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Eretz-Israel Research: Development and Trends

Sacred History, National History, History

THE AIM OF THIS article is to offer a broad overview of the field of Eretz-Israel research, sometimes known as Palestinography. The number of studies written and published in this area has grown annually not only in Hebrew in Israel, but also in other languages (especially German, English and French). Since we must be selective, we shall offer some general observations and single out only some of the important works that have appeared in recent years.

The completion of the ten-volume series, *The History of Eretz-Israel* (ed. Yaakov Shavit; ed. board: Israel Efal, Yehoshua Ben-Aryeh, Moshe David Herr, Amnon Cohen, Joshua Prawer, Menahem Stern, Jerusalem, 1981-1985), which documents in Hebrew the full history of Eretz-Israel from prehistoric times down to the War of Independence, makes possible the drawing up of such a summary. The interested reader will find in each volume of the series detailed, annotated bibliographies for each period, including surveys of the relevant archaeological sources and discoveries.

We shall begin by tracing briefly the history of Israeli Palestinography, or, better still, the desire to develop an original Jewish approach which would be differentiated from the widespread Christian research that proliferated during the 19th century. This will enable us to understand the cultural, ideological and national motives for the writing of Eretz-Israel history.

In a short review published in 1897 and entitled "Do You Know the Land" (*Al Parashat Derakhim*, vol. 3, Berlin, 1930, pp. 18-19), Aḥad Ha'am dealt with the work of Abraham Moshe Luncz, the pioneering modern Eretz-Israel researcher. He pointed to the lack of any original historical work concerning the

land and deplored the fact that there was "not even one good book on the knowledge of the land and its antiquities." Much had been written on Eretz-Israel — articles, stories, polemics, etc., but a full history was still a desideratum. Fifteen years had ensued since the rise of the Hibbat Zion movement and still no one had undertaken this vital task. The lack of a Hebrew Palestinography stood in sharp contrast to the wealth of material produced in the various European languages.¹

It should be noted that Aḥad Ha'am did not believe that Luncz should fulfill the lack by translating any available authoritative work but encouraged him to write an original one. To his mind, a national Jew had perforce different views on the history of the land from those of Christian scholars. At the same time he did not desire to see a propagandistic work with an ideological bias, but sought to apply to it the same standards that must govern Jewish research generally. In other words, the work should be fully authoritative and yet a popular new and comprehensive one which would cover the "knowledge of the land in all its aspects in a scientific manner." Aḥad Ha'am was not troubled over the state of the research and believed a work was to be judged by its plan (or historical program) and not necessarily by its capacity to be "complete" and "correct" in every fact and detail. He still thought perhaps that a single author could produce such a work. A decade previously, it was Graetz who, with a greater appreciation of the difficulties, asserted that only a Jewish academy could undertake the necessary research in the fields of Bible, Palestine geography and biblical archaeology in all their ramifications (in *Monatschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschafts des Judentums*, vol. xxxvi, 1887).

ORIGINAL WORKS NEEDED

The Hebrew works which appeared on Eretz-Israel during the following years were chiefly translations; research works *in Hebrew*, but not *Hebrew* research works. After reviewing the work of Luncz, Abraham Samuel Hirschberg, the early Zionist, wrote in his *In the Land of the East* (Hebrew, Vilna, 1910; Jerusalem, 1977), that "none among our people to whom such research

¹ Much of this literature, including the thirty-one volumes of *Palestina Jahrbuch*, has been photographically reproduced by G. Olms, Hildesheim, W. Germany.

should appeal, have put their mind to it." Similarly, David Smilansky, in an article dated January 1912, commented on a public lecture given by the noted German archaeologist Karl Watzinger (1877-1948) on the archaeological excavations in Palestine as follows: "Thus German Christians labor in field of our history. They do so because of scientific and religious interests. And we, who should be the most interested in the success of these archaeological excavations, do nothing in this regard and allow any who so desire to engage in them — Germans, British and Americans" (*A City is Born*, Hebrew, Tel-Aviv, 1981, p. 134).

In the same spirit of concern wrote Aaron Aaronsohn, the pioneering agronomist, regarding a lecture he heard in Jerusalem by the German archaeologist Immanuel Benzinger (1865-1935), who was active in Palestine during 1902-1911: "Usually, I do not pay attention to these excavations, and I have no objection when I see that the non-Jews conduct them. But when Benzinger related that he had discovered an altar and two monuments and when he circulated photographs of them, I felt a slight stab of pain, as though a profane hand had touched something very sacred to us. And I had considered myself to be completely free of any religious prejudice" (in Eliezer Livneh, *Aaron Aaronsohn, the Man and His Times*, Hebrew, Jerusalem, 1969, p. 96).

Aaronsohn was the author of a short monograph on the city of Acre, which was published after his death in *Ha-Yishuv*, 1925 (new ed., Ariel, Jerusalem, 1982). There he wrote concerning the geographical work of the early Haskalah writer in Galicia, Samson Ha-Levi Bloch (1784-1845), entitled *Shevilei Olam* (Paths of the World, 2 vols., 1822-1827, and dealing with Asia and Africa), as follows: "And to this day, and in our land, not only do we wait until strangers come to reveal our hidden treasures, to dig up the graves of our ancestors, to learn from the dead facts about our glorious past and to gather information about ancient times that are so necessary for us, but we are also negligent regarding practical geographic facts and we permit others to take our place. Can we accept this? Can we keep from complaining until a generation arises that will realize its duty towards researching the land?"

To the many voices which called for an original Hebrew research literature must be added those of David Ben-Gurion and Izhak Ben-Zvi in their introduction to their Yiddish book, *Eretz-Israel in the Past and Present* (Yiddish, New York, 1918; Hebrew tr., Jerusalem, 1979). They wrote at that time: "In the

very rich literature on Eretz-Israel you will not find even one work, written by a Jew for Jews, which presents a general picture of Eretz-Israel, past and present, without which one cannot arrive at a more or less correct description of the future potentialities of the land. Most of the books, even those written by secular Christians, consider it for the most part from a theological viewpoint."

CHRISTIAN SCHOLARSHIP

Ben-Gurion and Ben-Zvi stressed that the Christian researcher has no interest in the history of the land during the lengthy period between the destruction of the Second Temple and the 19th century (except for the Crusades). Nor does he have the necessary knowledge of post-biblical literature (and Josephus), a fact which detracts from the scientific value of his writing. They concluded: "The redemption of Eretz-Israel by Jews cannot come without the redemption of the knowledge of Eretz-Israel by Jewish scholars. This is not a task for an individual or individuals, but for all the intellectual forces in Jewish life that are engaged in Jewish research."

It is quite evident that the two authors, who expressed not their view alone but that of an entire generation, sought to differentiate between the sacred history of Eretz-Israel, which is written as background to theological research and religious faith, and a Jewish history which is a national-secular history of the land. Such a history is concerned not with Eretz-Israel as the scene of miraculous events and as a terra santa, a land of holy sites, but as a land which has a "secular" history. It was necessary, therefore, to study its settlement, demography, society, economy and other spheres of human endeavor which evolved there. But the aim and motivation are national; not history for its own sake, but knowledge of the land as an expression of the redemption of Eretz-Israel by Jews through scientific study as well. When seen through Jewish eyes it will loom as a central and vital chapter in the history of our national rebirth and of the new Hebrew culture. As in literature and the theatre, so in research, too, must the national rebirth produce original and independent fruits in order to free Hebrew culture from dependence on translations from other cultures.

It is noteworthy that a similar rationale for Eretz-Israel research (including archaeological study) was expressed in Orthodox circles. We find it stated in the approbations to the

study by Yitshak bar Eliyahu Pesach Goldhar (1847-1925), a surveyor who was employed by Baron Rothschild in the Galilee, entitled *Admat Kodesh* (Holy Land, 1913). Goldhar's purpose in studying the historical boundaries of the land was the desire to make use of talmudic sources rather than Christian ones, since the Sages are a trustworthy historical source. In his approbation, Rabbi Kuk, for example, wrote: "And we the people of the land, the people for which the land was created . . . have thus far done little in this most valuable and exalted work."

JEWISH APPROACH

Since the beginning of the century research in the history of the Jewish settlement in Eretz-Israel was sparked by a definite historical national motivation in order to stress the Jewish presence and the continuity of Jewish settlement in the land. It therefore did not concentrate merely on the biblical period and that of the Second Temple — both central yet differing from each other in character, problems and sources — but turned to later times in order to fill the vacuum which had been left in Jewish historiography up to that time. Much attention was given to establishing the boundaries of the land, to identifying the places mentioned in the Bible and in later literature and to delineating the geographical and topographical material in the Bible and Talmud. The majority of studies therefore dealt with these aspects and stressed the Jewish settlement. Among these, for example, were the works of Yeshayahu Press (1874-1955), *The Land* (Hebrew, 1911) and *Geography of Eretz-Israel* (Hebrew, 1926). They included also a book by the Bilu activist Israel Belkind (1861-1929), entitled *Eretz-Israel at This Time* (Hebrew, 1928), which had been written earlier in Russian for the Hovevei Zion; the previously published work by Yehoseph Schwarz entitled *The Produce of the Land* (Hebrew, 1845); and *Luah Eretz-Israel* (Eretz-Israel Almanac), published by Luncz for the years 1896-1916.

A pioneering role in the field of Palestinography was that of Professor Samuel Klein (1886-1940), who began his scholarly activity in Vienna with his *Beitreege zur Geographie und Geschichte Galilaeas* (Contributions to the Geography and History of Galilee, Leipzig, 1909). Among his Hebrew volumes are: *Eretz-Israel* (Vienna, 1922), *Eretz Ha-Galil* (1946) and *Eretz Yehudah* (1939). Of great value also are his Hebrew works, *History of the Jewish Settle-*

ment in Eretz-Israel (1935) and *History of Eretz-Israel Research* (1937). Klein was appointed in 1925 to the position of professor of Palestinography at the newly founded Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He was also elected president of the Israel Exploration Society and served as an editor of its journal.

A useful bibliographical guide to the subject is G. Kressel's *Eretz-Israel ve-Toledoteha* (Eretz-Israel and its History, 1943; new ed., 1983), which encompasses about 1,400 books and articles published up to the end of 1939. A detailed listing of items dealing with various localities in the land down to the end of the 1930s is found in Zvi Zohar's volume, *Limmud be-Ruah ha-Moledet* (Study in the Spirit of the Homeland, Jerusalem, Jewish National Fund, 1937, pp. 112-119).

One should differentiate between Eretz-Israel research and the subject commonly called *yediat ha-aretz* (knowledge of the land) or homeland studies, even though the two often overlap. The latter has to do with the acquiring of information concerning the geography and history of Eretz-Israel as ideological and practical values. The study of this material aims to inculcate a feeling of belonging and of love for the homeland. We find this motivation already during the periods of the first and second aliyahs, and it served as an expression of the romantic dimension in their ideology. By the time of the third aliyah it had become a widespread and institutionalized phenomenon. The national Jewish movement followed in this regard the European national romantic trends.

GUIDEBOOK LITERATURE

The motivation of the compilers of Eretz-Israel guidebooks who stressed the practical aspects of the knowledge of the land was not too far removed from the approach enunciated by Friedrich Ludwig Jahn (1778-1852), known as the "father of gymnastics," in his book *Das Deutsche Volkstum* (The German Nationality, 1810). He advocated the fostering of the national spirit through touring the fatherland on foot and considered this a vital part of both spiritual and physical education. Group travel, he felt, could strengthen the sense of belonging and help develop a love of humanity. The various guidebooks sought to transform

the subject of homeland study and to give it a romantic aura. In this their authors were influenced by the writings of various German romanticists.

The emphasis on the knowledge of the land was furthered beginning with the twenties by various bodies (especially the Histadrut), and gave rise to a number of leading personalities who became known as expert guides. These included; Dov Ashbel, Yosef Braslavy, Zev Vilnay, David Benveniste, Azriel Broshi, Shmuel Avizur and others. A number of articles which appeared in Ely Schiller (ed.), *Zev Vilnay's Jubilee Volume* (Hebrew, Jerusalem, 1984, pp. 15-56), deal with the contributions of the veteran guide to whom the book is dedicated.

These men were followed by a second generation of writers on Eretz-Israel history who made important contributions to the field. Among them were Shlomo Shva, Zvi Ilan, Azariah Alon and others.² One should note that a number of them engaged in scholarship as well as popular writing. The development of this type of literary activity, which combines the two aspects, has been aptly described by Shaul Katz in his article, "The Israeli Teacher-Guide: The Emergence and Perpetuation of a Role," *Annals of Tourism Research*, New York, vol. 12, 1985, pp. 49-72.

SACRED AND SECULAR

We have pointed to the desire of the members of the generation of national rebirth to transfer Eretz-Israel research from those who were theologically oriented to those who were motivated by national (and secular) ideals. The beginnings of "secular history" are evident already as early as the 13th century. What was involved was not simply the motivation to choose Eretz-Israel as a place to visit but the character of the concerns of the religious pilgrim. He also exhibited interest in the "earthly" aspects of Eretz-Israel, its physical characteristics and its ethnography and not just its sanctity.³

The renaissance period provided a new incentive for secular

² Their writings include, among others, popular and even anecdotal accounts of events and places during the 19th century and the mandatory period.

³ See Aryeh Grabois, "From Holy Geography to Palestinography: Changes in the Descriptions of Thirteenth Century Pilgrims," *Cathedra*, 31 (April 1984), pp. 43-66.

interest in Eretz-Israel. Men began to look with quickened consciousness at their surroundings. Travellers, even the most devout of pilgrims, could not refrain from describing places, people and customs and from recording their observations.⁴ During the 19th century one can find not only travellers and researchers with marked secular interests but also travellers and authors of travel books who have been called by Franklin Walker, in his book by that name, "Irreverent Pilgrims" (University of Washington Press, 1974). Nevertheless, the basic motivation of Christian research during the 19th century remained the desire to describe and to become acquainted with the geographical framework of the Bible and the background for the emergence of Christianity from Judaism. The British consul James Finn, in his book *Stirring Times* (London, 1878), describes the program of the Jerusalem Literary Society, founded in Jerusalem in 1849, and the advantages enjoyed by the researchers who live in the country. They are familiar with its landscape and understand the languages of the East and can therefore compare the life described in the Bible to actual conditions. Eretz-Israel is seen as a "model" for the Tanakh and the New Testament and as the stage for the enactment of the most important and fateful drama in human history.

Finn notes that besides the biblical era there are two other eventful periods in the history of the land: the Moslem period and the age of the Crusades. Also, there are two topics of utmost interest: the development of Rabbinism and of Christian ascetic practices and monasticism. The linking of "secular" history and religious interests is clearly brought out in Finn's writings. In Eretz-Israel one does not study geology, botany, ancient languages, architecture etc., merely to add to humanity's sum of knowledge. One studies them here in close connection with divine revelation, in order to grasp how there arose precisely in this land and its environs the most enduring religious and political events and institutions. Without the Tanakh and the New Testament the Jordan is no more than a stream unsuitable for navigation, Tabor is but a round and lowly mountain, and Bethlehem is only a pleasant village in southern Eretz-Israel. Only against the background of the Bible do these places take on grandeur and significance.

⁴ See. H.F.M. Prescott, *Jerusalem Journey: Pilgrimage to the Holy Land in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 1954), p. 177.

RELIGIOUS MOTIVATION

Similar sentiments are expressed as well in the works of leading scholars. Henry Baker Tristram (1822-1906), the "father of the nature study of Palestine," writes in his *The Land of Israel* (London, 1865) that Eretz-Israel research may be said to lead to an enhanced understanding of revelation and the cradle of universal faith. The French scholar, Victor Guérin, author of the comprehensive seven-volume *Description Géographique, Historique et Archéologique de la Palestine* (Paris, 1869-1880), states that the motivation for Eretz-Israel research is the desire to comprehend why God chose to reveal Himself in this special land. He also writes that here history confronts you everywhere and age-old memories are aroused. Eretz-Israel is the common heritage of mankind and because of the Bible, its influence is felt in the life of every Christian from childhood on. A visit to the land, therefore, may be seen as a return to one's childhood memories which take on here physical reality.

Eretz-Israel research as part of the national rebirth and the Jewish settlement effort has assumed a distinct national-secular character. The Israeli scholar does not approach the subject with any theological bias. His main motivation is to demonstrate the historicity of the events in the Bible and to uncover forgotten or unknown chapters in the history of Jewish settlement. This "secular" approach finds expression in the widening of the scope and content of the inquiry. There is no longer concentration on spiritual-cultural history alone (even though it is still central, and discoveries like the Dead Sea scrolls have been a major subject of research since the forties).

The aim is to describe the history of the Jews in their land as a comprehensive national phenomenon and not to gloss over the political and "earthly" aspects of that history. There is no doubt that this Zionist-national motivation (which was always tinged by an element of romanticism) was sometimes linked by scholars of the Zionist Socialist trend with an ideological approach that led them to deal with economic and social history and other practical aspects. The Jewish society is no longer viewed as a closed religious-theocratic community divorced from the stormy political events that occur in the land. On the contrary, at times there is too much concern (and even exaggeration) with describing the Jewish political and military role, as during such periods, for

example, as the brief Persian conquest (613-629 C.E.) and even the Crusades. The tension between "sacred" and "secular" history is most evident regarding the biblical period but is not as pronounced regarding later developments.

GROWTH AND SPONSORSHIP

The historical research at the Hebrew University, the development of the "Jerusalem School" of history, and such concepts as those held by Benzion Dinur, who advocated making Eretz-Israel the pivotal center of all of Jewish history,⁵ together with the growth of Jewish archaeological research beginning with the twenties, were leading factors in the emergence of Eretz-Israel research as an independent discipline. However, the full separation from such fields as Jewish history and biblical and theological studies did not come about until the sixties, when the history of Eretz-Israel and not merely of Eretz-Israel settlement was recognized as an independent and legitimate study, one not limited to archaeological research alone.

In 1976 there began to appear under the auspices of the Ben-Zvi Institute the quarterly journal, *Cathedra for the History of Eretz-Israel and its Yishuv*.⁶ Around this journal have gathered a whole group of scholars from the various universities, which have opened sections for Eretz-Israel history within their departments of Jewish history. In one university, that of Haifa, an independent department for Eretz-Israel studies has been set up.

The first attempt to prepare a comprehensive history of Eretz-Israel was made at the end of the thirties. Only the first volume appeared of the projected series, *History of Eretz-Israel* (Hebrew, 1938) by Benjamin Mazar (Maisler), which covers the ancient period up to the settlement. This book, and those that followed, underscored the fact that Palestinian and Israeli scholars had begun to view Eretz-Israel as a geographic-historic unit which

5 See his article, "The History of the Yishuv and Its Place in General Jewish History as a Historiographical Problem," *Historical Writings* (Hebrew, Jerusalem, 1925), vol. 2, pp. 79-86. See also his book, *Israel and the Diaspora* (Philadelphia, 1969).

6 In conjunction with Wayne State University Press, the Ben-Zvi Institute has published three volumes of *The Jerusalem Cathedra* (1981, 1982, 1983), containing studies in the history, archaeology, geography and ethnography of the Land of Israel.

had more or less defined (even if loose) boundaries within the Middle Eastern sphere. The Palestinian viewpoint sees all of history within the land as being an inseparable and legitimate part of research. Thus, it is Israeli research that has made the largest contribution to the writing of the history of the non-Jewish groups and population that lived in the land from antiquity to modern times. Subsumed under this research were such subjects, among others, as the study of the Ottoman period, of the Palestinian-Arab society, and prior to these, of the Crusaders' Kingdom of Jerusalem. We have, therefore, not a "Zionist" history alone, since its focus is not exclusively or specifically the Jewish settlement. Nor is it history viewed from a "Canaanite" viewpoint, since that ideology centers on the "classic" past of Eretz-Israel up to the Second Commonwealth (or earlier). Furthermore, Eretz-Israel history is always placed within the context of the history of the Near East or Levant and of the empires which dominated it.

A concern of the new scholarship is the Jewish relationship to Eretz-Israel and the pointing up of its ongoing aspects through pilgrimages or settlement. Still, this relationship is viewed not in the context of any single period alone but as part of a wider process of "continuity," so that seemingly isolated events are considered as links in a long chain of development. It is clear that a non-Israeli scholar would not give as much space as the Israeli one to the history of Jewish settlement in Safed, the aliyah of the Hasidim, or the 19th century old Yishuv in Jerusalem. At the same time, Israeli research is free of ideological inhibitions or apologetics. It does not overlook the long and influential presence of the non-Jewish populace, as well as non-Jewish interests in Eretz-Israel, and gives them their due. It treats such subjects as the Christianization of the land beginning with Constantine and Helena, and the assimilation that followed the Moslem conquest. The religious activity of Christians and Moslems, as well as the pagan population and culture which preceded, receive full attention. All these are grasped as part of the history and of human endeavor in this part of the world.

That only Israeli scholarship has undertaken the compiling of a comprehensive and continuous record, as pointed out by Professor Joshua Prawer on a number of occasions, stems from the fact that only one who lives in the land is capable of such a composite unified view. He is not given to singling out only those specific periods that appear to have special significance. (The devel-

opment of a Palestinian national ideology has been accompanied by an attempt to give a differing interpretation to the history of the land since biblical times in order to make a case for Arabs as the descendants of the ancient populace.)

AREAS OF CONCENTRATION

The periods of the Bible and the Second Commonwealth have remained the central ones in research and are being studied in all their ramifications. During the fifties much work was done on the two centuries of Crusade rule, while the seventies saw concentration on the Ottoman regime, particularly during the 19th century. The discovery of new sources (the Cairo Genizah, the documents of Wadi Daliya and the many archives that have opened up in various European capitals) has freed research from its almost complete dependence on travel accounts and has permitted the use of primary sources. Biblical research is clearly connected with archaeology and critical textual study and is not within our purview. While Second Commonwealth research has concentrated on the spiritual life and literature it has also dealt with other areas of Jewish history from the viewpoint of the Jews as a people and not only as a religious group. Among the works in this area is Bezalel Bar-Kochva's *The Battles of the Hasmoneans: The Times of Judah Maccabee* (Hebrew, Jerusalem, 1980), which treats the military aspects of the history of the Hasmonean state.⁷ Joshua Efrom's *Studies of the Hasmonean Period* (Hebrew, Tel-Aviv, 1980) differs sharply from prevailing views and offers new insights concerning this eventful time. The beginnings of the Second Commonwealth period are explored in the volume, *History of the People of Israel: The Restoration. The Persian Period* (Hebrew, Jerusalem, 1983).

The Roman period of domination is surveyed in another volume of the *History of the People of Israel*, entitled *Judah and Rome: The Wars of the Jews* (Hebrew, Jerusalem, 1983). This volume, too, is part of a series begun years ago and still far from completion. Noteworthy also is the collection of studies on Josephus as a historian of the Second Commonwealth edited by

⁷ See also his article, "Manpower, Economics and Internal Strife in the Hasmonean State, *Armées et Fiscalité dans le Monde Antique* (Paris, 1977).

Uriel Rappaport, *Josephus Flavius: Historian of Eretz-Israel in the Hellenistic-Roman Period* (Hebrew, Jerusalem, 1982).

The Bar-Kokhba rebellion has been the subject of much interest and has even served as grist for the mill of contemporary political polemics. Increased interest was sparked by the discovery of Bar-Kokhba letters and the caves that served to hide the rebels. A new collection of studies is: Aharon Oppenheimer, Uriel Rappaport (eds.), *The Bar-Kokhba Revolt: A New Approach* (Hebrew, Jerusalem, 1984). An earlier collection on the revolt was edited by Aharon Oppenheimer (Hebrew, Jerusalem, 1980).

A later period is surveyed in the collection of articles: Zvi Baras, Shmuel Safra, Menahem Stern, Yoram Tsafrir (eds.), *Eretz-Israel From the Destruction of the Second Temple to the Muslim Conquest*, vol. 1: Political, Social and Cultural History (Hebrew, Jerusalem, 1982). A comprehensive and detailed account is offered by Yoram Tsafrir in vol. 2, *Archaeology and Art* (Hebrew, Jerusalem, 1984), which describes the material culture during this period on the basis of archaeological discoveries.

To the classic work of Michael Avi-Yonah, *In the Days of Rome and Byzantium* (Hebrew, Jerusalem, 1970), there has now been added the late Yaron Dan's *The City in Eretz-Israel During the Late Roman-Byzantine Period* (Hebrew, Jerusalem, 1984). The young author of this work passed away during the time of publication. The relations between Jews and Greek Orthodox Christians are dealt with in a number of chapters of Zvi Ankori's *Jews and Christian Greeks in Their Reaction Through the Ages* (Hebrew, Tel-Aviv, 1984).

CRUSADE PERIOD

Reference has already been made to Joshua Prawer who gave us a ground-breaking two-volume study entitled, *A History of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Hebrew, Jerusalem, 1963). He augmented this work in his book, *The Crusades: A Colonial Society* (Hebrew, 1975), which sheds much light on the history of the time and the relations between clashing cultures.

The Muslim period, whose documents have been studied by Shlomo Dov Goitein⁸ and Jacob Mann, has now received detailed

⁸ See his collection of Hebrew studies, *The Jewish Settlement in Eretz-Israel During the Rise of Islam and the Revival of the Crusades* (Jerusalem, 1980). Valuable also are Michael Assaf's pioneering studies, including his *History of the Arabs in Palestine* (Hebrew, Tel-Aviv, 2 vols., 1935; 1941).

and exhaustive treatment in Moshe Gil's *Palestine During the First Muslim Period* (634-1099), 3 vols. (Hebrew, Tel-Aviv, 1983). The first part of this comprehensive work presents a pioneering introduction to the period, while its two concluding parts contain 618 documents and letters from the Cairo Genizah, comprising the largest collection of such genizah material to have thus far appeared. The work has restored an important link in the medieval history of Eretz-Israel and thus, together with the works on the Byzantine and Mamluk periods and the beginning of the Ottoman period, has established the continuity of Eretz-Israel history.

Valuable for the Ottoman period are Amnon Cohen's English work, *Palestine in the 18th Century: Patterns of Government and Administration* (Jerusalem, 1973), and the collection of English articles edited by Moshe Maoz, *Studies on Palestine During the Ottoman Period* (Hebrew, Jerusalem, 1975).

The literature on 19th century Eretz-Israel is quite extensive. The close of this century is viewed as a turning-point in the history of the land, for it marks the end of the Ottoman period, the penetration of various powers and the beginning of Jewish resettlement. A solid contribution to the subject is represented by Yehoshua Ben-Arieh's two-volume Hebrew work: *A City Reflected in Its Times: Jerusalem in the 19th Century*, vol. 1: *The Old City* (Jerusalem, 1977); vol. 2: *New Jerusalem — The Beginnings* (Jerusalem, 1979).⁹

By virtue of the fact that the field of Eretz-Israel research has become so broad it sometimes takes on the character of local history. The increase in scholars and studies has resulted in the search after small details, minor episodes and marginal events. Nevertheless these can be viewed in large measure as a contribution to a future synthesis. The general interest in the history of the land is considerable, and great numbers attend lectures and study sessions that are held in various parts of the country. This is partly a result of intellectual curiosity and partly of a developed historical consciousness. At any rate, Eretz-Israel research has become during the last two decades an independent subject and

⁹ See also the bibliographical survey, "The Last Phase of Ottoman Rule (1799-1912)," in vol. 8 of *The History of Eretz-Israel* (Jerusalem, 1983), pp. 321-338; David Kushner, ed., *Palestine in the Late Ottoman Period: Political, Social and Economic Transformation* (Jerusalem / Leiden, 1986).

area of inquiry which is not limited to the history of the Jewish people but serves also in great measure as a meeting ground between that history and general history. There is perhaps an element of historic irony in the fact that at a time when heightened national elements assert the Jewish right to Eretz-Israel, academic historical research has illuminated the many-sided aspects of the land and the constant struggle which took place there among different nations, religions and cultures throughout the ages.