

14 First Encounters: East European Jewry Discovers Pre-Balfour England

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'Ashkenaz – Thought; England – Action; France – Pleasure.'
Morris Vinchevsky (Benzion Novakhovichi),
'A Letter from the Diaspora', *HaKol*, 27:4, 1879¹

"Their modern culture is of no importance, empty
and frivolous are their periodicals, and yet spirituality is
not lacking for the more spiritual among them: the legacy of
generations – Byron and Shakespeare, Shelley and Carlyle.'
Yosef Haim Brenner²

Professor David Vital's second published book, *The Making of British Foreign Policy* (1968), analysed the mechanisms involved in shaping British foreign policy. Long before that, because the Balfour Declaration committed England to support for a Jewish national home in Palestine and Britain's League of Nations mandate gave it responsibility for governing the Holy Land, Zionist leaders during the interwar period were very interested in learning how British foreign policy was determined. For example, in 1930, Chaim Arlosoroff wrote an article entitled 'The Colonial Office' based on Sir George V. Fiddes's 1926 book *The Dominions and the Colonial Office*, one of the volumes in his Whitehall Series. Arlosoroff also translated into Hebrew Barth Williams's book, *The British Empire* (in Hebrew, 1930). It is obvious, then, that the early shaping of pre-Zionist Jewish attitudes to England seems particularly appropriate to this jubilee book.

In his satirical novel, *The Travels of Benjamin the Third*, published

in 1896, Mendele Mokher Seforim (Shalom Jacob Abramowitsch) describes a conversation between idlers sitting in a house of study in the city of Zalmona, where two travellers, Benjamin and Sandril, the heroes of the story, arrive in the midst of the 1853–56 Crimean War. The men in the house of study (*Bet midrash*) exchange items of news and rumours of events in the big world. They tell wondrous tales about 'Lady Vita, the world-renowned Queen Victoria, praise her exceedingly for her ingenuity and wisdom, and find great purpose in all her deeds', and in the marvels of the 'machines of England'.

There is, of course, no reason to wonder at the fact that reports about Queen Victoria and the industrial revolution penetrated as far as small Jewish towns in Eastern Europe in the 1850s. But it is clear that if this conversation had taken place a decade or two later, the men in the house of study would have known a great deal more about England. This additional information would result from the expanded horizons of geographical and historical knowledge of the 'average' contemporary Jew in Eastern Europe insofar as the world at large was concerned, including remote countries like England and far more distant ones.³

My intention is not to review the information about events in England and the British Empire received by Jewish newspaper readers in Eastern Europe during the mid-nineteenth century but to examine how these same Jews formed an opinion about England and whether the resulting image played any part, first in shaping their modern consciousness and later in affecting political decisions.

As is well known, German culture was the non-Jewish culture which played a key role in the modernization of Jewish consciousness. Alongside it, France and French culture served as a 'secondary model', according to Israel Bartal's definition. He describes France as a political model, for instance, towards which the Jew had an ambivalent attitude. Certain ideas of French origin were absorbed into Jewish society, generally in an indirect manner, and various literary models were adopted by Jewish authors.⁴ Besides the fact that political ideas, originating in the France of the Enlightenment and the Revolution, and of later generations, reverberated widely, France also had a real presence in the culture of the higher classes in Eastern Europe; and some elements of French culture (first and foremost, a knowledge of French) passed from them to small circles in the Jewish community.

But what of England? Was she, too, a 'secondary model'?

Unquestionably, the ideas of English and Scottish philosophers were widely disseminated in Eastern Europe, where the educated Jew of the mid-nineteenth century would have heard the ideas of John Stuart Mill and Jeremy Bentham, of Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer,⁵ Thomas Carlyle, Thomas Henry Buckle, John William Draper,⁶ and other English thinkers. Each of them influenced the Russian or the Polish intelligentsia in general, and also had a profound effect on some members of the Jewish intelligentsia in particular.⁷ An educated Jewish public might very well have read English literature in translation – from Shakespeare and Byron to Dickens and Oliver Goldsmith, and others.⁸ But English culture, aside from philosophy and literature, had a very limited presence, and hence could only serve as a 'marginal' – not a 'secondary' – model for the East European Jew.

Nonetheless, the image of England formed in the minds of the Jewish reading public in Eastern Europe is not a marginal chapter in describing how the Jewish knowledge of the world was shaped in modern times. A discussion of this topic does not merely constitute an academic study of the connection between the development of available knowledge, transmitted through various agents (the press, rumours and the like), or the formation of images and perceptions on any given subject. Despite England's marginal status, the attitude towards it in the Jewish press reflects the way in which Jews learned about the contemporary world and formulated an opinion about the forces acting in it. Needless to say, England's central and determining status in the contemporary world – as a power in the European constellation; as a world-embracing empire, with deeply rooted interests in the Middle East (including Palestine); as the generator of the industrial revolution and a formidable industrial power; as a constitutional monarchy and a parliamentary democracy which granted Jews full political rights; and as a destination for Jews emigrating from the east – could not help but arouse a desire to know as much as possible, to understand her nature, the secret of her strength, what made her unique and the way in which she operated.

The activity of English philanthropists and gentile Zionists in the second half of the nineteenth century, expressed in the aid given to the Jews of Eastern Europe and the millenarian ideas of the redemption of the Land of Israel which arose during that period also aroused interest in the nature of the mother country in the

organizations involved in these movements. Towards the end of the nineteenth century and up to the First World War, this interest grew once Herzlian Zionist diplomacy made England a target country and even obtained her agreement to establishing a Jewish settlement in Uganda. As expectations of England increased, interest in that country became less theoretical and more pragmatic.

In order to know what one could expect, it was desirable to know as much as possible about the object of these expectations. Having said this, I nevertheless believe that had it not been for the Balfour Declaration and British rule over Palestine after the First World War, the perception or image of England, and the reconstruction of the development of knowledge about her, as well as the attitude adopted towards her, would have been relegated to the sidelines of historical interest. The facts that the destiny of Zionism is closely and fatefully bound up with Britain and that Britain ruled Palestine from 1918 to 1948 are what make the attitude of East European Jews towards England so important. In other words, since knowledge about England had already developed before 1917, it was not a totally strange land to the Jews; they already had certain images of it as well as certain expectations.

By no means was this a negative view from the outset, one that engendered a suspicious or hostile attitude towards England. Nor was it an image that made her into a negative political model.⁹ It is true that the Zionist attitude towards England was often mingled with harsh criticism. Those adhering to socialist (and Marxist) views were critical of British capitalism and the status of workers in England. So, too, were they opposed to British imperialism and its treatment of the populations it ruled imperially. However, in general, East European Jews had a positive attitude towards England. One might even describe it as one of sympathy and admiration.

This positive attitude endured in Zionist public opinion in Europe and in Palestine, with certain exceptions, until nearly the mid-1940s, namely until the period of the *Yishuv's* 'struggle' against British rule in Palestine. Only then did an Anglophobic attitude begin to develop within certain circles. Although from the end of 1944 the majority did consider England a political enemy, it did not develop a hostile attitude towards her or her culture. The hostile, at times acrimonious, views voiced by public opinion in Palestine from 1944 to 1948 should not gloss over the fact that the greater part of this public clearly appreciated, even admired, several traits regarded as characteristic of Great Britain.

In any event, the fundamental difference between knowledge about England and the way it was understood before 1917 and after is clear. Until 1917 the knowledge was theoretical, and the image was of a distant political society and an unknown culture. After 1917, it became nothing less than critical to understand England and its image.

Zionist politics and statesmanship were largely based on the views and images Zionist leaders had of the nature of English political culture, the way England's dominant mechanisms operated, the interests that drove the country, and what characterized the 'English mentality' – both in England itself and in the officialdom that conducted British imperial rule overseas.

From 1917 onwards, there was daily contact with English politics and English political culture by permanent Zionist representatives in London and Jerusalem; the ties to English culture were not only direct but also tangible as a result of Britain's rule and presence in Palestine. After 1917 we are no longer referring to an attitude towards 'spiritual England',¹⁰ namely, towards 'high British culture' expressed in political principles, philosophical ideas and *belles-lettres*. It becomes an attitude towards 'concrete' England: towards patterns of government and administration, rules of conduct and lifestyle as expressed in Palestine, as well as ties and attitudes to various aspects of English culture (film, sport, popular culture and the like). Jewish society in Palestine was introduced to all these elements as a result of the growing number of its members who studied and knew English, and the open, receptive nature of the cultural market in Palestine, which enabled the importation of books, films, and the like.

The process by which knowledge of the 'other' expands into an image, or a repertoire of stereotypes, is dynamic and complex. As we shall see, a great deal of news about England and events taking place in that country was published by the Jewish press in Eastern Europe, often accompanied by commentary. This commentary stemmed from preconceived images and, at one and the same time, created and disseminated new images in turn. The news from England – and about England – was part of the ongoing reporting about events in the world, while the images reflected understanding and interpretation, which created a conventional pattern. Often, the image is more influential than the knowledge because it determines an *a priori* attitude towards the imagined object, and sometimes also dictates modes of action and behaviour towards it,

which, as noted, was important mainly in relation to shaping Zionist policy years later, at the time of the British mandate.

The news sections of the Jewish press reported on numerous subjects, while the editorials selected a particular dimension, usable both in determining a stance towards the overall East European society and in debating the desirable character of the Jewish society. England, as the 'other', was a multifaceted entity, and the Jews who wrote about it were able to discern four major facets. They saw England as: a distinctive *political* culture and a unique *political* tradition in contrast to the continental countries, including the special tradition of English liberalism on the one hand, and of English socialism on the other; the ruler of an empire; a land of singular culture; and the birthplace of the industrial revolution and the leading power in international trade and commerce. From the 1920s onwards, an attempt was also made by some Zionist writers to explain the riddle of the English character and single out its particular traits. In addition to these four emphases, great attention was devoted to the special and inspiring history of Jewish emancipation in England.

In terms of the time and place – East European Jewry in the Enlightenment era of proto-nationalism until the emergence of the Zionist movement in the late 1880s – the Jews formulated an image and a stance towards each of the four or five major facets on the basis of the admittedly only fragmentary, sometimes superficial, knowledge at their disposal, but also according to how they might be able to use this accumulated knowledge in their own local and distinctively internal Jewish context. Regarding the latter, the images and knowledge found expression in the manner in which England was used as a role model and how various Jewish writers hoped to learn lessons and derive inspiration from it.

Two brief methodical comments are necessary at this point:

1. A group of quotations taken from the press, periodicals and philosophical observations as well as from correspondence provides information about the views of the writers, but cannot represent those of the public. When we speak of a perception, we are referring to an image expressed in the writings of a very small group within the public-at-large. Yet it is entirely reasonable to assume that the articles regularly published in the daily press – journalistic writings and literature – were read by a large public as their major source of information and had to have had

some influence in shaping the perceptions and understanding of at least large segments of this public. At the very least, readers took the object – England – and transformed it from a distant, unfamiliar land and culture into a fairly well-known one, so that the later encounter with her politics and statesmanship, officials, army, and various sections of her culture was not an encounter with *Anglia incognita*."

2. Educated Jewish *maskilin* and the Jewish intelligentsia could garner information from the press in languages such as Russian or German (a knowledge of English was not widespread among East European Jews), from literature written in these languages and from translations of English literature into these languages. But there is no way to reconstruct the sources of their knowledge – with the exception of several testimonies about the manner in which they read English philosophical literature, or about it. On the other hand, again, we can reasonably assume that the average Jewish reader gained most of his knowledge from the press and literature in Hebrew or Yiddish. What was written in them therefore constituted for most Jews their window on the world – and the prism through which they looked out at that external, often exotic and uncharted world.

The weekly, *Ha-Maggid* (The Declarer), the first Hebrew newspaper and mouthpiece of moderate *Haskalah* and Jewish proto-Zionism in Eastern Europe from the 1850s to the 1980s, was founded in 1856, the year in which the Crimean War ended. Its continued to appear until 1903. It was published in the Prussian city of Lyck on the Russian–East Prussian border, then for two years in Berlin, and then, until closure, under the name *Ha-Maggid Ha'chadash* (The New Declarer), in Cracow. Hence, while most of its readers were subjects of the tsarist empire, in practice it never came under the scrutinizing eye of the tsar's censor. Still, because most of the paper's readers lived in Russia, and Prussia was itself an autocratic state, the journalists' freedom to write what they wished was restricted in more subtle ways. Its editors, for example, practised self-censorship on any item of a critical nature relating to Russia and autocratic Prussia. On the other hand, this did not preclude their praising parliamentary democracy in England, so that these words of commendation were an indirect way of criticizing, by unfavourable comparison, the autocratic regimes in Russia and Prussia.

The number of the paper's subscribers ranged, according to various estimates, from 400 to 2,000, although the number of its readers was much greater. *Ha-Maggid* was, therefore, a central fount of information about events in the Jewish world and in the world at large for Hebrew readers in Eastern Europe. The paper translated telegraphic items of news received from London which were frequently edited summaries of news published in *The Times* of London. In its worldview, too, the paper ardently supported Western Europe's first and foremost nation, England. Disseminated worldwide, the weekly also served as a harbinger of proto-nationalist ideas. In this way, the information and images *Ha-Maggid* created and disseminated were, on the one hand, a part-modernization of the process Jewish public opinion in Eastern Europe was undergoing and, on the other, contributed to the very development of the process itself.¹² From its first issues, the paper devoted space to reports about England as part of its political reviews of world events, and several times devoted editorials to England. I will not examine the current news the paper published, but will sum up the basic images of England that are reflected in its issues over a period of nearly half-a-century.

Another source of information available to the educated Hebrew reader from the 1860s onwards was Kalman Schulman's popular universal history. Schulman (1819–99), the most outstanding popularizer of Hebrew literature in the second half of the nineteenth century, made an immense contribution to the development of the East European Hebrew reader's knowledge of the world – past and present – since his books sold in several editions and were enormously popular.¹³ In his six-volume work, *Divrei yemei olam* (World History) (Vilna, 1867–84), adapted from a German source, Schulman devoted a great deal of space to the history of England, from the mid-twelfth century to the early 1880s. For instance, in his book *Sefer mosadei erez* (A Geography Book) (Vilna, 1875) he included a detailed description of governance in England.

On the pages of *Ha-Maggid* and in Schulman's book, England was portrayed as a model of political rule and political culture. Government in England was the antithesis of the absolutist regimes in Russia and Prussia, as well as of the tradition of the French Revolution. England's democratic form of government placed her 'at the highest point among all the peoples of the globe' – an exemplar for them (together with the political system in the United States).

On 10 July 1862, the newspaper wrote:

Yes, dear reader, this House of Commons is an ideal exemplar for the entire universe, a beacon for many nations to follow in its light and path. And the earth will be full of knowledge and justice as the waters cover the sea. Not merely do the British legislators show their concern for their own people, but they are the benefactors of other peoples as well, for as their own people's strength grows, so do the happiness and welfare of others.

The civil liberties of every citizen – including the Jewish citizen – are assured. Unlike in other countries, government ministers are elected by Parliament and need its support.¹⁴ Members of Parliament have the right to respond to the Queen's speech at the annual opening session of the Parliament – something unthinkable in tsarist Russia. Schulman writes: 'All those familiar with the customs of England will cover her with praise, and indeed she is deserving of praise, for she lays judgement by a plumb-line and righteousness by a plummet'.¹⁵ Even the king himself is not above the law in England, Schulman writes. Since King Charles I tried to undermine the *Magna Carta*, Schulman does not criticize the Puritan revolution as he so harshly does the French Revolution.¹⁶ The reason is simple: the French Revolution brought the mob to power, whereas the Puritan revolution was followed by the restoration of the monarchy and the supremacy of law. England, in Schulman's eyes, is the very embodiment of democracy, while the prosperity and strength she enjoys are directly attributed to the political and civil freedom prevailing in that land.

Ha-Maggid and Schulman did not marvel only at the processes of English government but also at the country's democratic political culture, wherein the principles of liberty and justice were put into practice and the rights of the citizen anchored in a long-standing historical tradition:

Here, in the free land of England, judgement prevails in the market place, and truth and justice lodge in the streets. Here the small and the large are judged alike, and a member of no faith is given precedence over a member of another.

Ignoring the Puritan revolution, both stressed the fact that this

political culture had developed in an evolutionary manner, without its traditional institutions being destroyed. In a formulation also accepted by the Russian intelligentsia, *Ha-Maggid* and Schulman created an interdependence between the political form of government in England and its industrial–technological progress, international trade ('the peddler of the nations'), and the material wealth endowing her with political power and greatness. England was a blessed land that had become the cradle of progress.

It is interesting that neither *Ha-Maggid* nor Schulman devoted any space to a description of the condition of the working class in England or to the negative aspects of English capitalism. The poet and man-of-letters, Judah Leib Levin (*Yahalel*, 1844–1925), in contrast, was well aware of England's dual nature. In a letter in April 1883, he wrote: 'You ought to know, my friend, that while England has the most favoured government of all nations, the proletariat and pauperism have increased in it sevenfold compared to all other countries'.

Nonetheless, Levin regards England as a land to be envied:

And would not your heart rejoice to see the Jews settled in their land, happy and blessed with only one-eighth the good and happiness of England? The general poverty is a separate issue, and the people as a whole, unprotected and open to plunder, is a separate issue.¹⁷

The sympathetic attitude towards England is also reflected in *Ha-Maggid's* and Schulman's position in relation to British imperialism. Although at times there is an undertone of criticism in relation to the tyranny of imperialist rule, insofar as the domination of non-white peoples in Asia and Africa was concerned, both the paper and Schulman were ardent advocates of England's civilizing mission ('the white man's burden') in the world, as a representative of the West. British imperialism was portrayed by them as an 'enlightened occupation', motivated not only by considerations of trade but also by a sense of moral mission: England is bringing progress to a 'backward' world. England, Schulman writes:

planted the seeds of the sciences in other lands and distant isles too, for her sons, who found too little room for themselves in that country, scattered throughout the lands of the East and the islands of the seas, and wherever they resided,

they spread the light of wisdom and knowledge, of craftsmanship and the practical arts. 'The ways of England are pleasant, all her paths lead to peace.' Only to Ireland did she say: 'There is no peace'.¹⁸

The Indian rebellion in 1857, for example, is depicted as an uprising against progress. Both *Ha-Maggid* and Schulman did in fact criticize England's intolerance in this affair. However, since the religions of the Far East were regarded as idolatrous, the suppression of the Indian revolt was seen in a positive light, and the newspaper called on England 'to better its ways in India, and seek to spread light in this vast country...but not to expand her government and treasures' (30 October 1857). Observing more broadly, the weekly expressed its opinion that England had played a positive role in India and China by making these countries, which until then had been outside the 'civilized world', a part of that world (17 April 1857).¹⁹

Now the Queen of England also rules over India, and the ministers of her government render judgement and compassion in the lands of India, a just sentence to the rebels and compassion to the inhabitants by giving them good and just laws according to which they will live happy lives so they will no longer rise up in rebellion.²⁰

In the same vein, Schulman writes about the British occupation of Ethiopia in 1867–68:

This war too will testify to the fact that the enlightened sons of Europe will always rule over the sons of benighted Asia and Africa, and...the Enlightenment will overcome all folly with all its might and power. Since then the Kingdom of England has positioned a large army in Abyssinia to put an end to the tyranny of her rulers and ministers, and perhaps that kingdom will also succeed in opening the gates of that land to European enlightenment and civilization until it unites with the lands of Europe in the practice of the sciences, industry and trade.²¹

Ha-Maggid also wrote during the war that it was England's duty to introduce order into an uncivilized country like Abyssinia.²²

Criticism was only voiced on those occasions when England was

perceived as trying to undermine religious tradition. Although *Ha-Maggid* showed no sympathy for the 'idolatrous' religions, and could not openly express opposition to the spread of Christianity, it apparently perceived the suppression of religious rites *per se* as a condemnable act. On the other hand, *Ha-Maggid* did denounce England's policy in Ireland and South Africa and, in the latter instance, revealed clear sympathy for the Boers.

This overall favourable attitude towards England's cultural 'mission' in Asia and Africa, the description of British imperialism as tolerant and enlightened, and the distinction drawn between the manner of British and French rule in their respective colonies found ample expression in Zionist literature up to the First World War, and doubtless prepared Zionist public opinion for accepting England as the enlightened holder of the mandate over Palestine. A perfect illustration of this is Ahad Ha'Am's comment about English rule in South Africa after England won the Boer War. In the summer of 1909, he wrote:

The English, for example, surely know how to use force – of the fist and the cannon. They have conquered a whole world with these, and founded an empire on which the sun never sets. But at the same time, they know that their empire will endure 'not by armics nor by force, but by the spirit'. Therefore, wherever possible, they try to replace the force of the fist with the force of the spirit...the spirit of 'liberty, equality and brotherhood'.²³

As a rule *Ha-Maggid* devoted no space to reports about English literature or thought. Thus, the controversy over Darwin's book *The Origin of Species*, published in 1856, is not mentioned at all in the paper. Nor did Schulman devote any space in his book to a description of English culture, except to mention Shakespeare: 'The light of the aspiring writer, unparalleled among the authors of all the peoples under the sun, is the sublime, famous writer called Shakespeare'.²⁴

Ha-Maggid and Schulman's books reflect perceptions based on second-hand, indirect knowledge acquired from the foreign press and literature. A similar perception can be found in Jewish publicist writings in Eastern Europe by authors whose image of England was formed through a distant mirror. It will be interesting shortly to see whether closer, more personal and direct acquaintance – a stay in England, for instance – reinforced or altered these perceptions.

For the most part, we do not find England serving as a model or argument in internal Eastern European Jewish debates. For much of the nineteenth century, after all, the question of the character of political government in any future Jewish society was not yet on the public agenda; therefore, a discussion of political rule in England had no effect whatsoever. Two noteworthy examples, however, in which England was used as a standard serving internal Jewish aims can be found in Peretz Smolenskin's publicistic historical writings.

Smolenskin (1842–85), a nationalist *maskil*, author and publicist, settled in Vienna in 1868, and for 17 years edited the periodical *Ha-Shachar* (*Dawn*) there.²⁵ In his view, England was the first country in Europe in which, even in the time of Henry VIII, the spirit of tolerance and freedom had overcome religious clericalism and political despotism. Not France, but England, was the first country to accept and apply the ideas of emancipation. Not because it had no anti-Semitism, but because it had a tolerant political system. Smolenskin was of the same opinion as Schulman, that England had succeeded in changing her political system while preserving her social stability, without resorting to terror or violence, without giving the mob any power, and without undermining the institution of the monarchy. This English precedent was undoubtedly the model of change that the enlightened Jews would have liked to see emulated in tsarist Russia. Furthermore, Smolenskin regarded the English experience as an instrument by which one could resolve the '*kulturkampf*' between the 'religious' and the 'free-thinkers' in Jewish society. The English model rejects the rule of the church but, at the same time, provides a way of introducing reforms in religion and society through consensus, not by the indiscriminate destruction of tradition and the 'old world'.

One could say that Smolenskin envisioned a kind of 'praiseworthy revolution' in Jewish society, leading to structural changes without impairing its framework and organic continuity. In his long article, '*Am Olam*' (An Eternal People), published in 1872, he wrote:

There is only one nation whose heart is set upon sublime knowledge and which has also applied it to man's actions. This nation is that of the British people, this people of both thought and deed, who will act, but will first think before doing so. This people has risen high on the ladder of this sublime knowledge until it now stands at the head of all the nations. This people did not seek to embrace and kiss all

humankind with its thought, like the Germans, nor did it wish to bring them under its wings and rule them like the French. It knew that first of all man must see to his own life, and only then act for the sake of humankind, for only in this manner will men achieve the lofty aim of benefitting all mankind.²⁶

These words were directed against assimilated Jews in the West, the members of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* and the believers. In England's historical trajectory, Smolenskin found a commendable example of a state whose first concern was for its own welfare and which had not succumbed to a self-imposed mission to spread good throughout the world. The English, he wrote, first of all love their own people, and through this love they benefit the entire world. In other words, in England Smolenskin found an exemplar of nationalism and patriotism, free of any missionary tidings like the revolutionary ideas borne by France, conclusively proving that a nation can contribute to world civilization without giving up its national assets.

In English history Smolenskin found a model worthy of emulation for the proper separation between government (politics and civil society) and religion. The English people, he wrote, remained believers even when the clergy had no ruling power; nor was the English government the sworn enemy of the faith.²⁷ It confirmed that religious reforms could be introduced by the sovereign legislator – a procedure, incidentally which he believed had support in Jewish tradition.²⁸ From McCaulay, Smolenskin learned that partisan divisions and controversies could be resolved by majority opinion.²⁹ In other words, England, the only place in which a blend of liberalism, tolerance, a democratic system of government changes according to the decision of the majority, and national unity had been successful, was the optimal (and utopian) model for the reforms required by Jewish religion and society: 'And to this great thing we must also cast our eyes whenever we desire to introduce innovations or reforms in Judaism'.

In Smolenskin's novel, *Hato'eh bedarkei ha'chayim* (The Perplexed in the Paths of Life) (Vilna, 1876–68), the hero writes a letter to his sister after having arrived in Paris from London:

Unlike London, which is only work and action, this city [Paris] is full. Here the hubbub of life overpowers the hubbub of work and labour in the great streets... but my heart will not

be captivated by her, the crowd and the commotion in her streets. I cannot endure it, nor do its people capture my heart. The people living in this land are as far removed from the people of Britain as the skies from the earth. A man of Britain is like an ox to his yoke and will wholeheartedly do his work.³⁰

In contrast to the image of French culture and society as superficial and even licentious, which was widespread in Jewish literature in Eastern Europe, England is described as a serious, staid society and culture. For a nationalist and positivist like Smolenskin, the revival of Jewry in its land would be realistic only if the Jews were as sober and industrious as the English.

Until the inception of Herzlian diplomacy, England and the British Empire were depicted as a political culture and a great power worthy of admiration. But the East European Jewish mirror in which England was reflected was a distorted mirror, one that revealed only a few aspects of its character.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, the Jews became better acquainted with England and events occurring there, and began to speak her praises; and yet this was a distant, platonic kind of love. Only later, when the intelligentsia and Zionist activists began to arrive in England as immigrants, and spent some time there, did their acquaintance with England deepen. Then the mirror drew closer to the object reflected in it: England increasingly came to be reflected with greater clarity, with growing attempts to understand her true nature.

'I must confess', wrote Chaim Weizmann to his fiancée, Vera, on 2 February 1905, 'that we used to have false notions about the English and England.'³¹ These words accurately reflect the first encounters of Eastern European Zionist leaders with England in the pre-First World War period. Their early exposure confronted partial, even superficial knowledge and a stereotyped image of England face-to-face with reality; this gave rise, in turn, to confused mixed reactions, as well as to a longer process of familiarization and learning.

This learning process would be entirely different for Zionist activists settling permanently in England than for those spending only a short time there. For the former, their attitude towards everything English was understandably affected by the sense of foreignness felt by any immigrant on encountering an unfamiliar cultural environment whose codes of conduct he finds strange.³²

My point is that their early, superficial acquaintance with England, based on information acquired from the 'old country' press and literature, did little to blunt the shock of the encounter or the problems of adaptation, particularly since the newcomers knew little or no English, certainly not on a level that could serve as an entry ticket to English culture.

What matters most is the adjustment process: how first impressions changed over time and led to an improved and in some cases – like that of Weizmann himself – even a sophisticated understanding of England and the English. Several examples will suffice.

Ahad Ha-Am resided from 1907 to 1921 in London,³³ where he was employed as a clerk in the Wissotsky tea company. We have already remarked that his thinking had been much influenced by British philosophers (Spencer, John Stuart Mill and others), but England itself was totally foreign to him. London seemed like 'Babylonia', an anonymous, noisy city that 'confuses the mind and stupefies the heart', and 'the City seemed like Hell, an accursed place that destroys the spirit'.³⁴ On 17 December 1907, he wrote to Mordechai ben Hillel HaCohen in Jaffa about the 'vast sea known as London', and about how difficult he was finding it to take leave of 'the world you have lived in most of your life and with which your best memories are linked, and to move "on the eve of old age" to a new, strange world'.³⁵ Nonetheless, Ahad Ha-Am was not oblivious to the enormous power held by a city like London, and when he left it to settle in little Tel Aviv he began to miss the large city, despite 'its crowded streets and markets, the dark City, where I spent so many years without light or air'.³⁶

It is not his nostalgia for London that is important to us, but the fact that Ahad Ha-Am marvelled at the political freedom prevailing in England and at the character of its political culture, which was marked by self-discipline and was deeply rooted in tradition. It is hard to say that he felt any emotional link to England; on the contrary, it always remained alien to him, but rational analysis led him to conclude that modern Jewry certainly had a lot to learn from Britain.

Yosef Chaim Brenner's impression of London, where he arrived penniless in early 1904,³⁷ was similar to that of Ahad Ha-Am:

London... is a very large city. And dark, very dark, with many crooked and twisting streets and lanes, filled with smoke and grime by day and night, and many people wander in them,

naked and hungry, searching and searching for something, but, in fact, no longer expecting to find anything. On their backs stand a fair number of very busy creatures, reading newspapers, travelling in carriages, wearing large black top hats. There are, of course, some pleasant aspects to the city that the local citizens can enjoy. It has many tree-filled parks, it has peaceful suburbs, it has culture wherever you look.³⁸

Brenner stressed the deep division between the social classes that characterized English society, and described the life of the bourgeois society as superficial and flighty. However, he greatly appreciated the political freedom prevailing in England, although he defined it as external freedom.

A third Zionist with socialist views who lived in London for a short time early in 1914 was Dov Ber Borochoy. His sojourn was spent mostly in libraries, and his letters indicate hardly any interest in English society and culture or any attempt to learn anything about them, other than a sketchy impression of the British national character. In his view, that character was best reflected in the library of the British Museum, which was a 'centre of world culture', its rules and regulations reflecting 'British order and England's ability to rule. An analogy, if you will, of the way Britain rules the seas.' Borochoy also mentions the Stock Exchange in the City as a centre of world trade.³⁹ We might, perhaps, have expected a more profound impression from a theoretician with such wide-ranging interests, but Borochoy, like Brenner, was only a sojourner in England, unlike Weizmann, who came to feel at home in British society.

In Chaim Weizmann's first letters, as noted, he reveals a negative impression and a sense of foreignness in England. In March 1905, for example, he wrote from Manchester, where he had recently moved, to his fiancée in Geneva: 'England is a country of large-scale social contradictions; nowhere is this felt so strongly as here. I myself work hard, harder than ever, yet I see people around me working even harder and living less well.'

He goes on:

The insincerity, sham and hollowness of the surroundings is somehow more obvious nowadays. Everything is covered by a superficial polish but the inner reality is frightfully nasty. England is a country of apparent 'respectability', but evil

deeds are committed beneath the cloak. Politics, personal intrigues, interests, they all blend, and it is difficult to determine where one ends and another begins.⁴⁰

In other letters Weizmann writes about his impressions of the gloomy nature of life in England, of the English lifestyle, which was totally antithetical to his own ideas and feelings, and of his deep sense of foreignness despite his outward adjustment.⁴¹ He also takes pains to stress that the reality he describes is not the product of a melancholy mood, or of a tendency to see everything in dismal colours, but rather a result of his observation of reality. England, he opines, is characterized by a materialistic, commercial existence, lacking in poetry and depth. In his eyes, English culture is inferior to German culture, representing the *Weltkultur*,⁴² because 'English society as such lacks the intellectual vigor one finds in Germany or France'.⁴³

After some time, however, he states that students of British universities are on a far superior level to those on the continent. Like Ahad Ha-Am and Brenner, he marvels at London, which he depicts as 'a giant, the city of cities'.⁴⁴

His biographer, Jeudah Reinharz, has written that

Weizmann could not have known that in England, he would encounter a culture that would forever stamp his character. For nearly all the remaining years of his life, England would be his physical and intellectual anchor.⁴⁵

But, like Brenner and Ahad Ha-Am's biographers, he did not reconstruct the process in which these men became more familiar with and acclimatized to the English culture in which they lived. What, for example, did they read, other than newspapers? What theatre performances did they attend? Did they live in a kind of Jewish-Zionist bubble without paying heed to what was going on outside Jewish and Zionist circles? It is hard to believe these otherwise astute observers could have been indifferent to the larger surroundings.

David Vital writes that Weizmann's appreciation – but not his love – for England was accompanied by deferential esteem, and that 'it is doubtful whether he ever understood English ways as thoroughly as he believed he did'.⁴⁶

Weizmann's copious letters, at least from the earlier period,

suggest that this 'deferential esteem' arose from the sense of superiority of a man who was the product of a deeply rooted, rich Jewish culture and felt at home, as well, in continental European culture. Vital, of course, is right when he says that Weizmann 'like so many other members of the Russian-Jewish intelligentsia, held Britain in exceedingly high esteem: a free, liberal society that stood in strongest contrast to virtually all other societies and regimes in early twentieth-century Europe'.⁴⁷

The examples cited here lead us to conclude that this essentially positive acquired attitude was shared by all parts of the Jewish-Russian intelligentsia, including liberals and socialists.⁴⁸ This does not mean that they felt a sense of spiritual affinity towards England or its history and culture; feelings were not involved in rationally taking stock of the positive foundations of English government and society.

What instilled in Weizmann his British orientation was less a growing sympathy for English culture, the first buds of his later Anglophilism, than his first-hand observation of the growing power of the British Empire and its standing in the international arena. This is what soon led him to recognize that (a) Zionism had to seek a way to win England's heart, and (b) any cooperation between Britain and Zionism had to be based on common interests. By the First World War, Weizmann had shaped more fully his perception of the character and workings of English politics, anchored in what has been defined as the English empiricist genius: namely, that the English did not necessarily operate on the basis of written documents, abstract formulas or a predetermined plan.⁴⁹

This profound insight would underpin Zionist policy towards England in the coming years. If 'the English act slowly, are empirical, and it is difficult to bind them down to a formula', he wrote, then 'life' will have to be stronger than any formula or any promise.⁵⁰

Another important insight Weizmann gained in the first years of his stay in England, shared by his rival Zeev Jabotinsky, was that England was led by an 'oligarchy of the ancient hereditary nobility', and everything was decided not in a party framework or by public opinion but by interests and personal relations within this closed circle. This meant that if it wanted to find the key to England's heart, Zionist diplomacy needed to make its way into this elite circle.

It is interesting to compare this with England's image in the

eyes of Herzl. English culture was not completely foreign to Herzl – he had books by British philosophers as well as English literary works in his personal library – but he did not feel any affinity to it. Similarly, Herzl had only a superficial acquaintance with British political affairs, certainly when compared to his deeper familiarity with French politics, which he described as a laboratory of all the political innovations in the modern world.⁵¹ He also knew very little about English culture. The only comparison he was able to draw between France and England in England's favour was the British parliamentary system. In his view, the rational parliamentary government of England had none of the flaws of the French republican form of government, which he had covered as a journalist.⁵²

What led Herzl to see England as a possible ally was not his preference for the English political model and political tradition, but rather Britain's imperial interests in the Near East. Upon analysing these interests, Herzl concluded it might be possible to persuade Britain that for ensuring the vital sea route to India it would be important to have a buffer state under Jewish auspices in Palestine.⁵³ This was in addition to his appreciation of England as a conveyer of civilization to backward societies. As he wrote, British imperialism 'is cleansing the East' and 'destroying benighted customs'.⁵⁴ To support his pro-British orientation, Herzl claimed that in 1896 he had seen England as the Archimedean lever one must grasp in order to get Zionism moving on the right track. While Israel Zangwill, too, explained this far-sighted approach as based on recognition of England as the only European country free of anti-Semitism and noted for its practical genius and financial stability,⁵⁵ there is no evidence in Herzl's earlier writings supporting either this contention in early 1898 or Zangwill's explanation.

Jabotinsky's spiritual and cultural world was also consummately 'continental', although, like the contemporary Russian intelligentsia, he was familiar with the writings of British philosophers. However, unlike Ahad Ha-Am or Weizmann, Jabotinsky was a journalist writing about cultural and political affairs. Hence his writings on the new English environment differed from those of others, who lived in a kind of Zionist-Jewish bubble and whose correspondence with relatives and Zionist associates 'abroad' was far more intensive than their contact with their English surroundings. When Jabotinsky first arrived in England, as a war correspondent for the Russian newspaper *Russkie Vedomosti*, in 1915 he began not only to

submit articles and news items on the Irish question, England at war and the British army and navy, but also on the theatre and literature, on English secondary schools, and the like.⁵⁶

Two years later, Jabotinsky wrote from a Zionist-political vantage point – an intelligent Russian with a Westernized orientation. In his book *Turkey and the War*, published in London in 1917 by Fisher and Unwin, he insisted that the Zionists had no particular affection for France or England but, emotionally, their sympathy tended towards the French more than the British. Any Zionist preference for England as a political ally was therefore based on a realistic view of the world balance of power and on purely pragmatic long-term considerations. Unlike the French, the English did not tend to impose cultural standards on their colonies, while their rule was comparatively liberal. He later stated that another insight he had arrived at in those years regarding the English 'mentality' or, as he put it, 'their philosophy of life', was that the English tend to see everything as a 'game'. By which he meant they did not take even the most important things too seriously.⁵⁷

Given this background, it would be wrong to say that East European Zionists arrived at the Balfour Declaration with a negative attitude towards Britain. But, on the other hand, they scarcely felt any special affinity either. The most one can say is that England was known to them through a selective mirror of images, some of which changed over time, while others remained fixed. Still, for purposes of diplomatic intercourse in the circumstances prevailing on the eve of the First World War, it was enough to have acquaintances and personal contacts in elite political and public circles. Entrée was crucial in order to place Zionism on Britain's political agenda and to turn it into a playing card.

Perhaps having a profound knowledge of the complexity of the political culture with which one is negotiating is not vital. Certainly, it carries less weight than the common interests that emerge in particular historical situations. Nor is psychological affinity to a familiar culture essential for rational analysis of political reality or in the choice of an ally. What truly matters is defining one's goal, accompanied by the political acumen to discern and then exploit opportunities that have opened.

In all the statements and writings of the Jewish intelligentsia and Zionist activists until 1917, there is no greater sign of deep spiritual affinity between Jews and England than the 19 November 1917 letter to Lord Balfour from Chaim Weizmann and Nachum

Sokolow. Writing in reaction to the Balfour Declaration, they state, among other things, that

The Jewish people always regarded Great Britain as a bulwark of right and justice and of the defence of the weak against the strong. [Therefore,] no Government is more qualified and no people more called upon by its noble traditions to take the leading part in this work of civilization and national justice than are the people and Government of Great Britain.⁵⁸

This rhetoric and the invented history accompanying it were meant to endow the pragmatic partnership with Britain created under the exigencies of the First World War with a moral and historical dimension. After the war it was also easier to regard Britain – not Germany – as the embodiment *par excellence* of the essential values of European civilization. Indeed, from a psychological standpoint, most Zionist leaders and activists continued to feel a close link to the continent. But after 1917 their appreciation of England grew as well – the inevitable result of political cooperation and deepening first-hand acquaintance. The need to understand character traits dictating its behaviour towards the Jewish national home in Palestine now became vital for Zionist aspirations.

NOTES

I wish to thank Chava Modrick and Savion Roth-Liron whose works on this subject were of great assistance to me.

1. Ben Zion Novakhovich (1856–1930), also known by the names Morris Vinchevsky and Leopold Benedict, was a socialist publicist, a native of the Kovno district, who lived in London for many years. See Yosef Klausner, *The History of Modern Hebrew Literature*, Vol. VI (Jerusalem, 1950), pp. 307–50.
2. *Kol Kitvei Y. C. Brenner* (Collected Writings of Y. C. Brenner), Vol. II (Tel Aviv, 1960), p. 10.
3. On the 'discovery of America' in Jewish nineteenth-century literature and public opinion, see Ben-Ami Feingold, 'The Haskalah Literature Discovered America', in Michal Oron (ed.), *Between History and Literature* (Tel Aviv University, 1983), pp. 91–104 (in Hebrew); Israel Bartal, 'Heavenly America: The USA as an Ideal Model for Nineteenth-Century East European Jews', in Mairiam Eliav-Feldon (ed.), *Following Columbus: America 1492–1992* (Jerusalem, 1996), pp. 511–22 (in Hebrew).
4. Israel Bartal, 'An Alternative Model' – France as a source of Influence for the modernization of East European Jewry (1772–1863), in Richard I. Cohen (ed.), *The French Revolution and its Impact* (Jerusalem, 1991), pp. 271–85 (in Hebrew).
5. See my previous essay, 'The Works of H. T. Buckle and Their Application by the Maskilim in Eastern Europe', *Zion*, NS 49, 4 (1984), pp. 401–12 (in Hebrew). It is interesting to note an unknown detail from Benjamin Zeev Herzl's biography. When he finished writing his booklet, 'The State of the Jews', on 21 March 1897, he sent a copy to Herbert Spencer, with a note saying that Spencer's great spirit was reflected in it. Spencer's secretary replied, on 26 March, that owing to Spencer's poor state of health, he was unable to respond. See notes to the Hebrew translation of Herzl's journals, Theodor Herzl, *Die Judensache*, Vol. I (Jerusalem, 1997), p. 632, note 185. It seems to me that Herzl's desire to obtain reaction from Spencer indicates that there was a profound positivistic dimension in his worldview, one that contrasted with the romantic dimension, which also pervades his approach.
6. See his *A History of the Intellectual Development of Europe* (1861).
7. The impact of various writings by English intellectuals from the eighteenth century onwards on Jewish thought has been discussed in various works, but has not been the subject of a comprehensive study. For example, in the early 1970s, the radical *maskil* Judah Leib Levin read Adam Smith, Darwin, Spencer and Buckle and, inspired by them, formulated his own radical positivistic stance.
8. One example: David Yellin's Hebrew translation of Goldsmith's novel *Hamokhinach mitvikfild* (*The Vicar of Wakefield*), based on the German translation, was published in Warsaw in 1897. Ahad Ha'Am was critical of the choice and offered the opinion that it would have been preferable to translate Goldsmith's *The Citizen of the World*, Ahad Ha'Am, 'Sifrei Am', in *Al Parashat Derakhim* (At the Parting of the Ways) (Berlin, 1930), pp. 12–13 (in Hebrew). Benjamin Disraeli's novel *Tancred* was translated into Hebrew from the German translation, by Judah Leib Levin (Ychalel, 1844–1925) and published in Warsaw in two parts (1883/1884) under the title *Nes lagoyim*. On the debate about the book in the Jewish press and its influence, see Shmuel Werses, 'Nachman's Last Speech and its Sources', *Moznaim*, Jubilee issue, 1929–79 (April–May 1979), pp. 280–91 (in Hebrew).
9. This is the view of Anita Shapira, who writes that the labour movement in Palestine was imbued with 'a long-standing East European Jewish tradition' of hostility towards the West (including England), which was depicted as 'heartless, cold-tempered and unwilling to make any self-sacrifice'. She cites no support for this description, which is far from the truth, as we will see here. In any event, the Jews of Eastern Europe, including members of socialist movements, admired English rationalism and pragmatism, the English talent for getting things done, and the like. See Anita Shapira, 'Elements of the National Ethos in the Transition to Statehood', J. Reinharz et al. (eds), *Jewish Nationalism and Politics: New Perspectives* (Jerusalem/Boston, 1996), p. 265 (in Hebrew).
10. On this distinction in the context of a familiarity with French culture and its influence see Yaacov Shavit, 'The Spirit of France' and 'French Culture', in 'The Jewish Yishuv in Eretz Yisrael (1882–1914)', *Cathedra*, 62 (Dec. 1991), pp. 37–53 (in Hebrew).
11. *Anglia* – the Hebrew name for England.
12. See J. Salmon, 'David Gordon and the Periodical *Ha-Maggid*', *Zion*, 40, 2 (1982), pp. 145–64; Yaacov Shavit, 'Window on the World', *Qesher*, 4 (November 1998), pp. 3–119 (in Hebrew).
13. See Shmuel Feiner, *Haskalah and History: The Emergence of a Modern Jewish Awareness of the Past* (Jerusalem, 1995), pp. 339–73 (in Hebrew); J. Klausner, *History of Modern Hebrew Literature*, Vol. III (Jerusalem, 1953), pp. 416–30 (in Hebrew).
14. *Ibid.*, 24 February 1874.
15. Schulman, Part V, p. 49 (allusion to Isaiah 28:17).
16. *Ibid.*, Part III, p. 22.
17. J. L. Levin, *Zikhronot v'hegijonot* (Memories and Studies), edited by Y. Shuzky (Jerusalem, 1968), p. 122 (in Hebrew).
18. Schulman, Part V, p. 49.
19. See also a series of articles entitled 'Observing the Actions of Britain in the Eastern Land, in 1857', whose publication began with the fifth issue in February 1858.
20. *Ha-Maggid*, 13 April 1859.
21. Schulman, Part V, p. 52.
22. *Ibid.*, 1 January 1868. On the war against Emperor Theodore and British public opinion during the time, see Richard Pankhurst, 'Popular Opposition in Britain to British Intervention against Emperor Theodore of Ethiopia (1867–1868)', *Ethiopian Observer*, 16, 3 (1972), pp. 141–203. See also his article, 'The Emperor Theodore', *ibid.*, 8, 3 (1964), pp. 267–72.
23. Ahad Ha'Am, *Kol kitvei Ahad Ha'Am*, (new edition, Berlin, 1930), Vol. 4, p. 84.

24. Part III, p. 176. But in a note, Schulman points to the anti-Semitic nature of *The Merchant of Venice*.
25. On Smolenskin, see Feiner, *Haskalah and History*, pp. 430–57.
26. P. Smolenskin, 'Am Olam', in *Ma'amarim* (Articles), Vol. I (Jerusalem, 1925), p. 138.
27. *Ibid.*, pp. 22–3.
28. He writes: 'For in the House of Israel, the Torah was not given into the hands of the priests... and the rabbis are but the elected from among the people and they must do whatever is asked of them, and hence if the entire people wishes to reform or cancel, it has the authority to do so and no one has the right to protest'. *Ibid.*, p. 32.
29. See his description of the Tories and the Whigs, *ibid.*, p. 40 and note 1.
30. *Ibid.*, Part 4, pp. 9–11.
31. Weizmann to Vera, *Weizmann Letters* (hereafter *WL*), Vol. 4 (Oxford University Press and Israel Universities Press, 1973), p. 41.
32. 'And I must pay visits to Westerners in accordance with all the rules of English "etiquette" (and don't imagine that is such a slight thing; there is a special "Shulchan Arukh" for such things – when to come and how to come and what to wear, etc.)', *Ahad Ha-Am, Igrot* (Letters), Vol. 4 (Tel Aviv, 1958), p. 101 (letter to J. C. Ravnitzky of 20 Dec. 1907).
33. On *Ahad Ha-Am* in London, see Joseph Goldstein, *Ahad Ha-Am* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1992), pp. 327–92 (in Hebrew).
34. Letter dated 2 January 1908, *Igrot*, p. 102.
35. *Ibid.*, pp. 97–8.
36. *Ahad Ha-Am, Igrot*, Vol. V (1959), p. 252. His description of the City as 'dark' is merely a figure of speech. *Ahad Ha-Am's* office near the Bank of England and his apartment in Gilford Street, in Bloomsbury, were large and comfortable. See Goldstein, *ibid.*, pp. 328–9.
37. On Brenner in London, see Yizhak Baron, *The Life and Works of Brenner until the Publication of 'Hameorer' in London*, Vol. 1 (Tel Aviv: HaKibbutz Hameuchad, 1975), pp. 121–237 (in Hebrew).
38. *Kol kitvei Y. C. Brenner*, Vol. II, p. 10 (in Hebrew).
39. *Igrot B. Borochov* (Letters of B. Borochov) (1897–1917), M. Minz and Avia Balsahn (eds) (Tel Aviv, 1989), pp. 614–15.
40. *WL*, 3 (1972), p. 66.
41. See, for example, his letter to Vera dated 20 June 1905, *WL*, 4, p. 110: 'I can't acclimatize myself to the life here, nor can I imagine that we shall live here permanently.'
42. In September 1898, Herzl said to Philipp Zu Eulenburg, the German ambassador in Vienna, that 'the majority of Jews now belong to German culture' (26 Sept. 1898) and to the Grand Duke of Baden, he had previously explained (3 Sept.) that the Jews in Palestine would be an 'element of German culture in the Orient' (26 Sept. 1898), *Theodor Herzl's Tagebücher, Sweiter Band* (Berlin 1923), p. 117; 3 September, *ibid.*, p. 110.
43. Letter 124, dated 8 September 1905, *WL*, 4, p. 142.
44. Letter dated 10 Oct. 1903, *WL*, 3, p. 48.
45. J. Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann: The Making of a Zionist Leader* (Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 210.
46. David Vital, *Zionism: The Crucial Phase* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), p. 163.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 361.
48. The Jewish Russian intelligentsia, like the Russians themselves, were pleased with the British historian Buckle's explanation of the causes of the despotism and backwardness of tsarist Russia in comparison to the freedom and progress of Britain. See Y. Shavit, *Zion*, 49, 4 (1984), pp. 401–12 (in Hebrew).
49. For one example which shows that this perception of the British mode of thinking, as based on empiricism rather than on 'abstract thought', had become a universal insight, see the article by the Chinese author and translator Lin Yutang entitled 'The English Think in Chinese'. He writes that the Chinese and English are noted for their, 'profound distrust in logic and extreme suspicion of arguments that are too perfect'. Moreover, he says that the British Empire was a product of the 'wonderfully robust common sense of the English and their utter freedom from logical reasoning', *Confucius Saw Nancy and Essays about Nothing* (Shanghai, 1937), pp. 92–111. I am grateful to my colleague, Professor Yoav Ariel, who gave me the biographical details about the author of this book, which I was fortunate to come across in a bookstore during a visit to Beijing.
50. *WL*, 9, No. 108, p. 126; *WL*, 9, p. 98 (1977).
51. Herzl, 'France in 1894', an article written at the end of December 1894, in Theodor Herzl, *From Boulanger to Dreyfus 1891–1895*, Vol. III (Jerusalem, 1974), p. 935 (in Hebrew).
52. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 235. I have no evidence that Herzl or Weizmann read Edmund Burke, but their favourable attitude towards the dimension of tradition in British politics is essentially Burkean.
53. *Theodor Herzl's Tagebücher, Erster Band: Viertes Buch* (Berlin, 1922), pp. 571–3.
54. During a tour in Egypt he also wrote that British rule was bringing 'freedom and progress to the East, which in the end will arouse the subjects to rebel against [their rulers]'.
55. Quoted in Elhannan Oren, *Hibbat-Zion in Britain 1878–1898* (Tel Aviv, 1974), p. 11 (in Hebrew).
56. Unfortunately, the relevant issues have disappeared from the Jabotinsky Institute and I was unable to locate other copies. Therefore, at least for the moment, I cannot quote from their contents.
57. Jabotinsky, *Megillat hagedud* (Jerusalem, 1929). It may also be worth noting that this image of a nation which views 'life as a game' was widespread in European (including English) literature, in relation to the Italians.
58. *WL*, 8 (1977), No. 10, p. 8.