⁴⁰, but also many of the new *moshavot* (settlements) established earlier in the decade during the First

¹³⁵ Cohen, op. cit., p. 90.

¹³⁶ Penslar, op. cit., pp. 70-71.

¹³⁷ For the conference program, its minutes, and papers, see *Jew and Gentile, Being a Report of a Conference of Israelites and Gentiles regarding their Mutual Relations and Welfare*, Bloch Publishing, Cincinnati, 1890.

¹³⁸ For fuller accounts of William Blackstone and his Memorial, see above all: 1) Yaakov Ariel, "An American Initiative for a Jewish State: William Blackstone and the Petition of 1891", *Studies in Zionism*, vol. 10, no. 2, 1989, pp. 125-137; 2) Jonathan Moorhead, "The Father of Zionism: William E. Blackstone?", *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 53/4, Dec. 2010, pp. 787-800; 3) Paul. W. Rood, "William E. Blackstone (1841-1935): Zionism's Greatest Ally Outside of its Own Ranks", *Western States Jewish History* 48,2 2016, pp. 49-69.

¹³⁹ William E. Blackstone, *Jesus is Coming*, 2nd ed., Fleming H. Revell Co., New York/Chicago/London/Edinburgh, 1898, frontispiece.

¹⁴⁰ Bertha Spafford Vester, *Our Jerusalem: An American Family in the Holy City, 1881-1949*, Doubleday & Co., Garden City N.Y., 1950, pp. 157-158.

Aliyah¹⁴¹. Blackstone's encounters with Jewish pioneers and refugees along the way and back strengthened the shift within him toward an active messianism akin to that of the Jewish founders of religious Zionism, rabbi Tsevi Hirsch Kalischer of Toruń, Poland most prominent among them¹⁴². Hence, once back in Chicago in 1889, Blackstone began to reach out to both Jewish and Christian leaders and was soon laying plans for the famous conference. Amongst the several rabbis it featured was the prime mover behind Chicago's Reform Jewish Sinai Temple, Bernhard Felsenthal¹⁴³, who at the opening session delivered the bluntly entitled address, "Why Israelites do not accept Jesus as their Messiah"¹⁴⁴.

Buoyed by the participants' broad assent for restorationist aims and their unanimous concern for the fate of Russia's persecuted Jews, Blackstone decided to press the matter with the American administration. He therefore drafted a petition (the "Memorial") to President Benjamin Harrison seeking the Jews' restoration to the Land of Israel. As often repeated, the 413 signatories comprised a list of "Who's Who" in America, and this was no doubt central to the fact that the Chicagoan was welcomed at the White House by the President and Secretary of State James Blaine on March 5, 1891. For the VIPs who had endorsed the Memorial included some 200 religious leaders, Christian and Jewish¹⁴⁵, along with leading politicians, businessmen, and media titans. "Blackstone obtained the signatures of [...] fifty-three newspaper editors, seven college presidents, the industrialists Rockefeller, Morgan, McCor-

¹⁴¹ Yaakov Ariel, op. cit., p. 130.

¹⁴² Jody Myers, *Seeking Zion: Modernity and Messianic Activism in the Writings of Tsevi Hirsch Kalischer*, The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, Oxford, 2003.

¹⁴³ Leon A. Jick, "Bernhard Felsenthal: The Zionization of a Radical Reform Rabbi", *Jewish Political Studies Review*, 9: 1-2 (Spring 1997), pp. 5-14.

¹⁴⁴ *Jew and Gentile*, op. cit., pp. 14-19.

¹⁴⁵ Among the latter signatories is dr. Henry (Haim) Pereira Mendes (1852-1937), chief rabbi of Shearith Israel in Manhattan, North America's oldest synagogue. Six years later in 1897, after having met Theodor Herzl in London via the agency of Haham Moses Gaster, Rev. Mendes founded what soon became the Federation of American Zionists – see David de Sola Pool, "Henry Pereira Mendes", *The American Jewish Yearbook*, vol. 40, American Jewish Committee, 1939/5699, p. 46; and "Born a Rabbi: H.P. Mendes Marks 60th Birthday in Pulpit", *Jewish Daily Bulletin*, May 24, 1934, p. 2. In 1897-98 Mendes published 3 articles on Zionism in *The North American Review* (see the issues of Oct. 1897, Aug. 1898, and Nov. 1898).

mick, Armour, Dodge and Scribner; the Chief Justice and twenty two federal and state jurists, the Speaker of the House and eight other members of Congress, the Governors of Massachusetts, New York and Illinois, and the Mayors of New York, Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia and Baltimore”¹⁴⁶. The specific request of the Blackstone Memorial was that the US organize an international conference devoted to establishing a Jewish homeland in Palestine. In the words of the Memorial itself:

Why not give Palestine back to them again? According to God's distribution of nations it is their home; an inalienable possession from which they were expelled by force... Why shall not the powers which under the treaty of Berlin, in 1878, gave Bulgaria to the Bulgarians and Servia to the Servians now give Palestine back to the Jews? These provinces, as well as Roumania, Montenegro, and Greece were wrested from the Turks and given to their natural owners. Does not Palestine as rightfully belong to the Jews?”¹⁴⁷

Regarding Jewish matters, the Blackstone Memorial caused the greatest stir in all of 19th-century America, excelling even Herzl's *Der Judenstaat* and the First Zionist Congress¹⁴⁸. Concerning just the still nascent Jewish population in 1891¹⁴⁹, the Memorial garnered the support of but a minority of rabbis and other Jewish leaders, and thus the tiny American Jewish press was markedly reluctant toward the Memorial. After all, American Jews did not begin to meaningfully back Zionism until World War Two. The Hebrew-language weekly *Ha-Pisgah* ('the summit'), edited by Wolf Schur and read in Hovevei Zion milieux on both sides of the Atlantic, was an exception in having printed a highly

¹⁴⁶ Paul W. Rood, "Blackstone and the Rabbis: The Story of Dialogue and Cooperation between a Christian Evangelist and Two Eminent American Rabbis concerning the Future of Israel", Blackstone Center Series, 2020, p. 5.

¹⁴⁷ The full document is available at the Billy Graham Center Archives, Wheaton, see <https://www2.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/docs/BlackstoneMemorial/1891A.htm> [accessed Feb. 25, 2023].

¹⁴⁸ Marnin Feinstein, "The Blackstone Memorial" in *American Zionism, 1884–1904*, Herzl Press, New York 1965. p. 56.

¹⁴⁹ The US's Jewish population was approx. 400,000 at the time of the Blackstone Memorial (general pop. ~63 million). It swelled nearly 4-fold to 1.5 million by 1905 (general pop. ~84 million), then doubled to 3 million by 1914 (general pop. ~98 million). See Samson D. Oppenheim, "The Jewish Population of the United States", in *American Jewish Year Book 5679*, The Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, 1918, p. 31.

favorable article on the Memorial shortly after its submission at the White House¹⁵⁰.

As we know, the US did not manage to achieve the goals of the Blackstone Memorial, though concrete steps were taken. On April 6, 1891 the US ambassador to Russia, Charles Emory Smith, spoke with the Tsar's minister for foreign affairs, Nikolay de Giers, who responded favorably to the idea of an international conference on "restoring Palestine" to the Jews¹⁵¹. Harrison and Blaine subsequently had the consul in Jerusalem, Selah Merrill, file a report on the chances of persuading the Sultan to agree to opening Palestine for Jewish settlement – and Merrill could only scoff¹⁵².

Concerning William Blackstone's subsequent restorationist career, the literature purports that soon following the First Zionist Congress six years later, he marked key passages of prophecy in a Hebrew Bible and posted it to Herzl, and that somewhere in the wake of Herzl's reburial in *Yerushalayim* in 1949, the Bible was on display at Mount Herzl¹⁵³. This story has yet to be substantiated, however, and may well be a myth¹⁵⁴. Thereafter we learn that on May 26, 1916 an updated version of the Memorial was adopted by the Presbyterian church at its annual General Assembly and then tendered to President Woodrow Wilson (the son of a Presbyterian minister), who was thereby encouraged to approve a final draft of Great Britain's Balfour Declaration in October, 1917¹⁵⁵. Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, who was co-ordinating efforts

¹⁵⁰ Bar Abi, "Messiah's Trumpet", *Ha-Pisgah*, March 13, 1891 – a translation of which was published in: *The Peculiar People*, vol. IV, Alfred Center, NY, April 1891, pp. 22-24.

¹⁵¹ See Cyrus Adler and Aaron M. Margalith, *With firmness in the right: American Diplomatic Action Affecting Jews, 1840-1945*, The American Jewish Committee, New York, 1946, p. 225. As the authors note, this dispatch is not found in the official *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States* for 1891, but rather in *Dispatches, Russia*, Vol. 42 No. 87, The National Archives, WA DC.

¹⁵² See Shalom Goldman, "The Holy Land Appropriated: The Careers of Selah Merrill, Nineteenth Century Christian Hebraist, Palestine Explorer, and U.S. Consul in Jerusalem", *American Jewish History*, vol. 85, No. 2 (June 1997), pp. 151-172.

¹⁵³ See Peter Grose, *Israel in the Mind of America*, Schocken Books, New York, 1984, p. 37; Moorhead, op. cit. p. 795.

¹⁵⁴ See footnote 192 for more on the story of this Bible.

¹⁵⁵ Yaakov Ariel, "A Neglected Chapter in the History of Christian Zionism in America: William E. Blackstone and the Petition of 1916", in *Jews and Messianism in the Modern Era: Metaphor and Meaning*, ed. Jonathan Frankel, Oxford University Press,

behind the scenes to secure Wilson's acceptance of the British War Cabinet's plan, later recalled the President exclaiming, "To think that I, the son of the manse, should be able to help restore the Holy Land to its people"¹⁵⁶.

Beyond that, the Blackstone Memorial has been rightly applauded as the boldest testimony to WASP America's commitment to Jewish nationhood, coming as it did before the US Jewish population was sizeable, influential, and pro-Zionist. About the standing of William Blackstone the man, his friend Louis Brandeis – the US Supreme Court Justice and Zionist leader whose name is enshrined at Brandeis University in Massachusetts – generously agreed with Nathan Straus that Blackstone was "the father of Zionism"¹⁵⁷.

Nonetheless, the Blackstone Memorial is described as "hardly known in Europe"¹⁵⁸, the literature's universal conclusion being that there is no evidence Theodor Herzl was aware of it.

5.1 The Blackstone Memorial's coverage in the European press

In fact, the Blackstone Memorial made its presence known across the Atlantic in three significant ways, each of which leads to Theodor Herzl *ante* 1895. First, beginning in mid-March, 1891 the Memorial was widely covered throughout the continent, one example being the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, the leading German daily for much of the 19th century¹⁵⁹. In the UK that additionally included articles on both the November, 1890 conference in Chicago and the period when signatures were being gathered¹⁶⁰. "Gentile" newspapers in Poland also reported on the Memorial – *Gazeta Polska* (May 6, 1891), *Tygodnik Mód i Powieści* (May 16, 1891), *Głos* (May 18, 1891) – as did the assimilationist, Polish-language, *Izraelita*, which on May 8, 1891 shared: "The London dailies are offering

New York/Oxford, 1991, pp. 68-85; and Richard Ned Lebow, "Woodrow Wilson and the Balfour Declaration", *The Journal of Modern History*, vol. 40, no. 4 (Dec., 1968), The University of Chicago Press, pp. 501-523.

¹⁵⁶ Stephen S. Wise, *Challenging Years: the autobiography of Stephen Wise*, Putnam's Sons, NY, 1949, pp. 186-187.

¹⁵⁷ Moorhead, *op. cit.*, p. 796-97.

¹⁵⁸ Ariel, "An American Initiative for a Jewish State...", *op. cit.*, p. 134.

¹⁵⁹ See *Allgemeine Zeitung*, April 2, 1891, p. 3; April 13, p. 6; April 19, p. 8.

¹⁶⁰ I have found four such articles on the November conference, and a dozen on the gathering of signatures.

a curiosity – to wit, that the President of the United States is seriously intending to propose to the Powers that they convene an international conference in order to weigh the question of creating a sovereign Jewish state in Palestine. *Si non e vero...*¹⁶¹.

One of the first German-language newspapers to cover the Blackstone Memorial was the *Wiener Allgemeine Zeitung*. Herzl deemed his literary career to have begun with that Viennese paper when he won 1st prize in its competition for best feuilleton in May, 1885. Over the next 5 years he wrote for the WAZ in various capacities, and continued reading it thereafter. On March 22, 1891 the *Wiener Allgemeine Zeitung* ran an approximately 650-word piece titled, “The Re-establishment of the Kingdom of Israel”¹⁶². It begins with an account of a recent local lecture on scriptural prophecies that concluded with the topic of a restored Israel. Fascinatingly, the lecturer is none other than Rev. William Hechler, who five years later was to become vitally important to Herzl. The article then pivots to the United States, and gives this report on the Blackstone Memorial:

Mr. William E. Blackstone of Chicago ... appeared [in Washington DC] in the company of Secretary of State Blaine, to present to President Harrison a memorial signed by distinguished businessmen, newspaper editors, politicians, etc. from all parts of the country. The document requested that the government of the United States exert its influence with the governments of Europe on behalf of convening an international conference at which steps shall be taken to give the children of Israel the Promised Land, especially in view of the persecutions of the Jews in Russia. As Mr. Blackstone explained, this plan might well be carried out if Jewish capitalists paid a part of the Turkish national debt in exchange for the territory to be ceded, which could be under the control of the treaty powers, and thus made the necessary money immediately available to the Turkish government, which is in dire financial straits¹⁶³. Since the United States is on good terms with Russia and is not directly interested in solving the Eastern question, that government is optimally suited to bring the matter to a head and bring about a favorable decision. Mr. Harrison listened

¹⁶¹ *Izraelita*, May 8, 1891 (nr. 18), p. 12. Translation mine.

¹⁶² “Die Wiederaufrichten des Reiches Israel”, pp. 3-4.

¹⁶³ In the words of Blackstone Memorial itself: “Whatever vested rights by possession may have accrued to Turkey can easily be compensated, possibly by the Jews assuming an equitable portion of the national debt” – see the full document, footnote 147.

attentively to the remarks of [Blackstone] and promised to consider the proposal ...

Like the UK papers, Nathan Birnbaum's *Selbst-Emancipation* in Vienna drew attention in mid-February, 1891 to the soliciting of signatures for the petition to the US president¹⁶⁴, and six weeks later ran an article on the submission of the Blackstone Memorial at the White House. Entitled, "The Americans and the colonization of Palestine", here is its salient portion:

The Anglo-Saxon race is more and more proving to be the one called upon to perform an outstanding role in the history of the revival of the Jewish folk in its ancestral land... As the strictly Zionist, Hebrew weekly *Ha-Pisgah* in Baltimore reports, Mr. William Blakestone [sic], accompanied by Presidential Minister [sic] Blaine, was received by the President of the United States at his palace in Washington on the 5th of this month (March), and presented a petition in the matter of the Russian Jews. Mr. Blakestone explained to the President, Mr. Harrison, that this petition was the execution of a resolution passed by Christian and Jewish men from all over America who had met in Chicago to discuss measures to help the Russian Jews, and that it did not contain any censure against Russia, but rather dealt with the question of how the Jews could be peacefully restored to their ancestral land. Mr. Blakestone brought persuasive evidence to the President that Palestine was a fertile land suitable for farming and trade, especially if it fell to skillful hands, all the more so as the Jerusalem-Jaffa railway would soon be completed and would later extend to Damascus and Palmyra and even farther to the banks of the Euphrates... The President of the United States listened kindly to Mr. Blakestone's remarks and assured him he would turn his attention to the petition and do his utmost in this matter... In its appraisal of this event, *Ha-Pisgah* quite rightly observes that, although in itself [the Memorial] is unlikely to produce any tangible result, it is still capable of awakening the most beautiful hopes in us. For it is now certain that the recognition of the only correct, Zionist solution to the Jewish question is beginning to take hold among Christians.¹⁶⁵

Having returned home on March 1 from nearly three weeks of travel about northern Italy and the French Riviera, Herzl throughout this period was in Vienna, where he had ready access to accounts of the plight of

¹⁶⁴ *Selbst-Emancipation*, February 16, 1891, p. 7.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibidem*, April 1, 1891, pp. 3-4.

Russian Jews fleeing persecution and often dreaming of life in Eretz Israel – as he did to the US initiative to help them do so. This is likely reflected in the fact that Blackstone’s proposal for the Jews to offer the Sultan assistance with financing the Ottoman empire’s debt became Herzl’s own. He tabled the idea in *Der Judenstaat* in the subsection “Palestine or Argentina?”: “Palestine is our ever-memorable historic home. The very name of Palestine would attract our people with a force of marvellous potency. If His Majesty the Sultan were to give us Palestine, we could in return undertake to regulate the whole finances of Turkey”¹⁶⁶.

5.2 The Blackstone Memorial’s British Child – The Lovers of Zion Petition

Secondly, that very spring the Chicagoan’s Memorial inspired an analogous petition in Great Britain – namely, the Lovers of Zion Petition¹⁶⁷, sponsored by Samuel Montagu, Albert Goldsmid, and the leaders of Hovevei Zion (the Lovers of Zion) in the UK¹⁶⁸. They drew upon the American endeavor known to them via articles in *The Jewish Chronicle* and Hovevei Zion channels (including *Ha-Pisgah*’s endorsement of the Blackstone Memorial)¹⁶⁹ when resolving to respond to Russia’s renewed persecution of Jews from late April that same year¹⁷⁰. Thus, on May 23, 1891 amidst a gathering of some 4,000 people – both Jews and

¹⁶⁶ Cf. *CD* vol 1, p. 338 (April 25, 1896); and *CD* vol 2, pp. 500-501 (Dec. 1, 1896).

¹⁶⁷ My own term.

¹⁶⁸ For both the background story and the full text of the Petition, see “The Colonization of Palestine: Important meeting – a Petition to the British Government”, *The Jewish Chronicle*, May 29, 1891, p. 8.

¹⁶⁹ News of signatures being gathered for the Blackstone Memorial, along with its purpose, was reported by *The Jewish Chronicle*, Feb. 6, 1891, p. 14 – and news of the Memorial’s presentation at the White House, including excerpts from the text, was covered therein on April 24, 1891, p. 11. *Ha-Pisgah*, in turn, was then being distributed in England – see Jacob Kabakoff, “The Role of Wolf Schur as Hebraist and Zionist”, in: *Essays in American Jewish History*, The American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, 1958, pp. 425-456 – and it had reached Vienna in late March (see the above fragment of the April 1, 1891 article in *Selbst-Emancipation*).

¹⁷⁰ Daniel Gutwein, “The Politics of Jewish Solidarity: Anglo-Jewish Diplomacy and the Moscow Expulsion of April 1891”, *Jewish History*, vol. 5, no. 2, Fall, 1991, pp. 23-45.

“a large proportion” of Christians – at the Great Assembly Hall, Mile End in support of the Russian Jews, Montagu and Goldsmid with the help of rabbi Simeon Singer drafted a petition and amassed a list of signatures running 12 yards in length¹⁷¹. The Lovers of Zion Petition was then submitted on behalf of Hovevei Zion to Prime Minister Salisbury by Baron Nathan Rothschild¹⁷². Released to the press late that month, the Petition beseeched Lord Salisbury to make overtures to both the Tsar and the Sultan for the sake of the Jewish refugees wishing to begin new lives in Palestine¹⁷³: “they love the very stones and favour the dust thereof [Psalms 102:14] and they would deem themselves blessed indeed if they were permitted to till the sacred soil”¹⁷⁴.

Although today the Lovers of Zion Petition has sunk into oblivion, at the time it was much more extensively covered in the European press than the Blackstone Memorial, and there were scores of follow-up stories on its progress. In the German-world, articles about the Petition began appearing in late May from Hamburg to the southern Tyrols and all points ‘twixt and ‘tween – including Herzl’s “own” newspapers, the *Berliner Tageblatt*, *Wiener Allgemeine Zeitung*, and *Neue Freie Presse*¹⁷⁵.

One example spreads over pages 1 and 2 of the May 31, 1891 edition of the *Neue Freie Presse*. It contains the full translation of a letter to Samuel Montagu from William Gladstone, then between his 3rd and 4th terms as Prime Minister. Montagu had enlisted Gladstone’s help in the efforts surrounding the Lovers of Zion Petition, believing him, albeit out of office, to have the ear of the Tsar. This Gladstone denied, though he did stress to Montagu his approval of Jewish settlement in Palestine:

¹⁷¹ Moshe Perlman, “The British Embassy in St. Petersburg on Russian Jewry, 1890-92”, *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research*, Vol. 48 (1981), p. 308.

¹⁷² Emil Lehman, *The Tents of Michael: The Life and Times of Colonel Albert Williamson Goldsmid*, University of America Press, Lanham/New York/London, 1996, pp. 109-111. Rev. Singer additionally translated the Petition into Hebrew; and “The Colonization of Palestine by Jews”, *Pall Mall Gazette*, May 25, 1891, p. 6.

¹⁷³ See Cecil Bloom, *op. cit.*, pp. 24-25.

¹⁷⁴ See full text, *op. cit.*

¹⁷⁵ Among the host of other German-language newspapers that reported on the Lovers of Zion Petition are: *Hamburger Anzeiger*, *Hamburger Nachrichten*, *Berliner Börsenzeitung*, *Volkszeitung*, and *Meraner Zeitung*. Among the Dutch newspapers are: *De Tijd*, *De Standard*, *Rotterdamsch Nieuwsblad*, *Tilburgsche Courant* – among the French: *Le Temps*, *L’Univers*, *Le Matin*, *La Croix*.

“I regard with warm and friendly interest the plan of a significant migration of the Jews to Palestine, and will be very happy if the Sultan supports such migration”¹⁷⁶.

On June 11 the evening edition of the *NFP* reported: “The Marquis of Salisbury sent a letter to Baron Rothschild in response to the petition addressed to him, requesting the backing of the English government in order to obtain permission from the Sultan for the settlement of Russian Jews in Palestine. Salisbury states in this letter that he will contact the English ambassador in Constantinople asking whether the intervention of the English government would help to attain this purpose; if the answer is affirmative, the ambassador will convey the matter to the Sultan”¹⁷⁷. This story was repeated by Herzl’s former newspaper, the *Berliner Tageblatt*, that very evening¹⁷⁸ – and by the *Wiener Allgemeine Zeitung* the next morning¹⁷⁹. Moreover, on the following day the *WAZ* ran: “An appeal for the establishment of Jewish colonies in Palestine”, signed by Nathan Birnbaum and Moritz Schnirer of Kadimah, Haham Moses D. Alkalay, and the publisher Chaim David Lippe¹⁸⁰, among other men representing Vienna’s “Association for the Support of the Colonization of Palestine”. The Association’s appeal, intended to capitalize on the current uproar, reads in part:

Palestine-Syria with its fertile valleys, from which delicious wine and the most splendid southern fruits hail, with its high plateaus rich in pasture and grain (Syria, the granary of Asia!) with its mountains and lakes rich in minerals, is, with its present extremely sparse population, the most

¹⁷⁶ Both letters – Montagu’s and Gladstone’s – were published in full two days prior in *The Jewish Chronicle* on May 29, 1891, p. 7., as was Gladstone’s in *St. James’s Gazette* (May 29, 1891, p. 11), where the former/future PM’s remark in the original is: “I view with warm and friendly interest any plan for the large introduction of Jews into Palestine, and shall be very glad if the Sultan gives his support to such a measure”.

¹⁷⁷ *Neue Freie Presse*, June 11, 1891, Abendblatt p. 3. Cf., “Lord Salisbury and the Russian Jews”, *St. James’s Gazette*, June 11, 1891, p. 12.

¹⁷⁸ *Berliner Tageblatt* (Abend Ausgabe), June 11, 1891, p. 2. Herzl worked for the paper from late 1886 to late 1888 and thereafter maintained regular contact with its editor-in-chief, Arthur Levysohn.

¹⁷⁹ *Wiener Allgemeine Zeitung*, June 12, 1891, p. 4.

¹⁸⁰ Rabbi Moses ben David Alkalay of Belgrade is a relative of the early Zionist rabbi Yehuda Alkalai of Zemun (Semlin), Serbia (see Conclusion). Chaim David Lippe, in turn, is the brother of Karpel Lippe, who figures earlier in this text.

amenable area for millions of our persecuted co-religionists ... and it is, of course, that country to which the majority of Russian Jews feel drawn in pious reverence and to which they would most like to be sent...

At the present time a network of associations supporting this colonization, with many tens of thousands of members, is spreading all over the globe, and in England and North America the most distinguished and best, both of Christian and Jewish confession, are extremely sympathetic or directly supportive of the enterprise. Let us mention first of all Gladstone and the President of the United States of North America, Harrison, then the Duke of Westminster, Earl of Aberdeen, Lieutenant Colonel Albert Goldsmid... Samuel Montagu, etc...

Fellow Israelites in Austria! Do not lag behind your fellow believers in other countries any longer! Join in the great humanitarian endeavor of resettling our oppressed brothers in Palestine and Syria – an enterprise whose success is beyond question! ... Brothers! Do not hesitate any longer. Do your duties as men and Israelites!¹⁸¹

The next day (June 13) the *Berliner Tageblatt* ran a lengthy piece on pp. 1-2 entitled “The emigration of the Russian Jews” that included the destination of Palestine¹⁸². Follow-up stories came i.a., on June 24 and July 3.

Back to the *Neue Freie Presse*, in the June 14 edition we read: “As far as the colonization of Palestine is concerned, the above-mentioned association [Hovevei Zion], as reported by telegraph, has applied to Lord Salisbury for the assistance of the English government to obtain permission from the Sultan for the settlement of Russian and Polish Jews in Palestine. Lord Salisbury has sent word through his private secretary [Philip] Currie that he has informed the Queen’s ambassador to the Porte on the issue of whether the intervention of the English Government might contribute to the achievement of the objective in question. Should this be the case, Sir William White would be authorized to bring the matter to the attention of the Sultan”¹⁸³.

Among the deluge of articles on the Lovers of Zion Petition, numerous editions of Herzl’s *Neue Freie Presse* in this period also provided

¹⁸¹ *Wiener Allgemeine Zeitung*, June 13, 1891, p. 2.

¹⁸² See Abend Ausgabe, “Die auswanderung der russischen juden”.

¹⁸³ *Neue Freie Presse*, June 14, 1891, p. 4; see follow-up June 25, 1891, reporting on difficulties with the Porte. The *NEP*’s article from June 14 was found in *The Jewish Chronicle* on June 12, p. 9.

reports of Russian Jews emigrating to Palestine in ways unrelated to the Petition¹⁸⁴. One is therefore hard-pressed to imagine how the journalist could have failed to notice the multi-pronged campaigns for the Jewish resettlement of Palestine – though explanations can be made.

The first is by no means indulgent: when Heinrich Kana took his own life in early February that year, Herzl was grief-stricken and at once fled Vienna alone to the Piedmont. Battling suicidal thoughts over his three weeks of desultory wandering, Herzl wrote life-line letters to his mother and father nearly every single day – most of them begin “Meine vielgeliebten Eltern”, *My much-beloved parents*. Back home from March, Herzl was despairing for his marriage. By May the 31-year-old was preoccupied with preparations to divorce Julie; he remained present for Hans’ birth on June 10, but then left Vienna on June 28 with his mother, his lawyers being instructed to commence dissolution proceedings¹⁸⁵. Jeanette Herzl returned home to Jakob a fortnight later; their son slowly picked his way westward across Occitania, haunted by Heinrich’s ghost and wracked by guilt over the pain and shame his divorce would cause.

It is also true that Herzl’s full-time position with the *Neue Freie Presse* began not until early October 1891 when he cut short his working vacation in the Basque Land and raced to Paris to become the paper’s correspondent¹⁸⁶. Even so, he had been steadily writing feuilletons for the *NFP* as a freelance contributor, and if only for that reason was regularly turning its pages. His daily habit, after all, was to visit “with bureaucratic punctuality” a favorite café and sit at a marble reading table, where his voracious perusal of “the dailies and the weeklies, the comic sheets and the professional magazines ... never consumed

¹⁸⁴ See *ibid* June 16 & 18, 1891.

¹⁸⁵ See Ernst Pawel, *op. cit.*, pp. 136-39.

¹⁸⁶ Ironically, on Herzl’s first full day in Paris, the *Neue Freie Presse* ran a story that included the Zionist idea. The piece is on the celebrations in Paris of the 100th anniversary of Jewish emancipation. There is no byline, but it was probably written by Max Nordau. It declares the Jews to be Frenchmen enjoying all legal obligations and privileges, and concludes with a joke from the 19th-cent. repertoire: “with the exception of the Jews in the East, who dream of a New Jerusalem, no Israelite longs for Palestine. And thus a witty [Western] Jew, when told about the re-establishment of the Kingdom of Judah, stated »As far as I am concerned, I would not be at all chagrined by this, provided that I am appointed royal ambassador to Paris«” – *Neue Freie Presse*, Oct. 7, 1891, p. 5.

less than an hour and a half”¹⁸⁷. In sum, both the Blackstone Memorial and its British scion, the Lovers of Zion Petition, remained staple news across Europe for long weeks during the spring and early summer of 1891, hence no valid doubts can be held but that Herzl, despite his anguish, was well aware of the two diplomatic initiatives toward fostering a Jewish return to Palestine. This is still further to be excluded as Herzl had personal knowledge of the broader crisis: Theodor’s sole remaining friend, Oswald Boxer, informed him that spring about his involvement on behalf of the Jewish refugees in Berlin’s *Deutsches Centralkomitee für die Russischen Juden*, and once in Brazil that summer he was writing to Theodor about his progress in conceiving a colony¹⁸⁸.

The above events have an interesting sequel, for in November 1895 Herzl was in Britain, where he had intimate conversations with three of the principle actors behind the Lovers of Zion Petition – namely, Samuel Montagu, Albert Goldsmid, and Rev. Simeon Singer¹⁸⁹. It is hardly possible that the men neglected to recall to Herzl their involvement with the Petition – all the more so, as Montagu, for one, is known to have publicly boasted his role in the endeavor¹⁹⁰. Nonetheless, Herzl preserved no account in his *Diaries* of such reminiscing, and this should be reckoned characteristic. He did, however, allude to the Petition shortly thereafter – namely, in an entry from May 14, 1896: “I am answering [the letter from Reverend] Singer by informing him for Montagu’s benefit that I do not wish to address an ‘appeal’ to the Sultan

¹⁸⁷ Thus in Herzl’s novel *Old New Land* do we encounter Dr. Friedrich Loewenberg, who Herzl doesn’t even begin to conceal is he himself. He goes so far as to assign to Loewenberg his own closest friends by their true names, i.e., the now deceased Heinrich Kana and Oswald Boxer: “Heinrich had written him just before sending a bullet into his temple ... Oswald went to Brazil to help in founding a Jewish labor settlement, and there succumbed to the yellow fever” – see Theodor Herzl, *Old New Land*, trans. Lotta Levensohn, Markus Weiner Publishing and The Herzl Press, New York, 1987, p. 3.

¹⁸⁸ On June 13, 1891 Herzl wrote a lengthy letter to Boxer that begins with reference to a letter he had just received from Oswald – see *Briefe und Tagebücher, Erster Band* op. cit. no. 508, pp. 447-450. See also Herzl’s obituary of his friend in the *Neue Freie Presse*, February 4, 1892, p. 1 of *Abendblatt*, where he refers to their ongoing correspondence during Oswald’s time in Brazil and quotes passages from Oswald’s final letter to him.

¹⁸⁹ See *CD* vol. 1, pp. 277 & 280 concerning Montagu; *ibidem* pp. 281-283 concerning Goldsmid; and *ibid* pp. 277-278, 280, 283-284 concerning Singer.

¹⁹⁰ See Bloom, op. cit., p. 26.

(which would be a typically English notion), but will negotiate with him secretly and possibly summon Montagu to Constantinople so that he may support me”¹⁹¹.

5.3 The Blackstone Memorial inspires the writing of a Zionist utopian novel

The third European legacy of the Blackstone Memorial is that it inspired a German-language Zionist utopian novel that opens with a scene of homage paid to the imagined Israel’s three great founders – none other than William Blackstone, Benjamin Harrison, and James Blaine. Moreover, this was a novel that Theodor Herzl knew¹⁹².

¹⁹¹ CD vol. 1, p. 350.

¹⁹² There is also a fourth hitherto unknown connection between Blackstone and Herzl, although this one falls after Herzl’s conversion to Zionism. Namely, I have discovered that, following the First Zionist Congress, Blackstone sent Herzl a four-language version of his article entitled “Jerusalem”, originally published – as Paul W. Rood kindly informed me – in his quarterly *The Jewish Era* (vol. 1, no. 3, July 1892, Chicago, pp. 67-71). Herzl passed the brochure *Jerusalem* on to *Die Welt*, which on Nov. 26, 1897 printed at the bottom of its last page (16) a brief review. Under the heading “Bücherwelt” (Book World), it reads thus in translation:

William E. Blackstone. “Jerusalem”. Oak Park, Illinois. 22 pp. (Hebrew, Yiddish, Spanish, English) – This little booklet, published simultaneously in four languages, takes up the cudgels for Zionism. In clear, colloquial language, it dissects the essence of Zionism, responding deftly to the various accusations, such as the non-existence of a Jewish nation, the barrenness of Palestine, and the like. The work is especially valuable, however, because of the use of quotations from the writings of the prophets Jeremiah, Ezekiel, etc., which contain a promise of the real and not merely symbolic return. Certain rabbis might even get to know the prophets from these writings. And this was sweetened for them, as Mr Blackstone (132 S. Oak Park, Illinois) is even prepared, in the interest of disseminating the booklet’s message, to send it free of charge to anyone who wishes it.

This is in all likelihood the basis of the long-rumored Old Testament with specially marked prophecies on Israel’s restoration, claimed to have been sent by Blackstone to Herzl, and subsequently included in an exhibit on Mount Herzl in Jerusalem before mysteriously disappearing. Thanks again to the help of Paul W. Rood, I have learned of an early version of this story in Daniel Fuchs’ “Prophecy and the Evangelization of the Jews” in Charles L. Feinberg, ed., *Focus on Prophecy*, Fleming H. Revell, Chicago, 1964, p. 252. Among the more recent, inflated versions, see Moorhead, op. cit., p. 75,

6. Zionist utopian novels from 1885 and 1893

In 1893, two years after the Blackstone Memorial was submitted at the White House, one Max Osterberg-Verakoff published *Das Reich Judäa im Jahre 6000 (2241 Christlicher Zeitrechnung)*¹⁹³, or: *The Jewish Kingdom in the year 6000 (2241 AD)*. Miriam Eliav-Feldon, in her analysis of the Zionist utopia genre, describes its beginning as follows: “After the expulsion of Jews from Moscow in 1891, a compassionate American evangelist, William Blackstone, had presented a memorandum to President Harrison urging the restoration of the Land of Israel to the Jews in order to rescue them from persecution in Tsarist Russia. Blackstone’s petition becomes, in the story, the basis for the initiative taken by the United States to help create the Kingdom of Judah. The book begins with a ceremonial unveiling of a commemorative statue to Blackstone, President Harrison, and his Secretary of State James Blaine”¹⁹⁴.

Herzl ostensibly learned about Osterberg-Verakoff’s Zionist utopia not until October, 1899. That, at least, is when he drafted a kind note on *Die Welt* letterhead to Osterberg-Verakoff praising the novel and asking its author why he had not joined the Zionist movement. Herzl also offered that he himself had started drafting a “zionistischen Zukunftsromans” (a Zionist future-fantasy), whereby he is referring to his utopian novel *Altneuland*, which came out in October, 1902. He closed with the (unfulfilled) promise that he would take the opportunity in the novel itself or in its epilogue to recognize Osterberg-Verakoff’s work, as well as the kindred novels *David Alroy* and *Daniel Deronda*¹⁹⁵. Once again therefore do we note the puzzling pattern of Herzl ever as a Johnny-

f. 34. Indeed, it now seems doubtful that there ever was any such Old Testament – nor has any evidence come to light that it was Blackstone’s *Jerusalem* that was once on display. I thank Shlomit Sattler, educational director at the Herzl Museum, for informing me that repeated searches over the years have failed to find any confirmation of anything from or by Blackstone ever having been on display – personal correspondence, Dec. 15, 2022.

¹⁹³ Max Osterberg-Verakoff, *Das Reich Judäa im Jahre 6000 (2241 Christlicher Zeitrechnung)*, Dr. Foerster & Cie., Stuttgart, 1893.

¹⁹⁴ Miriam Eliav-Feldon, “If You Will It, It Is No Fairy Tale: The First Jewish Utopias”, *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, vol. XXV, no. 2, December 1983, pp. 85-103 – the quoted passage is from p. 89, and refers to p. 19 in the novel.

¹⁹⁵ Central Zionist Archives (CZA), H1\198, H1\198-2. This is in fact a draft of a letter, one that may never have been sent.

come-lately to Zionist ideas – along with his pronounced reluctance to cite his forerunners. And of course the latter casts doubt on the former.

Surprisingly, Herzl was familiar with yet another Zionist utopian novel written in German – this time by a Slovak Jew named Edmund Menachem Eisler in 1882 in reaction to the pogroms in western Tsarist lands and the blood libel scandal of Tiszaeszlar noted in section 3. The novel was published three years later in Vienna as *Ein Zukunftsbild*, and was dedicated to Benjamin Disraeli. “Eisler’s story begins with pogroms in a Jewish community”, Miriam Eliav-Feldon explains, “which drive the hero, a young man called Avner, to rebel against the passive submission of his people and to start a campaign to lead the Jews out of Europe to the Promised Land. By petitions and speeches in parliaments, the governments of Europe are persuaded to obtain from the Turkish Sultan a concession over Palestine. Soon, a mass exodus begins to the Holy Land...”. Professor Eliav-Feldon adds: “A copy of Eisler’s utopia was found in Herzl’s private library and may have had some influence on the composition of his *Altneuland* which was to appear seventeen years later”¹⁹⁶. Several of the conspicuous similarities between Eisler’s utopia and Herzl’s were recently described by Yitzhak Conforti¹⁹⁷, but he does not conjecture on when *Ein Zukunftsbild* first came to Herzl’s attention. The Curator of the Theodor Herzl Archive at the Central Zionist Archives reports that Herzl’s copy of the book bears no acquisition date¹⁹⁸.

7. Reviews in the *Neue Freie Presse*

On May 2, 1893 Herzl wired a dispatch from Paris that was printed in the *Neue Freie Presse* the next day¹⁹⁹. This was a brief, 170-word description of a new book entitled *Israël chez les nations: Les juifs et l’antisémitisme* by the French Catholic, Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu²⁰⁰. Herzl summarizes the work as arguing that “France must remain faithful to its tradition of justice and freedom and liberty, which is the only greatness,

¹⁹⁶ Miriam Eliav-Feldon, op. cit., p. 88.

¹⁹⁷ Yitzhak Conforti, “The Zionist Utopias: Between Building a Future and Shaping a Past”, in *Australian Journal of Jewish Studies* XXXIV, 2021, pp. 78-80.

¹⁹⁸ I am grateful to Suzanne Berns.

¹⁹⁹ See *Neue Freie Presse*, May 3, 1893, p. 6.

²⁰⁰ Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu, *Israël chez les nations: Les juifs et l’antisémitisme*, Calmann Levy, Paris, 1893.

the only wealth that the fortunes of arms cannot rob [France] of". He quotes Leroy-Beaulieu thus: "Antisemitism corresponds neither to our principles nor to our national spirit", and adds the author's words that "In antisemitism one finds old and new, medieval and chimerical socialism, reactionary instincts, and revolutionary passions. Once again we must confess that we expected too much from reason, trusted too much in civilization... Antisemitism deceives and blinds us and wants to make us believe that evil is outside ourselves. But it is inside ourselves"²⁰¹.

Intriguingly, section II of Chapter XII of *Israël chez les nations* is devoted to the Zionist idea: "Can the Jews still form a People and a State?". Here the author quotes an Eastern-European rabbi as having told him, "Our entire worship... is based on faith in the re-establishment of Israel. In all our prayers, mindful of the promises of the prophets, we implore the deliverance of Zion, the reunion of the tribes in their ancient fatherland", going on to explain with additional examples that this belief is prevalent among the Jews of Russia and Romania²⁰². Leroy-Beaulieu also recounts speaking to a secularized Russian Jew who told him, "Why could we not even colonise Palestine and Syria, re-establish a Jewish State, and, like the Greeks, at least regain an independent national centre"²⁰³, where it would be possible for us to live according to our own laws and customs, in accordance with our historic genius?". *Israël chez les nations* continues with a discussion of George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda*, and how the novel "re-awakened in many [Jews] the desire to be independent of the Christians, to possess a country, a territory of their own". "Will this dream of a Jewish state", Leroy-Beaulieu asks, "ever become a reality?". He acknowledges strong doubts, but adds at once "it is not impossible. The question is worth looking into"²⁰⁴. Of further note is that Leroy-Beaulieu mentions Vienna's Peretz Smolenskin in his work²⁰⁵, along with Laurence Oliphant, whose Zionist writings he treats, albeit in passing, as representative of the multiple such exam-

²⁰¹ Ibidem.

²⁰² I am relying here on the authorized English translation published in 1895 – see Anatole Leroy-Beaulieu, *Israel Among The Nations: A Study of The Jews and Antisemitism*, trans. Frances Hellman, William Heinemann, London, 1895, p. 347.

²⁰³ The influence of Ahad Ha'am resounds here.

²⁰⁴ Ibidem, pp. 353-354.

²⁰⁵ In fact, Leroy-Beaulieu cites Smolenskin as a Hebraist, not a Zionist – see p. 369 in the French edition.

ples²⁰⁶. Moreover, prior to yet another description of George Eliot and her Zionist novel located 60-some pages earlier, the Frenchman remarks on the Zionist play *La Femme de Claude* by Alexandre Dumas fils²⁰⁷.

In fact, Herzl based his dispatch on just the preface to *Israël chez les nations: Les juifs et l'antisémitisme*, something the publisher had provided to sundry press organs in order to generate interest in the book. During this period, however, Herzl was earnestly struggling to grasp antisemitism²⁰⁸, and thus on the direct heels of his dispatch he acquired and attentively read the whole book, as he himself attested in early July 1897 when he penned a sharp critique of a freshly published lecture by Leroy-Beaulieu. Therein he recalls having “read the 433 pages of *Israel among the Nations* with steady engagement, enjoying the relaxed, gabby erudition of the author”²⁰⁹. Furthermore, Herzl’s library contains a copy of *Israël chez les nations*²¹⁰. This therefore gives us the earliest demonstrable date for Herzl’s awareness of both *Daniel Deronda* and Laurence Oliphant: spring 1893.

The final instance of Herzl encountering Zionist thought before his epiphany at the cusp of April and May, 1895 is well known, as he repudiated the idea in his column. This happened a year and a half after his review of Leroy-Beaulieu’s work, when the feuilletonist attended a performance of the above-noted *La Femme de Claude*, thereafter reviewing it for the *Neue Freie Presse* on Oct. 17, 1894. Written in 1873, the play’s powerful Zionist theme voiced by the character Daniel was said to have kindled Edmond de Rothschild’s interest in Zionism²¹¹:

²⁰⁶ See p. 409 in the French edition; p. 354 in the English.

²⁰⁷ Ibid pp. 287-288.

²⁰⁸ Significantly, in 1892 Herzl read the book from that same year by Mermeix (Gabriel Terrail), *Les antisémites en France: notice sur un fait contemporain*, E Dentu, Paris, 1892. Herzl discusses the work at relative length in his *feuilleton* “Französische Antisemiten”, which appeared in the *Neue Freie Presse* on September 3, 1892, pp. 1-2. See also Herzl’s notable letters from late January, 1893 to Friedrich Leitenberger in Vienna on the topic of German and Habsburg antisemitism (and the futility of well-intentioned Gentile anti-antisemitic campaigns) in *Briefe und Tagebücher, Erster Band*, op. cit., nos. 550 and 551, pp. 511-525.

²⁰⁹ Theodor Herzl, “Leroy Beaulieu über den Antisemitismus” – see, Kellner, op. cit. pp. 124-133.

²¹⁰ CZA H1\3526. It is also intriguing that Leroy-Beaulieu wrote to Herzl in late July 1897 (H1\1538-2), in response to Herzl’s article.

²¹¹ See *EJ* vol. 17, p. 491.

We have come to an epoch when each race has resolved to claim and to have as its own its soil, its home, its language, its temple. It is long enough since we Jews [were] dispossessed of all that. We have been forced to insinuate ourselves into the interstices of the nations, and there we have taken up the interests of governments, of societies, of individuals. This is a great deal, yet it is not enough. People still believe that persecution has dispersed us; it has merely spread us over the world... We do not want to be a group any more, we want to be a people, a nation. The ... fixed territorial fatherland is again necessary for us, and I go to seek it and to obtain there our legalized birth certificate.²¹²

Nonetheless, as late as the fall of 1894 Herzl was still willing to publicly disparage these precepts:

The good Jew Daniel wants to find the homeland of his tribe again and to lead his scattered brothers home. But such a person as Daniel knows that the Jews would not be served by their historical homeland. It is childish to look for the geographical location of this land. Every schoolboy knows it. And if the Jews really did "return home", they would discover the next day that they had long since ceased to belong together. They have been rooted in new homelands for centuries, assimilated, hence they are different from each other now, with a similarity of character only by the pressure that surrounds them everywhere. All downtrodden peoples have Jewish characteristics. And when the pressure is lifted, they behave like freedmen²¹³.

The piercing irony here is that these remarks (let it be repeated: the first known case of Herzl wrestling in writing with the Zionist idea) bring us full-circle back to Herzl's averred starting point with Eugen Dühring, who – though in terms vastly more vile than Herzl uses – had contended that if the Jews were again to live together on a single territory solely among themselves, "they would become food for each other... Something like a Jewish state therefore would mean extermination of the Jews by the Jews".²¹⁴ At the time he echoed this statement in his review, Theodor Herzl was still some six months away from the *metanoia* that transformed him, a people's aspirations, and the modern world.

²¹² Cited from Richard J.H. Gottheil, *Movements in Judaism: Zionism*, The Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, 1914, p. 42.

²¹³ Theodor Herzl, "Pariser Theater", *Neue Freie Presse*, October 17, 1894, pp. 1-4. It is noteworthy that Herzl began writing his play *The New Ghetto* four days later on October 21, completing the work on November 8, 1894.

²¹⁴ Dühring, op. cit., p. 110.

8. Conclusion

The canonical view is mistaken: Theodor Herzl had been aware of a wide range of Zionist thought and efforts over the 13 years prior to his conversion in the spring of 1895. This is entirely clear from the cases of Dühning and Boxer, the Blackstone Memorial and the Lovers of Zion Petition, and of course *La Femme de Claude*. At the very latest, it was in 1893 that Herzl encountered George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda* and Laurence Oliphant – specifically, among the Zionist ideas presented in the book he studied, *Israël chez les nations*. Moreover, his pre-1895 familiarity with the two Zionist utopias here described cannot reasonably be doubted. As regards Kadimah – with its ties to Smolenskin and Pinsker – the results of my inquiry are all but conclusive. At the very least they convincingly describe a willful ignorance or allergy on Herzl's part that began in his early student years at the University of Vienna. Indeed, Herzl everywhere shunned the very word “Palestine” – it appears in none of his diaries, letters, or feuilletons from before the spring of 1895²¹⁵. We have just witnessed this allergy in his review of *La Femme de Claude* from late 1894, where in the brief passage quoted Herzl misses no less than five opportunities to use the proper name “Palästina”, preferring instead “Heimat” (homeland) and cognate forms.

As I have shown, even after he had admittedly learned of the Zionist thinkers and activists who preceded him, Herzl avoided mentioning, let alone embracing them. Yet another telltale example of this is found in Herzl's September 20, 1895 diary account of when *Autoemancipation!* was first recommended to him, for he twice misspelled ‘Pinsker’ as ‘Pinsger’. Such unfamiliarity with the toponymy/onomastics of the Pale is untenable: rather, we have here a Freudian-slip that betrays aversion to Zionist forerunners²¹⁶. Herzl's deafening silence on Laurence Oliphant offers a more copious example of this – as does his treatment

²¹⁵ See Theodor Herzl, *Briefe und Tagebücher, Erster Band*, op. cit., where the only mention of Palestine is in Alex Bein's introduction (pp. 12, 13); and Theodor Herzl, *Feuilletons, Band I and Band II*, Verlag Benjamin Harz, Berlin, Wien, 1911 (?), where Herzl's single usage of the term “Palästina” is in volume II, in a feuilleton from 1898 (“Nikolai Wtoroi”, pp. 170-179).

²¹⁶ Similarly, in his diary account of his first meeting with the British leader of Hovevei Zion, Albert Goldsmid, in late November 1895 in Cardiff, Herzl wrote “Chowe we Zion”, and then “Howe we Zion” regarding his meeting the next day with the organization's secretary, Dr. Samuel A. Hirsch (CD vol. I, pp. 281 & 283,

of Nathan Birnbaum, whose loss to the Zionist movement, particularly after 1904, is incalculable²¹⁷.

Despite the dozens of insightful biographies of the Visionary, stressing as they do the magnetism and complexity of his personality, his burning ambition and staggering organizational achievements, Herzl still awaits his Fawn Brodie, that prodigy among psychohistorians²¹⁸. What I myself may proffer is that, over various periods of his life, Herzl expended enormous amounts of psychic energy in order to shield core aspects of his personhood from himself – his Hungarian identity, his loneliness, his Jewish identity. The way he long shielded himself from the Zionist idea correlates to the latter, and at bottom not only to his commitments to assimilation, but to his rationalist disdain for the messianism of the traditional Jews with whom he was at such pains to identify throughout his life²¹⁹.

where this is corrected). Shlomo Avineri treats this as positive evidence of Herzl's ignorance – op. cit., p. 136.

²¹⁷ Among the numerous further cases is one that may express narcissism even more than it does an allergy to the topic of founding a Jewish colony abroad. This is Herzl's response to a letter (since lost) that Oswald Boxer wrote to him just prior to his departure to Brazil. Answering on June 13, Herzl confirms receipt of his friend's letter, but then says nothing whatsoever – not a single word – about its doubtless contents, i.e., Oswald's imminent trip to Brazil and his plans for a Jewish colony there – perhaps even his reasons for choosing Argentina over Palestine re: the Lovers of Zion Petition he would have known about. Instead, throughout a missive running over 1,100 words, Herzl bemoans his crumbling family situation, though not without tenderness for his 3-day old Hans. Alluding to suicidal thoughts, he signs off, "Dein unglücklicher Theodor" (your miserable Theodor). See *Briefe und Tagebücher, Erster Band*, op. cit., no. 508, pp. 447-450.

²¹⁸ Brodie's biographies of Joseph Smith and Thomas Jefferson are, in my reading experience, unsurpassed – see Fawn M. Brodie, *No Man Knows My History: The Life of Joseph Smith, The Mormon Prophet*, 2nd ed., Vintage Books, New York, 1971; and her *Thomas Jefferson: An Intimate History*, Bantam Books, Toronto/New York/London, 1974.

²¹⁹ See Kornberg, op. cit., p. 77-80. Relatedly, see my discussion of how Herzl's disdain for engaging with the religious beliefs of his Christian partners kept him ignorant of the existing role and future potential of those beliefs in fostering the Zionist movement. That is, the Zionist pursuit of "faith-based diplomacy" began in earnest not until a decade after Herzl's death, above all with the efforts of Nahum Sokolow – Philip Earl Steele, *Birthing Zionism... op. cit.* pp. 51-52.

This was displayed ever so disastrously in Herzl's endorsement of the Uganda solution in 1903 – and yet ever so poignantly in his utter silence regarding his pious grandfather until after his cathartic conversion to Zionism²²⁰. Simon Loeb Herzl of Zemun, Serbia, was an adherent of his town's rabbi Yehuda Alkalai, one of the fathers of religious Zionism²²¹. Simon Herzl was furthermore a regular presence in Theodor's youth, and passed away not until his grandson was nearly 20 years old. That Simon shared with Dori his messianic belief in the approaching restoration of the Jewish people to the Land of Israel cannot wisely be questioned²²².

All the less so, as Grandfather Herzl was ultimately to loom, apparition-like, before Theodor during a moment of messianic expectation. This occurred on Herzl's journey by rail in the summer of 1896 to the Sultan in Istanbul, when he was virtually certain he would win the long-coveted *firman* and thereupon be able to lead the Israelites back to the Promised Land:

In Sophia a touching scene awaited me. Beside the track on which our train pulled in there was a crowd of people who had come on my account. I had completely forgotten that I was actually responsible for this myself. There were men, women, and children, Sephardim, Ashkenazim, mere boys and old men with white beards. At their head stood Dr. Ruben Bierer. A boy handed me a wreath of roses and carnations – Bierer made a speech in German. Then Caleb read off a French speech, and in conclusion he kissed my hand, despite my resistance. In this and subsequent addresses I was hailed in extravagant terms as Leader, as the Heart of Israel, etc. I think I stood there completely dumbfounded, and the passengers on the Orient Express stared at the odd spectacle in astonishment.

²²⁰ See Theodor Herzl, *Briefe und Tagebücher, Erster Band: Briefe 1866-1895*, Propyläen, Germany, 1983, whose only mention of Simon Herzl is in Alex Bein's introduction (p. 20). It does however deserve attention that there is a gap in Theodor's letters from September 1879 to May 1880. Simon Herzl passed away on Nov. 5, 1879.

²²¹ See *EJ* vol. 1, pp. 663-664, and Čedomila Marinković, "Staging Proto-Zionism. Jewish Quarter of Zemun, Serbia: Historical Evidence, Structure, Meaning", in: *Arts*, vol. 9, iss. 1, doi: 10.3390/arts9010027.

²²² See Bein, op. cit., pp. 4-5; Cohen, op. cit., pp. 24-25; Pawel, op. cit., pp. 9-10; Wistrich, *The Jews of Vienna...*, p. 427; Penslar, op. cit., pp. 14-15 – and conversely, Kornberg in *Modern Judaism*, op. cit., p. 102. See Annex 1 for my fuller discussion of the matter.

Afterwards I stood on the carriage steps a while longer and surveyed the crowd. The most varied types. An old man with a fur cap looked like my grandfather, Simon Herzl.

I kissed Bierer farewell. They all pressed about me to shake my hand. People cried '*leshonoh haboh birusholayim*' [Next year in Jerusalem].²²³

²²³ CD vol. 1, p. 368.

Annex 1

Were Zionist rabbis present in Theodor Herzl's youth?

Not merely one, but two Zionist rabbis are sometimes claimed to have made a formative impression on the young Theodor Herzl – *Dori*, as he was then known. The first rabbi was connected with his father and grandfather's hometown – Zemun¹, Serbia – the second with Budapest², where Dori was born and raised.

Yehuda Alkalai (1798-1878) was born in Ottoman Sarajevo, and spent his childhood and early manhood studying in Ottoman Jerusalem. In 1825 he was hired to teach Jewish children in the Habsburg border town of Zemun, immediately north of Belgrade, then within the Principality of Serbia, a semi-autonomous province of the Ottoman Empire. Alkalai soon began serving as Zemun's Haham (Sephardic rabbi), a post he held until returning to Jerusalem in 1874 for the final four years of his life³. Alkalai is one of the fathers of religious Zionism, his career closely mirroring that of his Ashkenazi avatar, as it were, rabbi Tsevi Hirsch Kalischer of Toruń, Poland (1795-1874). From the late 1830s their "active messianism" in pursuit of Israel's redemption developed in parallel: from the 1860s their efforts were directly entwined through both correspondence and joint involvements e.g., in the Kolonisations-Verein für Palästina in Frankfurt, and the Alliance Israélite Universelle in Paris⁴.

¹ Zimony in Hungarian – Semlin in German.

² Buda, Pest, and Óbuda were merged into a single city in fact not until 1873.

³ For biographical sketches of rabbi Alkalai, see Rev. J.K. Goldbloom, "Rabbi Jehudah Hai Alkalai", in: *The Gates of Zion: A Quarterly Review of Judaism and Zionism*, vol. 5, no. 2, London, January 1951/Tebeth 5711, pp. 3-7; Haham the Very Rev. Solomon Gaon, "Rabbi Jehuda Hai Alkalai", in: *The Rebirth of Israel: A Memorial Tribute to Paul Goodman*, ed. Israel Cohen, Edward Goldston & Son, London, 1952, pp. 138-147; Arthur Hertzberg, subsection "Rabbi Yehuda Alkalai, 1798-1878" in: *The Zionist Idea*, The Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia 1997, p. 102-107.

⁴ See Shlomo Avineri, chapter 4 "Alkalai and Kalischer: Between Tradition and Modernity", pp. 47-55, in: *The Making of Modern Zionism: the Intellectual Origins of the*

During Yehuda Alkalai's first years in Zemun, nearby Greece secured its independence (1827), Serbia its autonomy (1829) – with the Ottomans also losing control of the Levant to Egypt's Muhammad Ali Pasha (1832). While the rabbi's Zionism was endogenous to his faith, occurrences like these emboldened him in his belief that the year 5600 (1840 AD) would mark the dawning of a messianic age. He therefore treated successful bids for national liberation, along with Jewish emancipation, the sudden appearance of influential “Mordechai-like” Jews, and Christian Restorationism as divine signs. He and Kalischer would sharply rebuke their orthodox critics as being blind to the finger of God in unfolding events⁵.

Alkalai's literary push Zionward commenced in 1839 with the complete Hebrew grammar book he authored in Ladino, *Darkhe Noam* ('the pleasant paths', published in Belgrade), the introduction to which preached a return both to spoken Hebrew – and to Hebrew's cradle⁶. The next year, Alkalai created in Zemun the Society for the Settlement

Jewish State, Basic Books, New York, 1981; Sam N. Lehman-Wilzig, “Proto-Zionism and its Proto-Herzl: The Philosophy and Efforts of Rabbi Zvi Hirsch Kalischer”, in: *Tradition: A Journal of Orthodox Thought*, vol. 16, no. 1, summer 1976, New York, pp. 56-76; Michael K. Silber, “Alliance of the Hebrews, 1863-1875: The diaspora roots of an ultra-Orthodox, pro-Zionist utopia in Palestine”, in: *The Journal of Israeli History*, vol. 27, no. 2, September 2008, Tel Aviv, pp. 119-147.

⁵ Alkalai would blame those milieux for the rise of Reform Judaism, arguing that “the messianic spirit was being diverted from the hope for redemption in the Land of Israel to the hope for redemption in the Diaspora” – see Israel Bartel, “Messianism and Nationalism: Liberal Optimism vs. Orthodox Anxiety”, in: *Jewish History*, vol. 20, no. 1, 2006, pp. 5-17 (quotation, p. 15).

⁶ See Raymond Goldwater, *Pioneers of Religious Zionism: Rabbis Alkalai, Kalischer, Mohliver, Reines, Kook and Maimon*, Urim Publications, Jerusalem/New York, 2009, pp. 13-14. Alkalai developed this idea in his many works, including the early *Minhat Yehuda*, published in 1843 (in Vienna?), writing, “I will admit that all the time I myself regretted [...] that our ancestors did wrong in forgetting our Holy Tongue, thus dividing our nation into seventy nations, and our language into seventy languages in all the places where they were dispersed. [...] Therefore we must not despair, but instead, with courage and strength, we must bring up our language and raise it and make it foremost. And the Lord will pour out His spirit on the teachers and the students, on the sons and the daughters, and they will learn to speak clearly. Seek and you shall find” – as translated by Gideon Kouts in his *The Hebrew and Jewish Press in Europe: Select Problems in its History*, Sugar Press, Université Paris VIII, 2016, p. 177-178.

of Eretz Israel, the prototype of the many subsequent such societies⁷. The rabbi's numerous works taught that *Teshuvah* (repentance) necessarily involved a return to the Land, which in turn would usher in the *Geulah* (redemption). Drawing upon Judaism's scriptures, rabbinical authorities, and kabbalistic teachings, Alkalai's exegesis depicted a two-stage restoration of Israel: the Jews were first to unite, then resettle their ancient homeland and rebuild the Temple – thereafter the “Messiah Son of David” would come.

Like Kalischer, Alkalai solicited rich and mighty Jews (amongst them, Moses Montefiore and Adolphe Crémieux) in his bid to launch the national restoration. Alkalai also traveled to cities in Western Europe in 1852, endeavoring to plant further Zionist societies. This included London, where together with English Jews and Protestants he registered the Association for the Jewish Settlement of Palestine. In July Alkalai's bilingual Hebrew/English pamphlet *Mevaser Tov/Harbinger of Good Tidings* was published⁸, a work utterly unlike Leon Pinsker's *Auto-emancipation!*, Herzl's *Der Judenstaat*, and other examples from the last, fraught decades of the 19th century. For *Harbinger of Good Tidings: an Address to the Jewish Nation by Judah Elkali [sic] on the Propriety of Organizing an Association to Promote the Regaining of their Fatherland* by no means posits insurmountable antisemitism as the reason for its urgent appeal – rather, it depicts a blessed ripening of the age toward the fulfillment of prophecy. “For as the earth bringeth forth her bud”, Alkalai quotes Isaiah, “and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations”⁹. The Haham of Zemun stressed that the restoration would rely on international co-operation, “by petitioning for aid, to the sovereigns of the earth, who in justice will pave the way, and facilitate the mode of our return, as stated by Isaiah...”. He also called for a representative congress to be convened in London with the purpose of uniting Jewry – and then conjured the prophet Isaiah's “ships of Tarshish”, so powerful in the self-imagery of British Christian

⁷ Спасојевић, Тамара, “Алкалај, Јехуда Хај”, in: *Знаменити Јевреји Србије*, Belgrade, 2011, pp. 13-14.

⁸ Scans of the complete original are available thanks to Jeffrey Maynard at: <https://jewishmiscellanies.com/2021/04/14/mevaser-tov-harbinger-of-good-tidings-by-rabbi-yehuda-alkalai-london-1852/> [accessed Feb. 25, 2023].

⁹ *Ibidem* p. 3.

Restorationists, to deliver “thy sons from afar, their silver and their gold with them”¹⁰.

Although the Association soon folded, memory of its existence was cultivated in England. For example, in November 1866 London’s *The Jewish Chronicle* – in an article beginning with an account of rabbi Kalischer’s contemporaneous endeavor to create “a society for the colonisation of Palestine by Jews” – recalled the Association’s founding and reprinted across three columns its original “prospectus”, which in 1852 had been “widely circulated, and encouraged in various quarters”¹¹. Alkalai’s encounters in London contributed moreover to his clearest Zionist plan – namely, the 1857 pamphlet *Goral La Adonai* (‘much for the Lord’), which incorporated a range of prevalent English ideas, including that of “a joint-stock company, such as a steamship or railroad trust, whose endeavor it should be to induce the sultan to cede Palestine to the Jews...”¹². In her recent paper on the history of Zemun’s Jewish Quarter, Čedomila Marinković (a scholar from Zemun) opines, “Simon Herzl probably had one of the first copies of *Goral la Adonai*”¹³.

Until the early 1870s, the Jewish community in Zemun was not divided along Sephardic/Ashkenazi lines, but was united. Thus, it is

¹⁰ Ibid. p. 7. The British Restorationist belief that the “ships of Tarshish” were a prophecy regarding the British Navy and its role to come in transporting the Jews back to Israel dates back at least to the famous Cartwright Petition, accepted by the War Council on January 5, 1649 – see Robert O. Smith, *More Desired Than Our Own Salvation: The Roots of Christian Zionism*, Oxford University Press, New York 2013, pp. 95-97; more broadly, see also Mayir Vreté, “The Restoration of the Jews in English Protestant Thought 1790-1840”, *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 8, no. 1 (Jan., 1972), pp. 3-50 (esp. 37-38).

¹¹ “Drishath Zion... or Restoration of Zion”, *The Jewish Chronicle*, November 30, 1866, p. 3.

¹² See, “Alkalai, Judah ben Solomon Hai”, *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. 1, Funk & Wagnells, New York & London 1901, p. 402 – also Hertzberg, op. cit., p. 107: “I ask of our brethren that they organize a company, on the mode of the fire insurance companies and of the railroad companies. Let this company appeal to the Sultan to give us back the land of our ancestors in return for an annual rent. Once the name of Israel is again applied to our land, all Jews will be inspired to help this company with all the means at their disposal”.

¹³ Čedomila Marinković, “Staging Proto-Zionism. Jewish Quarter of Zemun, Serbia: Historical Evidence, Structure, Meaning”, in: *Arts*, vol. 9, iss. 1, doi: 10.3390/arts9010027 (quotation from pp. 14-15).

altogether likely that rabbi Alkalai officiated in 1830 at the wedding of the local merchant Simon Herzl and Rebecca née Bilitz, both born in Zemun¹⁴. Their son Jakob, born a year later in the Danubian town, would have studied Hebrew from Alkalai's textbook *Darkhe Noam* – and doubtless heard about the Zionist society established by his rabbi when he was nine.

Theodor Herzl's grandfather was to know Yehuda Alkalai, just a year his junior, for half a century. Simon is reported to have contributed to the building of the new synagogue in 1862; significantly, so is Jakob, even though he was then living 350 km up the Danube in Budapest with his wife and two small children. Much of our information on Theodor Herzl's forebears in Zemun is in fact unverifiable: what we do possess includes an article on the Herzls written by the town's rabbi Ignjat Šlang in 1939¹⁵. However, the source materials on which the article was based perished in WWII. "Although the synagogue was a result of efforts of the whole community", writes Marinković, "Rabbi Šlang informs us that two of the biggest contributors were Simon and Jakob Herzl", specifying that Theodor's grandfather donated 51 forints and 48 kreuzer, and his father 44 forints¹⁶. Rabbi Šlang gave a further example of Jakob Herzl's support of the synagogue, recording that in 1879, when Jakob and his family were now living in Vienna, he donated the silver finials (*rimonim*) for the rollers of the newly consecrated Torah scroll¹⁷.

During his regular visits upriver to his son's home in Budapest, Simon most assuredly shared with Dori his rabbi's teaching on the Israelites' necessary return to the Land of Israel – and recounted to him Alkalai's visit to Palestine in 1871, and his later move there when Dori was nearly 14. This helps to explain why Simon's ghost appeared to Theodor when he was en route to the Sultan in June 1896. Indeed, one readily pictures Simon Herzl giving Dori a copy of *Goral La Adonai* – and

¹⁴ Ibidem, p. 14. Simon and Rebecca Herzl lie in Zemun's Jewish cemetery to this day, although there are plans to remove their bones to Mount Herzl in Jerusalem – see <https://www.israelhayom.com/2021/11/30/if-you-will-it-it-is-no-dream-bones-of-herzls-grandparents-coming-to-israel/> [accessed Feb. 25, 2023].

¹⁵ Ignjat Šlang, "Zemunski preci Teodora Hercla", in: *Jevrejski narodni kalendar 5700*, Belgrade: Biblioteka jevrejskog narodnog kalendara, 1939, pp. 77–87.

¹⁶ Čedomila Marinković, op. cit., p. 8.

¹⁷ Ibidem, p. 15.

at the very least, illuminating for his grandson the booklet's message of religiously framed, but politically informed, proactive striving for Israel's restoration¹⁸.

* * *

Following Simon Herzl's passing in November 1879, Zemun continued to make appearances in Theodor's life. For instance, in 1903 the town's now famous son was awarded Zemun citizenship¹⁹. Far more intriguingly, together with Herzl some 20 years earlier at the law faculty in Vienna was one David Alkalai (1862-1933), grandnephew of rabbi Yehuda Alkalai. True to his family legacy, David was an early member of Kadimah, the Zionist fraternity formed in late 1882. One is tempted to imagine the fellow law students Theodor and David making each other's acquaintance, and Herzl learning that Alkalai, two years behind him, was from Belgrade. Zemun then being literally just a stone's throw across the Sava river from the Serbian capital²⁰, Herzl inevitably would have wondered if David was a relative of his grandfather and father's rabbi – but would he have asked? It may be that Herzl talked with Alkalai about his great-uncle from Zemun not until some years later, for David remained an important Zionist. In 1897 he attended the First Zionist Congress with his wife Rachel²¹, afterward serving as the movement's leader in Serbia and subsequently in Yugoslavia as a whole²². Serbian sources call Herzl and Alkalai longtime friends²³, and this is supported by the fact that David figures in Herzl's Zionist utopian novel *Altneuland* from 1902 as the fittingly named 'Alladino'.

¹⁸ Writing elsewhere, Rabbi Šlang opines that Alkalai's Zionist ideas may have been passed on to Theodor Herzl by his family in Zemun – see Игњат Шланг, *Јевреји у Београду*, Београд 1926, pp. 85-86.

¹⁹ Marinković, op. cit., p. 15.

²⁰ Zemun was absorbed into Belgrade not until 1934.

²¹ Their portraits are included on the famous collage of participants. Rachel was in fact rabbi Alkalai's granddaughter – and thus her husband's second-cousin.

²² *Encyclopaedia Judaica ed. II* [hereafter, *EJ*], ed. Fred Skolnik, Michael Berenbaum, MacMillan Reference, Detroit 2007, vol. 1, p. 663; Небојша Поповић, *Јевреји у Србији: 1918-1941*, Belgrade, 1997, pp. 192-193.

²³ See Милош М. Дамјановић, *Јевреји на Косову и Метохији 1918-1941* (докторска дисертација), Универзитет у Приштини са привременим седиштем у Косовској митровици филозофски факултет, 2022, p. 27.

Another instance of Zemun's presence is from March 3, 1896, when Herzl jotted down in his diary: "A fashion-goods dealer at Semlin, S. Waizenkorn, writes me that all the Semlin Jews are ready to emigrate, bag and baggage [*mit Kind und Kegel* – rather, 'with kit and caboodle'], as soon as the Jewish Company is founded"²⁴. This is the sole case of Herzl ever mentioning Semlin/Zemun in his *Diaries*, and the entry raises eyebrows as it admits no personal ties to the town, nor any such ties felt on the part of the *Semliner Juden* to Herzl. Fortunately, the letter from Siegfried Waizenkorn (dated February 26, just 12 days after *Der Judenstaat* came out in Vienna) is preserved at the Central Zionist Archives, hence we know that its author did in fact stress the community's identification with Herzl – namely, that the town's Jews were buoyed by "the most heartfelt pride" in Herzl's celebrity, "and are happy we may count ourselves among your intimates"²⁵. That Herzl filtered out this communal connection – one embracing the Zionist rabbi Yehuda Alkalai, as well – is of course characteristic, as I have demonstrated throughout this work.

* * *

Matters are different with rabbi Joseph Natonek (1813-1892), inasmuch as the purported links between Theodor Herzl and this Hungarian rabbi are tenuous in the extreme. Having held several rabbinic posts in Hungary (incl. in Jászberény and Székesfehérvár), Natonek truly is a notable early Zionist and was widely known in Zionist circles in the 1860s and 70s. His writings advocated a return to Hebrew and to Palestine, and in the mid-1860s he began corresponding i.a., with rabbis Alkalai and Kalischer²⁶. Amazingly, in the summer of 1867 rabbi Natonek was

²⁴ This is the full entry – see Theodor Herzl, *The Complete Diaries of Theodor Herzl*, vol. 1, Raphael Patai (ed.) & Harry Zohn (translator), Herzl Press and Thomas Yoseloff, New York 1960. p. 308.

²⁵ Central Zionist Archives, H1\2028, with special thanks to Suzanne Berns. I am also grateful to professor Karin Friedrich (University of Aberdeen) who transcribed what for me was Waizenkorn's illegible handwriting.

²⁶ Jody Myers, *Seeking Zion: Modernity and Messianic Activism in the Writings of Tsevi Hirsch Kalischer*, The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, Oxford, 2003, pp. 177-178; Michael K. Silber, "Alliance of the Hebrews..." , op. cit., pp. 127-128.

in Istanbul, where he negotiated for the Jewish settlement of Palestine with no less than the Grand Vizier²⁷.

Earlier in 1867, while in Paris, Natonek had become personally acquainted with his “pen pal” of several years, the famed German Zionist Moses Hess, author of *Rome and Jerusalem*, 1862. This happened when the two men were lobbying the central committee of the Alliance Israélite Universelle to expand beyond pro-Jewish advocacy and philanthropy, and pursue a “colonisation scheme” in Palestine. Hess himself described this initiative in *The Jewish Chronicle*, explaining that Natonek had been authorized by rabbi Kalischer to address the committee. Hess moreover credits rabbi Natonek with the success of having obtained written assurances from the Alliance’s central committee, its head A. Crémieux, along with the chief rabbi of France, Lazare Isidor, and the philanthropist Albert Cohn that steps would be taken to advance the colonisation plan²⁸. Indeed, Natonek’s insistence on a policy-pivot led to the founding three years later in 1870 of the agricultural school at Mikveh Israel, near Jaffa.

No longer able to serve as a rabbi because of a failing larynx, Joseph Natonek settled in Budapest in 1872 when Dori was 12. From late that spring and into July, he published seven issues of a German-language weekly meant to promote Jewish solidarity. It was called *Das einige Israel: Organ zur Einigung Israels* (“the united Israel: organ for the unity of Israel”), and the claim has been made that this title may have inspired Herzl’s ringing phrase in *Der Judenstaat*, “Wir sind ein Volk, ein Volk” – we are a people, one people²⁹.

In his book *Dori* from 1983³⁰, professor Andrew Handler offers a number of possible Zionist influences on Herzl from the time of his youth in Budapest, and Joseph Natonek features among them. However, besides the fact that the Herzls and rabbi Natonek inhabited the same metropolis in 1872-1878, Handler provides not the flimsiest evidence of

²⁷ See Michael K. Silber’s biographical sketch of rabbi Natonek in *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*, see https://yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Natonek_Yosef [accessed Feb. 25, 2023]; and *EJ* vol. 15, p. 32.

²⁸ Moritz (sic!) Hess, “The Projected Jewish Colonisation of Palestine”, *The Jewish Chronicle*, March 1, 1867, p. 2.

²⁹ Georges Yitzhak Weisz, *Theodor Herzl: A New Reading*, Gefen Pub., 2013, pp. 53.

³⁰ Andrew Handler, *Dori, the life and times of Theodor Herzl in Budapest (1860-1878)*, Univ. of Alabama Press, 1983.

any contacts between them. Notwithstanding this, 100-some pages later Handler concludes that Jakob and Joseph were “personal friends” and that Theodor Herzl’s failure to mention the rabbi is “inexplicable”³¹.

The single remaining argument I have encountered is from the late Robert Wistrich, who, in summing up the matter of both rabbis – Alkalai and Natonek – observed: “not only paternal devotion but also ideological conviction may have determined Jacob Herzl’s strong moral and financial support for his son’s efforts to maintain the momentum of the struggling Zionist movement after 1897”³². Yet Wistrich cites only Handler’s work when labeling Jakob “a supporter of the Hungarian proto-Zionist rabbi, Joseph Natonek”³³, and so this must be dismissed. Nonetheless, the role of Yehuda Alkalai alone in Jakob Herzl’s life offers sufficient basis for Wistrich’s interpretation.

In a word, there seems to be no sound reason for believing Herzl knew anything of rabbi Joseph Natonek. Nor is there sound reason for denying Theodor Herzl’s awareness of Yehuda Alkalai. On the contrary, Alkalai’s international Zionist career, sure to have been conveyed by Theodor’s father and grandfather, may well have latently conditioned the boy’s mind³⁴.

³¹ Ibidem – see pp. 32 & 34 on rabbi Natonek and his presence in Budapest, and p. 140 for Handler’s bald statements. More recently, G.Y. Weisz (in *Theodor Herzl...* op. cit., pp. 51-53) argued for rabbi Natonek’s impact on the Herzls, offering as evidence claims made by the rabbi’s daughter (not granddaughter? or great-granddaughter?) to two Israeli historians, Joseph Patai and Dov Frankel, that strike me as spurious – namely, that her father had frequented the Herzl home in Budapest, and that Jakob subscribed to the short-lived *Das Einige Israel*. The works cited (from 1947 and 1956, respectively) are only in Hebrew, and thus are inaccessible for me.

³² Robert S. Wistrich, *The Jews of Vienna in the age of Franz Joseph*, The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, Oxford, 1989, pp. 427-428.

³³ Ibidem, p. 427.

³⁴ In 1919 Reuven Brainin (1862-1939), originally from Russia, now based in New York, published a biography of Herzl, sometimes labeled the first. However, it follows that of Adolf Friedemann (1914) and Ozjasz Thon (1917). Brainin’s Hebrew-language work is remembered in Herzlian literature primarily for an account of a conversation with Herzl in Dec. 1903, about half a year before his early death. Herzl shares a secret here he never before or after divulged to anyone: as a 12 year-old, he had perused a German-language booklet that contained a story of the Messiah’s coming – and this soon led to a vivid dream of being transported heavenward by the “King-Messiah” and introduced to Moses. At the end of the dream, the King-Messiah tells Herzl, “Go and declare to the Jews that I shall come soon and perform

great wonders and great deeds for my people and for the whole world!”. This gripping account meets with no more than tepid acceptance among scholars, with several questioning how Herzl could have recalled the dream so well thirty years after the fact. What most raises my own doubts is how Brainin could have recounted Herzl’s words with such detail some fifteen years later. Indeed, the whole passage would be worthy of dismissal as invention (whether Herzl’s or Brainin’s), were it not for one twist: in the closing of Herzl’s reminiscence is a matter usually omitted in the retellings – namely, Herzl goes on to describe how the science-popularizer Aaron Bernstein (whose inspiration contributed to Einstein’s special theory of relativity) argued that modern electricity was the Messiah. The young Herzl initially balks at this “blasphemy”, but then warms up to the notion, only to conclude that Bernstein may well be right. Inspired, the boy even decides to become an engineer! Bizarre though this appendage to the King-Messiah story is, it nonetheless has a strong ring of authenticity: for one, it hardly serves Brainin’s hagiographical purposes, and more importantly it resonates with other instances of Herzl revealing a “steampunk” turn of mind, seen e.g. when, upon being cautioned over Sabbatai’s failure, he retorted, “Now it is possible – because we have machines”. Most important of all, recoiling from encounters with overt Messianism was part of a pattern in Herzl’s life. For a discussion of Brainin’s account and its excerpts, see Joseph Nedava, “Herzl and Messianism” *Herzl Year Book*, vol. 7, New York 1971, pp. 9-26. On Brainin see David Rome, “The Canadian Story of Reuben Brainin, Part 1”, *Canadian Jewish Archives*, no. 47, Montreal 1993; and https://yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Brainin_Reuven [accessed April 9, 2023]. For Herzl’s remark concerning Sabbatai, see *CD* vol. 1, p. 114.

Annex 2

Was Herzl's article "Zionism", the source of the Dreyfus myth, interpolated?

The Third Zionist Congress was held in Basel, August 15-18, 1899. During the following two weeks Theodor Herzl prepared an English-language article of a dozen or so pages entitled "Zionism" for the prominent US literary monthly, *The North American Review* (NAR). The commissioned piece was meant to provide US readers with an account of the Congress – and to introduce them to its leader. In early September Herzl sent the manuscript to New York addressed to Richard Gottheil, the president of the Federation of American Zionists, renamed in 1917 the Zionist Organization of America.

The submission to the NAR is the source of the claim long dismissed by scholars that the events leading to the degradation of Captain Alfred Dreyfus on Jan. 5, 1895 are what made Herzl a Zionist. For in Herzl's article – and nowhere else in his oeuvre – we read, "I wrote [...] my book *The Jewish State* in 1895, under the shattering impressions of the first Dreyfus trial" and "For what made me into a Zionist was the Dreyfus case". Prevalent explanations of this misconstrual range from Herzl's inadvertent conflation of the trial of late 1894 with the Dreyfus affair in 1899, some self-promotion on his part, a bid to "tweak" the story for an American readership – all the way to a lapse in candor. I propose that another explanation be explored – namely, that the article (known only from a German version published in 1905) was interpolated.

First, the background story: in late spring, 1899, the NAR's European editor William Baldwin Fitts contacted Gottheil – professor of Semitic languages at Columbia University – asking him to inform Theodor Herzl during the upcoming Zionist Congress that the NAR wished to have him write an essay on the movement. While together in Basel, the two men discussed the matter, and Gottheil agreed to intermeditate with the NAR. Once finished with the piece, Herzl penned a brief note

 76 Was Herzl's article "Zionism", the source of the Dreyfus myth, interpolated?

to Gottheil dated September 3, explaining that there had been some mishap with the copy he had intended to enclose ("Der Copist ... hat es ein bisschen beschmutzt"), and so he was sending "das Original". Expecting the article to appear in the October issue, on October 16 Herzl anxiously wrote to Gottheil inquiring, "Ist mein Artikel in der North American Review noch nicht erschienen?"/hasn't my article for the North American Review appeared yet? The third of eleven letters¹ I have located on the matter is from Gottheil, and is dated November 3, 1899. In it he explains to Herzl that upon getting back to New York from Switzerland, he passed the article to the NAR's assistant editor, as the editor-in-chief was away in Europe. He adds that inasmuch as the piece was "crowded out" of the November issue, it would probably be published in the next. On December 19 Herzl sent Gottheil a typed letter raising Zionist policy vis-à-vis the US presidential elections of 1900, with a hand-written annotation at the bottom asking again, "hasn't my article appeared yet?" – and then on New Year's Eve, in the post scriptum to another letter, he asked unadornedly, "North American Review?". The sixth letter, dated January 6, 1900, is on Harper & Brothers letterhead, as that publisher had recently acquired the NAR. It is addressed to Gottheil from the above William Fitts, who writes that he will have David A. Munro make payment to Herzl, and that the piece should appear in February. On January 26, 1900, Gottheil informed Herzl that the article should be out in the February issue, and blamed the delays on complications pertaining to the journal's change of ownership.

In the end, *The North American Review* never did publish the piece.

On July 3, 1900 a frustrated Richard Gottheil wrote directly to Munro about the "exceedingly unpleasant" circumstances, stressing that both the editor and publisher had failed to answer his queries and that, despite the assurances he had received, not only had Herzl's article not been published – but neither had payment ever been made. He adds that Herzl was demanding the manuscript be returned to Vien-

¹ Letters 1, 2, 4, and 6 are preserved at the American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati (Richard J. H. Gottheil Papers, MS-127, Box 1, Folder 7); letters 3 and 7 at the Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem (H1\1282-16 and H1\1282-19); and 9, 10, and 11 at the Library of Congress (NAR correspondence 1858-1912, Box 2). I am grateful to Jacob Heisler at the AJA, Shir Bach at the LOC, and (as ever) Suzanne Berns at the CZA for their generous help.

na “at once”². In his letter dated July 8, Gottheil thanks Munro for his response of July 5 and quotes Fitts as having promised fifty pounds in their initial exchange. In letter eleven of July 13, 1900, Gottheil confirms to Munro that he received the relevant check sent on the 9th, and has already forwarded it to Herzl.

Why Herzl’s article never appeared in the NAR remains to be solved. Perhaps Fitts at long last decided that Gottheil’s own comprehensive text on Zionism, printed in the August 1899 issue, had given the topic sufficient coverage³. More likely, the editors simply became too busy with matters deemed of higher priority – above all their absorbing bid to secure publication of a series of essays and books by Émile Zola of “*J’Accuse...!*” fame⁴. Whatever the reasons, Herzl’s article was published for the first time not until 1905 and in German – namely, as “Zionismus” in Leon Kellner’s compilation of Herzl’s writings, *Zionistische Schriften*⁵. This version is widely assumed to be a translation of the English article, in which case my conjecture is that professor Kellner made avail of neither the “besmirched” copy nor the original manuscript Herzl sent to Gottheil. Rather, there are grounds for asking whether he possessed a version of Herzl’s article edited in New York. Neither that hypothetical version nor – oddly – the two that had arisen in Vienna in

² Letter 5 is found in: Theodor Herzl, *Briefe und Tagebücher (Briefe 1898-1900), Fünfter Band*, Propyläen Verlag, Berlin 1991, 2187, p. 282; and letter 8 (from June 3, 1900, in which Herzl wrote to Gottheil “Please send me back my article from the North American Review by registered letter”), is available in *ibid*: 2647, p. 458.

³ Richard Gottheil, “The Zionist Movement”, *The North American Review*, August, 1899, vol. 169, no. 513, pp. 227-236. Dr. Henry (Haim) Pereira Mendes (chief rabbi of Shearith Israel, NYC, signatory of the Blackstone Memorial, founder in 1897 of what soon became the Federation of American Zionists) had already made three contributions on Zionism in *The North American Review* – namely, in the issues of Oct. 1897, Aug. 1898, and Nov. 1898. Max Nordau also published an article in the NAR in this period, however it addressed antisemitism, barely mentioning Zionism as one of the numerous responses to the problem – see “Israel Among the Nations”, *The North American Review*, June, 1899, vol. 168, no. 6, pp. 654-669.

⁴ See Shelley Selina Beal, “Theodore Stanton: An American Editor, Syndicator, and Literary Agent in Paris, 1880-1920”, A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Graduate Department of French Studies University of Toronto, 2009, pp. 201-220.

⁵ Theodor Herzl, “Zionismus”, in *Zionistische Schriften*, ed. Leon Kellner, Jüdischer Verlag, Berlin-Charlottenburg, 1905, pp. 119-133.

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the late summer of 1899 are known to have survived⁶. All we seem to have is the published German version from 1905⁷.

That professor Kellner may have had a redaction of Herzl's article was first alluded to by Henry J. Cohn in his groundbreaking analysis from 1970⁸, wherein he debunked the claim emphasized in "Zionismus" that the first Dreyfus trial was what triggered Herzl's conversion to Zionism in the spring of 1895. The leading Herzlian scholars have repeated professor Cohn's arguments virtually wholesale ever since⁹ – above all, that Herzl's diary entries and other writings, both from 1895 and later, betray no such debt to the Dreyfus case; moreover, that Herzl initially gave no indication of believing the French artillery officer to be innocent – nor did he ascribe meaning to Dreyfus's Jewishness (tenuous, though it was)¹⁰; and that it

⁶ As reported throughout in the literature, and confirmed by my own inquiries i.a. with: 1) the Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem; 2) the Herzl Institute, Jerusalem; 3) the American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati; 4) Columbia's Rare Book & Manuscript Library; 5) the New York Public Library's Brooke Russell Astor Reading Room for Rare Books and Manuscripts; 6) Harvard Library Judaica Division & Houghton Library; 7) Library of Congress, Manuscript Division; 8) Leo Baeck Institute, Center for Jewish History; 9) Cornell, Olin Library; 10) Brandeis Library; 11) Jüdisches Museum Wien; 12) Theodor Kramer Gesellschaft; Vienna; 13) Wiener Stadt- und Landesarchiv; 14) Zentralarchiv zur Erforschung der Geschichte der Juden in Deutschland, Heidelberg. One might suspect that Herzl threw away the "besmirched" copy, and that this was an important reason why he wanted Gottheil to return the manuscript passed on to the NAR.

⁷ There is a partial translation back into English included in Ludwig Lewisohn's compilation of Herzl's writings – see Theodor Herzl, "Zionism", translated by Hella Freud Bernays, in *Theodor Herzl: A Portrait for this Age*, ed. Ludwig Lewisohn, World Publishing Company, Cleveland and New York, for the Theodor Herzl Foundation, 1955, pp. 320-329.

⁸ Henry J. Cohn, "Theodor Herzl's Conversion to Zionism", *Jewish Social Studies*, vol. 32, no. 2, Apr., 1970, pp. 101-110.

⁹ See e.g., Desmond Stewart, *Theodor Herzl: Artist and Politician*, Double Day & Co. Inc., Garden City, New York, 1974, pp. 163-167; Robert S. Wistrich, *The Jews of Vienna in the age of Franz Joseph*, The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, Oxford, 1989, pp. 441-443; Steven Beller, *Herzl*, Peter Halban, London, 1991/2004, p. 16 & 31; Jacques Kornberg, *Theodor Herzl: From Assimilation to Zionism*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1993, pp. 190-200; Shlomo Avineri, *Herzl's Vision: Theodor Herzl and the Foundation of the Jewish State*, Bluebridge, Katonah, NY, 2013, pp.71-72; Derek Penslar, *Theodor Herzl: The Charismatic Leader*, Yale University Press, New Haven/London, 2020, pp. 68-70).

¹⁰ The primacy of the Dreyfus trial of 1894-95 in Theodor Herzl's conversion story amounts to a conflation with the passage to Zionism of the French Jew Bernard

was foremost the rising antisemitism in Austria (esp. the successes of the antisemitic politician Karl Lueger and his party in Vienna's municipal elections in the spring of 1895) that had horrified Herzl and prompted his "solution to the Jewish question".

In 1967 Cohn had corresponded with Alex Bein, director of the Central Zionist Archives in Jerusalem. In footnote 6 of his paper Cohn quotes a letter from Bein regarding the circuitous story of "Zionism", and thus Cohn knew that Gottheil was the recipient of Herzl's article, and that it was he who passed the piece along to *The North American Review*¹¹. Later in his paper Cohn quotes a passage from Gottheil's

Lazare (1865-1903). Lazare, also having personally witnessed Dreyfus's degradation on January 5, 1895, became viscerally convinced of Dreyfus's innocence and, moreover, of antisemitism – not "judicial error" – being the true cause behind the sordid affair. An anarchist and literary critic who earlier had espoused antisemitic views, Lazare was virtually alone in his belief, opposed by even the Dreyfus family and the French Jewish community. Nonetheless, it is Lazare who is most to be credited for the Dreyfus trial becoming the Dreyfus Affair – indeed, Émile Zola's "*J'Accuse...*" text, published on the front page of *L'Aurore* on January 13, 1898, was directly based on a text written by Lazare. After *Der Judenstaat* came out, Lazare became a Zionist and made Herzl's acquaintance on July 17, 1896, going on to be lionized at the Second Zionist Congress in 1898 – though the next year he fell out with Herzl and left the movement. See Lauren Gottlieb Lockshin, "The Dreyfus Affair's Forgotten Hero: Bernard Lazare and the First Modern Fight against Antisemitism", *Jewish History* (2021) 34: 305–330; and Nelly Wilson, *Bernard-Lazare*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1978. For an overt conflation of Herzl and Lazare's conversions to Zionism see Adam Sutcliffe, *What are Jews for?*, Princeton University Press, Princeton & Oxford, 2020, p. 171 – I thank Steven Beller for calling my attention to this matter.

¹¹ "Dr. Alex Bein, Director of the Zionist Central Archives in Jerusalem, has kindly supplied the following information to me in a letter of Dec. 10, 1967: »According to the correspondence of Herzl with Professor Richard Gottheil, the President of the Federation of American Zionists, Herzl sent the manuscript to Gottheil in September 1899. It should have been published in December 1899; later the publication date was postponed until February 1900. In the meantime the *North American Review* passed into the hands of new owners, and it seems that eventually the article was not published in the *North American Review*. When Leon Kellner first published the article (in German) in Herzl's *Zionistische Schriften*, he appears to have had before him a manuscript from which he could conclude that the article had been written by Herzl for publication in the *North American Review*. This manuscript is, however, not in the Herzl archives which are preserved by us. Kellner obviously did not know that the article was not published in the *North American Review* in 1899«" – Cohn, op. cit., p. 103.

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contribution to *The Jewish Encyclopedia* of 1905 which indicates that Gottheil had never seen any such statements by Herzl as "For what made me into a Zionist was the Dreyfus case" and "I wrote [...] my book *The Jewish State* in 1895, under the shattering impressions of the first Dreyfus trial", as found in the German version. On the contrary, the entry in *The Jewish Encyclopedia* reads: "It was at this time that Theodor Herzl, brooding over the strong rise of anti-Semitism in his own Austrian home and in Paris, in which city he was then living, wrote his *Judenstaat*. According to his own statement, it was conceived and written during the last two months of his stay in Paris in the year 1895, as a private expression of his opinion, and to be shown only to a small circle of his friends"¹². After all, if Gottheil had read Herzl's purported pronouncements on the impact of the Dreyfus case, he certainly would not have given Austrian antisemitism priority – and would doubtless have mentioned the name Dreyfus. Neither was Herzl's "own statement" drawn from "Zionismus", though clearly its English-language original is what someone who knew it would have relied on for that purpose. Rather, Gottheil cites here Herzl's "An Autobiography", published in *The Jewish Chronicle* early in 1898¹³.

Such unfamiliarity with the Dreyfusard pronouncements found in "Zionismus" is plain throughout the writings of Herzl's close associates until well after 1905¹⁴. Among them is the British-born Jacob de Haas, Herzl's ally in England from 1896 whom he dispatched to the US in

¹² Richard Gottheil, "Zionism", in *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. XII, Funk and Wagnalls Company, New York and London, 1905, pp. 666-686 (quotation from p. 671). Intriguingly, Gottheil refers here to *Zionistische Schriften* as a source for the original, German-language version of *Der Judenstaat*.

¹³ "In 1895 I had had enough of Paris and returned to Vienna. During the last two months of my stay in Paris, I wrote the book *A Jewish State*, which gave me the honor of being asked by your paper for some biographical information about my humble person" – Theodor Herzl, "An Autobiography", *The Jewish Chronicle*, January 14, 1898, pp. 20-21.

¹⁴ The Dreyfus myth is present in what is labeled the first biography of Herzl – namely, Adolf Friedemann, *Das Leben Theodor Herzls*, Jüdischer Verlag, Berlin, 1914, pp. 20-21. It is also found in the 1917 Polish-language biography of Herzl by rabbi Ozjasz Thon (*Teodor Herzl*, Wydawnictwo Akademickiej Młodzieży Syjonistycznej, Warszawa, 1917, p. 8), which is an authorized translation from the German original published that same year. Both Friedemann and rabbi Thon cite *The North American Review* as their source; though only Friedemann refers also to its publication in *Zionistische Schriften*.

1902 to take the post of secretary of the Federation of American Zionists. Indeed, de Haas might even have been asked to edit “Zionism” (de Haas edited and translated a range of materials for Herzl¹⁵). Be that as it may, Cohn points out that in his biographical entry on Herzl for *The Jewish Encyclopedia* of 1904, de Haas wrote, “Herzl has not confessed to what particular incident the publication of his *Jewish State* in the winter of 1895 [sic] was due. He was in Paris at the time and no doubt moved by the Dreyfus Affair”¹⁶. Yet Herzl of course had “confessed”, if we are to assume that “Zionism” contained the pronouncements we know from “Zionismus”. Likewise, concerning the surmised attribution to the Dreyfus affair, there would have been no need for de Haas to surmise at all if he had encountered the blunt statements we have in “Zionismus”, or heard them uttered in his regular, direct contacts with Herzl¹⁷. Among other of Herzl’s confidants who were unfamiliar with his osten-

¹⁵ For instance, late that June he had translated Herzl’s address to the Third Congress into English – see, Theodor Herzl, *The Complete Diaries of Theodor Herzl* [hereafter, CD], vol. 3, Raphael Patai (ed.) & Harry Zohn (translator), Herzl Press and Thomas Yoseloff, New York 1960. p. 853. Relatedly, de Haas was also responsible for the final form of *Der Judenstaat*’s early English translation – see Theodor Herzl, *A Jewish State: An Attempt at a Modern Solution of the Jewish Question*, translated by Sylvie D’Avigdor, revised by Jacob de Haas, Maccabean Publishing Co., New York, 1904. I have examined the correspondence between Herzl and de Haas in this period, as found at the CZA – however, nothing therein makes the barest mention of Herzl’s article.

¹⁶ Jacob de Haas, “Herzl, Theodor”, in *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. XII, Funk and Wagnalls Company, New York and London, 1904, pp. 370-371 (quotation from p. 370).

¹⁷ Nor does de Haas’s preface to *A Jewish State*, op. cit., 1904, pp. v-xv, ascribe unique, let alone paramount importance to the Dreyfus affair. On the contrary: “The rise of Ahlwardt in Germany, the break-up of the Liberal party in Austria, and the particular success of the anti-Semitic factions in Vienna, the trial and sentence of Dreyfus in Paris, and the immediate lowering of the position of the Jews in France which followed, and for which Drumont had labored partially, the failure of the Argentine experiments—these facts, and others of lesser and greater degree will mark out the first half of the last decade of the nineteenth century as black years in Jewish history. It was seeing and hearing these things, as an observer rather than as a participant, that Theodor Herzl came to the Jewish people with an old thought, »We are a people—one people« – and an old corollary, »The restoration of the Jewish State«, p. vi. Conversely, in his earlier booklet of 64 pages *Zionism: Jewish Needs and Jewish Ideals*, Greenberg & Co., London, 1901, where he again makes general comments on rising antisemitism in Europe (esp. Germany, France, Austria, Switzerland,

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sible view on the Dreyfus case are Max Nordau¹⁸, Lucien Wolf, and Asher Myers¹⁹. In sum, nowhere in the record but in "Zionismus" did Herzl ever offer anything akin to, "For what made me into a Zionist was the Dreyfus case". To add to the literature on the topic, there is Herzl's testimony in the British Parliament before the Royal Commission on Alien Immigration, convened on July 7, 1902, where by no means did he attribute his *metanoia* to Dreyfus: "I am an Austrian subject, and seven years ago, when I was living in Paris, I was so impressed with the state of Jewry throughout Europe that I turned my attention to the Jewish question and published a pamphlet which I called *A Jewish State*". In the single case when Herzl did mention Dreyfus before the Commission, he outright denied that French antisemitism had been significant at the time of the first trial: "I remember the time before the beginning of anti-Semitism in France. I was present at the beginning of the Dreyfus case, and then there was no anti-Semitism, but it came in..."²⁰.

Hungary, Bulgaria), de Haas does not mention Dreyfus directly – and makes no connection to Herzl's conversion (see p. 9).

¹⁸ Max Nordau, 1) "Zionism", in *The International Quarterly*, vol. VI, Sept-Dec. 1902, Burlington, Vermont, pp. 127-139; 2) *Zionism: Its History and Its Aims*, Federation of American Zionists, New York, 1905. The latter (a pamphlet) is in fact an updated version of the former (e.g., it additionally discusses the 6th Congress and Herzl's death), and was translated by someone else. Nordau says nothing whatsoever about Dreyfus in either work.

¹⁹ See Henry J. Cohn, op. cit. p. 109, where he quotes Wolf's 1902 entry "Zionism" for the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 10th ed.: "The electoral successes of the anti-semites in Vienna and Lower Austria in 1895 had impressed him with the belief that the Jews were unassimilable in Europe and that the time was not far distant when they would be once more submitted to civil and political disabilities"; and *ibid.* p. 107-8, where he writes, "On November 26, 1895 [Herzl] expounded his views to the Maccabees in London at a meeting attended by Asher Myers, editor of the *Jewish Chronicle*. Myers asked Herzl for a resumé of his argument, which appeared in the *Jewish Chronicle* on January 17, 1896. In his editorial Myers significantly commented that »the present phase of Austrian anti-Semitism must be grave indeed if such heroic remedies suggest themselves as not only advisable but also as practicable«. In that same editorial (on p. 15), Myers also noted, "So far from [antisemitism's] present acute appearance in Vienna being a temporary phenomenon, [Herzl] bids us prepare for an even fiercer and more general outbreak".

²⁰ "Dr. Herzl's Evidence before the Royal British Commission on Alien Immigration (Verbatim Report)", *The Maccabæan*, August, 1902, vol. III, no. 2, pp. 77-98. The first quotation I give is from Herzl's written statement read out by Major W.E.

Taken together, the above and other examples²¹ suggest that the account of Herzl's conversion found in the German version of 1905 significantly diverges from the English-language text that arose in the Habsburg capital in 1899.

* * *

One cannot help but wonder who might have redacted the original, if so. Jacob de Haas comes to mind, if only because he went on to give the Dreyfus affair ever higher, ultimately pivotal standing in Herzl's conversion²². Secondly, "Zionismus" is a unique work among Herzl's writings also in regard to its historical bent, something otherwise quite alien to Herzl²³. Thus, in what appears to reflect the influence of de

Evans-Gordon (p. 77), the second from his oral remarks made during questioning (p. 93).

²¹ I may give three: 1) Joseph Jacobs (1854-1916), the prolific scholar, Macca-bæan, and editor of *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, was not one of Herzl's confidants. However, it is significant that his lengthy, closely researched account of the Dreyfus case written for *The Jewish Encyclopedia* in 1903 mentioned Herzl not at all – see *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. IV, Funk and Wagnalls, New York-London, 1903, "Dreyfus Case", pp. 660-688; 2) the leading Christian Zionist in America, William Blackstone, who was attentively following Herzl's career and the First Zionist Congress, stated, "Dr. Herzl, [the Zionist party's] founder and principle leader, espoused [his party's program] as a dernier resort, to escape the persecutions of anti-semitism, which has taken such a firm hold of the masses of the Austrian people". No mention of Dreyfus is found therein – see "Signs of Christ's Speedy Coming", *The Jewish Era: A Christian Quarterly*, vol. 6, no. 4, October 1897, p. 117; 3) Derek Penslar recently noted that "in March of 1896, the Odessa-based Hebrew newspaper *Ha-Melitz* attributed Herzl's turn to Zionism to antisemitism in Vienna. There was no mention of Dreyfus" – see op. cit., p. 68.

²² Jacob de Haas, *Theodor Herzl: A Biographical Study*, vol. 1, The Leonard Company, Chicago – New York, 1927, pp. 39-52. De Haas quotes from Herzl's article "Zionismus" here – "The Dreyfus process ... which I witnessed in Paris in 1894, made me a Zionist" – describing that source as "an essay quoted in Kellner's collection, but wrongfully described as having appeared in the *North American Review* in 1899" – p. 50. That de Haas could have been quoting himself seems outrageous.

²³ Exquisitely in Herzl's style are the passages about the moving first glimpse of the Palestinian shore seen from aboard ship the previous year; the mystical longing coupled with earthly desire for a restored Israel voiced in the ancient prayers he heard in Jerusalem; the scene of the 20 Jewish lads riding Arab horses in Rehovot,

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Haas and Gottheil, Herzl builds his article upon historical developments oft-repeated by those two men: Mendelssohn and assimilationist hopes, Napoleon and his Sanhedrins of 1806 and 1807²⁴. Herzl also refers to Hovevei Zionism more fully than elsewhere in his oeuvre, even mentioning such names as Pinsker, Rülff, Goldsmid, and... Birnbaum²⁵.

The "prime suspects" are the editors at *The North American Review*. As already noted, in late 1899/early 1900 Fitts and his colleague Theodore Stanton urgently sought to get a contract signed with Émile Zola for a series of essays and books²⁶. It may therefore have occurred to them to put Herzl's piece on hold and suitably revise it in order to serve Zola's anticipated publications by building up the 1894-95 back-story on the Dreyfus case²⁷. That the NAR went on to shelve the piece, within this line of conjecture, would reflect the ultimate failure to formalize an agreement with Zola and persuade him to write about the Dreyfus affair²⁸. Whatever the case, in the NAR's hypothetical revision we would have the manuscript returned to Gottheil, thereafter forwarded to Herzl, and subsequently relied upon by Leon Kellner. It need be pointed out, however, that Gottheil's known correspondence with Munro from July 1900 says nothing about actually obtaining the manuscript back from the NAR: Gottheil confirms only the receipt of Munro's letters – and the check for fifty pounds. Nonetheless, Gottheil was "under orders" to return the manuscript to Herzl, and doubtless did so.

"performing swashbuckling dances on their steeds and whooping out Hebrew songs with extraordinary verve".

²⁴ A few months earlier Herzl had in fact mentioned the French Sanhedrin in a letter to the Kaiser – see CD vol. 2, p. 795, March 1, 1899.

²⁵ Within this same period – namely, on November 15, 1899 – Herzl sent a letter to Birnbaum that Jess Olson describes as "unusually friendly" (Olson, op. cit., p. 92). In it, Herzl asked Birnbaum to again contribute articles to *Die Welt*. See Theodor Herzl, *Briefe und Tagebücher, Fünfter Band*, op. cit., 2134, p. 253.

²⁶ Beal, op. cit., pp. 201-220.

²⁷ "I'm inclined to agree with your hunch about the Dreyfus material. We know how important Zola was to Stanton. We also saw him as a hands-on editor of the [Empress] Eugénie memoirs who was not averse to augmenting or altering text" – correspondence with professor Shelley Beal, July 7, 2022. See her "Translation and Re-translation: The Memoirs of Eugénie de Montijo, Ex-Empress of France", *Mémoires du livre / Studies in Book Culture*, Volume 2, Number 1, Fall 2010.

²⁸ In the end, Zola agreed to write just a single essay. Entitled "War", it was on military disarmament and appeared in *The North American Review's* April 1900 issue – see Beal, op. cit., pp. 206, 211.

* * *

Alas, awaiting archival discoveries that have eluded researchers to date, one may at most entertain serious doubts about the fidelity of “Zionismus” to “Zionism”, and merely speculate on what became of the English-language manuscripts. As if that were not enough, just how the English-language text was prepared is also confined to speculation. Though Herzl could be coy, as when in a letter written May 26, 1896 to rabbi Simeon Singer in London he claimed, “An Sir S. Montagu schreibe ich nicht direct, weil ich mich Englisch nicht gut ausdrücken kann...”/I do not write directly to Sir S. Montagu because I cannot express myself well in English...”²⁹, he was in fact competent in English. After all, just a few weeks later he wrote a brief letter to Lucien Wolf in flawless English³⁰. In the summer of 1888 the polyglot had spent just over a month (July 9-August 10) traveling about England (London, Brighton, Worthing, Isle of Wight)³¹. In November 1895 during his visits to London and Cardiff, Herzl conducted his business in English, including with the above Samuel Montagu – although at a meeting of the Maccabæans in London he allowed himself the convenience of having Rev. Singer translate his remarks³². In the summer of 1896, however, Herzl addressed the Maccabæans in English himself. Beyond that, Herzl’s English and American colleagues wrote to him in English (e.g., de Haas, Gottheil – though his own letters to them were in German). Herzl also spoke in English during a question and answer session that must have lasted hours at a Royal British Commission in July, 1902 (see footnote 20).

Thus Herzl could have written “das Original” in English himself and then had it proofread; his standard practice however was to write in German and then rely on a translator. If the latter is what happened, then here – in what would have been Herzl’s original text – we might have the (*nota bene* also missing!) German manuscript Leon Kellner published in 1905. *Zionistische Schriften* offers no clarification on

²⁹ Special thanks again to Suzanne Berns at the CZA.

³⁰ See Herzl to Wolf, July 1, 1896, CZA A77.

³¹ See Theodor Herzl, *Briefe und Tagebücher, Erster Band: Briefe 1866-1895*, Propyläen, Germany, 1983, letters 285-300, pp. 292-302.

³² Singer also translated Herzl’s resumé of *Der Judenstaat*, published in *The Jewish Chronicle*, Jan. 17, 1896 – see de Haas, *Theodor Herzl*: op. cit., p. 91; CD vol. 1, p. 284.

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whether "Zionismus" is the original or (as usually assumed) a translation. No matter the case, the doubts Henry J. Cohn first raised continue to be compelling. For if Kellner possessed what was the German-language original, the Dreyfusard statements would have been found in the translated manuscript Gottheil received – and yet he knew nothing about them. The evidence continues therefore to point to interpolation at the NAR and the return of that manuscript to Vienna, where Kellner discovered it after Herzl's premature death.

What remains certain is this: the claims found in "Zionismus" that the first Dreyfus trial was the primary cause of Herzl's conversion are counterfactual, notwithstanding which they will continue to dominate the popular narrative – even in Israel³³.

³³ No less than the Herzl Center in Jerusalem promotes the Dreyfus myth. See this Herzl Center educational video, 3:00-4:00, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hr02Y7CPYWU> [accessed Feb. 25, 2023].

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“This is an excellent contribution to research into the career of Theodor Herzl and ... marks a significant advance in our understanding ... Steele adds perspectives that one does not usually see in the history of Herzl and political Zionism, such as the Blackstone Memorial of 1891 ... Steele convincingly demonstrates that a well-informed individual such as Herzl surely must have known much more about Zionism *before* 1895 than his statements *after* 1895 indicate. He certainly has convinced me ... Steele’s explanation of why Herzl did not show more evidence of having known about the Zionist movement and its many thinkers and projects before his own Zionist “conversion” ... is very perceptive ... That Steele’s monograph has led me, an author who has also had to investigate and understand the complex mind of Herzl, to such a disquisition on this central question of how much Herzl’s thought was original or not, is an indication, I think, of how powerful Steele’s work is, and how much it will set other scholars of Herzl and Zionism thinking ... Steele maintains the very high quality of his research and forensic thought in the two addenda.”

– Steven Beller, author of the biography *Herzl*, 1991, 2004

“This short monograph makes a number of important contributions to our understanding of how, when, and why Theodor Herzl turned to Zionism. It deserves to be published, and it will be of enduring scholarly merit ... Steele not only illuminates Herzl’s probable pre-1895 exposure to Zionist ideas; he also shows how after 1895 Herzl was aware of a multitude of Zionist texts yet did not acknowledge that awareness in his diaries or public statements, and even his private correspondence has to be read against the grain to reveal what Herzl had concealed. As Steele concludes sagely, “Herzl expended enormous amounts of psychic energy in order to shield core aspects of his personhood from himself.” Steele’s reading does not in any way lessen Herzl’s unique contributions to the early Zionist movement, but precisely by focusing on concealment rather than revelation it exposes previously opaque aspects of Herzl’s persona ... In sum, this is a masterful, responsible, and illuminating piece of scholarship that merits wide distribution and discussion.”

– Derek Penslar, Harvard, author of *Theodor Herzl: The Charismatic Leader*, 2020

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