

Nationalism, Discourse and Imagination: British Policy towards the
Zionist Movement during the First World War

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FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF HEBREW AND JEWISH STUDIES
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

January 2003

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Abstract

This thesis examines the ways in which the British Government's policy towards the Zionist movement during the First World War was influenced by policy makers' perceptions of ethnicity, ethnic groups and nationalism. It seeks to shed new light on two issues that have been at the centre of the historiography of the Balfour Declaration: the rationale behind the Government's decision to pursue a Zionist policy and the relationship with the Zionists that came about as a result. As well as discussing the origins and fruition of the Balfour Declaration, this work analyses the Government's post-Declaration Zionist propaganda policy, which has not hitherto been given serious attention by scholars.

Unlike previous studies, the thesis contends that the Government's Zionist policy emerged out of a wider phenomenon of foreign policy thinking concerning ethnic groups during the war, which stemmed from the world view of policy makers. The resulting propaganda policies were driven by a general belief in ethnic power, a racial conception of ethnic groups and, in particular, the perception that nationalism held the key to winning their allegiance in the war.

Utilising this approach, the thesis re-assesses the role of the Zionists in the making of the Balfour Declaration and the question of whether they were used by the British Government. In contrast to most existing interpretations, it argues that whilst the Declaration did result in large part from the efforts of a number of individual Jewish activists, of whom Chaim Weizmann was definitely not the main actor, the British Government had only been persuaded to use Zionism for propaganda purposes. The thesis also contends that after the Declaration the Zionists helped the British to use Zionism to this end much more than has previously been recognised,

but still failed to obtain any reciprocal British interest in aiding the Zionist movement in real terms for the duration of the war.

Acknowledgements

It gives me great pleasure to thank those whose advice and support have made this thesis possible.

Dr Michael Berkowitz has been an ideal supervisor. His consistent encouragement, support, insights and suggestions were invaluable. Both his scholarship and supervision have been formative influences. The scholars, doctoral students and administrative staff at the Department of Hebrew and Jewish Studies at University College London made my doctoral studies there a great joy and an invaluable learning experience. In particular, I thank John Klier for always having his door open.

I have benefited enormously from the thoughtful comments of those who read various parts of this thesis at different stages of its preparation, Mark Levene, whose work inspired me to begin my research into the history of the Balfour Declaration, Jonathan Frankel, Ben Gidley, Ilan Pappé, Jens Hyvik, Colin Shindler and Joachim Schlör. For taking the time to discuss aspects of this project with me, I am grateful to Bill Williams, Israel Bartal, Eli Lederhendler, Gideon Shimoni and Iris Abramovici. I would also like to express my gratitude to Eitan Bar Yosef, who gave me permission to read his D.Phil. thesis, *Images of the Holy Land in English Culture, 1798-1917*.

Whilst carrying out my research in Israel I benefited from the warmth and hospitality of Dafna Brosh and her family, Galia Arocas, Scott Ury and Iris Abramovici. During a most difficult and frightening period, the close community of my friends at the Hebrew University, their sense of humour and spirit, kept me going. Especially, I thank Wang Xianhu, a man of great learning and wisdom, for his friendship through those times.

The knowledge and assistance of a number of archivists, librarians and staff in various institutions were invaluable, particularly at the Public Record Office, the Weizmann Archives, the Central Zionist Archives, the Jabotinsky Institute, the British Library, the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies, the New York Public Library, the Harvard Law Library, the Sudan Archive at the University of Durham, the Imperial War Museum and the American Jewish Archives.

Financial assistance for this thesis came from the United Jewish Israel Appeal, the Central Research Fund at the University of London, the UCL Graduate School, the Ian Karten Charitable Trust, the Jewish Memorial Council and the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Most important of all has been my family's enduring patience and support throughout this stage of my life. My parents and siblings' unceasing encouragement and advice and my father's editorial eye have been critical. Finally, I wish to acknowledge Monica Gonzalez-Correa for her unending faith in me, her love and patience.

I dedicate this thesis to my late grandparents.

Introduction

This thesis is an analysis of how perceptions of ethnicity, ethnic groups and nationalism determined the British Government's policy towards the Zionist movement during the First World War. It seeks to provide a new interpretation of the origins of British policy towards Zionism, how it came to fruition and the ways in which it manifested itself after the Balfour Declaration, up until the end of the war. In doing so I aim to answer two fundamental questions that have been the focus of scholarly debate since the issuance of the Balfour Declaration: What were the sources of the interest which British foreign policy makers took in Zionism, and what was the specific nature of the official British/Zionist relationship that came about as a result?

In answer to the first question it will be argued that the Government's Zionist policy was the product of a wider line of foreign policy thinking concerning ethnic groups during the war, which was born out of the world view and culture of policy makers. Predicated upon a belief in ethnic power, a conspiratorial fear of German and revolutionary socialist influence and, above all, the conviction that nationalism was the key to the ethnic imagination, there resulted a series of nationalist propaganda policies that were designed to win the allegiance of ethnic groups to the British and Allied cause in the war, only one of which was Zionism. In particular, this thesis will focus upon how the Government's Zionist policy emerged out of, and was shaped by, the discourse of race nationalism which came to prominence in British culture during this period, and defined how Jewish and ethnic identity was viewed by the makers of the Balfour Declaration.

In response to my second question, regarding the relationship between the Zionists and the British Government, I will argue that it was by playing upon these perceptions of Jews and ethnic groups that a number of Jewish activists successfully

persuaded members of the Government to pursue a Zionist policy. This thesis therefore goes against the assertions of those who have contended that the Zionists made no direct contribution to the making of the Balfour Declaration. Equally, though, this analysis will dispute the emphasis that has been placed upon the role of Chaim Weizmann in most of the historical literature. It will be contended that whilst his contribution was minimal, the efforts of other Jewish activists, whose significance has often been downplayed in the dominant Zionist narrative, were of critical importance. But despite their significant contribution to the winning of the Declaration, it will be questioned to what degree the Declaration constituted an unequivocal achievement for the Zionists. It will be argued that the Government had only been persuaded to use Zionism to serve its own propaganda aims, and, as such, did not evince for the duration of the war a reciprocal interest in furthering the political aims of the Zionist movement. There was, to put it simply, no *quid pro quo*, despite what the Zionists might have hoped. Nevertheless, this study will demonstrate that up until the end of the war the Zionists continued to work as a propaganda instrument for the British Government to a much greater extent than has previously been recognised.

This work is divided into two parts. The first addresses the origins of the Balfour Declaration, and the events that led to its publication. The second part will explore a largely ignored subject. Drawing on material that has not hitherto been used by historians, I will examine how the British Government attempted to put its Zionist propaganda policy into practice after the Declaration, which included the creation of a special office for Jewish propaganda. Contending that this project was of equal importance in Whitehall's Zionist wartime policy as the issuance of the Declaration itself, I will further show the determining influence of the discourse of nationalism on

that policy, and the degree to which the Zionists were willingly used by the Government. In an elaborate and extensive propaganda effort, the British Government tried to convince Jewry that the Balfour Declaration constituted the restoration of the Jewish nation in Palestine, by creating and disseminating a discourse of Jewish national rebirth. In this endeavour there existed a symbiotic relationship between the British Government and its Zionist supporters in London, which has not before been acknowledged by scholars. However, as I will show, this British/Zionist entente had clear limitations, and was confined to this propaganda project. The key concern of the British Government was to create the illusion that the Balfour Declaration meant the return of Jewish national life in Palestine, but without doing anything in real terms towards that end.

This work is a contribution to a longstanding historiographical debate over the origins and making of the Balfour Declaration. In the immediate wake of the Great War, perhaps the most influential explanation to emerge was that the Declaration was the product of the genuine idealism and religious sympathy of the Government for the restoration of the Jews to the land of the Bible.¹ This myth had a lasting impact on the public and scholarly imagination.² However, as the serious historical study of British

¹ On the origins of this myth see chapter 3 of this study, pp. 156-159.

² In particular, see Barbara Tuchman, *The Bible and the Sword: England and Palestine from the Bronze Age to Balfour* (New York: New York University Press, 1956) pp. xiv, 311-312, 337, Arthur Koestler, *Promise and Fulfilment- Palestine 1917-1949* (London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd, 1949), pp. 6-7, Franz Kobler, *The Vision was There- A History of the British Movement for the Restoration of the Jews* (London: Lincolns-Prager, 1956). For more recent expositions of this view, see David Fromkin, *A Peace to End all Peace- The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East* (New York: Avon Books, 1989) pp. 267-268, 283, 298, Ronald Sanders, *The High Walls of Jerusalem: A History of the Balfour Declaration and the Birth of the British Mandate for Palestine* (New York: Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, 1983) pp. 73-74, 615, Michael Polowetzky, *Jerusalem Recovered: Victorian Intellectuals and the Birth of Modern Zionism* (Westport, Ct: Praeger, 1997) and Paul Charles Merkley, *The Politics of Christian Zionism, 1891-1948* (London: Frank Cass, 1998) pp. 37-43. For those scholars who have noted the influence of religious idealism and the Bible on the makers of the Declaration, but suggest that it was just a minor factor, see Isaiah Friedman *The Question of Palestine: British-Jewish-Arab Relations: 1914-1918* (New Jersey: Transaction, 2nd ed., 1992) p. 290, Leonard Stein, *The Balfour Declaration* (London: Valentine, Mitchell & Co., 1961) pp. 143, 158, Regina Sharif, *Non-Jewish Zionism: Its Roots in Western History* (London: Zed Press, 1983) pp. 78-80.

motives for the Declaration developed, the allure of this thesis faded as scholars sought to show that it was the result of carefully considered political and diplomatic motives.

Arguably, this scholarship began in earnest with the publication of Leonard Stein's classic work in 1961, from which all others have followed.³ Despite the unavailability of official Government documents, Stein presented a complex and nuanced narrative, detailing a number of causal factors. He claimed that the original political interest in the Zionist movement came out of the British Government's desire to secure sole control of Palestine in the anticipated post-war settlement. Stein argued that due to Palestine's proximity to Egypt and the Suez Canal, British suzerainty had to be guaranteed so as to ensure the trade route to India. However, the Sykes-Picot Agreement of May 1916, which had been agreed by the French, British and Russian Governments, had proposed the internationalisation of Palestine. Although the Russians were no longer thought to be a serious concern following the February revolution in 1917, the French had made clear that they had a continuing and profound desire to stake their claim.⁴ In addition, by 1917 the British were forced to take account of President Wilson's fundamental objection to any post-war annexations.⁵ As a result, it was considered that by supporting the claims of the Zionist movement, whose leadership in London wished for British control, the Government could cloak their ambitions under the guise of Jewish national self-determination.

Together with this imperial motive, Stein showed that by the time of the Declaration the need for consolidating support for the war in the USA, and more

³ Stein, *op. cit.*

⁴ *Ibid.* pp. 234-235, 278-280, 319-322, 331, 335, 343-344.

importantly, the need to stem pacifism and revolutionary socialism in Russia, resulted in a desire to create pro-British propaganda in these countries. Due to a belief in the power of Zionism amongst Jews, and their apparent political influence, members of the War Cabinet and Foreign Office believed that a pro-Zionist declaration would greatly help the situation.⁶ In the final run up to the issuance of the Declaration, this factor came to the fore just as its advocates were further convinced of its urgent necessity by the mistaken rumour that Germany was about to steal their thunder with their own bid to win the Zionist card.⁷

The most important work that followed Stein, with the release of Government documentation in the 1960s, came from Mayir Vereté and Isaiah Friedman. Frustrated with Stein's unwillingness to draw a definite conclusion that singled out the key motive for the Declaration,⁸ as he saw it, Vereté largely ignored the issue of propaganda and focused upon the imperial motive, keeping the French out of Palestine.⁹ Friedman also concentrated on this question, but he argued that the Declaration stemmed from the need to prevent Germany from taking control after the war, rather than the French.¹⁰ Friedman did acknowledge what he referred to as short-term factors, winning support in Russia and the USA, but this was, according to him, meant to create propaganda for a British Palestine rather than anything related to the running of the war. Alternatively, other scholars, such as Frank Hardie, Irwin Hermann and David Vital, argued that creating propaganda in the USA and Russia to

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 358.

⁶ *Ibid.* pp. 345-348, 359. This explanation for the Balfour Declaration was put forward by Lloyd George himself. See David Lloyd George, *Memoirs of the Peace Conference*, Vol. II (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1939) pp. 723-724.

⁷ Stein, *op. cit.*, pp. 549-550, 515-517.

⁸ Mayir Vereté, 'The Balfour Declaration and its Makers,' *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 6, no. 1 (January 1970) in Norman Rose (ed.) *From Palmerston to Balfour- Collected Essays of Mayir Vereté* (London: Frank Cass, 1992) p. 3.

⁹ *Ibid.* pp. 1-38.

help the war was an important consideration, but maintained that the Declaration was primarily driven by the Palestine issue.¹¹ In contrast, Jon Kimche, and later Conor Cruise O'Brien, emphasised the pre-eminent importance of propaganda in Government calculations,¹² but this was not common place in specialist studies on the subject.¹³

And yet, the propaganda consideration raised highly intriguing and problematic issues. Beneath the Government's rationale for using Zionism in this sense lay a series of wholly erroneous assumptions. It was predicated upon a belief in Jewish unity and power, the conviction that Jews were largely pro-German, and that they also constituted a dominant force in pacifist and Russian Revolutionary circles. These questions were raised explicitly by David Vital. Although he continued to emphasise the primacy of matters of Empire in his analysis, Vital, like Howard M. Sachar before him,¹⁴ drew attention to the mistaken assumptions of Jewish influence and unity, claiming that they were the product of age old anti-Semitic stereotypes.¹⁵

¹⁰ Friedman, *op. cit.*, pp. 285-287.

¹¹ David Vital, *Zionism: The Crucial Phase* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987) pp. 269, 299-301, *idem. A People Apart- The Jews in Europe, 1789-1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) p. 690, Frank Hardie and Irwin Hermann, *Britain and Zion: The Fateful Entanglement* (Belfast: Blackstaff Press, 1980) pp. viii-ix.

¹² Jon Kimche, *The Unromantics: The Great Powers and the Balfour Declaration-* With a Preface by Lord Sieff (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, Published under the auspices of the Anglo-Israel Association, 1968) pp. 34, 39, 43, Conor Cruise O'Brien, *The Siege: The Saga of Israel and Zionism* (London: Wiedenfeld and Nicolson, 1986) pp. 123-126, *idem. 'Israel in Embryo,' New York Review of Books*, 15 March 1984, pp. 34-38, David Stevenson, *The First World War and International Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988) pp. 176-177. For an example of an earlier brief allusion to this argument, see Ben Halpern, *The Idea of the Jewish State* (Cambridge, MS and London: Harvard University Press and Oxford University Press, 1961) p. 275. Other observers such as Christopher Sykes considered that it was impossible to deduce which motives were of greater importance, or indeed why the Declaration was made at all. Christopher Sykes, *Cross Roads to Israel: Palestine from Balfour to Bevin* (London: Collins, 1965) pp. 12-23, *idem. Two Studies in Virtue* (London: Collins, 1953) p. 224.

¹³ For an early exception, which dismissed the Palestine issue as a factor in the Government's decision to issue the Balfour Declaration, see D.Z. Gillon, 'The Antecedents of the Balfour Declaration,' *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 5, no. 2 (May 1969) pp. 131-150.

¹⁴ Howard M. Sachar, *The Emergence of the Middle East: 1914-1924* (London: Allen Lane, 1970) pp. 201-202.

¹⁵ Vital, *op. cit.*, pp. 190-191.

Though not lying at the centre of his analysis, Vital's observation implied that the considerations behind the Declaration were at least in part based upon incorrect perceptions of Jewry, rather than the product of realistic diplomatic calculation. The possibility of such an approach stood in stark contrast to the conception of British foreign policy making that was held by those who had tried to correct the earlier myths of British altruism or miscalculation.¹⁶ Echoed in the writings of Friedman and Vereté, Stein had confidently asserted, "there were at every stage strictly rational arguments, related to a realistic assessment of British interests, in favour of a pro-Zionist policy."¹⁷

By the 1980s scholars such as Elie Kedourie, Jonathan Frankel and Chimen Abramsky had, in a similar vein to Vital, begun to draw particular attention to these misconceptions of Jewish power in the minds of those members of the British Government who had advocated a pro-Zionist policy.¹⁸ Increasingly, therefore, a number of works that discussed the origins of the Balfour Declaration acknowledged the misconceived nature of these beliefs and their anti-Semitic roots. But in the majority of these narratives this phenomenon was acknowledged, rather than focused upon, and was placed alongside other motives for the Declaration, such as the need to justify British control of Palestine and religious idealism.¹⁹

¹⁶ Elizabeth Monroe summed up this view when she famously wrote in 1963, "Measured by British interests alone, it [the Balfour Declaration] was one of the greatest mistakes of our history." Elizabeth Monroe, *Britain's Moment in the Middle East, 1914-1956* (London: Chatto and Windes, 1963) p. 43

¹⁷ Stein, *op. cit.*, p. 551, Friedman, *op. cit.*, pp. 55, 291-296, 299, 309, *idem.* 'The Declaration- Myths and Motives,' *Jewish Chronicle*, Balfour Declaration Supplement, 3 November 1967, Vereté, *op. cit.*

¹⁸ Jonathan Frankel 'An Introductory Essay- The Paradoxical Politics of Marginality: Thoughts on the Jewish Situation During the Years 1914-1921,' *Studies in Contemporary Jewry*, 4 (1988), pp. 13-18, Elie Kedourie, 'Sir Mark Sykes and Palestine 1915-16,' in *idem.* *Arabic Political Memoirs and other Studies* (London: Frank Cass, 1974), p. 239, 'Young Turks, Freemasons and Jews' in *Ibid.* p. 249, 'The Jews of Baghdad in 1910' in *Ibid.* p. 263, Chimen Abramsky, *War, Revolution and the Jewish Dilemma* (London: H.K. Lewis 1975) pp. 12-16, Yehuda Bauer, *The Jewish Emergence from Powerlessness* (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1979) p. 54.

¹⁹ See, for example, Ephraim Karsh and Inari Karsh, *Empires of the Sand- The Struggle for Mastery in the Middle East 1789-1923* (Cambridge, MS and London: Harvard University Press, 1999) p. 252 and

Conversely, Mark Levene, in his path-breaking work on the subject, was the first to address these mistaken assumptions of Jewish power, cohesiveness and pro-Germanism/Bolshevism in detail and to place them unequivocally at the centre of his comprehension of the Balfour Declaration. Rejecting any motive for the Declaration other than the desire to wean Russian Jewry away from revolutionary socialism, Levene argued that the Government's pro-Zionist policy was solely the product of anti-Semitic conceptions of Jewish unity, power and conspiracy.²⁰ Following Levene, Sharman Kadish has endorsed this thesis, centring upon the myth of the conspiratorial Bolshevik Jew²¹ and in his discussion Tom Segev has put forward a similar interpretation.²²

Undoubtedly, this anti-Semitism argument helps us to understand why those behind the Balfour Declaration imagined Jewry to be a hostile international power, conspiring with the enemy forces of Germanism and Bolshevism. Moreover, it has demonstrated that in order to fully comprehend why the Balfour Declaration came to be, it is necessary to go beyond the traditional approach to this subject, in which historians had sought to establish a set of rationally considered political motives. As Levene concluded in his article on the subject, the Balfour Declaration was, in the final analysis: "the product not of assessment, but of perception: a perception of the

Jehuda Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann: The Making of a Statesman* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993) p. 208.

²⁰ Mark Levene, 'The Balfour Declaration: A Case of Mistaken Identity,' *English Historical Review* (January 1992) pp. 54-77, idem. *War, Jews, and the New Europe- The Diplomacy of Lucien Wolf, 1914-1919* (Oxford: Published for the Littman Library by Oxford University Press, 1992) Chs. 4 and 6.

²¹ Sharman Kadish, *Bolsheviks and British Jews: The Anglo-Jewish Community, Britain and the Russian Revolution* (London: Frank Cass, 1992) Ch.4. Although Kadish offers a similar argument to Levene she does not suggest that the situation in Russia was the sole consideration behind the Declaration. Instead, she contends that it was primarily, though not exclusively, designed as a piece of wartime propaganda aimed at Jews in both Russia and the USA. *Ibid.* pp. 140, 245.

²² Tom Segev, *One Palestine Complete: Jews and Arabs under the British Mandate*- Translated by Haim Watzman, (London: Little, Brown and Company, 2000) pp. 39-49.

world, and of Jews within it, through the narrow, socially and culturally confined prism of Britain's traditional ruling class."²³

Taking Levene's lead in this respect, this thesis will attempt to deconstruct how the mental universe of members of the British Government refracted and determined their policy toward the Zionist movement during the war. In line with post-structuralist thought, which has had a profound influence on cultural and literary studies, this analysis utilises a discursive approach, pioneered by Michel Foucault, and defined by Stuart Hall in the following way:

The discursive approach . . . examines not only how language and representation produce meaning, but how the knowledge which a particular discourse produces connects with power, regulates conduct, makes up or constructs identities and subjectivities, and defines the way certain things are represented, thought about, practiced and studied.²⁴

Influenced by scholars working in post-colonial studies, I have therefore investigated how culturally produced forms of knowledge within British culture during the war shaped how Jewry, as a mythical edifice, was created, categorized, represented and controlled in the minds of policy makers.²⁵ And like Levene, we are concerned with how this was undertaken by a small group of individuals within the British

²³ Levene, 'The Balfour Declaration,' p. 76.

²⁴ Stuart Hall (ed.) *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (London: Sage, in association with the Open University, 1997) p. 7 The influence of this discursive approach over the last two decades has been far reaching, particularly within gender studies, postcolonial and subaltern studies, ethnic studies and more recently in nationalism studies. See Catherine Hall 'Introduction: thinking the postcolonial, thinking the empire' in idem. (ed.) *Cultures of empire: A Reader- Colonizers in Britain and the empire in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000) p. 13, Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism- A Critical Survey of Recent Theories of Nations and Nationalism* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998) pp. 142, 202-210.

²⁵ C. Hall, *op. cit.*, p. 14, D.A. Washbrook, 'Orient and Occidents: Colonial Discourse Theory and the Historiography of the British Empire,' in Robin W. Winks (ed.) *The Oxford History of the British Empire: Vol. V, Historiography* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1999) pp.596-600. Of seminal influence in the development of Post-Colonial Studies was Edward Said's *Orientalism*. Edward Said, *Orientalism- Western Conceptions of the Orient* (London: Penguin Edition, 1995). For a critique of Said's and other post-Colonial studies' reductive construction of Jews as part of a homogenous and dominant white 'Western Judeo-Christian' culture, which was not itself the subject of this process of cultural construction, Othering and control, see Bryan Cheyette, *Constructions of 'the Jew' in English literature and society: Racial Representations, 1875-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993) p. 4 and idem. 'Neither Black Nor White: The Figure of "the Jew" in Imperial British Literature,' in Linda Nochlin and Tamar Garb (eds.), *The Jew in the Text: Modernity and the*

Government and Establishment, in the main springing from the same social, educational and cultural milieu.²⁶

However, my point of departure from Levene, Kadish and others is that a focus upon anti-Semitism, or as Bryan Cheyette has usefully termed it, Semitic discourse,²⁷ does not answer a fundamental question: why did policy makers so readily and steadfastly believe that Zionism was the key to the Jewish imagination? The idea that the attitude of world Jewry, as an organic whole, could be won over to the British cause through Zionism was predicated upon the assumption that there existed an essential Jewish identity, one that was primordially fixed upon the restoration of national life in Palestine. Jewry was therefore perceived to be a very specific type of imagined community, a national community.²⁸ By not investigating the origins of this perception of Jewry the previous historical literature has failed to explain what lay at the very core of the Government's decision to pursue a nationalist policy designed to win the hearts and minds of what was thought to be a nation.

That this mistaken assumption has not previously been examined was in part due to the prevailing influence of Zionist discourse on historians. For this reason, the majority of early scholars writing on this subject accepted the idea that Jewry did indeed constitute a nation, latently yearning for its return to national life in Palestine.²⁹ To be sure, by the time of the First World War the Zionist movement had

Construction of Identity (London: Thames and Hudson, 1995) pp. 31-41.

²⁶ Levene, 'The Balfour Declaration: A Case of Mistaken Identity' p. 76. On the social, cultural and educational homogeneity of the Foreign Office and the diplomatic service, drawn in the main from the British upper class, see Steiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-20, 174, 210.

²⁷ Cheyette, *Constructions of 'the Jew' in English literature and society*.

²⁸ In this study I will draw upon Anthony D. Smith's typology of a national community- a singular collective body of individuals, or mass, which is perceived to have a particular character or soul, intrinsically linked to and defined by its national space and landscapes, language, culture and historical myths of ancestry, golden age, decline and rebirth. Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986) pp. 170-208.

²⁹ Kimche, *op. cit.*, p. 40, Friedman, *op. cit.*, p. 55, 289, 291-292, 296, 299, Stein, *op. cit.*, pp. 577-578. On the impact of this assumption on Zionist historiography in general, see David Vital, 'The History of

spread, as a minority party, across the Jewish world,³⁰ and witnessed dramatic growth in the years 1914-1918 in Russia and the USA.³¹ Nevertheless, Zionism was far from being the dominant, uncontested voice in modern Jewish politics in these countries.³² Moreover, as modernist and post-modern students of nationalism and Zionism have persuasively shown in recent years, the idea of an innate Zionist national consciousness is an invention of national ideology,³³ which is belied by the fluid and complex nature of ethnic identities.³⁴

the Zionists and the History of the Jews' *Studies in Zionism*, 6 (Autumn 1982) pp. 159-170.

³⁰ Walter Laqueur, *A History of Zionism* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1972) pp. 161-162. For a good political history of the Zionist movement prior to the First World War, see David Vital, *The Origins of Zionism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), idem. *Zionism: The Formative Years* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983). On Zionist ideology, see Gideon Shimoni, *The Zionist Ideology* (Hanover and London: Brandeis University Press. Published by University Press of New England, 1995). On the dilapidated condition of the World Zionist Organisation prior to the outbreak of war, see Vital, *Zionism: The Crucial Phase*, Chs. 1 and 2.

³¹ Before 1914 the World Zionist Organization had a membership of just 127,000. Howard M. Sachar, *A History of Israel- From the Rise of Zionism to Our Times* (New York: Knopf, 1976) p. 66. By 1917, however, Zionism was probably the largest political movement in organised Russian Jewish politics, with a mainly inactive membership of 300,000, though it was certainly not the single voice of Russian Jewry. Zvi Y. Gitelman, *Jewish Nationality and Soviet Politics: the Jewish Sections of the CPSU, 1917-1930* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1972) pp. 71-72. In 1914 there were 7,500 members of approximately 200 Zionist societies in the USA, which had grown by 1918 to more than 30,000 members of 600 societies. Eviatar Friesel, 'Brandeis' Role in American Zionism Historically Reconsidered,' *American Jewish History*, no. 69 (1979-1980) p. 48.

³² Other influential movements, which were often diametrically opposed to Zionism, included various strains of socialism, liberalism, Yiddishism, Bundism and other Diaspora nationalist movements. See Ezra Mendelsohn, *On Modern Jewish Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), Jonathan Frankel, *Prophecy and Politics: Socialism, Nationalism, and the Russian Jews, 1862-1917* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), Gitelman, *op. cit.*, 71-82, Zosa Szajkowski, *Jews, Wars, and Communism Vol. I- The Attitude of American Jews to World War I, the Russian Revolutions of 1917, and Communism (1914-1945)* (New York: Ktav, 1972), Sheila Stern Polishook, 'The American Federation of Labor, Zionism, and the First World War,' *American Jewish Historical Quarterly*, vol. LXV (1975-1976) pp. 232-233, 242-243, Moses Rischin, 'The Early Attitude of the American Jewish Committee to Zionism (1906-1922)' *Publication of the American Jewish Historical Society*, vol. 59 (Sept. 1959) pp. 188-201.

³³ For modernist analyses, which posit that the nation is an invention of the modern period, see Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds.) *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780- Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2nd ed. 1992) Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 2nd ed. 1991). Post-modernist scholars of nationalism have gone further than the modernists, who they criticize for seeing modern nations and nationalism as a tangible reality, and assert that nations are imaginary constructs, narrated through representation and discourse. Of particular influence has been Homi Bhaba (ed.) *Nation and Narration* (London and New York: Routledge, 1990) Even though 'perennialist' scholars such as Anthony D. Smith have critiqued such modernist and post-modern histories of nationalism, emphasizing a nation's dependence upon pre-existing *ethnies* and earlier forms of the nation, they too reject the primordial nature of the nation and nationalism. See Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism*, pp. 142, 190-198, 201-

From this starting point my research sought to investigate why advocates of a pro-Zionist policy in the British Government held this nationalist vision of Jewry and Jewish identity. But, similar to David Feldman's work on how Jews were seen in English society prior to the First World War, I found that it was not possible to understand this question without going beyond the Jewish case.³⁵ Indeed, during my time going through the relevant archival material it became increasingly clear that the construct of Jewry as a nation, and indeed the whole dynamic of a pro-Zionist policy, was part of a wider phenomenon.

As we have noted above this thesis contends for the first time that that the Balfour Declaration was borne out of British policy-makers' perceptions of ethnicity and ethnic groups during the First World War. It is argued that their belief that Jewry was a nation stemmed from a general imagining of ethnic groups as singular, racial entities that were driven by a profound national consciousness. Fundamentally influenced by the discourse of race nationalism that came to prominence in British and European culture in the late nineteenth century, the Government officials and

210. For scholars of Zionism who have been influenced by modernist and post-modernist critiques of nationalism, and have sought to show the invented nature of Zionist discourse, see Ilan Pappé, 'Critique and Agenda: The Post-Zionism Scholars in Israel,' *History and Memory*, Vol. 7 (1995) pp. 79-85, Uri Ram, 'Zionist Historiography and the Invention of Modern Jewish Nationhood: The Case of Ben Zion Dinur,' *Ibid.* pp. 91-124, Laurence J. Silberstein, *The Postzionism Debates- Knowledge and Power in Israeli Culture* (New York and London: Routledge, 1999) Chs 1, 4, 5 and 6, idem. 'Mapping, Not Tracing: Opening reflection,' in idem. (ed.) *Mapping Jewish Identities* (New York and London: New York University Press, 2000) pp. 1-36, Yael Zerubavel, *Recovered Roots: Collective Memory and the Making of Israeli National Tradition* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1995) pp. 13-36. For a recent analysis of Jewish nationalism that is more in line with the work of A.D. Smith, see Aviel Roshwald, 'Jewish Identity and the Paradox of Nationalism' in Michael Berkowitz (ed.) *Nationalism, Zionism and Ethnic Mobilization* (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming).

³⁴ On the fluid and multi-dimensional nature of ethnic identities see, for example, Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*, pp. 9-11, 123, Richard Jenkins, *Rethinking Ethnicity: Arguments and Explorations* (London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1997), Etienne Balibar, 'The Nation Form: History and Ideology' in idem. and Immanuel Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities* (London and New York: Verso, 1991) pp. 86-87, 93-97, Jonathan Rutherford, 'A Place Called Home: Identity and the Cultural Politics of Difference' in idem. *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1990) pp. 10, 24, Stuart Hall, 'New Ethnicities' in James Donald and Ali Rattansi 'Race', *Culture and Difference* (London: Sage in association with The Open University, 1992) pp. 252-257.

³⁵ David Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews: Social Relations and Political Culture 1840-1914* (New

politicians behind the Balfour Declaration viewed identity and social relations through this prism. It was for this reason, in the final assessment, that Zionism, as a reflection of policy makers' own cultural forms and identity, was accepted and embraced as representing the authentic desires of world Jewry. Furthermore, I seek to show that the interest in trying to win the bogey of Jewish power through Zionism was part of a broader dynamic of ethnic propaganda politics, in which ethnic groups were commonly viewed as hostile forces of power, whose allegiance had to be wrested from German and then revolutionary socialist influence through an appeal to their nationalist identities.

This argument will be elaborated in chapter one, in which I shall analyse the discursive forms and context that resulted in the imagining of Jewry as a nation, and the Government interest in publicly supporting the Zionist movement. This will be achieved by an examination of how the discourse of race nationalism shaped how the relevant members of the Government understood identity and ethnic groups, and how in the context of total war they developed a general line of policy thinking in which it was conceived that nationalism could be used to capture the allegiance of ethnic groups. Despite the fact that the particular requisites for how Jewry could be perceived as a nation, and the belief in Jewish power as a hostile force, stemmed from Semitic discourse, the national construction of Jewry and the need to win Jewish power through this identity came out of a wider context. This will be illustrated through a comparative study of British policy towards ethnic groups in the USA.

In chapter two, I will examine how this official mindset, which provided the fertile soil for the Government's Zionist policy, led to the Balfour Declaration, and will assess the role of Zionist activists in this process. This chapter therefore takes up

the second subject which this thesis seeks to address, the contribution of the Zionists to the making of the Government's policy and the nature of the British/Zionist relationship which came about as a result.

Traditionally, Zionist histories of the Balfour Declaration have depicted its issuance as a great Zionist victory, a turning point in the history of the movement, which was the heroic achievement of Chaim Weizmann.³⁶ Despite the attempts of some to deconstruct this myth,³⁷ Weizmann's own version, as embodied in his highly popular autobiography,³⁸ and furthered by his supporters after his death,³⁹ came to predominantly influence how this question was seen in both the public sphere and by scholars.⁴⁰ When historians such as Vital and Vereté did attempt to criticize this deeply entrenched myth, arguing that the Zionists were used by the British and made no direct contribution to the making of the Balfour Declaration,⁴¹ their work was seen

³⁶ See Stein, *op. cit.*, idem. *Weizmann and the Balfour Declaration*- The Sixth Chaim Weizmann Memorial Lecture in the Humanities (Rehovoth, Israel: Yad Chaim Weizmann, 1961), Jehuda Reinharz, 'The Balfour Declaration and Its Maker: A Reassessment,' *Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 64 (September 1992) pp. 455-499, idem. *Chaim Weizmann: The Making of a Statesman* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), Friedman, *op. cit.*, Sanders, *op. cit.*, Devorah Barzilay-Yegar, 'Crisis as Turning Point: Chaim Weizmann in World War I,' *Studies in Zionism*, No. 6 (Autumn 1982) pp. 241-254, Norman Rose, *Chaim Weizmann: A Biography* (New York: Viking 1986), Barnett Litvinoff, *Chaim Weizmann: Last of the Patriarchs* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1976), Kimche, *op. cit.*

³⁷ Max Nordau published a critique of the Weizmann myth as early as 1920. Israel Kolatt, 'Chaim Weizmann's Rise to Leadership,' in Isaiah Berlin and Israel Kolatt (eds.) *Chaim Weizmann as Leader* (Jerusalem: The Institute of Contemporary Jewry, The Hebrew University, 1970) p. 46. Also see Oskar Rabinowicz, *Fifty Years of Zionism: A Historical Analysis of Dr Weizmann's 'Trial and Error'* (London: Robert Anscombe, 2nd ed. 1952) and Josef Fraenkel to the Editor, *Jewish Chronicle*, 12 November and 24 December 1976.

³⁸ Chaim Weizmann *Trial and Error* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1949).

³⁹ See, for example, Isaiah Berlin, *Chaim Weizmann* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Cudahy, 1958), Charles Webster, *The Founder of the National Home- Chaim Weizmann Memorial Lecture* (Rehovot: Yad Chaim Weizmann, 1955), Meyer Weisgel and Joel Carmichael (eds.) *Chaim Weizmann- A Biography by Several Hands* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1963), H.M. Blumberg, *Weizmann: His Life and Times* (New York and London: St Martin's Press and Robson Books, published for Yad Weizmann, 1975).

⁴⁰ On the historical development and influence of the Weizmann myth, see James Renton, 'National History and Romantic Narrative Form: The Weizmann Myth and the Marginalization of Moses Gaster,' in Michael Berkowitz (ed.) *Nationalism, Zionism and Ethnic Mobilization* (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming).

⁴¹ Vereté, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-38, idem. 'Further Reflections on the Makers of the Balfour Declaration,' in Rose, *From Palmerston to Balfour*, pp. 204-226, Vital, *Zionism: The Crucial Phase*, pp. 90, 223-224, 235-236.

by many as unsubstantiated and extreme,⁴² and for the most part has failed to have a discernible impact.⁴³

Challenging both the dominant Zionist narrative, and those who have suggested that the Zionists played a negligible part in this story, I will argue in this chapter that the Balfour Declaration resulted in large part from the efforts of a number of Zionist and Jewish activists other than Weizmann. Faced with the countless problems of the war, Whitehall was reactive, rather than pro-active, in its development of a Zionist policy. Members of the Government were pre-disposed to accept the logic and need for a Zionist propaganda policy, as the crises of the war developed, and the need for propaganda became ever more acute, but it was wholly dependent upon the Zionists to provide the rationale and impetus. Differing from the tidy, linear narrative of the Weizmann myth, I intend to highlight the complex and fortuitous nature of what took place, drawing attention to the cumulative efforts and diplomatic strategies of a number of individuals whose role has largely been obscured within the Zionist collective memory and historical literature. But, although I aim to recover the importance of figures such as Horace Kallen, Moses Gaster, and especially Vladimir Jabotinsky, this chapter will maintain that, in contrast with the conventional wisdom, the Zionists and the Zionist movement fell far short of their

⁴² See Isaiah Friedman, 'Zionist History Reconsidered,' *Studies in Contemporary Jewry*, vol. 6 (1990) pp. 309-314, Eviatar Friesel, 'David Vital's Work on Zionism,' *Studies in Zionism*, vol. 9 No. 2 (Autumn 1988) pp. 219-225 and Reinharz, 'The Balfour Declaration and its Maker,' p. 493.

⁴³ See, for example, Derek Penslar, 'The Foundations of the Twentieth Century: Herzlean Zionism in Yoram Hazony's *The Jewish State*,' *Israel Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (Summer 2001) pp. 124-125. Despite the outpouring of work by the New Historians, as they have attempted to destroy the myths of Zionist and Israeli history, the Weizmann myth has not received their attention, coming as it does, outside of their central concern, the Arab-Israeli conflict. See Benny Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, 1947-1949* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), Ilan Pappé, *The Making of the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1948-1951* (London: Macmillan, 1993), Avi Shlaim, *Collusion Across the Jordan: King Abdullah, the Zionist Movement, and the Partition of Palestine* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), Simha Flapan, *The Birth of Israel: Myths and Realities* (New York: Pantheon, 1987) For an example of one of these scholars who has perpetuated the Weizmann myth in his own work, see Avi Shlaim, *The Iron Wall- Israel and the Arab World* (London: Penguin Books, 2000) pp. 5-7.

goal with the Balfour Declaration. All that these individuals had persuaded the British Government to do was to use Zionism as a propaganda tool to win Jewish support for the British war effort.

Disagreeing with historians such as Jehuda Reinharz, a particularly staunch proponent of the Weizmann myth,⁴⁴ it is therefore a central contention of this thesis that the Zionists were undoubtedly used by the Government. Paradoxically, though, the narrative offered here also goes against the arguments of Vital and Vereté who claim that the Zionists were unwitting pawns, duped by the British. It was in fact the Zionists themselves who established the rationale behind using Zionism as a propaganda weapon, and consistently showed the Government how and why this should be done. This was the only way that they could convince British officials to take an interest in Zionism. Stemming as it did from the wider frame of thought of the Government's ethnic propaganda policies, British advocates for the Declaration were united in their desire to use Zionism to create pro-British propaganda, not just in Russia, as some have suggested, but also in the USA, and anywhere where Jews could be found. To be sure, it will be asserted that a few influential politicians, who were concerned with British imperial interests in the Near East, were also interested in using Zionism to bring Palestine into the British imperial orbit after the war. Nevertheless, all that this objective entailed in the context of the war was again propaganda, convincing Jewry and the world that Britain was the true champion and protector of the Zionist cause. Those members of the War Cabinet and the Foreign Office who were behind the Declaration had no intention of helping the Zionist movement in any real sense, and committed themselves to as little as possible.

⁴⁴ Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann: The Making of a Statesman*, pp. 207, 212, 406. Also see Friedman, *op. cit.*, p. 306.

This argument that the Zionists were voluntarily used to serve British interests, together with my assertion that the Government's Zionist policy was fundamentally defined by a nationalist perception of Jewish and ethnic identity, will both be brought into sharp relief in the second part of this thesis.

Previously, the majority of historians have predominantly confined their examinations of the Government's Zionist policy to the events that led to the Balfour Declaration, picking up the historical trail again with the birth of the British mandate in Palestine. However, this has overlooked an important part of the Government's Zionist policy during the war. The Balfour Declaration was only ever intended to be the first step in this policy, a platform from which it would attempt to win Jewry to the British cause in the war and the idea of a British Palestine. For those behind the Declaration this project was just as important as the publication of the Declaration itself, and therefore merits special attention. Seeking to fill the gap in the historical literature, the last three chapters of this thesis will for the first time examine what constituted the true implementation of the Government's Zionist policy as it was intended by its makers at the time, a far-ranging and elaborate propaganda campaign. My analysis of this propaganda will draw upon a wide range of sources, such as film, photography, pamphlets and books, which have not previously been studied, much of which is housed in the archives of the Imperial War Museum. In my attempt to uncover and examine the narratives that were communicated through these materials I have been influenced by the discursive and inter-textual approaches used by scholars working in cultural studies, and cultural historians of Zionism such as Michael Berkowitz.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ On Cultural Studies see, for example, Simon During, *The Cultural Studies Reader* (London and New York: Routledge 1993). Michael Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture and West European Jewry before the*

In this part of my thesis, it will be contended that the nationalist imagining of Jewish identity which had done so much to propel the Government to embark upon a Zionist policy also shaped and defined the ways in which it sought to capture the Jewish imagination after the Declaration. Utilising the vast propaganda machinery and resources of the British Government, British propaganda agencies and their Zionist supporters sought to win Jewry to the British cause and a British Palestine by creating the myth that the Balfour Declaration, and the British occupation of Palestine, represented the restoration of the Jewish nation in Palestine, and the glorious liberation of the land from the iniquity of the Ottoman Turk. Due to the Government's nationalist perception of Jewish identity these narratives were communicated through the creation and dissemination of a discourse of Jewish national rebirth. This discourse was mediated through the conventions and narratives of Zionist discourse and culture, and was constructed and disseminated across the Jewish world through print-media, photography, film and a series of symbolic projects and ceremonies. As the Government's Zionist policy was adopted by some to justify Britain's post-war suzerainty of Palestine the narrative of Jewish restoration under British auspices was accompanied by a narrative of Ottoman oppression-British liberation-Jewish national redemption.

These chapters will also endorse our argument that the Declaration did not constitute an unequivocal achievement for the Zionist movement, and will reveal the degree to which the Zionists worked to serve British interests. Similar to the events that led to the Balfour Declaration Zionist activists played an absolutely pivotal role in showing the Government how best to convince Jewry that the Balfour Declaration

First World War (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993) idem. *Western Jewry and the Zionist Project, 1914-1933* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). On recent work that has analysed Zionism with a discursive approach, uncovering the narratives of representation that underpin Zionist

truly meant the restoration of the Jewish nation in Palestine, and eagerly went about the task of putting this into action. There existed an intimate relationship between the Zionists and the British in this endeavour. However, the parameters of this British/Zionist entente were limited. As Zionists such as Weizmann and Jabotinsky became aware, this alliance no longer applied when it came to helping the Zionist movement in Palestine in practical terms. The Government's overriding concern was to create and display the myth of Jewish national return, without actually committing itself to anything beyond the vaguely worded and definitively non-committal Balfour Declaration.

The foundations of this propaganda work will be discussed in chapter three. The first part will examine the establishment of the Jewish Section of the Department of Information, which under the auspices of Zionists in London directed the distribution of propaganda across world Jewry. The second part of this chapter will examine how the discourse of national rebirth was mediated through the practice of history, constructing the Balfour Declaration as a turning point in the Jewish past, ushering in the return of Jewish national existence. Chapter four will analyse how the space of Palestine was utilised, through visual and textual representations, to communicate the narrative of Ottoman oppression, British liberation and Jewish national rebirth for the Jewish audience. It will emphasise how the nationalist perception of Jewish identity determined this visualization of Palestine, by contrasting it with the representations of the land that were created for Christian and Muslim audiences. Finally, chapter five will explore how the Zionist Commission, the Hadassah Medical Unit, the Jewish Legion and the foundation of the Hebrew University were used as vehicles of representation that were created in order to act out

the discourse of Jewish national rebirth for the benefit of world Jewry. As defined by the objectives and limits of the Government's Zionist policy, the primary purpose of these enterprises, as they were conceived by Whitehall, was to display the myth of Jewish restoration under British auspices.

This thesis concentrates on why members of the British Government adopted a Zionist policy during the First World War, and how that policy was put into practice. In the main, therefore, I have drawn upon archival materials in England, Israel and the USA that relate to these personalities and their Zionist petitioners. As a result, there is the necessary but unfortunate omission of the counterpoise to this, the actual voices of Jewry and how they responded to and were affected by this policy.

Chapter One- The Roots of a Pro-Zionist Policy: Perceptions of Jewry and Ethnic Groups during the First World War

This chapter is an analysis of the perceptions that lay behind the British Government's decision to adopt a pro-Zionist policy. As certain scholars have recently shown, the rationale for the Balfour Declaration was predicated upon a mistaken image of a powerful and collective Zionist Jewry, which was first seen as pro-German and then conflated with revolutionary socialism. As a result, it was believed by members of the Government that this Jewish influence had to be won over to the British side in the war and that this was to be achieved through an appeal to their Zionist aspirations. By way of explanation, it has been argued that these beliefs were a product of anti-Semitic stereotypes of Jewish power and cohesiveness.¹ It will be contended here, however, that this model only gives one part of the picture, and it is necessary to place this imagining of Jewry within British officials' wider understanding of ethnicity and ethnic groups during the war.

Specifically, it is argued in this chapter that this conception of Jewry emerged out of a wider discourse of race nationalism in British culture,² through which ethnic groups in general were perceived to be singular entities, driven by an innate national identity. This argument, however, does not seek to dismiss the particularities of the Jewish case. Indeed, it will be contended that the imagining of Jewry as a nation was predicated upon the

¹ See Levene, 'The Balfour Declaration: A Case of Mistaken Identity,' *idem. War, Jews, and the New Europe*, Chs. 4 and 6, Kadish, *op. cit.*, Ch.4, Segev, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-49.

² Although the term neo-Romantic nationalism is equally applicable, positing the nation as a primordial, organic body, we shall, in the main, use the appellation race nationalism in this chapter. The intention is to highlight the racial conception of the nation and society in the minds of the Government officials and politicians under discussion, utilising their own terms of reference and thereby reflecting more accurately their modes of thought. Although Regina Sharif has previously argued that racism and Romantic nationalism played a part in the emergence of 'non-Jewish Zionism' at the end of the nineteenth century, she does not relate this to the Government's decision to issue the Balfour Declaration, which she sees as a product of British imperialism. Rather, Sharif sees this discourse as predisposing certain members of the Government to supporting the goals of Zionism in and of itself. Regina Sharif, *Non-Jewish Zionism: Its Roots in Western History* (London: Zed Press, 1983) pp. 4, 43, 75-84.

designation of Jews as a distinct racial group, which stemmed from the image of the Jew as Other in British culture. Moreover, the ability to see Jewry as a nation defined by its yearning for restoration in the national space of Palestine, the site of its mythological Golden Age, must be understood in relation to the thick presence of the Bible and the Holy Land in British culture. But despite this specific cultural context, which provided the tools that were necessary to be able to see Jewry as a nation, it was the discourse and form of the nation itself that determined, as with other ethnic groups, the arresting belief that it constituted a national community.

Just as the British Government's vision of Jewry as a nation was the result of a broader conception of ethnicity and ethnic groups, so was the interest in winning over Jewish influence through an appeal to this national identity. Although the myth of Jewish power was a deep rooted part of British anti-Semitism, the perceived need to capture it through a pro-Zionist policy was the product of a wider discourse of ethnic propaganda politics. Evincing a certain Faustian turn of mind, policy makers often considered ethnic groups in general to be hostile entities that wielded a powerful degree of influence in host societies, in the interlinked realms of public opinion and politics. In the midst of total war, when the will of the masses and propaganda were seen as a crucial aspect of the conflict between the Allies and the Central Powers, these perceived forces of influence became a key concern for foreign policy makers in the British Government. In particular, this battle for the public imagination was fought within the context of a conspiratorial mindset; centred upon the omnipresent spectre of the evil German menace, engaged in subterranean intrigue and subterfuge, undermining the Allied war effort at every turn in its quest for world domination. As a product of this worldview, the hearts and minds of ethnic groups had to be wrested from the ever extending grasp of German propaganda, and the spread of pacifism and revolutionary

socialism within their midst. Due to the imagining of ethnicity through the discourse of race nationalism, this was to be achieved through appeals to their national selves. The function of the principle of the nation as the basis of stability, civilization and the established order within the *Weltanschauung* of certain foreign policy makers meant that not only was nationalism the key to the ethnic imagination, but for some it was inherently seen as a force of good in the face of the destabilising and threatening Others of pacifism, revolutionary socialism and Germanism.

This chapter is divided into four parts. The first will discuss the influence of the discourse of race nationalism on how identity and ethnicity was imagined by key members of the British Government. The second will explore how, within this discourse, the specific nature of ‘the Jew’ as Other and the presence of the Old Testament and the Holy Land within British culture combined, enabling Jewry to be so readily and powerfully imagined as a nation. The third will examine the concept of Jewish power and influence in the minds of those behind a pro-Zionist policy, placing it in its wider context in the war. The final part of this chapter will be a brief comparative study of British policy towards ethnic groups in the USA, tying together and illustrating my overall argument, that the perception of Jewry as a cohesive, powerful group that had to be won to the Allied cause through an appeal to its innate national self, was part of a wider phenomenon of ethnic propaganda politics in the Great War.

1:1 The Discourse of Race Nationalism

In Britain, as across Western Europe, the pseudo-scientific study of race, with the emergent disciplines of anthropology, ethnology and eugenics, had come to prominence in

the second half of the nineteenth century.³ The theory of immutable racial difference embodied in a fixed racial physiognomy and innate character was encapsulated in the *epistimé* of the racial type. Despite debates concerning the environmental or innate nature of racial difference, and the inherent flux and arbitrary nature of what constituted a racial type,⁴ racial difference was increasingly accepted.

Most significantly for our study, by the Edwardian period this reduction of ethnicity to a unitary, individual racial type became conflated in Britain and Europe as a whole with the neo-Romantic, organic concept of the nation.⁵ From this perspective, the nation, and by extension an individual's identity, was defined in racial, primordial terms,⁶ organically linked to its national space, and shaped by its mythologies of descent, Golden Age, decline and rebirth.⁷ With the advent of the First World War, and even more so during the conflict

³ Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (London: Trinity Press, 1951) p.158, George Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution: A History of European Racism* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1978) Ch. 5, Christine Bolt, *Victorian Attitudes to Race* (London and Toronto: Routledge & Kegan Paul, University of Toronto Press, 1971) Ch. 1, G.R. Searle, *Eugenics and Politics in Britain 1900-1914* (Leyden: Noordhoff International Publishing, 1976). On the impact of the Empire and the colonial encounter on perceptions of race in British culture, see, for example, C. Hall, *op. cit.*, p. 19 and Paul B. Rich, *Race and Empire in British Politics* (Cambridge, NY, Melbourne, Port Chester, Sydney: Cambridge University Press, 2nd ed. 1990). On the development of racial thought in general, see Mosse, *op. cit.* and Stephen Jay Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man*, (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1981) pp.31-80. For analyses of how this racial discourse was appropriated by Jews in their own self-image, see John M. Efron *Defenders of the Race: Jewish Doctors and Race Science in Fin-de-siècle Europe* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1994) and Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1998) Ch. 5.

⁴ Bolt, *op. cit.*, p. 206. On the slippery, fluctuating nature of racial discourse see Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color*.

⁵ Mosse, *op. cit.*, pp. 94-95, Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780*, Ch.4, pp. 108-109, Searle, *op. cit.*, p. 39. For an example of how nations such as the English or French were considered as races, with hereditary traits, character and a particular soul, see Cyril Scott, 'The Genius of French Music,' *The New Statesman*, 8 September 1917.

⁶ Admittedly, this view of the nation as a primordial, racially defined community did not, before the war, completely supersede the liberal understanding of the nation as a group of individual citizens within a state, bound and defined by shared civic values, individual liberties and loyalty to a constitution. See below, pp. 33-34.

⁷ On the invention of the English nation in this sense, see Stefan Collini, *Public Moralists: Political Thought and Intellectual Life in Britain, 1850-1930* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991) Chs. 8 and 9, esp. pp. 315-316, 341, 351, 359-360, Paul B. Rich, 'Race, Immigration and the Question of "Englishness" in idem. *Prospero's Return? Historical Essays on Race, Culture and British Society* (London: Hansib, 1994) pp. 9-18, Billie Melman, 'Claiming the Nation's Past: The Invention of an Anglo-Saxon Tradition,' *Journal of Contemporary History*,

itself, the belief in the powerful impulse of race nationalism, and the will to national self-determination, became all-pervasive.⁸ Crucially, this perception of identity was widely shared by those members of the Government who advocated a pro-Zionist policy. They, after all, emerged in the main from an establishment whose self-image was in large part defined by these discourses of race, nation and Empire.⁹

Lord Milner, the influential imperialist at the centre of *The Round Table* circle and Minister without portfolio in Lloyd George's War Cabinet throughout 1917, is a pertinent example.¹⁰ In an introduction to his speeches published in 1913, he wrote, "Throughout the foregoing statement I have emphasised the importance of the racial bond. From my point of view this is fundamental . . . [D]eeper, stronger, more primordial than . . . material ties is the bond of common blood, a common language, common history and traditions."¹¹ Milner

Vol. 26 (1991) pp. 575-595, Hugh A. MacDougall, *Racial Myth in English History- Trojans, Teutons, and Anglo-Saxons* (Montreal, Hanover and London: Harvest House and University Press of New England, 1982), Philip Dodd, 'Englishness and the National Culture' in Robert Colls and Philip Dodd (eds.) *Englishness: Politics and Culture 1880-1920* (London, Sydney, Dover, New Hampshire: Croom Helm, 1986) pp. 1-28, Alun Howkins, 'The Discovery of Rural England,' pp. 62-88, Brian Doyle, 'The Invention of English,' pp. 89-115, Peter Brooker and Peter Widdowson, 'A Literature for England,' pp. 116-163, in *Ibid.* On the construction of British national identity during the Edwardian period, within the context of this race nation discourse, reconciling the Welsh and English, the Celt and the Saxon, see John S. Ellis, 'Reconciling the Celt: British National Identity, Empire, and the 1911 Investiture of the Prince of Wales,' *Journal of British Studies*, vol. 37 (October 1998) pp. 391-418. For a discussion of the growing interest in the historical study of English and British nationalism as a constructed culture in this sense, see Catherine Hall, Keith McClelland and Jane Rendall, *Defining the Victorian Nation: Class, Race, Gender and the British Reform Act of 1867* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) pp. 37-49.

⁸ On the rise of nationalism and racial thought during the First World War, see Mosse, *op. cit.*, Ch. 11, and on the idea of national self-determination in Government circles, see Kenneth J. Calder, *Britain and the Origins of the New Europe 1914-1918* (Cambridge, London, New York, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1976). For a succinct overview of the rise of race nationalism in British culture during the war, see George Robb, *British Culture and the First World War* (Hampshire and New York: Palgrave, 2002) pp. 5-11. The influence of this discourse in Britain in the years 1914-1918 was such that, as Ben Gidley has recently argued, the liberal concept of citizenship itself became racialized. Ben Gidley, *Citizenship and Belonging: East London Jewish Radicals 1903-1918* (PhD Thesis, University of London, 2002).

⁹ On the centrality of race and nation discourse in the self-image of Oxbridge students in the second half of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century see, Paul R. Deslandes, ' "The Foreign Element": Newcomers and the Rhetoric of Race, Nation, and Empire in "Oxbridge" Undergraduate Culture, 1850-1920,' *Journal of British Studies*, vol. 37 (January 1998) pp. 54-90.

¹⁰ On the importance of Milner in the fruition of the Balfour Declaration see Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, p. 312.

¹¹ Lord Milner, *The Nation and the Empire: Being a Collection of Speeches and Addresses: with an*

profoundly believed in “development along nationalist lines” and the mission of “the British race.”¹²

In even more explicit fashion, his protégé from his days in South Africa, Leopold Amery M.P., who was made part of the War Cabinet secretariat in 1917,¹³ declared the following in an address on imperial unity;

The whole foundation of Nationalism lies in the realisation of the fact that there are no such things as the independent individuals whom the individualist ideal postulated. Men are what they are, do what they do, wish what they wish, just because they are born of a certain race into a certain society. Race-instinct or patriotism are as much natural emotions as hunger or self-interest.¹⁴

It was of no small significance that in Amery’s draft of what became the Balfour Declaration he replaced the term “Jewish people” with “Jewish race” and “home” with “national home.”¹⁵

This reduction of the complexities of identity and ethnicity, as de-limited through the ordering prism of a racial discourse of the nation, was also apparent in the thought of Arthur J. Balfour, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs from 1917 to 1919.¹⁶ As Jason Thomes has so ably demonstrated, Balfour’s conceptions of race and nation played a central part in

introduction by Lord Milner, G.C.B. (London: Constable and Company, 1913) p. 39. Milner’s personal focus on the importance of race can be located particularly within the Imperial discourse of Anglo-Saxonism and the Empire. See Rich, *Race and Empire in British Politics*, p. 15.

¹² Lord Milner, ‘The Two Nations,’ An Address delivered at Toynbee Hall in East London- December 9, 1912’ in Milner, *op. cit.*, p. 496.

¹³ John Barnes and David Nicholson (eds.) *The Leo Amery Diaries, Volume I: 1896-1929* (London, Melbourne, Sydney, Auckland, Johannesburg: Hutchinson, 1980) p. ii. For Amery’s part in the development of the Government’s pro-Zionist policy, see Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, p. 320, Friedman, *op. cit.*, p. 44-46, 126, 128, 135, 138-140.

¹⁴ L.S. Amery, ‘Imperial Unity- Read at the inaugural meeting of the Chatham Club, July 15, 1910,’ in idem. *Union and Strength: A Series of Papers on Imperial Questions* (London: Edward Arnold, 1912) p. 15.

¹⁵ Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, p. 521. Although it has been suggested by William D. Rubinstein that Amery’s interest in Zionism stemmed from his supposed ‘secret identity’ as a Jew, this does not help us to understand why Amery was so easily inclined to consider that Jewry was a race/nation. William D. Rubinstein, ‘The Secret of Leopold Amery,’ *History Today* (February, 1999) pp. 17-23.

¹⁶ Although Mayir Vereté and Isaiah Friedman have downplayed Balfour’s role in the making of the Declaration,

his *Weltanschauung*, attracting him to the national ideology of Zionism.¹⁷ However, this did not simply constitute a meeting of ideologies. As we shall see, Balfour's imagining of Jewry within his wider vision of ethnic groups as singular, racial entities, bonded by a latent or innate national consciousness, was a fundamental precept for his, and others, decision to pursue a pro-Zionist policy.¹⁸

Although in the 1890s Balfour had been sceptical about the innate, immutable nature of racial/national types, qualifying the power of racial heredity, by 1908 he insisted that it was "quite impossible to believe that any attempt to provide widely different races with an identical environment, political, religious, educational, what you will, can ever make them alike. They have been different and unequal since history began; different and unequal they are destined to remain through future periods of comparable duration."¹⁹ In an address to the Welsh nationalist Society of Cymmrodorion in 1909, arranged by Lloyd George, Balfour simply declared, "questions of race" are the "most important of all."²⁰ For Balfour, race lay at the very centre of being, determining identity, culture and social relations. And not only did he conflate nation with race, seeing ethnic groups as distinct racial entities defined by a

it would not have been possible without his ardent and committed support. Vereté, 'The Balfour Declaration and its Makers', p. 26, Friedman, *op. cit.*, pp. 284-285.

¹⁷ Jason Thomes, *Balfour and Foreign Policy: The International Thought of a Conservative Statesman* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) Ch. 8. With the exception of Thomes, scholars have made little effort to examine the ways in which Balfour's *Weltanschauung*, or specifically racial national discourse, influenced his foreign policy and his perceptions of Zionism. For examples of more traditional biographical treatments of Balfour, see Ruddock F. Mackay, *Balfour Intellectual Statesman*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), Sydney H. Zebel, *Balfour- A Political Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973) and Max Egremont *Balfour: A Life of Arthur James Balfour* (London: Collins, 1980).

¹⁸ Thomes argues that Balfour's perceptions of race and nationalism did not directly contribute to the decision to issue the Balfour Declaration, as he assumes that it was solely designed to secure sole British suzerainty in Palestine. Thomes, *op. cit.*, Ch. 8.

¹⁹ Decadence [The extracts under this heading are taken from the Henry Sidgwick Memorial Lecture delivered at Newnham College, January, 1908] in Wilfrid M. Short, (ed.) *Arthur James Balfour as Philosopher and Thinker: A collection of the more important and interesting passages in his non-political writings, speeches and addresses, 1879-1912* (London, New York, Bombay and Calcutta: Longman, Green and Co., 1912) p.110.

²⁰ 'Race and Nationality by the Right Hon. Arthur J. Balfour, M.P., 21 October 1909,' in the *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*, Session 1908-1909 (London: published by the society, 1909) p. 238.

national culture, but for him nationality constituted the basis of normative culture in the modern world.²¹

Sir Mark Sykes, the most determined, consistent and convinced advocate of the Government's pro-Zionist policy,²² was equally the individual most influenced by the neo-Romantic discourse of race and organic nationhood. Significantly, during the course of the war Sykes became one of the most respected Government experts on the Near East, and by 1917 was a prominent member of the War Cabinet Secretariat. Not only did he ardently push for a pro-Zionist policy, but he was also a vociferous supporter of the Government's pro-Arab nationalist endeavour and personally developed a post-war vision of the Near East, built upon the principles of Jewish, Arab and Armenian nationalism.²³ Profoundly influenced by racial thought and neo-Romanticism, Sykes commonly perceived ethnic groups as homogeneous and organically interconnected, defined and bound by a deep sense of race.²⁴ Crucially, though, in his mind, the only true site of authentic racial self was nationalism, the basis of the world order, viewed as a natural, primordial instinct, rooted in the depths of history.²⁵ For this reason he conceived that the key principle of a stable post-war Near East was

²¹ "On Nationalism, Chiefly Scottish- Speech at the 248th St. Andrew's Day Festival of the Royal Scottish Corporation, 19th November, 1912" in Mrs Edgar Dugdale (ed.) *Opinions and Argument from Speeches and Addresses of the Earl of Balfour, K.G., O.M., F.R.S., 1910-1927* (London: Hodders and Stoughton, 1927) p. 60.

²² Vereté, 'The Balfour Declaration and its Makers,' p. 25, Roger Adelson, *Mark Sykes: Portrait of an Amateur* (London: Jonathan Cape Ltd, 1975) p. 244, Kedourie, 'Sir Mark Sykes and Palestine 1915-16'.

²³ Adelson, *op. cit.*, Fromkin, *op. cit.*, pp. 170-173, 182, 188, 224, Ch. 34, Yair Auron, *Zionism and the Armenian Genocide- The Banality of Indifference* (New Brunswick, NJ and London: Transaction, 2000) Ch. 5.

²⁴ For the influence of race thinking on Sykes see his racial typing of Armenians, Kurds and others in his book *Through Five Turkish Provinces*, and his interest in ethnology, Adelson, *op. cit.*, pp. 65, 118. Also see, for example, his Orientalist definition of "Asiatic Arabs" as a "people divided by religion, social custom, economic condition, but bound by one common language and an intense sense of race and breed." Memorandum by Sir Mark Sykes, 'Evidence on the Arab Revolt' 6 July 1916, CAB 42/16/1, Public Record Office, Kew (hereafter PRO).

²⁵ Sir Mark Sykes, 'Note on Palestine and Zionism,' c.22 September 1917, Document 80, Sledmere Papers, Copies held at the Middle East Centre, St Antony's College, Oxford, Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, pp. 272, 274. For Sykes' racial view of the emergence of nations see, for example, 'Agriculture and the State (A Speech delivered at York on November 7, 1907)', in Sir Mark Sykes, *Things Political*- pamphlet no.2 (n.d. or place of publication) pp.18-19.

“Nationality”, replacing the pre-war corruption of imperial aggrandizement, driven by finance, and the divisive competition between the Great Powers.²⁶

Though it was never the all-consuming passion that it was for Sykes, David Lloyd George, who as Prime Minister from December 1916 was of pivotal importance in the fruition of the Balfour Declaration,²⁷ also saw ethnicity and identity through a certain discourse of nationalism. As John Grigg has observed, Lloyd George was both “a product and a prophet” of “the revival of Welsh national feeling”, and was proud of “Wales’s distinctness and cultural identity.”²⁸ As part of this world-view, he was a firm believer in the importance of race, language and religion.²⁹ He once declared, ‘National feeling has nothing to do with geography; it is a state of mind.’³⁰ As such, he developed a “distinct ethnic theory”, through the prism of nationalism, in which he argued in 1896, “The Jewish nation had clung to its traditions, language and religion through all the ages”.³¹

Like Sykes, Balfour, Amery, Milner and others, Lloyd George conceived Jewry through the lens of race nationalism. Ethnic groups were seen as distinct, cohesive entities, held together by an essentialist national identity and culture. This identity was signified by a national self that was defined by and embodied in its specific national language, literature and land, underpinned by its myths of ancestry, golden age, decline and rebirth.

²⁶ Sir Mark Sykes, Offices of the War Cabinet, to Eric Drummond, FO, 20 July 1917, Sledmere Papers. To be sure, this belief in the beneficent power of nationalism was not shared by all those foreign policy makers that were behind the Balfour Declaration, such as Lord Robert Cecil. See Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe’s Twentieth Century* (London: Allen Press, 1998) p. 46. Nevertheless, they were all united in the belief that nationalism lay at the core of ethnic identity.

²⁷ Friedman, *op. cit.*, pp. 284-285, Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, p. 144, Vereté, ‘The Balfour Declaration and its Makers,’ p. 26.

²⁸ John Grigg, *The Young Lloyd George* (London: Methuen, 1990) p. 297, *idem*. *Lloyd George: From Peace to War, 1912-1916* (London: Harper Collins, 1997) p. 110.

²⁹ *Ibid.* p. 23.

³⁰ Quoted in Friedman, *op. cit.*, p. 243.

³¹ ‘Speech at Cardiff, as president of the annual music festival of the Welsh nonconformist choirs, 5 February

When, as we shall see in the second chapter, Jewish activists brought Zionism to the attention of members of the British Government during the war, it was readily accepted as representing the identities and yearnings of world Jewry. Primarily this was because it fitted in with their own conceptions of ethnic identity and normative culture. They were both a product of the same discourse of nationalism. As Balfour wrote to Lord Beaverbrook, the newspaper magnate and Minister of Information in 1918, “. . . Zionism is a purely nationalistic question, just as much as that of Poland, Esthonia [sic] or any other of the hundred and one nationalities who now demand our support to secure their self-determination.”³² In a crucial private meeting with Zionist representatives in February 1917, Sykes is reported to have said, “the idea of a Jewish Palestine had his full sympathy. He understood entirely what was meant by nationality and there was no confusion on that point”.³³ For Sykes it was natural that Jews aspired for a return to national life in Palestine and that it was rooted in “the fundamental traditions[,] sentiment and hereditary longings of the Jewish people”.³⁴ Unlike the assimilated Jews of Western Europe, this innate sense of national consciousness was considered to drive the authentic, uncorrupted Jewish identity of the masses in Eastern Europe and the USA, in which there was “an instinct to revive the Jewish nation once more in Palestine.”³⁵ William Ormsby-Gore, a member of the War Cabinet Secretariat with Amery and Sykes since April 1917, wrote, “Their [the Jewish people’s] hopes, whatever they may say, are centred in their survival as a people and as a people founded upon the idea of an ultimate restoration of Hebrew civilization in the land

1896’ quoted in Grigg, *The Young Lloyd George*, p. 202.

³² Balfour to Beaverbrook, 13 September 1918, PRO FO 800/204.

³³ ‘Memorandum of a Conference held on the 7th February 1917 at 193 Maida Vale, London. W.’ A226/30/1, Nahum Sokolow Papers, Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem [hereafter CZA].

³⁴ Sykes to Georges Picot, 28 February 1917, Document 32c, Sledmere Papers.

³⁵ Sir Mark Sykes, ‘Note on Palestine and Zionism,’ c.22 September 1917, Document 80, Sledmere Papers.

that was once theirs.”³⁶

The qualification ‘whatever they may say’ revealed a mind-set in which the national essence of the Jewish people was an objective reality, simply waiting to be exposed and seen, one that positioned other Jewish voices as inauthentic and illusory. The Zionist conception of Jewishness was not, therefore, accepted because of its own merits within Jewish politics or culture, but how it matched the pre-existing assumptions of British officials and politicians, who projected their own sense of culture and desires onto a mythical Jewry. This shared worldview meant that the vision of Jewish identity that was held by Zionists was easily acknowledged as an established fact and expounded as such by the Government expert. Hence, the following passage by Ormsby-Gore would sit just as comfortably in a popular Zionist pamphlet of the time as it did in his Government memorandum.

The hope of a return to Palestine has sustained every succeeding generation of Jews scattered in every quarter of the Globe. Palestine has always been regarded by the Jews, not merely as the Land of their ancestors and the place where all that goes to make up the Jewish religion, Jewish consciousness, and Jewish national history as its source, but also as the country of their future, where they will once again find a home and a fresh inspiration. The “Diaspora” or the scattering of the Jews has always been regarded by them as “Galuth” i.e. exile, and they have always cherished this hope of a “return”.³⁷

Underpinning this concept of a primordial Jewish national consciousness was the conception that “the word “Jew” neither connotes nor denotes solely or even mainly a religion or a sect . . . To the vast majority of the Jews of Russia, Poland, Austria and even in Germany- though in the latter to a less extent- “Jew” denotes and connotes something

³⁶ Ormsby-Gore, Offices of the War Cabinet, to Harold Nicholson, FO, 13 September 1918, PRO FO 371/3409/156603. As an example of this mentality outside of the Government it was written in *The Times*, “the Jews do constitute a nationality. The question is one of fact, not of argument, and the fact that the Jews are a nationality “is attested by the conviction of the overwhelming majority of Jews throughout all “ages.” *The Times*, 27 May 1917.

³⁷ William Ormsby-Gore, ‘The Zionist Movement,’ April 1918, PRO FO 371/3395/164779.

politically, socially and racially distinctive.”³⁸ That ‘the Jew’ was perceived as distinctive in a social, political and racial sense, defined by an instinctive yearning for national redemption, has to be seen within the wider discourse of race and nationalism from which Zionism sprung and certain members of the British Government derived their own world-view. To assume that Jews could be seen specifically as a nation, with a history, culture, memory and destiny perennially located within a national landscape and soil in Palestine, without acknowledging the way in which this view was shaped by the overarching discourse of race nationalism, would be to succumb to its power effects, its masquerade as a representation of the real. This leap of imagination, accepting the Zionist representation of Jewish identity as an unquestionable truth, could only have been possible if members of the British Government had the same vision of identity, one that was equally shaped by the discourse of the nation.

However, once we burrow beneath the assumptions of this national discourse, we are left with the question of how and why Jews were believed to be distinct in the first place, constituting something apart, racially, culturally, socially, politically. The key founding block of Jewry as a nation was that in the first place it constituted a singular, separate ethnic group, rather than individual advocates of a religious faith, all primarily citizens within the nation-state in which they lived. We must therefore acknowledge and explain Ormsby-Gore’s belief that, “Their consciousness is not our consciousness”.³⁹

1:2 The Jew as Other

The idea that ‘the Jew’ was distinct from the rest of the population had deep roots

³⁸ Ormsby-Gore, Offices of the War Cabinet, to Harold Nicholson, FO, 13 September 1918, PRO FO 371/3409/156603.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

within English culture, dating back to the medieval period.⁴⁰ This image of 'the Jew' lay in its function as Other, a mirroring, imaginary edifice, fed by traditional prejudice, upon which were projected the changing fears of the majority culture.⁴¹ And as a number of scholars have contended in the past two decades, the large depositary of myths and perceptions concerning Jews survived into post-Enlightenment discourse in England.⁴² However, as David Feldman has argued, the inclusion or exclusion of Jews *qua* Jews within the fabric of the English nation, rather than a foreign body, was dependent upon the wider, fluid context of national self-definition, defined by changing currents in social, political and cultural thought. The ambivalence of emancipation, "the extent to which Jews, at a particular moment, could be contained within the national community" was, in particular, defined by contending visions of the English nation, one defined by race, culture and religion (exclusion)⁴³ and

⁴⁰ Frank Felsenstein, *Anti-Semitic Stereotypes- A Paradigm of Otherness in English Popular Culture, 1660-1830* (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1995).

⁴¹ *Ibid.* Ch.1. For the wider study of stereotyping difference and Jews as Other see, in particular, Sander Gilman, *The Jew's Body* (London and New York: Routledge, 1991), idem. *Inscribing the Other* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1991) *Difference and Pathology- stereotypes of sexuality, race, and madness* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1985) and Mosse, *op. cit.*

⁴² In particular, see Colin Holmes, *Anti-Semitism in British Society, 1876-1939* (London: Edward Arnold, 1979), David Cesarani (ed.) *The Making of Modern Anglo-Jewry* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), idem. 'The Study of Antisemitism in Britain: Trends and Perspectives' in Michael Brown (ed.) *Approaches to Antisemitism: Context and Curriculum* (New York and Jerusalem, 1994) pp. 249-275, Tony Kushner, 'The Impact of British Anti-Semitism, 1918-1945' in Cesarani, *The Making of Modern Anglo-Jewry*, pp. 191-208, idem. *The Persistence of Prejudice: Anti-Semitism in British Society during the Second World War* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1989), idem. 'Comparing Antisemitisms: A Useful Exercise?' in Michael Brenner, Rainer Liedtke, Werner Mosse, David Rechter, (eds.) *Two Nations: British and German Jews in Comparative Perspective* (Tübingen: M. Siebeck, 1999) pp.91-109, Cheyette, *Constructions of 'the Jew' in English Literature and Society*, Michael Ragussis, *Figures of Conversion: "The Jewish Question" and English National Identity* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1995) Felsenstein, *op. cit.*, Juliet Steyn, 'Charles Dickens' Oliver Twist: *Fagin as a Sign* in Nochlin and Garb, *op. cit.*, pp. 42-56. For a more traditional, celebratory view of liberal acceptance of Jews within British society and culture see the much criticized William D. Rubinstein, *A History of the Jews in English-Speaking World: Great Britain* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996).

⁴³ The effects of this racial conception of the English nation on anti-Semitic racial representations of Anglo-Jewry as a people apart, perpetually alien, with their own hidden agenda, corrupting the Christian, Anglo-Saxon nation was strikingly apparent in the polemics against Benjamin Disraeli during the Eastern Crisis [1876-1880]. Todd Endelman, *The Jews of Britain 1656-2000* (Berkley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2002) p. 153, Feldman, *op. cit.*, p. 136 and Ch. 4, Ragussis, *op. cit.*, Chs. 4 and 5. The construct of the Jew as racially distinct, an alien presence, came to further prominence in the discourse of anti-alienism that emerged in the wake of East European immigration, amidst the pre-occupation at the turn of the century with national degeneration and urban poverty, informed by eugenic and racial thinking, and the corresponding attempt to

another that was predicated upon the civic liberties of an individual in relation to the state (inclusion).⁴⁴ Although within the political sphere the liberal conception of the nation held fast prior to the First World War,⁴⁵ the discourse of race, as we have seen, was an increasingly dominant code of thought and language within British culture. Within this frame of thinking, Jews were not only seen as a perpetually separate entity, or a degenerate alien presence, driven by a singular racial consciousness dating from biblical times, but they were considered to have a peculiarly strong and tenacious racial self, above and beyond other racial types, marked by a perpetual clannishness and exclusivity.⁴⁶

Emerging from this racial discourse, Balfour, for example, had by 1905 referred to Anglo-Jewry as “a people apart”⁴⁷ and later spoke of “the age-long miseries created for Western civilization by the presence in its midst of a Body which it too long regarded as alien and even hostile, but which it was equally unable to expel or absorb.”⁴⁸ This racial construct of Jewry as immutably different, with an inner identity that was primarily Jewish, only thrust

construct a British racial-imperial identity. David Cesarani, ‘An Alien Concept? The Continuity of Anti-Alienism in British Society before 1940,’ in idem. and Tony Kushner (eds.) *The Internment of Aliens in 20th Century Britain* (London: Frank Cass, 1993) pp. 28-29, David Feldman, ‘The Importance of Being English: Jewish Immigration and the Decay of liberal England’, in David Feldman and Gareth Stedman Jones (eds.) *Metropolis London: History and Representations since 1800* (London and New York: Routledge, 1989) pp. 77-78, Pick, *op. cit.*, pp. 215-216.

⁴⁴ Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews*, p. 120, 135-136, 380.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* pp. 377, 381.

⁴⁶ See, for example, C. Russell and H.S. Lewis, *The Jew in London: A Study of Racial Character and Present-Day Conditions*, Being Two Essays Prepared for the Toynbee Trustees, with an introduction by Canon Barnett and a Preface by the Right Hon. James Bryce, M.P. (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1900) pp. x, xv-xviii, xxi-xxvii, 1-2, Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews*, p. 92, Felsenstein, *op. cit.*, p. 246, Holmes, *op. cit.*, pp. 57, 74-75, 112, G.R. Searle, *Eugenics and Politics in Britain 1900-1914* (Leyden: Noordhoff International Publishing, 1976) p. 41. Not only did this racial, eugenic discourse also allow for Jews to be constructed as the degenerate, threatening Other, but following the outbreak of war, the racial marking of Jewish difference combined with anti-alienism. This was brought into sharp focus by a predominantly exclusionist notion of Englishness, and had a profound, negative impact on both foreign and British born Jews. Cesarani, ‘An Alien Concept? The Continuity of Anti-Alienism in British Society before 1940,’ pp. 34-36, idem. ‘An Embattled Minority: the Jews in Britain During the First World War,’ in Tony Kushner and Kenneth Lunn (eds.) *The Politics of Marginality- Race, the Radical Right and Minorities in 20th Century Britain* (London: Frank Cass, 1990) pp. 61-81.

⁴⁷ Quoted in Sharif, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

⁴⁸ A.J. Balfour, ‘Introduction,’ in Nahum Sokolow, *The History of Zionism, 1600-1918, Vol. I* (London, New

into confusion by attempts at assimilation, was commonly held during the war.⁴⁹

It is apparent, therefore, that the imagining of Jewry as a separate, cohesive people apart was rooted within a specific 'Semitic discourse' of the Jew as Other. But it was also intrinsically tied to, and dependent upon, a wider frame of racial thought within British culture. It is equally clear, however, that from the concept of racial distinctiveness to a nation, primordially tied to the concept of restoration in the space of Palestine, there is a substantive leap. It is true that Jews were sometimes represented as being defined by their attachment and gaze to the space of their Biblical past and their racial origins as an Oriental or Asiatic people.⁵⁰

But, as Bryan Cheyette has argued, the racial discourse of 'the Jew' did not constitute a static representation. Rather, racial constructions of 'the Jew' were fluid, indeterminate and slippery, undermining and threatening the yearning for fixity and homogeneity, order and stability within English culture during our period.⁵¹ The desire to incorporate and fix 'the Jew' was attempted through a number of totalizing discourses, only one of which was Zionism,⁵² including, "a civilizing liberalism, or an all-controlling Imperialism, or a

York, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras: Longmans, Green and Co. 1919) p. xxxiv.

⁴⁹ See, for example, 'Life and Letters- The Roots of Zionism,' *The Nation*, 1 May 1915. Also see 'Reviews' *The New Europe*, Vol. II, no. 26, 12 April 1917, 'On Jewish Patriotism' *The Nation*, 8 July 1916.

⁵⁰ This came to the fore in the polemics against Disraeli and representation of Jews during the Eastern Crisis, in which he was accused of being driven by 'Hebraic' concerns and his Oriental, anti-Christian, affiliation and common identity with the despotic Turk. Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews*, pp. 101, 110, 114, Holmes, *op. cit.*, pp. 11-12, 112, Anthony S. Wohl, 'Ben-Juju': Representations of Disraeli's Jewishness in the Victorian Political Cartoon,' in Todd M. Endelman and Tony Kushner (eds.), *Disraeli's Jewishness* (London and Portland, OR: Valentine Mitchell, 2002) pp. 114-117, 122-123, Ragussis, *op. cit.*, Ch. 5.

⁵¹ Cheyette, *Constructions of 'the Jew' in English Literature and Society*, pp. 268-270. Also see idem. 'Introduction: Unanswered Questions,' in idem. (ed.) *Between 'Race' and Culture: Representations of 'the Jew' in English and American Literature* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996) pp. 1-15.

⁵² On G.K. Chesterton's exposition of this discourse in 1911, of the transfiguring power of nationalism in redeeming and fixing 'the Jew', see Cheyette, *Constructions of 'the Jew' in English Literature and Society*, p.184.

rationalizing socialism.”⁵³ Overall, then, the fact that Jewry was perceived by members of the British Government as not just a cohesive racial group, but one that was defined by a primordial national consciousness, must be seen within their wider nationalist imagining of identity. However, advocates of a pro-Zionist policy in the British Government could not have accepted Zionism as being the authentic representation of the deep yearnings of an organic nation, simply because it fitted in with their own modular form of identity and culture.

1:3 Mythologies of the ‘Jewish Nation’ in British Culture

The portrayal of Palestine as the Jewish national space, the site of its mythical Golden Age up until the fall of Exile in 70 C.E., the negation of the Diaspora as an era of unremitting persecution and degeneration, and the unceasing Jewish desire for Return, were all essential elements in the Zionist discourse of Jewish nationhood.⁵⁴ In addition to their aforementioned acceptance by individuals such as Ormsby-Gore and Sykes, these concepts were widely asserted within British society during the war.⁵⁵ In understanding why Jewry was seen within parts of British society and the Government, more readily than Jewry itself, as being defined by Zionist constructs of history, culture, space and self, we must explain the resonance of these mythologies in British culture.

⁵³ *Ibid.* p. 269

⁵⁴ Yael Zerubavel, *Recovered Roots: Collective Memory and the Making of Israeli National Tradition* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1995) pp. 13-36. On the role of the Golden Age of national sovereignty in the ‘historical-myth complex’ of Jewish and other Diaspora nationalisms, see Anthony D. Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1999) pp. 215-216. On the Zionist negation of the Diaspora as a period of degeneration and unremitting suffering, see, in particular, Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin, ‘Exile in the Midst of Sovereignty: A Critique of ‘Shelilat Hagalut’ in Israeli Culture’ (in Hebrew) *Theory and Criticism* 4 (Fall, 1993) pp. 23-55, idem. ‘Exile in the Midst of Sovereignty: A Critique of ‘Shelilat HaGalut’ in Israeli Culture II’ (in Hebrew) *Theory and Criticism*, 5, (Fall, 1994) pp. 113-132, idem. ‘Historical Consciousness and Historical Responsibility’ (in Hebrew) in Y. Weitz, (ed.) *Between Vision and Revision: A Hundred Years of Historiography of Zionism* (Jerusalem: The Zalman Shazar Centre, 1997) pp. 97-134, discussed in Silberstein, *The Postzionism Debates*, pp. 177-182, *Ibid.* Ch. 1, pp. 52, 74-75, 78, 79.

⁵⁵ *The Daily Chronicle*, 30 March 1917, *The Glasgow Herald*, 29 May 1917, *The Liverpool Courier*, 24 April,

In order to do so it is necessary to point to the Bible's function as a cultural meta-text in English and then British national identity since the seventeenth century.⁵⁶

Since the Protestant Reformation the narratives, heroes and imagery of the Old Testament had become a key part of the British cultural fabric. During the nineteenth century, as Eitan Bar-Yosef has noted, "the Protestant Biblical vocabulary- a Chosen people, a Promised Land- was crucial to the forging of British imperialism."⁵⁷

The thick cultural presence of the Old Testament continued during the nineteenth century above and beyond any literal religious function, as evinced by evangelical and non-conformist movements. It also superseded the decline of the religious authority of the Hebrew Bible in the established Church, with the growing influence of liberal Christian theology from the 1850s and 1860s.⁵⁸ The so-called rediscovery of Palestine from the end of the eighteenth century, constructing it visually and textually as the Holy Land, the timeless landscape of the Bible and Ancient history, was driven by the original nexus of the Bible and English identity, but perpetuated itself in new and far-reaching

1917, 'On Jewish Patriotism' *The Nation*, 8 July 1916, *The Review of Reviews*, September 1916, *The Manchester Guardian*, 1 October 1917, *The Weekly Dispatch*, 1 April 1917.

⁵⁶ See Christopher Hill, *The English Bible and the Seventeenth Century Revolution* (London: Penguin Books, 1994) Linda Colley, *Britons- Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992) pp. 19-58, Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1992) pp. 51-54, Israel Finestein, 'Early and Middle 19th-Century British Opinion on the Restoration of the Jews: Contrasts with America,' in Moshe Davis (ed.) *With Eyes Toward Zion- Volume II- Themes and Sources in the Archives of the United States, Great Britain, Turkey and Israel* (New York, Westport, C., London: Praeger, 1986) pp. 73-92.

⁵⁷ Eitan Bar-Yosef, 'The Last Crusade? British Propaganda and the Palestine Campaign, 1917-18,' *The Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (January, 2001) p. 90, idem. *Images of the Holy Land in English Culture, 1798-1917* (D.Phil. Thesis, University of Oxford, 2000) On how imperial writers used the ancient mythology of the Bible and represented themselves as a newly chosen imperial race, see Cheyette, *Constructions of 'the Jew' in English literature and society*, p. 92. The use of Biblical motifs and metaphors in which Britain was constructed as the successor of the Jews as God's elect reached its apogee in the albeit marginal, *British-Israel* movement, which believed the British race and Empire to be the descendents of the Lost Tribes of Ancient Israel. Michael O. Friedman, *Origins of the British Israelites: The Lost Tribes* (San Fransisco: Mellen Research University Press, 1993) pp. 14-15. See, for example, Mrs George Wilson *Our Predestined British Empire: Israel in the British Race* (London: Robert Banks and Son, 1916) Capt. B. De W. Weldon *The Evolution of Israel: The Story of the English Race from 721 B.C. to the Present Day* (London: Harrison & Sons, c1910).

⁵⁸ Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews*, pp. 83-88.

ways as it was reconfigured within the emergent discourses of imperialism and Orientalism.⁵⁹ With the materialization of antiquarianism and archaeology, historical-geography, the challenge of Biblical criticism, improvements in travel and the development of organised tourism, photography and graphic technology and travel literature, the Holy Land was vividly brought to life, measured, documented and generally appropriated as a cultural possession within British culture.⁶⁰ As such, the mythologies of the Golden Age and fall of Ancient Israel loomed large in the popular imagination, as did Palestine, constructed and exhibited as the landscape of this historical drama. The imagery and language of the Bible as a cultural code through which the world was provided with meaning and significance was still evident by the time of the First World War,⁶¹ as was the apparent magnetic hold of the Holy Land in this sense.⁶² The result was that the degenerate, inauthentic Jew of the present, as predominantly seen within British culture and society, also had within that culture its binary, a glorious, heroic past with a national self located within the mythical space of Palestine.⁶³ Moreover, the idea of Jewish Restoration in Palestine was also present

⁵⁹ Bar-Yosef, 'The Last Crusade? British Propaganda and the Palestine Campaign, 1917-18,' p. 90, *idem. Images of the Holy Land in English Culture*, Yehoshua Ben-Arieh, *The Rediscovery of the Holy Land in the Nineteenth Century* (Jerusalem and Detroit: Magnes Press and Wayne State University, 1979), *idem. 'Holy land Views in Nineteenth-Century Western Travel Literature'* in Moshe Davis and Yehoshua Ben-Arieh (eds.) *With Eyes Towards Zion- III: Western Societies and the Holy Land* (New York, Westport, C. and London: Praeger, 1991) pp. 10-29, Naomi Shepherd, *The Zealous Intruders: The Western Discovery of Palestine* (San Fransisco: Harper and Row, 1987). Also see below, p. 179, n. 58.

⁶⁰ Rupert L. Chapman, 'British-Holy Land Archaeology: Nineteenth Century Sources,' in Davis and Ben-Arieh, *op. cit.*, pp. 208-226, Israel Finestein, 'British Opinion and the Holy Places in the Nineteenth Century: Personalities and Further Themes,' in Davis and Ben-Arieh, *op. cit.*, pp. 227-238, Vivian D. Lipman, 'Britain and the Holy Land: 1830-1914,' in *Ibid.* pp. 196-207, John Moscrop, *Measuring Jerusalem: The Palestine Exploration Fund and British Interests in the Holy Land* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1999).

⁶¹ Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European cultural history* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) Chs. 5-8, Alan Wilkinson, *The Church of England and the First World War* (London: SPCK, 1978) pp. 11-12.

⁶² See Bar Yosef, *Images of the Holy Land in English Culture*, pp. 268-293, *idem. Bar-Yosef, 'The Last Crusade? British Propaganda and the Palestine Campaign, 1917-18'* and below, pp. 169-170.

⁶³ On the binary of the modern (vulgar) Jew and the ancient (or heroic) Jew in nineteenth century English culture see

within British culture, having been a significant aspect of British Protestant thought, particularly its evangelical component, since the Reformation.⁶⁴ To be sure, those who actively believed in Britain pushing for Jewish restoration, so as to hasten the Second Coming, were marginal within British society and the established Church by the time of the First World War. Nevertheless, the concept of Return, beyond any eschatological meaning, was widely known, holding a familiar resonance.⁶⁵

Hence, within the discourse of nationalism, in which ethnic groups were assumed to possess a latent national consciousness, the mythologies that developed out of the specific nexus of British identity, the Holy Land and the Bible, provided a pre-existing vision of what Jewish national consciousness could mean and aspire to - an instinctive yearning for a Return to its national Golden Age in Palestine. This was underpinned by a schema of Jewish history that corresponded with Zionist periodization: the Golden Age of Ancient Israel, Exile, the degeneration of the Diaspora and the future redemption of national restoration.⁶⁶ With this in mind we can delineate how and why members of the British Government could accept that Jewry, as a distinct racial group, was driven by a hereditary impulse and traditional yearning for Jewish restoration in Palestine. It is in this sense that we can appreciate the function of the Bible and the Holy Land in British culture in our analysis, that is, its role in the reductive construction of Jewish identity as

Ragussis *op. cit.*, p. 278.

⁶⁴ Mayir Vereté, 'The Restoration of the Jews in English Protestant Thought 1790-1840,' in Rose, *op. cit.*, pp. 78-140, Israel Finestein, 'Early and Middle 19th-Century British Opinion on the Restoration of the Jews: Contrasts with America,' in Davis, *op. cit.*, pp. 72-101, Lionel E. Kochan, 'Jewish Restoration to Zion: Christian Attitudes in Britain in the Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries- Comparative Approach,' in *Ibid.* pp. 102-121, Jonathan Frankel, *The Damascus Affair- "Ritual Murder," Politics, and the Jews in 1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) Ch. 11, Kobler, *op. cit.*

⁶⁵ Finestein, 'Early and Middle 19th-Century British Opinion on the Restoration of the Jews', p. 98

⁶⁶ Zerubavel, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-36. Although David Myers has placed a caveat against a static Zionist vision of Jewish history, this periodization represented the dominant form of the historical meta-narrative which underpinned Zionist discourse. David N. Myers, *Re-Inventing the Jewish Past: European Intellectuals and the*

being synonymous with the claims of Zionist discourse.⁶⁷

Lloyd George is perhaps the most obvious example of this point, though the cultural presence of the Bible in British society was such that its influence was not confined to those with a religious background such as his or Balfour's.⁶⁸ Lloyd George was raised within "an intensely religious environment", in the small Baptist secessionist sect, the Disciples of Christ, which focused on the literal interpretation of the Scriptures as the sole basis of Christian belief.⁶⁹ Though rejecting these religious beliefs during his childhood,⁷⁰ his imaginings of Palestine and Jewry were manifestly filtered through the cultural code of the Old Testament, which continued to have a profound hold on his mind.⁷¹ Hence, in a meeting with the Imperial War Cabinet during the Palestine campaign of 1917, he remarked upon the army's entrance into Gaza thus, "We have entered the land of the Philistines . . . That is very interesting. I hope we shall conquer the Philistines."⁷² As such, as early as 1896, as we have mentioned, he was fixed in his conviction that Jewry was a nation from antiquity, bonded by its "traditions, language

Zionist Return to History (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995) pp. 5, 7-9, 181.

⁶⁷ This is in contrast to more traditional discussions of the relationship between the Bible, British culture and the origins of the Balfour Declaration. They have tended to point to the appeal of Zionism to the religious or historical sensibilities of individuals such as Lloyd George and Balfour, framing it as a direct motivation for their support for a pro-Zionist policy. See above, p. 3 n. 2.

⁶⁸ On Balfour's knowledge of the Old Testament and the related lifelong interest in Jewish history, stemming initially from his Scottish Presbyterian and Anglican upbringing see Stein, *op. cit.*, p. 158, Blanche E.C. Dugdale, *Arthur James Balfour, Volume I* (London: Hutchinson, 1936) p. 433, Ruddock, *op. cit.*, pp. 2-3. On the central importance of his religious philosophy on his attitude to life and politics see *Ibid.* p. 316.

⁶⁹ G.I.T. Machin, 'Lloyd George and Nonconformity,' in Judith Loades (ed.) *The Life and Times of David Lloyd George* (Bangor, Gwynedd: Headstart History, 1991) pp. 34-35.

⁷⁰ Grigg, *The Young Lloyd George*, pp. 33-34, *idem.* *Lloyd George: From Peace to War 1912-1916*, pp. 26, 111.

⁷¹ For his own account of the lasting impression made by his Bible education in his youth, see his afterword to Philip Guedalla, *Napoleon and Palestine* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1925) pp. 45-55, quoted in Sharif, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

⁷² 'Procès-verbal of the First Meeting of the Imperial War Cabinet, held at 10 Downing Street, S.W., on Tuesday, March 20 1917,' PRO CAB 23/43.

and religion through all the ages".⁷³

That the cultural prominence of the Bible in British society influenced how certain members of the Government were able to view Jewry as a nation is apparent from the fact that Return, as a pre-existing concept, could be discussed as having a historical or transcendent appeal. Hence, Sir Edward Grey, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, from 1905 to December 1916, was said to have remarked in November 1914, "the idea had always had a sharp sentimental attraction to him. The historical appeal was very strong."⁷⁴

In its most exaggerated form, the veneration of the Bible narrative as the history of the Golden Age of humanity, allowed for Zionism to be seen as a beneficent ideal and regenerative force, returning to the stability and authenticity of the Ancient world. Sykes was probably the sole example of this line of thought, in which his Catholicism,⁷⁵ neo-Romanticism and nationalism were intertwined.⁷⁶ Imbued with a sense of providence and transcendent mission, he wrote to Nahum Sokolow in May 1918,

... Your cause has about it an enduring quality which mocks at time; if a generation is but a breath in the life of a nation, an epoch is but the space twixt a dawn and a sunrise in the history of Zionism.

When all the temporal things in this world now holds are as dead forgotten as the curled and scented Kings of Babylon who dragged your forefathers into captivity, there will still be Jews, and so long as there are Jews there must be Zionism.

⁷³ 'Speech at Cardiff, as president of the annual music festival of the Welsh nonconformist choirs, 5 February 1896' quoted in Grigg, *The Young Lloyd George*, p. 202.

⁷⁴ Herbert Samuel, 'Note on a discussion with Sir Edward Grey, with an appendage concerning a meeting with Lloyd George, 9 November 1914,' Herbert Samuel Papers, Israel State Archive, Jerusalem, copies held in the House of Lords Record Office, London.

⁷⁵ On the profound influence of Catholicism on Sykes' world-view see, Shane Leslie, *Mark Sykes: His Life and Letters- with an introduction by the Rt Hon. Winston Churchill* (London, New York, Toronto and Melbourne: Cassell and Company, 1923) Ch. 5. On his deep reverence for the Bible, see Adelson, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

⁷⁶ Sokolow wrote of Sykes, "In him appeared to be harmoniously united the soaring imagination of Byron, the deep mysticism of Thomas Moore, the religious zeal of Cardinal Manning and the statesmanly and wide outlook of Disraeli." Nahum Sokolow, *History of Zionism 1600-1918, Vol. II- with an introduction by M. Stéphen Pichon* (London, New York, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras: Longmans, Green and Co. 1919) p. xvii.

We live in an age where mankind is reaping the whirl-wind of its wickedness and folly. Where in the past men have sown those dragons' teeth of intolerance, tyranny, injustice, and race hatred, legions of armed men now spring up to destroy and shatter the husbanded resources of progress.

... In Zionism lies your people's opportunity. In alliance with those other forces of regeneration and illumination which are centred on Jerusalem and which radiates through the world, it may be that you and your ancestors will play a part in establishing a moral order which will enable mankind to combine universal material progress with mutual subjection and charity.⁷⁷

Overall, therefore, it would be wrong to ignore the particular nature of Jews within the imagination of Sykes, and others in the Government, if we are to comprehend why he believed Zionism to have a deep hold over an essentialist Jewish psyche. The influence and nature of anti-Semitism within British culture, positing Jews as a distinct, degenerate and anomalous people, must be acknowledged if we are to appreciate, for example, his acceptance of the Zionist assertion that a sense of national consciousness was required to improve the "moral" of the anational Jew, "which has been impaired by ages of wandering and aloofness."⁷⁸ Equally, the looming presence of the Bible and the Holy Land within his mind was fundamental in his ability to unquestionably accept the tenets of Zionist discourse and his ever-growing embrace of Zionism as a valid, vibrant national movement, emerging out of the deep tradition, sacred literature and mythologies of an ancient nation yearning for restoration to its Golden Age.

But, despite the particular cultural context of how Jewry could be imagined within British culture as a singular racial group, defined by an immutable Zionist consciousness, this construct was born out of a broader, hegemonic discourse of identity and ethnicity. Without appreciating the determining power of nationalist discourse in

⁷⁷ Sykes to Nahum Sokolow, 27 May 1918, A18/23, Sokolow Papers, CZA. Although his letter to Sokolow was written in 1918, and was later published, it reflected his modes of thought and values which had driven him throughout his adult life. Sokolow, *History of Zionism, 1600-1918, Vol. II*, pp. 37-38.

⁷⁸ Sir Mark Sykes, 'Note on Palestine and Zionism,' c.22 September 1917, Document 80, Sledmere Papers.

how society was imagined by members of the Government, it is not possible to explain why other forms of Jewishness were instinctively seen as unrepresentative and inauthentic.

Indeed, the fact that ethnicity and ethnic groups in general, and not only Jews, were imagined through a specific discourse of race nationalism is demonstrated by the British Government's perceptions of other ethnic groups during the war. This will be illustrated below through a comparative study of Government perceptions and policies towards ethnic groups in the USA. Although those members of the British Government who advocated a pro-Zionist policy were not solely interested in American Jewry, it was their first and most consistent concern.⁷⁹ It is for this reason that the case study of British policy towards ethnic groups in the USA has been chosen as a means of contextualizing Government perceptions of and policies towards Jews during the war. It will be shown that ethnic groups were commonly considered to be cohesive, racial entities, whose influence could be won through appeals to their national selves. A fundamental question, though, is why would the British Government be interested in winning the support of ethnic groups, Jewish or otherwise, in the midst of the Great War?

1:4 Jewish Power in the Context of Total war

Historians such as Levene, Kadish and Segev have located the interest in Jews, or "obsession" as Levene sees it,⁸⁰ solely within anti-Semitic conceptions of Jewish power and the Jewish conspiracy myth.⁸¹ There is no doubt that world Jewry, particularly in the United States and Russia, was thought by members of the British Government to wield

⁷⁹ See Ch. 2.

⁸⁰ Levene, 'The Balfour Declaration: A Case of Mistaken Identity,' p. 76.

⁸¹ Kadish, *op. cit.*, p. 140, Segev, *op. cit.*, p. 42. Also see Leon Poliakov, *The History of Anti-Semitism, vol. iv 'Suicidal Europe, 1870-1933'* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985) pp.196-197

influence in the societies in which they lived, particularly in the press, politics and international high finance. Also, Jews were widely held to be anti-Allied, if not pro-German, and were by 1917 equated with pacifist, revolutionary socialism in Russia.⁸² It is readily apparent that the specific influence of Semitic discourse cannot be ignored in an explanation of this imagining of Jewish influence and its subversive pro-Germanism and revolutionary socialism.

Within British culture in the years prior to the war, the image of the influential Jewish plutocrat; the cosmopolitan, wire-pulling financier, attempting to influence politics, press and government policy, had indeed come to prominence in Semitic discourse.⁸³ This mythical construct had a clear impact upon how Jewry was conceptualised by members of the British Government who advocated a pro-Zionist policy. In the imagination of individuals such as Lord Robert Cecil, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Lloyd George, Sykes and Ormsby-Gore, Jewry was construed as a singular, influential international entity. In particular, as Levene has argued, Jews engaged in the world of *haute finance*, such as the Rothschilds or the American, Jacob Schiff, were seen as part of an international banking group attempting

⁸² Levene, 'The Balfour Declaration: A Case of Mistaken Identity,' Kadish, *op. cit.*, Ch. 4, Segev, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-49, Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, pp. 35-36, 145, 202-203, 226-228, 280, 346-347, 551, Vital, *Zionism: The Crucial Phase*, pp. 190-191, Segev, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-49. Frankel, 'An Introductory Essay- The Paradoxical Politics of Marginality: Thoughts on the Jewish Situation During the Years 1914-1921,' pp. 13-18, Kedourie, 'Sir Mark Sykes and Palestine 1915-16,' p. 239 and idem. 'Young Turks, Freemasons and Jews,' p. 249.

⁸³ This discourse was particularly marked during the Boer war, the Marconi scandal and the Indian silver affair. Holmes, *op. cit.*, pp. 11-13, 24-25, 28-29, 63-88, 112-113, Claire Hirshfield, 'The Anglo-Boer and the Issue of Jewish Culpability,' *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 15 (1980) pp.619-631, Kenneth Lunn, 'The Marconi Scandal and Related Aspects of British Anti-Semitism 1911-14,' (Ph.D. thesis, University of Sheffield, 1978), Feldman, *Englishmen and Jews*, Ch.4, pp. 265-267, Cheyette, *Constructions of 'the Jew' in English Literature and Society*, pp. 56-59, 77-78, 171-181. On the roots of this myth in the medieval construct of 'the Jew' as usurer see Felsenstein, *op. cit.*, p. 226. For a recent discussion of the international Jewish conspiracy myth, centred upon Jewish economic influence and avarice, see Derek Penslar, *Shylock's Children: Economics and Jewish Identity in Modern Europe* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2001) pp. 42-49.

to influence governments in pursuance of a common Jewish interest.⁸⁴ It is in this sense that we can perhaps understand Cecil's opinion that "it is not easy to exaggerate the international power of the Jews" and his specific reference to their "vast financial influence."⁸⁵ Similarly, Lloyd George, who had long conflated Jews with power in trade, finance and politics,⁸⁶ argued in 1917 that "influential Jews" were working for a premature peace, as they were "anxious that normal conditions of trade and industry should be re-established as soon as possible."⁸⁷ For Lord Eustace Percy, who worked for the Foreign Office on propaganda for the USA, Jewish financial power was of even greater importance, playing a pivotal role in the direction of world affairs.⁸⁸ The greater prominence of this myth in his mind reflected the pre-occupation with Jews in his Christian millenarian world-view. Indeed, his deeply religious *Weltanschauung*, setting him apart from his Government colleagues, led him to object to a pro-Zionist political, or profane, policy.⁸⁹

However, conceptions of Jewish influence were not solely viewed, if at all, in economic terms by certain advocates of the Declaration. Ormsby-Gore, for example, argued, "I am not suggesting that we can do anything by propaganda among the wealthy assimilated non-Zionist Jews, but among the middle and proletariat class of Jewish intelligentsia whose ranks contain so many of the journalists, teachers, political wire

⁸⁴ Levene, *War, Jews and the New Europe*, Ch. 3, esp. pp. 56-57, idem. 'The Balfour Declaration: A Case of Mistaken Identity,' p. 59.

⁸⁵ Minutes by Lord Robert Cecil, c.8 March 1916, PRO FO 371/2671/35433 and 15 February 1916, PRO FO 368/1600/14562 quoted in Levene, 'The Balfour Declaration: A Case of Mistaken Identity,' p. 59, n. 3.

⁸⁶ See his views on the Boer War being fought for German-Jewish financiers, Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, p. 143 and Grigg, *The Young Lloyd George*, p. 260.

⁸⁷ Phillip Kerr, 10 Downing Street to Lord Derby, War Office, 22 August 1917, PRO WO 32/11353.

⁸⁸ See Lord Eustace Percy to Felix Frankfurter, 23 May 1915, Frankfurter Papers, Library of Congress, copies held at the Harvard Law Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MS.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

pullers etc of the world.”⁹⁰ Prior to the Declaration, Ormsby-Gore was particularly interested in Jewish influence over the provincial press in Southern Russia.⁹¹ And Sir Ronald Graham, like others, considered the Russian Jewish proletariat, “the most important factor in the community in Russia”, to play “a very important role” in the “Russian [revolutionary] political situation.”⁹² After the Bolshevik revolution one official went so far as to suggest that if the Balfour Declaration had been issued earlier “it might possibly have made all the difference in Russia.”⁹³ Here, the myth of the influential Jewish proletariat, conflated with revolutionary socialism, was prominent.⁹⁴ Indeed, the key interest in Jewish influence by the time of the Declaration was winning the hearts and minds of the so-called Jewish masses, in Russia, but also in America and elsewhere, well beyond the confines of Russian revolutionary socialism.⁹⁵

This contradictory, fluctuating picture of Jewish influence was in part a product of the ambivalent nature of the Jew in Semitic discourse, which allowed for, if not determined, such fluid, shifting definitions and locations of Jewish influence. Moreover, the very nature of Faustian thinking, the idea of subterranean influence, is predicated upon the irrational, an elastic and all-encompassing vision. Sykes’ conception of Jewish influence is, perhaps, the most striking example of this point. He definitively believed in

⁹⁰ Ormsby-Gore, Offices of the War Cabinet to Harold Nicholson, FO, 13 September 1918, PRO FO 371/3409/156603.

⁹¹ Ormsby-Gore to Sir Ronald Graham, 30 May 1917, PRO FO 371/3012/110308, Ormsby-Gore, ‘Appreciation of the Attached Eastern Report, No.XVI,’ 17 May 1917, PRO CAB 24/143.

⁹² Sir Ronald Graham to Ormsby-Gore, War Cabinet Offices, 9 June 1917, PRO FO 371/3012/110308, Memorandum by Sir Ronald Graham for Balfour, 24 October 1917, PRO FO 371/3054/207495.

⁹³ Minute by Lord Hardinge, Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, c.11 December 1917, PRO FO 371/3054/233438.

⁹⁴ See Kadish, Chs. 1 and 4, Levene, ‘The Balfour Declaration: A Case of Mistaken Identity,’ p. 70. On the anti-Semitic myths of the Jewish financier and the Jewish revolutionary during the war see, for example, Mosse, *op. cit.*, pp. 177-178.

⁹⁵ See below, pp. 109-110.

the “inestimable advantages” to the allied cause of gaining the active friendship of Jewry, a “world force.”⁹⁶ And as part of his wider neo-Romantic vision of the world, shaped by organic, inter-connected forces,⁹⁷ this international force and its influence operated in terms that were “subconscious, unwritten, and wholly atmospheric.”⁹⁸

Overall then, the precise nature of collective Jewish influence, or how it functioned, was rarely, if ever, fixed or mapped out by a uniform Government group. Indeed, its significance and nature varied depending on the individual and the context of the discussion. There was, though, *a priori*, the idea that the will of the Jewish masses, as a collective group, could and did have an effective, though unspecified, influence in wider society, in public opinion and politics.

The pro-German or pacifist, socialist orientation of this power, as conceived in the minds of advocates of the Balfour Declaration, may be explained in part by the threatening and subversive element of ‘the Jew’ within their Semitic discourse. And their concern with this negative Jewish influence could and has been seen as part of a singular pre-occupation with Jews, shaped by an endemic anti-Semitism. However, the wider context of how Jewish power was conceived and given importance by members of the Government during the war, places a question mark against this analysis.

Indeed, the interest of foreign policy makers in the construct of Jewish influence was part of their overall imagining of ethnic power and its role in the fighting of the war.

⁹⁶ Sykes to the Foreign Office, 14 March 1916, PRO FO 371/2767/49669.

⁹⁷ Although Sykes believed that when faced with something like Zionism it was “not possible to work and think on ordinary lines”, he saw the world in wholly Faustian terms, worked by organic international forces of influence. Sykes to Sir Arthur Nicolson, 18 March 1916, PRO FO 800/381. Hence, as part of his belief in the power of the space of Palestine, he considered that British occupation would capture the “international forces” of Islam, Roman Catholicism, the Greek Orthodox and the post-reformation Churches. Sir Mark Sykes, ‘Note on Palestine and Zionism,’ c.22 September 1917, Document 80, Sledmere Papers. Also see ‘Palestine and West Arabian Situation- Memorandum by Sir Mark Sykes, 1 January 1918, PRO FO 371/3388/3767 and ‘The Problem of the Near East’ 20 June 1916, PRO WO 106/1510 (General Macdonogh Papers).

This is not to minimize the particular and culturally specific nature of Jewish power in the official mind, but to locate its relevance and nature within the Government's conceptualization of ethnic politics and total war between the years 1914 and 1918.

Foreign policy makers shared a profound concern with the construct of ethnic power in general, a conspiratorial fear of German and other hostile influences, and a belief in the beneficent nature and power of nationalism as a pro-Allied antidote.

The all-encompassing nature of total war had made the public will in all countries a prime concern for governments on both sides. It was conceived that mass opinion had a direct and intrinsic effect on a country's ability to fight the war, and its government's policies.⁹⁹ Moreover, the international nature of the Great War and its financial and material enormity made the public will of neutral countries, particularly the United States, of great significance.¹⁰⁰ As the deadlock and losses of trench warfare became ever more acute, public opinion was increasingly seen as a crucial weapon to be fought for; securing the will and means to fight in Allied countries, winning support in neutral countries and de-stabilising the Central Powers.¹⁰¹ As a result, the First World War, "the first media war", witnessed on both sides the most organised and prolific propaganda effort yet known, a desperate fight to shape public perceptions.¹⁰² In Britain, the increasing pre-occupation with propaganda was reflected in the development of a

⁹⁸ Sykes to Sir Arthur Nicolson, 18 March 1916, PRO FO 800/381.

⁹⁹ M.L. Sanders and Philip M. Taylor, *British Propaganda during the First World War, 1914-1918* (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1982) pp. 2, 11, Philip M. Taylor, *British Propaganda in the 20th Century: Selling Democracy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999) p. 5.

¹⁰⁰ Sanders and Taylor, *op. cit.*, Ch. 5, Peter Buitenhuis, *The Great War of Words: British, American and Canadian Propaganda and Fiction, 1914-1933* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1987) p. 54, Ch. 5.

¹⁰¹ Sanders and Taylor, *op.cit.*, pp. 134-135, Ch. 6.

¹⁰² Ferguson, *op. cit.*, p. 212, Alice Goldfarb Marquis, 'Words as Weapons: Propaganda in Britain and Germany During the First World War,' *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 13, no. 2 (1978) pp. 467-498.

vast machinery from 1914, dedicated to shaping hearts and minds.¹⁰³ From 1917, the year of the Balfour Declaration, this work was consolidated and expanded under the premiership of Lloyd George, who was strongly convinced of the power and importance of winning over mass opinion.¹⁰⁴

Of particular significance for this study, the haunting spectre of mass opinion and all its complexity was ordered in the official mind by breaking it down into distinct groups, stratified in large part along ethnic lines. Through racial discourse, the ethnic group was considered to be a homogenous, collective entity, with a singular will, driven by its own inherent racial consciousness and interests. Crucially, the interlinked spheres of public opinion and politics were thought to be influenced by such mass ethnic sentiment and the so-called wire-pullers and opinion formers, especially in the press, which existed within each group. Indeed, prior to 1918, the Government's foreign propaganda agencies directed their work principally "at the opinion-makers in foreign societies . . . 'the principle being that it is better to influence those who can influence others than attempt a direct appeal to the mass of the population.'" ¹⁰⁵ Underpinning policies towards ethnic groups, however, there lacked a clear distinction between the influence of "opinion-formers" and mass racial sentiment, or how this influence worked, demonstrating a certain Faustian conception of society and Government, determined by

¹⁰³ Following the onset of war, the Government responded to Germany's propaganda efforts, and proceeded to set up its own apparatus for propaganda abroad, including the Neutral Press Committee, the News Department of the Foreign Office and the War Propaganda Bureau at Wellington House. Sanders and Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-51.

¹⁰⁴ The offices for propaganda abroad were consolidated, albeit with on-going inter-departmental conflicts, with the establishment of a Department of Information in February 1917, a full Ministry from March 1918 and a Department of Enemy Propaganda at Crewe House in February 1918. *Ibid.* pp. 11-12, 57-66, 70-89, Gary S. Messinger, *British Propaganda and the State in the First World War* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1992) pp. 4, 33-34, 49, David French, *The Strategy of the Lloyd George Coalition 1916-1918* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995) p. 15.

¹⁰⁵ Sanders and Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 101, Taylor, *British Propaganda in the 20th Century: Selling Democracy*, Ch. 2.

unseen and yet somehow discernible ethnic power.

These perceptions of ethnicity and ethnic power, within the context of the propaganda war, drove the Government's interest in winning their support. However, what prompted and sustained the concern with such agents of influence, as with the propaganda campaign from its inception, was a wider conspiratorial and paranoid mindset, which was in the main centred upon the fear of the German menace.¹⁰⁶ Emanating from a pre-war Germanophobia and spy fever, there existed within Government circles an overpowering belief in the omnipresence of subterranean German intrigues and duplicity, manipulating the public imagination toward pro-Germanism, and the de-stabilising forces of pacifism and revolutionary socialism.¹⁰⁷ Aside from the fear of the German Other,¹⁰⁸ this paranoia, perhaps combined with a projection of anti-alienism,¹⁰⁹ often led to minorities being viewed from the outset as hostile, or at least deeply ambivalent, elements, posing a threat to the Allied cause. The pre-occupation of

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.* p. 45.

¹⁰⁷ Christopher Andrew, *Secret Service: The Making of the British Intelligence Community* (London: Heinemann, 1985) pp. 36-59, David French, 'Spy Fever in Britain: 1900-1915' *The Historical Journal*, vol. 21, no. 2 (1978) pp. 350-370, Ferguson, *op. cit.*, pp. 11-15. On the influence of Germanophobia amongst members of the Foreign Office and the diplomatic service before the war see Zara Steiner, *The Foreign Office and Foreign Policy, 1898-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969) pp. 70, 101, 104, 180 and Keith M. Wilson, *The Policy of the Entente: Essays on the Determinants of British Foreign Policy 1904-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985) Ch. 6. Niall Ferguson has highlighted the impact of the 'Napoleon neurosis' in the Foreign Office and its role in preventing a pre-war agreement with Germany. Germanophobes in the Foreign Office were mistakenly convinced of a Napoleonic German desire for European, if not world, domination. Ferguson, *op. cit.*, pp. 68-76. On the corresponding phenomenon of Anglophobia in Germany during the war, see Matthew Stibbe, *German Anglophobia and the Great War, 1914-1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001). To be sure, the German Government undertook a far ranging world policy of trying to induce minorities, both religious and 'national', within the Empires of the Entente to revolt, as well as carrying out propaganda within neutral countries. See, in particular, Hew Strachan, *The First World War, vol. 1: To Arms* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2001) Ch. 9. Nevertheless, what I intend to highlight here is how the Germanophobia amongst British foreign policy makers caused them to see German influence and intrigues far beyond where it existed, and led them to instinctively assume that the German menace had, or was about to, succeed in capturing the imagined power of ethnic groups.

¹⁰⁸ On the construction of external enemies as Other in time of war and the formation of British identity see Coley, *Britons* and idem. 'Britishness and Otherness- An Argument' *Journal of British Studies*, 31 (October 1992) pp. 309-329.

¹⁰⁹ Cesarani, 'An Alien Concept? The Continuity of Anti-Alienism in British Society before 1940'.

foreign policy makers with gaining the support of ethnic groups was, accordingly, largely focused upon deflecting and transmuting these anti-British and anti-Allied intrigues, wresting them from the grasp of German influence. Admittedly, some anti-Semitic agitators in the right-wing British press, such as Leo Maxse of *The National Review*, conflated the Jewish thirst for power with the German, the two being interchangeable.¹¹⁰ But for foreign policy makers engaged in the making of the Balfour Declaration, Jewry was only one subordinate, potentially hostile, force of influence aiding or being used by the German menace.

It is true that after the Bolshevik revolution the myth of the Bolshevik Jew became all pervasive within British society and the publication of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* in 1920 had some initial success in the Conservative press.¹¹¹ But, although Winston Churchill famously argued in terms of a worldwide Jewish/Bolshevik conspiracy in 1920,¹¹² we should not read this back into the minds of policy makers in 1917. The Jew-centric focus of the Jewish conspiracy myth, positing a Jewish desire for world control,¹¹³ is belied in our case by the complex tapestry of conspiratorial subjects, in the main manipulated by the enemy Other, that existed within Government thinking at this time.

Just as the problem of Jewry as an anti-Allied power, emerged out of a wider

¹¹⁰ See Panikos Panayi, *The Enemy in Our Midst- Germans in Britain During the First World War* (New York and Oxford: Berg, 1991) pp. 153, 163, Susanne Tewey, 'German Jews, Jews and Germans. Are all Jews Germans?: The Combination of Anti-Semitism with Germanophobia in Great Britain during the Great War', Paper given at the International Conference on First World War Studies, 7-8 September 2001. I am grateful to Dr Michael Berkowitz for giving me a copy of this paper.

¹¹¹ Holmes, *op. cit.*, pp. 141-160, Cohn, *op. cit.*, pp. 149-156, Kadish, *op. cit.*, Ch.1.

¹¹² Kadish, *op. cit.*, pp. 140-141.

¹¹³ For a discussion of the Jewish world-conspiracy myth, embodied in the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, as a modern adaption of medieval demonological anti-Semitism, see Norman Cohn, *Warrant for Genocide- The Myth of the Jewish world-conspiracy and the Protocols of the Elders of Zion* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1967) esp. pp. 16, 21-23.

frame of thought, so did the solution. As has been argued above, the view of Jewry as a cohesive racial group, driven by an innate national identity, was shaped by a discourse in which ethnic identity *per se* was seen to function in this way. As a result, the idea that Jewry could be won to the side of the British war effort through an appeal to its national self, also emerged out of a wider line of policy thinking in regard to ethnic groups. An appeal to the deep national consciousness of an ethnic minority was instinctively thought to be the means through which their loyalty could be won, transmuting their subversive and hostile tendencies. Beneath this concept lay the belief that nationalism in and of itself was a transfiguring and beneficent force. Emerging out of a pre-war discourse of racial, urban and societal degeneration, nationalism had been seen by many as the regenerative force *par excellence*.¹¹⁴ Balfour reflected upon this point in an address given in 1912, stating his view that the "doctrine of nationality . . . has played so great and so beneficent a part in the construction and reconstruction of the world."¹¹⁵

In the minds of Balfour, Sykes and others, nationalism,¹¹⁶ and therefore

¹¹⁴ Donald Read, (ed.) *Edwardian England* (London and Canberra: Croom Helm, 1982), Greta Jones, *Social Darwinism and English Thought: The Interaction between Biological and Social Theory* (Sussex and New Jersey: The Harvester Press and Humanities Press, 1980) pp. 115-116, Daniel Pick, *Faces of Degeneration: A European Disorder, c. 1848-c.1918* (Cambridge, New York, Port Chester, Melbourne, Sydney: Cambridge University Press, 1989) Ch. 7, Samuel Hynes, *A War Imagined- The First World War and English Culture* (New York: Atheneum, 1991) pp. 10, 12-13, 19, Howkins, *op.cit.*, Rich, *Prospero's Return?* pp. 10-11. For an example of this line of thought in popular literature, see Rev. R.F. Horton, *National Ideals and Race-Regeneration* (London, New York, Toronto and Melbourne: New Tracts for the Times, Cassell & Company, Ltd, 1912).

¹¹⁵ A.J. Balfour, 'On Nationalism, Chiefly Scottish- Speech at the 248th St. Andrew's Day Festival of the Royal Scottish Corporation, 19th November, 1912" in Mrs Edgar Dugdale (ed.) *Opinions and Argument from Speeches and Addresses of the Earl of Balfour, K.G., O.M., F.R.S, 1910-1927* (London: Hodders and Stoughton, 1927) p.60.

¹¹⁶ See, for example, Sir Mark Sykes, 'Note on Palestine and Zionism,' c.22 September 1917, Document 80, Sledmere Papers. For its most ardent champions, particularly in the circle of scholars and journalists that wrote for *The New Europe* and worked in the Government's propaganda agencies, including R.W. Seton-Watson, Wickham Steed and Lewis Namier, national self-determination was seen as the basis of stability and peace for post-war Europe. See below, p. 60, n. 148. For Sykes, Arab, Armenian and Jewish nationalism were the key to restoring the past glories and authenticity of these peoples and the Orient, which had been corrupted by modernity and the Ottoman Turk. Elie Kedourie, *England and the Middle East- The Destruction of the Ottoman Empire 1914-1921* (London: Bowes & Bowes, 1956) pp. 67-87.

Zionism,¹¹⁷ symbolised the principles of order, stability, idealism and normative culture. In this sense, it embodied the self-image of the Allied cause, defined against the immoral, destructive forces of the enemy Other.¹¹⁸ Sykes defined this in a simple binary; citing “the principle of nationality” as “the antidote to Prussian military domination.”¹¹⁹ Thus, in 1918 Ormsby-Gore wrote, ‘Politically Zionism has thrown itself wholeheartedly on the side of the Entente powers . . . because the moral conceptions and ideas of Zionism are essentially shared by Great Britain and her Allies, and are in marked contrast to those of the Central Powers.’¹²⁰

As such, the Manichean doubling of the war, as determined by nationalist discourse, was projected by some onto Jewry. Percy, for example, divided Jewry in 1915 into “the true Israel”, defined by its national culture, ideals and religion, naturally allied with England, and its Other; the corruptive, de-nationalized powerful side of Israel, equated with Germanism.¹²¹ With the added threat of Russian revolutionary socialism in 1917, Sykes was also quite clear in his doubling of Jewry, between Zionism, “a permanent and positive force in world Jewry” and the anti-national, “cosmopolitan” minority that were corrupted by either high finance or socialist internationalism.¹²² By

¹¹⁷ On Balfour’s conception of nationalism as the single normalizing force, fixing the ambivalence of the Jew, see, for example, Weizmann to Ahad Ha’am [Asher Ginsburg] 14-15 December 1914, no. 68, Leonard Stein (ed.) *The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann, Vol. VII Series A, August 1914-November 1917* (Jerusalem: Israel Universities Press, 1975) p. 81. For Sykes, see Sykes to Sokolow, 14 April 1917, document no. 42B, Sledmere Papers.

¹¹⁸ On the image of Britain as the protector of small nations, particularly Belgium, and thus for freedom and democracy, set against the evil German aggressor, in British domestic propaganda, see Cate Haste, *Keep the Home Fires Burning: Propaganda in the First World War* (London: Allen Lane, 1977) p. 80 and Ch.5. For foreign propaganda and the stereotype of the quintessentially immoral Hun, see Sanders and Taylor, *op. cit.*, Ch. 4.

¹¹⁹ ‘Memorandum on Separate Terms of Peace with Turkey,’ n.d. Document 72, Sledmere Papers.

¹²⁰ William Ormsby-Gore, ‘The Zionist Movement,’ April 1918, PRO FO 371/3395/164779.

¹²¹ Percy to Felix Frankfurter, 23 May 1915, Library of Congress, copies held at the Harvard Law Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MS.

¹²² Sir Mark Sykes, ‘Note on Palestine and Zionism,’ c.22 September 1917, Document 80, Sledmere Papers. For other examples of this Manichean binary of the nationalist and anationalist Jew in the minds of individuals such as Wickham Steed, foreign editor of *The Times* see Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, p. 325.

tying the British cause to the dominant and innate national aspirations within Jewry, the positive force of nationalism would have a beneficent effect on their attitudes to the war.¹²³ Given this construction of nationalism as a transfiguring, positive force, as imagined, for example, within Sykes' neo-Romantic *Weltanschauung*, we can understand his assertion that satisfying Zionism would result in, "powerful and impalpable benevolence deflecting hostile forces, calming excitement and transmuting various Pacifist tendencies of thought into friendly political elements."¹²⁴

Correspondingly, anti-Zionism, as anti-nationalism, represented for Sykes all that was negative, degenerative and threatening in Jewry and the world. It was therefore tied in his mind to the demonic others of the "Prussian Militarist" and the Ottoman Turk, a united opposition to morality, peace and stability.¹²⁵ Anti-Zionists were cited as "pro-Turk Germans" who were being used by the Ottomans in their post-war "world policy", together with pacifists in all Allied countries, international financiers, Indian and Egyptian seditionists, and revolutionary socialists. "[E]ach one of these forces" was

Drawing on Cheyette's analysis of Semitic discourse as inherently dualistic, Kadish has also noted this doubling of Jewry in the minds of those in the Government who advocated a pro-Zionist policy, focusing on the binary of the constructive nationalist Jew and the revolutionary, internationalist Jew. Kadish, *op. cit.*, pp. 136-137, 181-182. Also see Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, p. 551. However, in these analyses no explanation is given as to why nationalism was the measure of this Manichean division. Yet, this is of critical importance in understanding how members of the Government perceived Jews and why they pushed, specifically, for a pro-Zionist policy. That this was a product of a wider totalizing discourse of the nation, and not solely Semitic discourse, is apparent from our study.

¹²³ Alyson Pendlebury has recently argued that the British Government's support of the Zionist movement was in part seen by some its supporters as an attempt at conversion, not to Christianity but to nationalism. This conversion drive was intended to replace one identity, Bolshevism, with another, Zionism. Alyson Pendlebury, 'The Politics of the 'Last Days': Bolshevism, Zionism and 'the Jews' ' *Jewish History and Culture*, vol. 2, no.2, (Winter 1999) pp. 103-105, *idem*. 'Jerusalem in Ragtime.' *Reconstructions of 'the Jew' in First World War Britain* (Ph.D. thesis, University of Southampton, 2001) pp. 145-147. However, it is argued here that the majority of Jews were already conceived as having an innate Zionist identity. In the minds of those that pushed for the Balfour Declaration they did not need to construct a new identity. Rather, they wished to tie the yearnings of this pre-existing identity to a British victory in the war.

¹²⁴ Sykes to Sir Ronald Graham, 28 April 1917, PRO FO 371/3053/87897.

¹²⁵ Sir Mark Sykes, Memorandum printed for the use of the War Cabinet, 29 July 1917, PRO FO 371/3057/149776.

described as “evil, corrupt, and hostile, either to this country or the welfare of mankind .

.”¹²⁶

That this designation of anti-Zionism as evil and pro-Turk German was part of a wider world-view is clear. It was in large part defined by the Manichean structure of nationalism and its Other within his mind, and his conspiratorial vision of world affairs, centred upon the forces of Prussian Militarism and Ottoman Turkey. Equally, if we look beyond the peculiar language and mentality of Sykes’ conspiratorial Romanticism, which was unique among the advocates of the Balfour Declaration, the Government’s perceptions of, and interest in, Jewry were also drawn from a similar, wider frame of thought. That is, ethnic groups were commonly viewed as powerful entities, whose hostile proclivities and the threat of German influence had to be neutralised through an appeal to their nationalist identities. I shall now attempt to illustrate this typology of Government thought, through our brief comparative study of British policies towards ethnic groups in the USA during the war.

1:5 British Policy towards Ethnic Groups in the USA- A Comparative Study

From its inception, as has been noted above, the British Government’s foreign propaganda campaign was primarily focused upon winning public opinion in the USA. Britain’s war effort was increasingly dependent on American financial and material support, which became ever more significant as the prolonged and draining nature of the conflict took its toll.¹²⁷ Even after the USA entered the war in April 1917, the need to secure full American support

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²⁷ Sanders and Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 185, W.B. Fowler, *British-American Relations, 1917-18: The Role of Sir William Wiseman* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969) p. 64, K.M. Burk, *Britain, America and the Sinews of War 1914-1918* (Boston and London: Allen & Unwin, 1985), John M. Cooper, Jr., ‘The Command of Gold Reversed: American Loans to Britain, 1915-1917,’ *Pacific Historical Review*, vol. 45, (May 1976) pp. 209-230, Carl P. Parrini, *Heir to Empire: United States Economic Diplomacy* (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh University Press, 1969).

remained a pre-occupying concern, particularly with the military deadlock on the Western front and the threat of social and military breakdown in Russia, Italy and France.¹²⁸ Within this context, British foreign policy makers sought to gather American public opinion squarely behind the British plight and the conflict with Germany. Significantly, as I have mentioned, this propaganda war was pitched against the fear of enemy influence, attempting to win the loyalty, or deflect the hostility, of agents of power in American society and politics. Although American Jewry was considered to be one of these interest groups, public opinion and the corridors of power were generally thought to be influenced by ethnic and religious entities¹²⁹ that were hostile or indifferent to the British cause. My focus here is on how ethnic groups specifically were perceived as singular, powerful social units in society, who were driven by a collective national consciousness and interest. Although Government officials could not ignore the divisions that existed within each group, it was consistently believed that they were fundamentally defined and united as a whole by this all powerful bond. As Kenneth J. Calder has shown in his important work on propaganda policies towards 'Slavic' minorities, particularly Poles, the perceived power of these groups and their aspirations for national self-determination were used as "weapons of warfare", combating enemy and other hostile forces of influence.¹³⁰

In this study, the British Ambassador to Washington, Sir Cecil Spring-Rice, is a good starting point. Although he clearly discussed Jewry as a collective, largely pro-German, or at

¹²⁸ French, *The Strategy of the Lloyd George Coalition, 1916-1918*, pp. 275-276.

¹²⁹ On attempts to win the perceived influence of religious groups such as Catholics by British foreign propaganda agencies, see Sanders and Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 199-200, 169-170 and below, pp. 175, 180-183.

¹³⁰ Kenneth J. Calder, *Britain and the Origins of the New Europe 1914-1918* (Cambridge, London, New York, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1976) pp. 130-131, Chs. 4 and 5. Calder's excellent work is, however, marked by a qualified acceptance of Government thinking on the issue of minority power and the enemy threat. Although he states that their importance may have been exaggerated he writes that, "the dangers [of the latter]. . . were very real." *Ibid.* pp. 62, 216.

least anti-Allied, group,¹³¹ they were only one part of his vision of an American social and political landscape, shaped by hostile forces of influence, largely ethnic or religious in nature, allied with or used by the German menace.¹³² He reported in December 1916: “At the present moment we are confronted with a situation that the influence of the pro-German elements . . . of the hereditary enemies of England, of the pacifists, of a large section of the Catholics, are altogether arrayed against us”.¹³³

These pro-German elements included, for example, American Swedes, who were driven by “a strong race sympathy with the Germans” and the Lutheran clergy, who were reported to be “working in German interests”.¹³⁴ Together, pro-Germans and German Americans were thought to control the entire media and had a hold over “the most prominent and influential members of Congress.”¹³⁵

In the midst of this struggle with Germany over the American public imagination, there were a number of perceived groups of influence to be won that were categorised and viewed solely in ethnic terms. They were conceived, through the prism of race, as cohesive, collective types whose identity and attitudes to the war were exclusively shaped by their racial self. Thus, American society was in part ordered and controlled in the Government official’s mind by dividing it into singular ethnic questions. These ethnic forces of influence included the imagined constructs of ‘the Jews’, ‘the Armenians’, ‘the Syrians’, ‘the Irish’, and ‘the Poles.’ Hence, Spring-Rice wrote the following assessment of American opinion for Balfour, homogenising these complex groups into singular types: “the attitude of the Irish at the present moment is

¹³¹ See Poliakov, *op. cit.*, pp. 189-191, Levene, *War, Jews and the New Europe*, pp. 58, 121.

¹³² On Spring-Rice’s pre-war Germanophobia, see Steiner, *op. cit.*, pp. 103-104.

¹³³ Spring-Rice to Grey, 13 January 1917, PRO FO 800/86.

¹³⁴ Spring-Rice to FO, 7 July 1916, PRO CAB 37/151/43.

¹³⁵ Spring-Rice to Grey, 21 July 1915, PRO CAB 37/131/31 quoted in C.J. Lowe and M.L. Dockrill (eds.) *The Mirage of Power: British Foreign Policy 1902-22, Vol. 3, The Documents* (London and Boston: Routledge and

fanatically hostile . . . The Zionists are very powerful among the Jews and the Syrians and the Armenians exert a good deal of influence.”¹³⁶ Elsewhere he proclaimed in June 1916, “The Poles and the Irish both seem to be lost to us and this will make a very considerable difference. I don’t know yet what pressure is being brought to bear upon the government but no doubt it will make itself felt.”¹³⁷

The interest in these entities stemmed from their supposed, but unseen power, having the ability to make “a very considerable difference” and pressure the US Government. Crucially, the direction of this power, whether it supported or opposed the British cause, was necessarily determined by what was seen to define these groups, their ethnic selves and interests.

Aside from groups such as the Armenians, who were described by a member of the Department of Information as being, “well-organised commercial communities, with a considerable influence in the countries in which they live”¹³⁸, the power of the American Poles and particularly the American Irish were pre-occupying concerns. As we have just noted, the Poles, like the Irish, were seen to wield considerable power and were lost to the British cause.

As early as March 1915, under the influence of his friend Lewis Namier, the Wellington House expert on Poland,¹³⁹ Percy had drawn up a memorandum on the ‘Polish-American Question.’ Although he considered that “if we ever try to form foreign opinion in America the Jews are our job”, he asserted the need to have Polish opinion in America as a “makeweight” to

Kegan Paul, 1972) p. 555.

¹³⁶ Spring-Rice to Balfour, 29 December 1916, ADD 49740, Balfour Papers, British Library.

¹³⁷ Spring-Rice to Lord Percy, 16 June 1916, PRO FO 800/242.

¹³⁸ A.J. Toynbee, Intelligence Bureau, Department of Information, ‘The Nationality Problem of the Caucasus,’ 9 October 1917, PRO CAB 24/28/GT.2253.

¹³⁹ Sanders and Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 41, Messinger, *op. cit.*, p. 166, ‘Propaganda- the Department of Information’s tree of sections and power structure,’ Manchester File No. 204, C.P. Scott Papers, John Rylands Library, University of Manchester. Namier, who later became the great English parliamentary historian and a Zionist, was already a distinguished scholar by the time of the war. Norman Rose, *Lewis Namier and Zionism*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980) and Julia Namier, *Lewis Namier- A Biography*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1971).

the German vote.¹⁴⁰ This assessment stemmed from the widely held view of the American Polish community as an important political power.¹⁴¹ However, this force was considered to be divided into neutral and pro-Austrian factions, with Austrian and German agents vigorously working to capture it for the Central Powers. Up through to 1917, the British desperately tried to subvert this imagined threat.¹⁴²

The way in which British Government officials attempted to unify this perceived force behind the British cause is of great significance for our study of Government perceptions of ethnicity and ethnic groups during the war. Not only was it considered that there was a singular ‘Polish-American Question’, a power to be won by British propaganda agencies, but Percy, Spring Rice and others believed that this could be achieved by Russia making intimations over the future of Poland, which had been split between Russia, Austria-Hungary and Germany since the late eighteenth century.¹⁴³ Spring-Rice commented in early 1915, the “Poles are still divided on the question of Russia, although they would certainly like if they could to espouse the Russian cause, that is if they could be convinced that Polish aims would receive recognition.”¹⁴⁴ In sum, it was considered that American Poles, as an influential, ethnically defined group, could be persuaded to support the Allied cause by tying it to the national self-determination of the Polish nation.

Beneath this concept lay the fundamental assumption that American Poles were

¹⁴⁰ Lord Percy, ‘The Polish-American Question,’ 3 March 1915, PRO FO 371/2450/29614.

¹⁴¹ Calder, *op.cit.*, p. 72, Stanislaus A. Blejwas, ‘Polonia and Politics’ in John J. Bukowczyk (ed.) *Polish Americans and Their History: Community, Culture, and Politics* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1996) p. 129. There is no doubt that during the war numbers of Polish Americans became more politicized and organised in relation to Poland, but their questionable influence did not in any way correspond to the Government’s perception of their power. *Ibid.* pp. 128-129.

¹⁴² Calder, *op. cit.*, pp. 64-65.

¹⁴³ Lord Percy, ‘The Polish-American Question,’ 3 March 1915, PRO FO 371/2450/29614, Minute by Spring-Rice, 1 April 1915, PRO FO 371/2450/43258.

¹⁴⁴ Minute by Spring-Rice, 1 April 1915, PRO FO 371/2450/43258.

primarily driven by a singular sense of Polish nation-ness and inherent desire for national restoration, one that was so prominent that it could determine their entire attitude toward the war. This idea was axiomatic within the minds of foreign policy makers and was never questioned. It governed the entire propaganda campaign towards American Poles throughout the war.¹⁴⁵ Already in August 1914, a Russian proclamation promising Polish unity and autonomy was used by the Foreign Office for propaganda purposes in the USA.¹⁴⁶ It was considered that, as Kenneth J. Calder put it, “the Polish nation was a weapon which could be used by either side”.¹⁴⁷

But, in keeping with the belief in the power of pan-nationalist/racial feeling, the considerations concerning American-Poles were also tied in with Pan-Slavism. Significantly, the group of academics and self-styled experts who were engaged in propaganda work in relation to Central and Eastern Europe were probably the most influenced by the discourse of race nationalism. Centred around the journal *The New Europe* and its founder, R. W. Seton-Watson, this group, which included Namier, G.M. Trevelyan and Henry Wickham Steed, the foreign editor of *The Times*, were the most committed champions of national self-determination in government circles. They profoundly believed in the beneficent power of the racial/national bond, especially amongst their key interest, the Slavs.¹⁴⁸ Hence, Namier argued, “the only way of approaching “the neutrals” among the American Poles and of gaining their support for our side is through the intermediary of the other American Slavs. However impracticable a Slav union may be in Europe it is by no means impracticable in the United States and it might give

¹⁴⁵ Calder, *op. cit.*

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.* p. 23.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.* p. 145.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.* esp. pp. 18-19, 55, 112-113, Messinger, *op. cit.*, Ch. 11, Sanders and Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 82, 160, Ch. 6, Hugh and Christopher Seton-Watson, *The Making of a New Europe- R.W. Seton-Watson and the last years of Austria-Hungary* (London: Methuen, 1981).

excellent results”.¹⁴⁹

In his assessment of American Slavs, Spring-Rice went much further and argued in terms of a Slav race whose behaviour in the United States would, in an unspecified manner, “react upon the struggle in Europe.”¹⁵⁰ The influence of this “race” was seen to be so great that it was thought that, if it was made known in the United States that the Russian Government was carrying out a favourable policy to the Russian Poles, and that the latter had an enthusiasm and eagerness for military service; it would have “an important influence in checking German intrigues directed against supplying the military needs of the Allies.”¹⁵¹ This information would be disseminated amongst “the English speaking population and also to the Polish population and to the Bohemian, Slovak, Croatian and Slovenian elements with whom the prominent friendly Poles, especially in Chicago, are believed to be closely in touch”.¹⁵²

These suggestions were considered to be of such importance that the British Ambassador to Russia, Sir George Buchanan, was instructed to discuss them with the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sazanov. In his report to the Foreign Office Buchanan stated that he had informed the minister of the British Government’s desire to “win over to our side the Poles” in America. Buchanan told Sazanov that “Anything that His Excellency could do to influence the Polish and Slav elements in the United States would be very useful at the present moment . . . Monsieur Sazanov replied that he would certainly do so . . . ”¹⁵³ Sazanov, however, did nothing.

The Russian interest in Poland meant that they were not about to make any substantial sacrifices for the sake of winning American Polish opinion. And as an internal Russian affair, the

¹⁴⁹ Lewis Namier, ‘Preliminary report based on some Polish-American Papers,’ 13 March, 1915, PRO FO 371/2450/29614.

¹⁵⁰ Minute by Spring-Rice, 1 April 1915, PRO FO 371/2450/43258.

¹⁵¹ Minute by Lord Percy 14 April 1915 and anonymous memorandum which I would attribute to Percy.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

¹⁵³ Sir George Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey, 19 May 1915, PRO FO 371/2450/73841.

British Government could not act independently on an issue which could risk a breach with her ally.¹⁵⁴ Yet, British propaganda agencies would not stand idly by and proceeded to use Polish and other Slavic nationalist organisations in the USA to create and distribute pro-British propaganda, sent missions to organize Poles and Slavs against German intrigues, recruited American Poles to serve in the Canadian army and sponsored Polish relief to the same end.¹⁵⁵ Although it was not possible to make any statements about the future of Poland, any possible opportunity was taken to tie the Polish national imagination to the British cause. After the fall of the Tsar in February 1917, Britain was able to directly and publicly make qualified statements over the future of Poland, culminating in the Supreme War Council's declaration on 3 June 1918, and contributed to the creation of a Polish national army, both of which were intended to secure Polish support in the face of German intrigue.¹⁵⁶ But by this time, according to Calder, the desperate military situation in Eastern Europe and the Central Powers' promises over Poland, meant that the prime focus was no longer American Poles, but winning the military support of the Polish population itself.¹⁵⁷ Nevertheless, from 1914 to the beginning of 1917, Anglo-Polish relations were principally driven by a concern with American Polish power, the fear of enemy influence and the frustrated attempt to tap into what was seen as the fixed, nationalist identity of American Poles.

Admittedly, Namier did question the predominant Foreign Office belief in American Polish power. In his memorandum, 'Observations on Polish Activities in America', he wrote, "My own conviction is that the general political and military importance of the Poles, both in America and Europe, has been hitherto vastly exaggerated . . . The real attitude of the Poles

¹⁵⁴ Calder, *op. cit.*, 85-86.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.* pp. 53, 65-67, 71, -73, 75-76, 77-78, 130-131, 134, PRO FO 800/108(Grey Papers) Telegram to Horodyski through the British Consulate in New York, 9 December 1916.

¹⁵⁶ Calder, *op. cit.*, pp. 196-197, 156-167, 168, 170.

towards us we can hardly influence at all- and it very questionable to what an extent it is worth attempting it . . . ” However, Namier went on to place his critical stance within the assumptions of the Government mindset and maintained that, “The Poles could become a united and important factor in Europe, and possibly also in America, and would become dangerous to us, if the Central Powers gave them a guarantee of unity and freedom.”¹⁵⁸ So, even as he tried to dispel the myth of Polish power, the omnipresent threat of enemy intrigues, conspiring to capture and foster ethnic influence through nationalism, had clearly left its mark on Namier. As for his colleagues, his doubts failed to have a discernible impact, and were certainly not followed by any questioning of nationalism as the key to a singular American Polish identity.

This was despite the fact that even within the Polish nationalist movement itself there were bitter divisions between the left and right wing factions, led by Roman Dmowski and Józef Pilsudski respectively. This conflict was just one manifestation of a complex diversity that belied any semblance of American Polish unity. There were many “criss-crossing factionalisms in Polish America”, including, “the continuing rivalries among religionists and secularists . . . and . . . conflict[s] among monarchists, socialists and liberals.”¹⁵⁹ With regard to the imagined depth and power of Polish national consciousness amongst American Poles, the fact is that more Polish Americans served in the U.S. armed forces during the war than in the Allies’ Polish army and that “the Polish-American purchase of liberty bonds exceeded what they donated to Polish relief.”¹⁶⁰ After the war, only an estimated 3% of the population returned to independent Poland.¹⁶¹ Despite the fractured diversity amongst American Poles, one thing that stands out

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.* p. 154.

¹⁵⁸ Lewis Namier, ‘Observations on Polish Activities in America’, c. mid-1916, PRO FO 395/10/106874.

¹⁵⁹ Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Special Sorrows: The Diasporic Imagination of Irish, Polish, and Jewish Immigrants in the United States* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1995) p. 308, n. 19.

¹⁶⁰ Blejwas, *op. cit.*, pp. 129.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*

from the war years was their commitment to the American war effort and their efforts to signify their American patriotism, rather than any static, all-consuming gaze toward Poland.¹⁶²

Similar to Jews, therefore, American Poles were considered to be an important factor in the propaganda war. They were mistakenly viewed as a singular ethnic group whose significant power had to be won to the Allied cause, drawing them from German intrigue, through appeals to their innate national identity. Ideally, this was to be achieved through national declarations and the formation of national legions to fight with the Allies.

The perceived international bond of such ethnic groups was such that American Poles, and others, were also used by the British Government to win over their brethren in the Russian Empire. For example, when it was proposed that a mission of secret agents of influence should be sent to Russia to counter “pacifist propaganda” in 1917, the plan included Bohemians, Poles and Czechs, as well as Jews.¹⁶³

However, the imagined ethnic construct that the Foreign Office, the War Cabinet and British diplomats seemed most concerned with in the USA were not the American-Poles, Jews, Bohemians or Czechs, but Irish-Americans. His Majesty’s Government believed that the situation in Ireland made Irish-Americans the most hostile and difficult American minority to win over to the side of Great Britain during the war. Moreover, the degenerate, threatening image of the racial Irish Other within British culture resulted in its construction as the most corruptive, powerful presence facing the British cause in the United States.¹⁶⁴ In one report, written for the

¹⁶² This is not to deny the function of Poland and Polish nationalism as part of the dynamic of individual American Poles’ identity and culture. Rather, it highlights the relational and fluid reality of American Polish identities, which were not primordially or solely defined by their attachment to Poland. On the place of Poland within the diasporic imagination and culture of American Poles see Jacobson, *Special Sorrows*, *passim*.

¹⁶³ “Russia: Intelligence and propaganda 1917 April- June,” 18 May, 1917, Box 10 Folder 255, Sir William Wiseman Papers, Sterling Library, Yale University, New Haven.

¹⁶⁴ Luke Gibbons, ‘Race against time: racial discourse and Irish history’ in Hall, *Cultures of empire*, pp. 207-223, Catherine Hall, ‘The Nation within and without’ in Hall, McClelland and Rendall, *op. cit.*, pp.204-233. The argument put forward by Gibbons is a critique of Sheridan Gilley’s assertion that English attitudes towards the

Foreign Office in March 1916, it was simply put, “the Irish-American party . . . exude poison from every pore.”¹⁶⁵

Whilst Balfour was on a war mission to the States in June 1917, he wrote on the ‘Irish Question’ to Lloyd George, revealing his perceptions of Irish-American power and its hostility towards the British cause.

The Irish question looms very large in the minds of United States politicians. From the domestic as well as from international point of view they are deeply concerned that no solution has yet been found to this ancient problem. From the international point of view they regard it as the one obstacle which stands in the way of a close friendship between their country and ours . . . its roots have struck so deep that even a settlement which satisfied the majority of Irishmen . . . would scarcely satisfy the Irish-American “boss”. The interests of so-many wirepullers of the lower sort are involved in the maintenance of the Irish-American party that, if the existing Irish question were solved, a new one would have to be invented!¹⁶⁶

Later the same month, Lord Northcliffe, the head of the War Mission after Balfour, was much more emphatic with regard to the anti-British hostility of Irish American power and the extent of its harmful effects. He considered, “the Irish are more powerful than I thought they were. Lane, one of the ministers at Washington, said the settlement of the Irish difficulty would mean a 10% increase of war activity. The Irishmen hurt us in all kinds of ways that are not apparent in England. Apart from their power in the Press they have much to do with various metals used in munitions.”¹⁶⁷ Lloyd George was also convinced of Irish-American power, and its anti-British orientation, believing that, in co-operation with the Germans, Irish-Americans had

Irish were not defined by an anti-Irish racial discourse, but rather toleration and acceptance. See Sheridan Gilley, ‘English Attitudes to the Irish in England, 1780-1900’ in Colin Holmes (ed.) *Immigrants and Minorities in British Society* (London, Boston and Sydney: George Allen & Unwin, 1978) pp. 81-110. On the profound influence of racial discourse on how Irish-Americans saw themselves and were seen within American culture, see Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color*, esp. pp. 48-55.

¹⁶⁵ Report from John Masefield on the United States, 28 March 1916, PRO FO 371/2835.

¹⁶⁶ Balfour to Lloyd George, 23 June 1917, F/210/2/2, Lloyd George Papers, House of Lords Record Office.

¹⁶⁷ Northcliffe to Mr Davis, 20 June 1917, F/41/7/8, Lloyd George Papers.

the ability to force the hand of President Wilson.¹⁶⁸ This faith in Irish political power led, for example, to the Foreign Secretary being duped into believing that an Irish-American lawyer, Michael Francis Doyle, could “exercise an influence in the United States favourable to the action of the British Government” because of his intimacy with the Wilson administration¹⁶⁹

The reality was that a great many Americans opposed Irish-nationalism and “no administration was willing to allow the country’s vital interests to be influenced by Irish-American demands. Thus the government entered the First World War on the side of the Allied powers, refused to demand that Britain grant independence to Ireland as the *sine qua non* of participation in the war and peace, and refused to extend premature diplomatic recognition to the Dáil government.”¹⁷⁰ Even if the role of Irish-Americans in the Church, the political machine and the labour movement are appreciated¹⁷¹ they were far from cohesive, and nationalist activity on a large scale was far from the norm. As William V. Shannon has argued, by the 1890s “the surface unity of the Irish masked a growing diversity and stratification”.¹⁷² In terms of nationalist fervour and action, the anti-English nationalist newspaper *The Gaelic American* only reached a circulation of 30,000 at its height. As Chris McNickle recently observed, “Despite the harsh words, before the First World War most Irish Americans were content with proposals for home rule, and few spent much time actively working toward the cause of Irish freedom. They were too busy tending to their own parochial needs.” And although the “attitude of the majority of Irish Americans began to change after the Easter Rebellion executions . . . when America

¹⁶⁸ Lloyd George to Grey, 2 October 1916, E/2/13/6, Lloyd George Papers.

¹⁶⁹ Francis M. Carroll, *American Opinion and the Irish Question, 1910-1923* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1978) p.73.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.* p.191.

¹⁷¹ See Shannon, *op. cit.*, Ch. 9.

¹⁷² *Ibid.* p.142. Also see, Maldwyn A. Jones, *The Old World Ties of American Ethnic Groups- An Inaugural Lecture delivered at University College London* (London: Published for the college by H.K. Lewis & Co Ltd, 1974) p.13.

entered the war on the side of the British, only the most radical Irish leaders refused to salute smartly and rally 'round the flag. Irish Americans volunteered by the thousands. In New York, Catholic Church leaders sought to remove the issue of Irish independence from public debate until the war ended for fear that criticism of America's British ally would be perceived as unpatriotic."¹⁷³ Indeed, revolutionary Irish Nationalism can only be seen to have been a mass movement in the United States after the war.¹⁷⁴ However, these nuances escaped the attention of British foreign policy-makers who were blinkered by their perceptions of the Irish Other, as delimited through their wider understanding of ethnicity and nationalism. Not only were Irish-Americans, as a homogenous racial and nationalist entity, consistently considered to be a powerful threat to British interests but one report by a respected observer for Wellington House, the department concerned with literary propaganda, described them as "the serious Irish evil".¹⁷⁵

This image of the corruptive and powerful Irish-American threat, which was driven by a deep racial bond and national self, came to particular prominence in Government thinking following the Easter Rising of 1916 and, especially, the trial of the accused leader of the rebellion, Sir Roger Casement.

In Spring-Rice's initial report on 28 April 1916 he considered that the attitude of public opinion as to the "Irish rebellion" was satisfactory but feared that if a pro-rebellion movement spread amongst Irish-Americans then it could become a very serious problem. He emphasised that it would be very dangerous to make Casement a martyr. The assumptions of pan-Irish feeling, uniformity and power, that under-lie these observations went unquestioned by the

¹⁷³ Chris McNickle, 'When New York was Irish and After', in R.H. Bayor and T.J. Meagher (eds) *The New York Irish* (Baltimore and London: John Hopkins University Press, 1996) pp. 349-350.

¹⁷⁴ David Brundage, ' "In Time for Peace Prepare for War" Key Themes in the Social Thought of New York's Irish Nationalists, 1890-1916,' in *Ibid.* p.334.

¹⁷⁵ 'Employment of Americans in our American Propaganda', sent by CFG Mastermann, Wellington House to Lord Newton, News Department, 29 January 1917, PRO FO 395/72/3813.

members of the Foreign Office that received the report.¹⁷⁶

By 15 May Spring-Rice reported an escalation of opposition to British policy in Ireland. The executions of Irish rebels had a negative effect and in the interest of Anglo-American relations he argued that Casement should receive clemency. Revealing his belief in an international Irish community Spring-Rice suggested that Irish men in London should be consulted about the situation in the United States. The Ambassador's suggestions were shown to the Cabinet. He wrote again on 19 May and thought that the best policy with regard to the American point of view was to treat the rebels as innocent victims of a German plot. In the end all the rebels in question were executed. However, despite the government's feeling that it had no choice but to execute Casement, the appeals on his behalf from the USA were considered by the Cabinet.¹⁷⁷ The influence of Irish-Americans was feared at the highest level of the British Government. But by June, this power was considered to be utterly lost to the British cause, having serious ramifications for Anglo-American relations. Spring-Rice stated with great pessimism, "recent events have alienated from us almost the entire Irish party . . . I hope that you are not in any way counting on American sympathy or support . . . or doing anything to help us . . . You would be drawing a cheque where you have no bank account."¹⁷⁸

The haunting figure of the powerful Irish-American Other meant that this negative influence was not simply viewed as being virulently anti-British. In the minds of some, it was intimately tied to the German menace, and other forces that threatened the war and established order. As early as July 1915 Spring-Rice had asserted that "the Irish and German organisations, assisted by the Catholic church, are working together and bringing strong very pressure to bear

¹⁷⁶ Spring-Rice to Foreign Office, 28 April 1916 initialled by Arthur Nicolson and George R. Clerk, PRO FO 800/86 (Grey Papers).

¹⁷⁷ Carroll, *op. cit.*, p.77.

¹⁷⁸ Spring-Rice to Foreign Office, 15 and 19 May 1916, PRO FO 800/86. Spring-Rice to Grey 19 May, 1916

on Congressmen and Senators.”¹⁷⁹ By July 1917, this corruptive, anti-British threat had reached even greater proportions, in league with revolutionary socialists and directed by the German menace: “All the Irish organisations including the majority of the priests are now in the hands of the Sinn Feiners who are organised and paid by German funds . . . An alliance appears to have been formed with the I[n]ternational W[orkers of the] W[orld] and Irish agitators are going through the country stirring up troubles wherever labour troubles can do most harm to the cause of the allies.”¹⁸⁰ By 1918, Sykes considered that Sinn Fein was the dominant force in Ireland, “because it has got into its net the Bolshevik element which exists in every country”, and that the bloodshed that would follow the dropping of the Home Rule Bill would give, “an accretion of strength to Pacifism and Revolutionary movements in . . . the U.S.A.”¹⁸¹

Significantly, in response to the crisis of anti-British, pro-German Irish-American influence, tied to the destabilising forces of revolutionary socialism, nationalism was readily assumed to be the key to transfiguring this Other, winning it over to the British cause. Like Jews and Poles, therefore, it was considered that this could be achieved through a pro-Irish nationalist declaration. In June 1916, Spring-Rice had argued that a declaration over Home Rule in Ireland would have had a beneficial effect in the USA.¹⁸² Lord Reading, his replacement in January 1918, suggested the same solution, in more emphatic terms, in April 1918: “Key of situation is I am convinced public declaration . . . in event of Home Rule.”¹⁸³

Such plans, however, proved to be cheated by political developments. When Sinn Fein leaders were arrested in May 1918, it became clear that there would be no immediate grant of

circulated around the Cabinet 1 June 1916, PRO CAB 37/148/16.

¹⁷⁹ Spring-Rice to Grey, 21 July 1915, PRO CAB 37/131/31 quoted in Lowe and Dockrill, *op. cit.*, p. 555.

¹⁸⁰ Spring-Rice to Balfour, 13 July 1917, ADD 49740, Balfour Papers.

¹⁸¹ Sykes to Sir Maurice Hankey, Secretary to the War Cabinet, 27 April 1918, PRO CAB 24/49/GT.4369.

¹⁸² Memorandum by Spring-Rice, 16 June 1916, PRO FO 800/86.

¹⁸³ Lord Reading to Colonel Murray, 15 April 1918, F/60/2/56, Lloyd George Papers.

Home Rule. Nevertheless, the government's cowering concern over the 'Irish Question' was palpable. When the Colonial Secretary, Walter Long, informed Reading of the current impossibility of a settlement, he wrote that despite this turn of events the British government remained quite sincere in its desire to introduce Home Rule, and could he please explain all of this to President Wilson.¹⁸⁴

In the absence of the possibility of a public declaration other avenues had been explored. One proposal retained a similar logic to the attempted recruitment of American Poles and Jews into their own 'nationalist' divisions. As early as January 1916, Lord Robert Cecil of the Foreign Office and Herbert Montgomery of the News Department suggested that greater press coverage of acts of valour performed by Irish regiments would have a good effect on Irish-Americans.¹⁸⁵ Other alternative methods of propaganda put forward were to send an eminent nationalist to lecture in the States, and to distribute anti-German literature amongst Irish Americans.¹⁸⁶ Despite these efforts, already by January 1917 the Assistant Director of Wellington House saw Irish-Americans as the greatest problem facing Anglo-American relations. He wrote the following bleak summary:

Nothing . . . has caused us more anxiety than the question of dealing with Irish opinion in the United States.

It is not too much to say that the rebellion, the executions, and the subsequent failure of the Home Rule negotiations, caused a most disastrous change of opinion throughout the whole of America, and that the Irish question stands in the fore-front to-day among the things which are alienating American opinion from this country . . .¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁴ Denis Judd, *Lord Reading- Rufus Isaacs, First Marquess of Reading, Lord Chief Justice and Viceroy of India, 1860-1935* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1982) p.161.

¹⁸⁵ Memorandum by Shane Leslie, 18 January 1916, minutes by Herbert Montgomery and Lord Robert Cecil, 15 and 17 February 1916, Montgomery to General Macdonogh, Director of Military Intelligence, 24 February 1916, PRO FO 371/2836/27698, minutes by L.W., 26 January 1917 and John Buchan, 28 January 1917, PRO FO 395/72/4091.

¹⁸⁶ See, for example, E.Gowers to H. Montgomery, 25 February 1916, PRO FO 371/2836/38478, Gowers to Montgomery, 20 September 1916, PRO FO 371/2836/38478.

¹⁸⁷ CFG Mastermann to Mr Magill, Irish Office 23 January 1917, PRO FO 395/72/4091.

In sum, therefore, Irish-Americans were consistently discussed as a homogenous group, solely defined by a singular ethnic bond and identity, which was determined by an unyielding national consciousness, perpetually fixed upon the national space of Ireland. Everything that the Irish-American did or thought with regard to the war was as a result of this primordial national self. Moreover, the Irish-American was a figure of power, whose subversive anti-British hostility allied itself to the conspiratorial German menace, or other negative forces such as socialism. The means to neutralise this threat, bringing Irish American power into the Allied orbit, away from the grasp of the enemy, was to tie its singular desire, national freedom, to the British cause.

This example, as with the case of the American Poles and other minorities, serves to illustrate the way in which ethnic groups in the USA were seen through the same overarching discourse during the war. They were commonly viewed as singular racial groups that wielded power in American society, who were potentially hostile and courted by German intrigue, and could only be won through appeals to their innate national self. There is no doubt that the differences between how these entities were perceived are crucial and impossible to ignore. Each of these constructs had a particular and unique history which determined their nature and density within the British imagination. Hence, for this reason, at least in part, the Irish American figured more prominently in Government considerations than, for example, the American Swede. And yet, these distinctions and differences should not be allowed to obscure the very real and significant commonalities in how ethnic groups were viewed. To do so would be to miss the great impact and wider significance of how the discourses of race nationalism, Faustian ethnic influence and conspiratorial thinking, centred upon the evil German menace, combined and determined many British propaganda policies during the war. Indeed, the ramifications of this discursive nexus reached well beyond the confines of the American context. In the final year of

the war, it resulted, in part, in the Government's public and covert support of movements for national self-determination in Central and Eastern Europe.¹⁸⁸ As well, from 1915 British support of Arab nationalism was driven by a belief in a united Arab national consciousness, which had to be won before it was seized by the enemy and to secure the support of world Islam.¹⁸⁹ Of course, in this case, the pre-existing discourse of Orientalism shaped the vision of a homogenous Arab world, but it does not account for the rest.

With regard to the focus of this study, it is very clear that the specific nature and history of how Jewry was imagined and constructed within British society and culture is of crucial significance. Without acknowledging the deep roots and prominence of 'the Jew' as the threatening Other, and the myths of Jewish power and cohesiveness, it would not be possible to explain why Jews in particular were seen to be of such influence, or that they constituted a people apart. Equally, the cultural presence of the Holy Land and the Bible within British culture enabled advocates of a pro-Zionist policy to imagine Jewry as a nation, yearning for restoration in Palestine, the space of its mythical Golden Age and national self.

However, as much as this particular context made it possible for Jewry to be perceived as a homogenous racial group, primarily defined by an essentialist Zionist identity, both the racial

¹⁸⁸ Calder, *op. cit.*, Chs. 4, 5 and 6. For a succinct discussion of the use of national self-determination in the propaganda war fought by both sides in Central and Eastern Europe, see Mazower, *op. cit.*, pp. 45-46. Also, see Marc Ferro, *The Great War, 1914-1918*, translated by Nicole Stone (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973) pp. 98-105, Aviel Roshwald, *Ethnic Nationalism and the Fall of Empires: Central Europe, Russia and the Middle East, 1914-1923* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001) p. 128, Mark von Hagen, 'The Great War and the Mobilization of Ethnicity in the Russian Empire,' in Barnett R. Rubin and Jack Snyder (eds.) *Post-Soviet Political Order: Conflict and State Building* (London: Routledge, 1998) pp. 34-57, Oleh Fedyshyn, 'The Germans and the Union for the Liberation of the Ukraine, 1914-1917,' in Taras Hunczak (ed.) *The Ukraine, 1917-1921: A Study in Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 1977) pp. 305-322, idem. *Germany's Drive to the East and the Ukrainian Revolution, 1917-1918* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1971) pp. 30-41.

¹⁸⁹ Fromkin, *op. cit.*, Chs. 23, 28, esp. pp. 188, 219, 275. On the mistaken belief in the power of pan-Islam amongst British and German policy makers, and how it influenced their wartime Arab policies, see, in particular, Donald M. McKale, *War by Revolution- Germany and Great Britain in the Middle East in the Era of World War I* (Kent, Ohio, and London, England: Kent State University Press, 1998). For a particular focus on Germany's policy of using Islam and then nationalism to foment revolution amongst the Muslim populations of

and national construction of the Jew was dependent upon and determined by a wider discourse of race nationalism. Unless it is noted that ethnic groups and ethnicity were commonly perceived through this prism by foreign policy makers, it is difficult to explain why Zionism, and only Zionism, was thought to be the key to a singular Jewish imagination. Equally, the interest in Jewish power, its potential hostility, as well as the threat of enemy influence and intrigue, must be viewed in light of the wider phenomenon that we have illustrated above.

This set of perceptions and context set the stage for why the construct of Jewish power came to be of significance in the war and why nationalism, in the shape of Zionism, was so readily accepted as being a beneficent, transfiguring force, at the heart of the Jewish psyche, which could be used to capture it as an asset for the British cause. But it did not make a pro-Zionist policy inevitable.

the Entente, as part of its global strategy from the onset of war, see Strachan, *op. cit.*, Ch. 9.

Chapter 2: Turning Perceptions into Policy: The Role of the Zionists in the Making of the Balfour Declaration

The subject of this chapter is how the perceptions of Jews and ethnic groups that we discussed above resulted in the Balfour Declaration, and is specifically concerned with the role of the Zionists in this process.

There are two schools of thought concerning the part played by the Zionists in the making of the Balfour Declaration, and its significance in the history of Zionism. The first, and by far and away the most influential, posits that the Declaration was a critical turning point for the Zionist movement, resulting primarily from the great diplomatic skill and genius of Chaim Weizmann.¹ The second, put forward by Mayir Vereté and David Vital, suggests that Weizmann and his Zionist colleagues had little influence on the British Government, who used the Zionists, issuing the Declaration to serve British interests alone.² In contrast to both of these interpretations it will be argued here that Weizmann's role was indeed minor but that the Balfour Declaration was the result of the effective diplomacy of a number of other Jewish activists. At the same time, however, I will contend that the Declaration did not mark as great an achievement for the Zionists as it has commonly been portrayed, as they had only convinced British policy makers to use them to serve British propaganda aims.

The starting point of my analysis is that in order to assess the impact of the Zionists' influence upon the Government's decision-making process, it is first necessary to establish what interested British officials in Zionism. It is from this vantage point that the contribution of Weizmann and other Zionists will be measured. Conversely, in the majority of the

¹ See the introduction, pp. 14-15.

² Vereté, 'The Balfour Declaration and its Makers,' pp. 22-26, Vital, *Zionism: The Crucial Phase*, pp. 90, 223-

historical literature the starting point was not so much British motives, but the assumption that Weizmann had won the Balfour Declaration, which scholars then sought to explain, reading the Weizmann myth back into history. Alternatively, Vereté and Vital utilised an approach similar to the one used here. However, their conclusions were based upon the contention that the key concern behind the Balfour Declaration was securing British control of Palestine after the war. As I have argued in the previous chapter, the Government's Zionist policy emerged from a wider phenomenon of ethnic propaganda politics during the war, which was underpinned by the perception that ethnic groups were powerful and potentially hostile entities, whose support had to be won from the omnipresent influence of the German menace, through an appeal to their innate nationalist identities.

Based upon this thesis I will assess the role of the Zionists in the events that led to the Balfour Declaration, and will suggest that it was only by playing upon these perceptions of Jewry and ethnic groups that Jewish activists persuaded the British Government to adopt a Zionist policy.³ Viewed through this lens, it will be shown that at every stage the Government was wholly reactive, rather than pro-active, in its policy making towards Jews and Zionism. It was only in response to proposals and petitions from Jews themselves that the Government

224, 235-236.

³ Kadish, Levene and Segev have also argued that the Zionist role in the making of the Declaration was due to the way in which they re-enforced Government perceptions of Jewish influence and Zionist strength. However, their work predominantly focuses upon Weizmann. Although Levene has shown that Lucien Wolf also did this to great effect in 1916, he contends that it was Weizmann who took up this strategy on the part of the Zionists, leading to the Declaration. Levene, *War, Jews and the New Europe*, Ch. 6 and p. 308, idem. 'The Balfour Declaration', pp. 72-74. In her analysis Kadish questions the degree to which Jews could have influenced Government policy, but within this model confines her discussion of the Zionists' role to Weizmann. Kadish, *op. cit.*, pp. 156-157. In contrast, Segev is less restrained in the importance he attributes to Weizmann's efforts to dupe the British Government. Segev, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-49. For a brief assertion of the argument that Weizmann secured the Declaration by playing upon these perceptions of Jews, also see Bernard Wasserstein, 'Chaim Weizmann and the Zionist *Risorgimento*' in Ruth Kozodoy, David Sidorsky and Kalman Sultanik (eds.) *Vision Confronts Reality: Historical Perspectives on the Contemporary Jewish Agenda* (New York: Herzl Press, 1989) pp. 180-181.

became interested in Zionism and was continually pushed by them towards its final decision to pursue a pro-Zionist policy. It will also be argued that Weizmann's contribution was minimal. Whilst his efforts produced little effect, others, who have previously been marginalised in the Weizman-centric narrative, developed, and applied, the diplomatic strategy that resulted in the Balfour Declaration. However, differing from the neat and linear narrative of the Weizmann myth, this chapter seeks to emphasise the complex and largely fortuitous way in which the efforts and strategy of these Jewish activists, who, for the most part, were not working in a co-ordinated manner, coalesced and cumulatively led to the Balfour Declaration, which was at no point a foregone conclusion.

Despite the fact that the Zionists were directly responsible for persuading the British Government, I will argue that the Declaration did not represent any real achievement for the Zionist movement. As defined by the strategy that was employed by the Zionists, all they had succeeded in doing was to persuade the British Government to use Zionism for propaganda purposes.

With regard to the specific motives behind the Declaration it will be argued, therefore, that the Government's policy was primarily a propaganda policy, designed to win Jewish opinion not just in Russia, as some have contended,⁴ but in the USA and elsewhere. Although I will maintain that some influential advocates for a Zionist policy also came to see Zionism, at a late stage, as a means of securing British suzerainty over Palestine after the war, it will be asserted that this motive was not widely shared, nor was it the result of any effective Zionist diplomacy.⁵

⁴ Levene, 'The Balfour Declaration,' pp. 68-70.

⁵ This position is different from my previous argument that the Declaration was equally the product of imperial

This chapter is divided into three parts. Firstly, it will pay close and detailed attention to the efforts of individual Jewish activists other than Weizmann in the period prior to 1917, showing how they pioneered the strategy that led to the Balfour Declaration and how their activities began the chain of events that resulted in the Government's decision to court the Zionists in 1917. The detailed nature of this analysis is necessary to illustrate the contribution and planned nature of each individual's diplomatic efforts, and how they came together in a complex and cumulative manner. Secondly, this chapter will discuss how this strategy was successfully taken up by Moses Gaster in his crucial discussions with Sir Mark Sykes, and will contend that his removal, and Weizmann's appointment as an official conduit with the Government, was more to do with Zionist internal politics than Weizmann's previous efforts at diplomacy. Thirdly, this chapter will examine how the Zionists, particularly Vladimir Jabotinsky, again used the tactic of playing upon British perceptions of Jewish power and nationalism, finally convincing the Government to adopt a Zionist policy, and how the work of Zionists in Russia and the USA ensured this decision.

2:1 Sowing the Seeds for the Balfour Declaration, 1915-1916

As is well known, the first time that the support of Jewish settlement in Palestine was considered at Cabinet level during the First World War was in March 1915. This development was solely the result of the efforts of the Anglo-Jewish Liberal M.P., Herbert Samuel, then serving as President of the Local Government Board. Following the decision of the Ottoman Empire to join the Central Powers in the war at the end of October 1914,

and propaganda concerns. James Renton, 'The Historiography of the Balfour Declaration: Toward a Multi-causal Framework,' *The Journal of Israeli History*, vol. 19, No. 2 (Summer 1998) pp. 109-128. My position is now more in line with those who claim that the Declaration was primarily a piece of wartime propaganda. See the introduction, pp. 6, 8, n. 11, n. 19. Nevertheless, I maintain that the imperial motive was a serious ongoing consideration for a few important individuals within the Government, in tandem with the issue of propaganda,

Samuel had with uncharacteristic alacrity taken it upon himself to agitate for the support of Zionist aims in Palestine from November 1914 and put before the Cabinet a memorandum on the subject in March 1915.⁶

Within this memorandum there were two key political arguments which would be adopted by Jewish activists in their attempts to persuade the British Government to take up a pro-Zionist policy during the war.⁷ The first, which was adopted by Weizmann, posited that a British protectorate in Palestine, committed to the development of Jewish national colonization, could secure sole British suzerainty, thereby protecting Egypt and the Suez Canal from any future menace from either France or Germany.⁸ The second argument, which was given less attention in Samuel's memorandum, derived from his Zionist understanding of world Jewry as a singular, organic nation, fixed upon its return to Palestine,⁹ whose influence could be of value for the British Empire.

The course which is advocated would win for England the gratitude of the Jews throughout the world . . . they would form a body of opinion whose bias . . . would be favourable to the British Empire . . . [H]elp given now towards the attainment of the ideal which great numbers of Jews have never ceased to cherish through so many centuries of suffering cannot fail to secure, into a far-distant future, the gratitude of a whole race, whose goodwill, in time to come, may not be without its value.¹⁰

Of the two arguments, the former would be of little use in the Zionists' attempt to convince the British Government to support their movement. Rather, it was in Samuel's depiction of Jewry as a nation and a body of influence, which could potentially be of help to

rather than secondary to it.

⁶ See Bernard Wasserstein, *Herbert Samuel- A Political Life* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992) pp. 200-211.

⁷ Both arguments were also present in his earlier draft of January 1915. Herbert Samuel, 'The Future of Palestine,' January 1915, PRO CAB 37/123/43

⁸ Idem. 'Palestine' March 1915, PRO CAB 37/126/1.

⁹ See 'Note on discussion with Sir Edward Grey, with an appendage concerning a meeting with Lloyd George, 9 November 1914, Herbert Samuel Papers. Also see Samuel, 'The Future of Palestine,' January 1915, PRO CAB 37/123/43.

the British cause, that we can identify the seeds of the successful Zionist diplomacy that led to the Balfour Declaration.

Tellingly, the depiction of Jewry as a nation worth winning over to the British cause went largely unquestioned.¹¹ Conversely, with the exception of Lloyd George, there was no Cabinet or Foreign Office interest in adding Palestine to the Empire.¹² The uncertainty surrounding post-war policy towards the Ottoman Empire, particularly Palestine, was marked by a desire to avoid further imperial responsibilities and a dangerous struggle for spheres of influence amongst the Allied powers.¹³ In any case, the absence of any military campaign in the region and the early stage of the war meant that both Palestine and the will of world Jewry were not of special concern to the Foreign Office or the Cabinet. Nevertheless, Samuel's early efforts had revealed a point of fundamental importance. If the will of Jewry did become a matter of concern, and Palestine came into the Allied orbit, it was readily accepted within Government circles that Zionism was the key to securing "the gratitude of a whole race."¹⁴

By late 1915 the situation had changed sufficiently to allow for the consideration of a pro-Zionist policy. British discussions with Arab nationalists and considerations of a military

¹⁰ Samuel, 'Palestine' March 1915, PRO CAB 37/126/I.

¹¹ The major exception was Samuel's cousin in the Treasury, Edwin Montagu. Confidential Minute by Edwin Montagu, 16 March 1915, C/25/14/1, Lloyd George Papers. Also, Prime Minister Asquith, who was sharply opposed to extending the Empire, was wholly disinterested in Samuel's plans for which he revealed a certain bemusement if not mocking contempt. Wasserstein, *op. cit.*, p. 211, Fromkin, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

¹² 'Note by Herbert Samuel,' 7 February 1915, Herbert Samuel Papers.

¹³ Friedman, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-21, V.H. Rothwell, *British War Aims and Peace diplomacy 1914-1918* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971) pp. 26-27, Jukka Nevakivi, *Britain, France and the Arab Middle East 1914-1920* (London: Athlone Press, 1969) p. 22. On the pre-war policy of maintaining the Ottoman Empire in the Near East for this purpose, see, for example, Marian Kent, 'Great Britain and the End of the Ottoman Empire, 1900-23,' in *idem.* (ed.) *The Great Powers and the End of the Ottoman Empire* (London: Frank Cass, 1996) pp. 172-173. On British policy towards the Ottoman Empire before the war, also see Joseph Heller, *British Policy towards the Ottoman Empire 1908-1914* (London: Frank Cass, 1983).

¹⁴ Samuel, 'Palestine' March 1915, PRO CAB 37/126/I.

campaign from Egypt had placed Palestine and the rest of the region firmly on the agenda, with English and French representatives preparing to discuss their desired spheres of influence prior to any campaign.¹⁵ More significantly, as discussed in chapter one, the protracted and draining nature of the war had led to an increasing Government concern with the opinion of ethnic groups, particularly in the USA.¹⁶ In their assessment of American Jewish opinion, it was considered that this community was plagued by a fervent and deep seated hatred of anti-Semitic Russia,¹⁷ whose sentiments were being manipulated by German agents and pro-German Jewish financiers such as Jacob Schiff. Despite a willingness by certain Foreign Office officials to combat this problem, the impossibility of influencing Russia to change its domestic policies meant that there was no apparent solution.¹⁸

It was out of this context that the concept that Zionism could hold the key to solving this imagined problem for the Foreign Office was to be seriously considered. Significantly, however, this proposal did not come from within the Government itself. With propitious and somewhat fortuitous timing, between November 1915 and February 1916, four Jewish activists from the USA, England, Russia and Egypt, Horace Kallen, Lucien Wolf, Vladimir Jabotinsky and Edgar Suares, independently offered such an assessment. Together they endorsed the increasingly accepted belief in pro-German intrigues and influence amongst the masses of American Jewry and the existence of a powerful German Jewish financial clique. Not only did this image hold up a mirror to British Foreign Office concerns but they offered a

¹⁵ Elie Kedourie, *In the Anglo-Arab Labyrinth: the McMahon-Husayn Correspondence and its Interpretations, 1914-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), Adelson, *op. cit.*, pp. 197-202, Nevakivi, *op. cit.*, pp. 25-36.

¹⁶ See above, pp. 48, 55-73.

¹⁷ During the Spring of 1915, atrocities against Jews in the war zone of the Pale of Settlement committed by a retreating Russian army greatly exacerbated this problem. Levene, *War, Jews and the New Europe*, pp. 50-51.

solution which equally fitted in with how certain officials perceived Jewry, arguing that it could be won through an appeal to its yearning for national restoration in Palestine. It was only through such a precise reflection of the Foreign Office mindset and interests at this particular point which could have resulted in them being persuaded to consider any support for Zionism.

The fact that these approaches resulted in the first serious consideration of a pro-Zionist policy by the Foreign Office in 1916 is widely known. Yet, this development is predominantly portrayed as having no relation to the way in which Zionists contributed to the Government's decision to pursue a pro-Zionist policy in 1917.¹⁹ For critics of the Weizmann myth, the fact that he made no contribution to this first official interest in Zionism is used to show the irrelevance of Zionist political activity in the attainment of the Balfour Declaration.²⁰ At the other end of the historiographical spectrum, the attempts to convince the Foreign Office to support Zionism in 1916 are depicted as a doomed, or irrelevant, prelude to Weizmann's success story in 1917. According to this narrative, the events of 1916 had no relation to what lay behind Weizmann's ascendancy the following year, or how he convinced members of the Government to issue the Declaration. If anything, the failure of 1916 and the fact that he played no part in it, merely serves to demonstrate his genius for diplomacy. He was simply aware that the time was not yet ripe for making his move.²¹

Conversely, it is argued here that the consideration of a pro-Zionist policy in 1916

¹⁸ *Ibid.* pp. 59, 63.

¹⁹ Friedman, *op. cit.*, Ch.5, pp. 319-331, Sanders, *op. cit.*, Ch. 23, Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, Ch. 14, Vital, *Zionism: The Crucial Phase*, pp. 183-206, 236.

²⁰ In particular, see Vereté, 'The Balfour Declaration and its Makers,' pp. 11-16 and *idem.* 'Further Reflections on the Balfour Declaration,' pp. 213-223.

²¹ See Reinhartz, *Chaim Weizmann: The Making of a Statesman*, pp. 96-99, 172-173, 208, 405.

resulted, in the main, from a considered diplomatic strategy on the part of Jewish activists, that the success in 1917 was dependent on its continued application, and that the decision to approach Zionist representatives in 1917 was a direct consequence of the events of 1916.

Whilst Weizmann had confined his infrequent discussions with members of the Government to the merits of Zionist ideology and Samuel's argument for a British protectorate in Palestine, others were about to sow the seeds for the Balfour Declaration.²²

The first concrete step in this direction was a memorandum for the Foreign Office from the young American Zionist leader and social philosopher Professor Horace Kallen, who was then an instructor at the University of Wisconsin.²³ This development has often been given only slight attention by scholars, without any considered explanation as to its origins.²⁴ However, not only did Kallen's approach prompt the Foreign Office to investigate the possibility of a pro-Zionist policy for the first time, but it was the product of a carefully considered strategy on his part.

Although the Provisional Executive Committee for Zionist Affairs in the USA, founded in August 1914, had declared its official neutrality,²⁵ Kallen had been engaged in a

²² Minute by Lord Robert Cecil, 18 August 1915, PRO FO 800/95, Weizmann to Achad Ha'am, 14-15 December, 1914, no. 68, Stein, *The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann*, p. 82. During 1915 and 1916 the majority of Weizmann's largely indirect contact with Lloyd George was in relation to problems with his scientific work for the Ministry of Munitions, and had very little to do with Zionism. See, for example, C.P. Scott to Lloyd George, June 1915, 27 October 1915, D/18/15/2, Lloyd George Papers, Diary of C.P. Scott, 8 and 22 May, 26 July 1916, C.P. Scott Papers, John Rylands Library, University of Manchester. Contrary to the argument of Jehuda Reinharz, there is no evidence to suggest that this work had any positive impact on Weizmann's stature within the British Government or that it influenced his position as a Zionist representative in 1917. See Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann: The Making of a Statesman*, pp. 69-72, idem. 'Science in the Service of Politics: The Case of Chaim Weizmann During the First World War,' *English Historical Review* (July 1985) pp. 572-603.

²³ See Eric Drummond to Davies, 6 November 1915, PRO FO 800/112 (Grey Papers).

²⁴ Friedman, *op. cit.*, p. 43, Sanders, *op. cit.*, pp. 324-325, Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann: The Making of a Statesman*, p. 96, Levene, *War, the Jews and the New Europe*, pp. 87-88, Vereté, 'The Balfour Declaration and its Makers', n. 7, p. 30, idem. 'Further Reflections on the Balfour Declaration,' p. 218.

²⁵ Melvyn Urofsky, *American Zionism: From Herzl to the Holocaust* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1975) pp. 198-199.

covert but ardent Zionist and pro-Allied propaganda campaign amongst American Jewry and the wider public since the beginning of the war.²⁶ He was joined in his staunch support of the Allied cause, particularly Britain, by other prominent Zionist figures in or associated with the Provisional Executive, such as Richard Gottheil and the young social progressives Rabbi Stephen Wise and Felix Frankfurter, who both had access to President Wilson.²⁷ Similar to his Zionist colleagues in London, Kallen had already conceived that the American Zionist leadership should establish high level contacts with the British Government, whose imperial policy he publicly hailed as being the great example of “the principle of harmony . . . posited . . . upon the voluntary and autonomous cooperation of . . . [its] component nationalities.”²⁸

With Kallen already having sought contacts with the British Government,²⁹ events started to proceed apace when in April 1915 Alfred Zimmern, a member of the highly placed British imperialist *Round Table* group, intimated to his friend Kallen, who informed Brandeis, that it was the “present intention of the “Powers-that-be” to put the Jewish question to the fore, when peace comes.”³⁰ It would appear that soon afterwards Kallen drew up a memorandum for Lord Eustace Percy, who then worked in the Foreign Office News Department, in which he advocated a statement concerning a British protectorate over Palestine in favour of Zionism, so as to combat the influence of pro-Germans in American

²⁶ Kallen used the secret Zionist fraternity organization, the Parushim, which he had founded in 1913, to this end. Sara Schmidt, *Horace M. Kallen: Prophet of American Zionism* (New York: Carlson, 1995) p. 81.

²⁷ Kallen to Chaim Weizmann, 16 December 1915, Box 1, Manuscript Collection 47, Harry Barnard Papers, American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati [hereafter AJA], Urofsky, *op. cit.*, pp. 138-139, 199, Ben Halpern, *A Clash of Heroes- Brandeis, Weizmann and American Zionism* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987) pp. 153-155.

²⁸ Horace Kallen, ‘Democracy versus the Melting-Pot: A Study of American Nationality,’ *The Nation*, 100 (18 February 1915) in Werner Sollors (ed.) *Theories of Ethnicity: A Classical Reader* (London: MacMillan, 1996) p. 91.

²⁹ Kallen to Frankfurter, 17 September 1914, Frankfurter to Kallen, 21 September 1914, Box 10, Folder 5, Horace Kallen Papers, AJA.

Jewry. That Kallen genuinely believed that such a statement could have a serious effect upon American Jewry is readily apparent from his own Zionist *Weltanschauung* and his ethnocentric understanding of identity. Reflecting Government perceptions, he too believed that American society was stratified by unbreakable ethnic bonds, which ultimately defined the individual self, which was particularly evident in the case of the Jews.³¹ Moreover, like Gottheil and Brandeis, Kallen was well aware that the Allied embassies in Washington, with whom they were in frequent contact, believed that American Jewry was vehemently anti-Russian and pro-German, and feared “the influence of the International Jewish banking group.”³²

Although no copy of this memorandum remains, it was the first time that a Zionist suggested to a Government official that Britain could combat German influence through a public declaration of support for Jewish nationalist aspirations in Palestine. Although Percy did not pass this document onto the Foreign Office, on 1 November 1915 Kallen sent another memorandum to Percy via Zimmern, which was then passed on to the Foreign Office for consideration. Playing upon the Foreign Office fear of German intrigues amongst Jewry and Jewish power, Kallen stated, “all [Jewish] opinion is manufactured at a price by German agents who are doing their best to feed the very influential Jewish public in New York with stories of German consideration of Jewish interests and claims.” His solution to this problem was, “a statement on behalf of the Allies favouring Jewish rights in every country, and a very

³⁰ Kallen to Louis Brandeis, 9 April 1915, Box 4, Folder 10, Horace Kallen Papers.

³¹ Kallen, *op. cit.*, pp. 78, 86-87.

³² Gottheil to Kallen, 19 and 30 October, 10 November 1914, Box 12, Folder 1, Horace Kallen Papers. Concerning the British Ambassador, Sir Cecil Spring-Rice, see Gottheil to Kallen, 22 July 1915, *Ibid*.

veiled suggestion concerning nationalization in Palestine.”³³ By this point the original proposal of a pro-Zionist declaration had been toned down to a “veiled suggestion”, probably due to Percy’s earlier protest to Kallen that Palestine was the “thorniest question in the world”, in which Britain had no interest.³⁴ Nevertheless, the idea of making a public statement concerning the future of Palestine, in order to win over Jewish opinion from the clutches of German intrigue and influence, had now been put forward to the Foreign Office.

In the official consideration of Kallen’s memorandum by the Foreign Office there were no initial criticisms of his picture of American Jewry. At first, there was no apparent sense of urgency to act upon the matter, but it had clearly stirred some interest. Cecil, who had evinced during the previous year a sharp interest in Jewish opinion, particularly financiers, wished to look further into the issue. He remarked that Lucien Wolf, the representative of the Jewish Conjoint Foreign Committee, which liaised with the Government on behalf of the Board of Deputies and the Anglo-Jewish Association, had views on the subject and that he should be asked to communicate them to Sir Gilbert Parker, the head of the Government’s extensive propaganda campaign in the USA.³⁵ A few days later Wolf sent for the attention of Parker a memorandum entitled ‘Suggestions for a pro-Allied propaganda among the Jews of the United States.’³⁶

In his analysis of American Jewry, Wolf not only confirmed Kallen’s assertions

³³ Kallen to Zimmern, 1 November, 1915, Box 32, Folder 20, Horace Kallen Papers. This was a reference to the decision of Schiff and others to withhold their support for a large American pro-Allied loan in September 1915. Levene, *War, the Jews and the New Europe*, pp. 58-59.

³⁴ Percy to Frankfurter, 23 May 1915, Frankfurter Papers, Library of Congress, copies held at the Harvard Law Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MS, Zimmern to Kallen, 19 August 1915, Box 32, Folder 20, Horace Kallen Papers.

³⁵ Minute by Lord Robert Cecil, 12 December 1915, PRO FO 371/2579/187779, Wolf to Cecil, 6 December 1915, PRO FO 371/2835/37215.

³⁶ Lucien Wolf, ‘Suggestions for a Pro-Allies Propaganda among the Jews of the United States,’ 16 December

regarding their influence, but he gave a much more explicit endorsement of the benefits of a pro-Zionist policy with regard to winning over their support to the British cause. Although Wolf was an avowed opponent to political Zionism, he saw this as an opportunity to re-gain favour within the eyes of the Foreign Office, and to wrest control of the Palestine issue from the Zionists.³⁷ As an experienced and shrewd diplomat, Wolf used the Government's belief in American Jewish power and pro-Germanism to try and achieve these objectives.³⁸

Wolf wrote to Parker, "in the United States the Jews number over 2,000,000 and their influence- political, commercial and social- is very considerable." Pointing to the apparent victory of the Zionists in gaining dominant support through the campaign for an American Jewish Congress,³⁹ Wolf asserted that in "any bid for Jewish sympathies to-day, very serious account must be taken of the Zionist movement." He exclaimed, "This is the moment for the Allies to declare their policy in regard to Palestine." Specifically, Wolf contended that, "what the Zionists would especially like to know is that Great Britain will become mistress of Palestine." However, at this stage, the officials involved were not convinced. Parker responded to Wolf's scheme in a markedly disinterested tone, "What view does Spring-Rice take? From my own view it is largely if not solely a matter for him."⁴⁰ Wolf's memorandum was sent to Washington almost two weeks later.⁴¹

Prior to Spring-Rice's reply concerning the issue, a proposal by a Zionist and highly

1915, PRO FO 371/2579/193902.

³⁷ Mark Levene, 'Lucien Wolf: Crypto-Zionist, Anti-Zionist or Opportunist par-excellence?' *Studies in Zionism*, vol. 12, no. 2 (1991) pp. 137-141, idem. *War, Jews and the New Europe* pp. 15-17, 84-87, 93-94.

³⁸ *Ibid.* pp. 15-16, 82, 87, Levene, 'The Balfour Declaration: A Case of Mistaken Identity,' p. 64.

³⁹ On the Congress, see Jonathan Frankel, 'The Jewish Socialists and the American Jewish Congress Movement,' in Ezra Mendelsohn (ed.) *Essays on the American Jewish Labor Movement, YIVO Annual of Jewish Social Science, Vol. XVI*, 1976, pp. 202-257 and Urofsky, *op. cit.*, Ch.5.

⁴⁰ Sir Gilbert Parker to Lord Robert Cecil, 16 December 1915, PRO FO 371/2579/193904.

⁴¹ Minute by Lord Robert Cecil, 24 December 1915. PRO FO 371/2579/193904. The memorandum was sent to

respected journalist from Russia, Vladimir Jabotinsky, had reached the Foreign Office. Although his solution was fundamentally different from that of Kallen or Wolf, Jabotinsky's assessment of the problem posed by American Jewry for the British Government was the same. Being an astute journalist and political observer Jabotinsky had a marked appreciation of Government concerns and *realpolitik*. Throughout his discussions with members of the British Establishment and Government for the duration of the war, his petitions were designed to meet what he had accurately identified as their key political need concerning Jewry, winning over their opinion to the side of the Allies. Unlike his friend Weizmann, he wasted no time or verbiage discussing the plight and troubles of Jewry or Zionist ideals, merely what the British could materially gain from supporting his Zionist plans. Despite the lack of emphasis that has been placed upon his role in the historical literature, it will be shown that Jabotinsky's skilful diplomacy was of central importance in the Government's adoption of a pro-Zionist policy.⁴²

Jabotinsky had arrived in England from Italy, via France, in April 1915 and had sought to create a Jewish Legion, building on the Zion Mule Corps raised in Egypt by Joseph

Spring-Rice for comment on 29 December.

⁴² Although some historians of the Balfour Declaration have given due attention to Jabotinsky's diplomacy in his attempt to convince members of the British Government to form a Jewish Legion, it has often been subsumed within isolated discussions over this issue, rather than on how it impacted upon the British decision to adopt a pro-Zionist policy as a whole. See, for example, Friedman, *op. cit.*, pp. 43-47, 135-136, 180-181. When his role in this sense has been acknowledged, it is commonly described as functioning in a supportive and secondary role to Weizmann and not given due attention. Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann: The Making of a Statesman*, pp. 93, 97, 168-169, 212, Kadish, *op. cit.*, p. 144, 157. As well, a number of scholars barely mention him at all in their accounts of the Declaration. See Levene, *War, Jews and the New Europe*, pp. 143-146, Vereté, *op. cit.*, 'The Balfour Declaration and its Makers,' n. 7 pp. 31-32. Perhaps the exception to all of this can be found in the work of Ronald Sanders, who sees Jabotinsky's skill and ability in forming connections among English men of power and influence as being on a par with Weizmann. Sanders, *op. cit.*, p. 427. Jabotinsky's biographer, Shmuel Katz, has also emphasised Jabotinsky's skills at diplomacy in his efforts to gain the Government's support for the Jewish Legion, but does not consider how this may have contributed to the decision to issue the Balfour Declaration. Shmuel Katz, *Lone Wolf: A Biography of Vladimir (Ze'ev) Jabotinsky*, Volume I (New York: Barricade Books, 1996) Chs. 10-13, esp. pp. 215-216.

Trumpeldor, to serve with the British army in any future campaigns in Palestine.⁴³ Armed with an introduction from Count Alexander Benckendorff, the Russian Ambassador to London, and the support and advice of Colonel H. Patterson, the former Commander of the Mule Corps, Jabotinsky had been engaged in a vigorous campaign, petitioning for British Government support for Zionism and the Legion. By January 1916 he had already gained the close support of the influential foreign editor of *The Times*, Henry Wickham Steed, and Arthur Henderson, the head of the British parliamentary Labour party and the Minister of Education.⁴⁴

On 26 January 1916 Jabotinsky wrote to CFG Masterman, the founder and assistant-director of British propaganda at Wellington House, whom he had arranged to meet the previous week.⁴⁵ Echoing Kallen and Wolf, he began with a statement that embodied the prevalent perception of American Jewry amongst British propaganda and Foreign Office officials. “The Jews of America, especially those of New York (1,250,000), represent a political factor of serious influence, even from the standpoint of international politics.”⁴⁶ Noting that German agents were using the persecution of Jews by Russia against the Allies, “a living dementi to the moral claims of the Allies,” Jabotinsky argued that, “The only sentiment strong enough to counterbalance this rancour is the Zionist ideal.” From a mind largely defined by European neo-Romantic nationalist discourse, Jabotinsky himself

⁴³ *Ibid.* pp. 163-168, Joseph Schechtman, *Rebel and Statesman: The Vladimir Jabotinsky Story*, vol. I (New York: T. Yoseloff, 1956) pp. 207-215. Jabotinsky had originally opposed the idea of the Mule Corps, but soon came to believe in its political potential. In his discussions with the Zionist Pinchas Rutenberg the decision was taken that Jabotinsky would go to Britain to try and convince the British authorities to raise a Jewish Legion. Katz, *op. cit.*, pp. 160-161, 163, 170-171.

⁴⁴ Jabotinsky had been in touch with Steed since April 1915, following an introduction from the historian Charles Seignobos. Katz, *op. cit.*, p. 168, Wickham Steed to Jabotinsky, 25 April 1915, 3/3/18, Jabotinsky Papers, Jabotinsky Institute, Tel Aviv.

⁴⁵ G.I. Norris, Wellington House, to Jabotinsky, 20 January 1916, 3/3/18, Jabotinsky Papers.

conceived that amongst the Jewish masses there existed an inner attachment to the land of the nation, Palestine.⁴⁷ Summing up his position he wrote, “This [Zionist] belief and only it, can form the base and point d’appui for a systematic pro-Entente propaganda in the American Jewry.”

Believing that under the present conditions of the war the British Government was not able to offer any promises concerning the future of Palestine, Jabotinsky offered an alternative solution. Emerging out of a certain discourse of militarism and nationalism, he believed that a Jewish Legion for service in the East would constitute “a permanent fact”, a visible and powerful symbol that the victory of the Allies would be favourable to Zionist aims.⁴⁸ Again pre-empting the sensibilities and concerns of British propagandists, Jabotinsky offered to create a pro-British Jewish propaganda office in New York.⁴⁹ Overall, it was not surprising that Jabotinsky’s assessment of the problem of American Jewry, his awareness of British interests and his practical proposal, based upon a nationalist conception of Jewry, had been well received by Masterman and his colleagues in Wellington House. Explaining to Hugh Montgomery of the Foreign Office News Department, Gowers wrote, “he made a considerable impression on Masterman and myself.”⁵⁰ Indeed, Masterman became “very anxious” to act upon Jabotinsky’s scheme in order to create propaganda for use amongst American Jewry.⁵¹ Jabotinsky’s influence upon him was clear. From this moment until the official decision of the War Cabinet to issue a declaration in October 1917 Masterman

⁴⁶ Jabotinsky to Masterman, 26 January 1916, PRO FO 371/2835/18095.

⁴⁷ Michael Stanislawski, *Zionism and the Fin de Siècle- Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism from Nordau to Jabotinsky* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2001) pp. 171, 179-181, 210-211.

⁴⁸ Jabotinsky to Masterman, 26 January 1916, PRO FO 371/2835/18095.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ Gowers to H. Montgomery, 26 January 1916, PRO FO 371/2835/18095.

remained a strong and convinced supporter of the concept of using Zionism to win over American Jewish opinion.⁵²

By January 1916 the young Conservative M.P. Leopold Amery, then working for the War Office, had been petitioned by Patterson and was also greatly enthused by Jabotinsky's proposals. Writing to Cecil he readily asserted that "anti-Russian feeling" had been "used by the Bosche" and considered that a Zionist legion "might turn things the other way."⁵³ But as useful as Amery's help and advice would be for Jabotinsky later in the war, the War Office objected to the Legion idea, given that it could implicate the Government in a wider Zionist policy.⁵⁴ Indeed, aside from Amery and Wellington House there was no great enthusiasm for Jabotinsky's proposal, which without clear Jewish or even Zionist support, a Palestine campaign or an agreed pro-Zionist policy, was understandable.⁵⁵

But even though Jabotinsky's proposal for a Jewish Legion was turned down by the Foreign Office, his depiction of a pro-German, influential and Zionist American Jewry had served to endorse their pre-existing perceptions and the assessments provided by Kallen and Wolf. The rejection of the Legion scheme was in no way due to Jabotinsky's analysis of the problem, rather his solution.

Prior to the rejection of Jabotinsky's scheme, Wolf had put forward a different

⁵¹ Minute by W.E.? c.25 May 1916, PRO FO 371/2835/98116.

⁵² G.I. Norris, Wellington House to Jabotinsky, 6 March 1916, CFG Masterman to Jabotinsky 31 May 1916. Masterman to Jabotinsky, 31 May 1916, 3/3/18, Masterman to Alfred Read, 7 November 1917, 2/5/3/18, Jabotinsky Papers.

⁵³ Amery to Cecil, 11 January 1916, PRO FO 371/2835/18095. Amery later met with Cecil and the two "discussed the matter exhaustively." Cecil to Jabotinsky, 10 February 1916, 3/3/18, Jabotinsky Papers.

⁵⁴ War Office to Guy Locock, Private Secretary to Cecil, 17 January 1916, PRO FO 371/2835/18095.

⁵⁵ It was finally decided by the Foreign Office in May 1916 to "leave this alone." Minute by Hardinge, c.27 May 1916 and A. Nicolson, 27 May 1916, PRO FO 371/2835/98116, Wolf to Montgomery, 22 May 1916, *Ibid.* Friedman, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

formula to the Foreign Office, an Anglo-French declaration⁵⁶ recognizing the historic interest and rights of the Jewish community in Palestine if that country came within their spheres of influence during the war.⁵⁷

Only ten days prior to the submission of the Wolf formula, the Foreign Office had received a record of an interview with the leader of the Jewish community in Alexandria, Edgar Soares, a self-proclaimed “anti-Zionist.”⁵⁸ Soares stated, “with a stroke of the pen, almost, England could assume herself the active support of the Jews all over the neutral world.”⁵⁹ Adding great urgency to his appeal he stressed that with “the sympathy of the British Government today he would have secured the support of the whole Jewish and German-Jewish community in America within perhaps one month; and at most three . . . This was war, and time was more than precious.” Soares’ statement struck home in a concise and dramatic manner. It again confirmed that Jewish opinion was an issue, that it could be won through their attachment to Palestine and that time was of the essence.

By February 1916, the urgency of the situation and the need to act had become clear. With regard to the necessary remedy, both Wolf and Soares had suggested a public declaration as the best way to go forward. Although Kallen’s suggestion to the same effect had not been acted upon in December, by late February the conception that publicly supporting Zionism was the key had crystallized in the minds of certain officials. Some were

⁵⁶ Wolf was probably driven into action due to an erroneous rumour that Lloyd George had made an assurance to Chaim Weizmann regarding Zionism and the future of Palestine. Levene, *War, Jews and the New Europe*, p. 93, Wolf to Cecil, 17 February 1916, PRO FO 371/2835/37215, Eugene Black, *The Social Politics of Anglo-Jewry 1880-1920* (Oxford and New York: Basil Blackwell, 1988) pp. 342-343.

⁵⁷ Draft from Wolf to Georges Leygues in Wolf to Lancelot Oliphant, 3 March 1916, PRO FO 371/2817/42608

⁵⁸ What prompted Soares to approach the British authorities and make the case for a pro-Zionist propaganda policy still remains a mystery.

⁵⁹ Record of an interview between Sir Henry McMahon and Edgar Soares, received on 23 February 1916, PRO FO 371/2671/35433.

overtly enthusiastic, such as Hugh O’Beirne,⁶⁰ whilst others, such as Lord Crewe,⁶¹ Grey’s deputy, were more reactive, tempted by the prospect of a tool that may or may not hold the solution to perceived problems that faced Great Britain at a time of crisis. Their views may have varied, but they were all driven to consider using Zionism as a result of the cumulative efforts of Kallen, Wolf, Jabotinsky and Suares.

By the time of Wolf’s Palestine formula a week later, the resulting momentum was such in the Foreign Office that it was decided to officially approach France and Russia, with whom the post-war future of the Near East was being discussed in Petrograd. Lord Crewe, speaking for Grey, noted that this matter of a Zionist declaration should not be put aside. O’Beirne asserted that they could persuade the French to acquiesce if they explained “the political object which we hoped to attain by turning in our favour the Jewish force in America, the Near East and elsewhere, which is now preponderantly hostile to us”.⁶²

Despite these hopes, both the Russian and French Governments objected to the whole scheme in March, spelling the end of the endeavour. Neither Government was persuaded that American Jewry could be won through Zionism.⁶³ In any case, the on-going discussions over the future of the Ottoman Empire and the prospective Arab Revolt, meant that the French were not about to add a further complication to the issue, particularly one that might obstruct

⁶⁰ See memorandum by Hugh O’Beirne, 28 February 1916, PRO FO 371/2671/35433. On O’Beirne’s belief in the political power of Jewry, particularly in the Ottoman Empire, see Vereté, ‘Further Reflections on the Makers of the Balfour Declaration,’ p. 219, Levene, ‘The Balfour Declaration: A Case of Mistaken Identity,’ pp. 65-66.

⁶¹ Minute by Lord Crewe, 3 March 1916, PRO FO 371/2671/35433. For a more sceptical view, see minutes by Arthur and Harold Nicolson, 23 February 1916, PRO FO 371/2671/35433.

⁶² Minute by O’Beirne, 8 March 1916, *Ibid*.

⁶³ Buchanan to FO, 14 March 1916, PRO FO 371/2817/49273, Lord Bertie to Grey, 13 March 1916, FO 800/59, Grey Papers, Telegram from Bertie to FO, 22 March 1916, PRO FO 371/2817/54791.

their own strong ambitions in Palestine.⁶⁴ Faced with these objections, together with a growing distrust of Wolf⁶⁵ and the British Government's own interest in not compromising the Arab Revolt, the declaration was quietly dropped in June.⁶⁶

In sum, it is readily apparent that, as we have shown, the decision to consider using Palestine as a means of winning Jewish opinion, particularly in the USA, was a direct result of a consciously considered strategy on the part of at least Kallen, Wolf and Jabotinsky, whose independent efforts came together at just the right moment. Their success was, as I have shown, fundamentally drawn from their ability to understand the nature and importance of the Government's pre-occupation with propaganda, and within that context, to use foreign policy makers' perceptions of Jewish influence, the threat of German intrigue and the beneficent power of nationalism as the key to the Jewish imagination. The reasons why this did not result in a Government policy in 1916 did not lie in the strategy itself, but in the wider context of the war and the resulting concerns of the Government. Circumstances would change dramatically as the year turned to 1917, making a pro-Zionist policy both possible and necessary. By then the Arab Revolt had come to be a grave disappointment, a new Government had been established which included individuals who were more inclined to fervently pursue a pro-Zionist policy, the need for propaganda had become all-consuming and the decision to conquer Palestine had been taken. Nevertheless, as we shall see, any success that did come for Zionists as a result of these developments was predicated upon the

⁶⁴ See F.W. Brecher, 'French Ambitions in the Levant 1914-1918,' *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 29, no. 4 (October 1993) pp. 641-663, Levene, *War, Jews and the New Europe*, p. 97.

⁶⁵ Minute by Lord Crewe, 8 March 1916, minute by Lord Robert Cecil, 14 March, 1916, minute by Lancelot Oliphant, 27 June 1916, PRO FO 371/2817/43776. Spring-Rice had gone so far as to call Wolf a German agent. Spring-Rice to Eric Drummond, Grey's Private Secretary, 30 January 1916, PRO FO 800/86.

⁶⁶ Minute by Oliphant, 27 June 1916. Also, see minute by George Clerk, 29 June 1916, minute by Sir Edward Grey n.d., minute by Oliphant, 4 July 1916, and De Bunsen to Wolf, 4 July 1916, PRO FO 371/2817/130062.

effective continuance of the methods that had been used by Kallen, Wolf and Jabotinsky. Indeed, Jabotinsky himself was to become the most successful proponent of this diplomacy, utilising and building upon the tactics he had honed in 1916. In sharp contrast, the years 1915 and 1916 had seen Weizmann going down a completely different road with no possible claim of having influenced policy makers in pursuing a pro-Zionist policy. Demonstrating his ignorance of how the issue of propaganda played upon the official mind, and that this was the key to their possible interest in Zionism, he met, for example, with Cecil and extolled the strategic benefits of a British Palestine and the regenerative effects of national restoration for Jewry.⁶⁷ Cecil never was and never would be interested in the use of a British Palestine as a bulwark for Egypt or the restoration of the Jewish people for its own sake. For this reason, he made no effort to consult with Weizmann in relation to the Wolf formula. In 1916 the trusted referent with regard to Zionism, for at least Cecil and Lord Crewe, remained Herbert Samuel.⁶⁸

However, the considerations over the Wolf formula, at least in part, had a major ramification, the winning of Sir Mark Sykes to the idea of using Zionism to advance British interests.⁶⁹ It was the eventual result of this development that Sokolow and Weizmann would in February 1917 become the Government's official liaisons as Sykes sought to win the Zionist movement to the British cause. This turn of events had not stemmed from any new found realisation on Weizmann's part of what drove the Government's concern with Zionism, or any of his past attempts at diplomacy. It was, rather, the product of his own power building in Zionist circles and the removal of a Zionist representative who had

⁶⁷ Note by Lord Robert Cecil, 18 August 1915, PRO FO 800/95.

⁶⁸ Minutes by Cecil and Crewe, c. 29 June 1916, PRO FO 371/2817/130062.

accurately understood and cultivated Sykes perceptions of, and interest in, Jewry and Zionism.

2:2 Sir Mark Sykes and Moses Gaster, 1916-1917

It is quite clear from the historical record that Sykes, who had not shown any prior interest in Zionism, quickly came to see its benefits for British foreign policy as the Wolf formula was under consideration. In February, prior to his departure for Petrograd, where he was to negotiate with French and Russian representatives over the future of the Near East, culminating in the Sykes-Picot Agreement, Herbert Samuel had given him a copy of his memorandum from March 1915.⁷⁰ Clearly, it had an impact upon Sykes,⁷¹ who after receiving news of the Wolf formula, promptly discussed the subject, much to the annoyance of the Foreign Office, with Georges Picot, the French representative and Sazanov, the Russian Foreign Minister.⁷² Despite Samuel's discussions of the benefits of a British protectorate in Palestine, this aspect of his memorandum was not, as some have maintained, of concern to Sykes at this point.⁷³ Rather, his key interest in Zionism, like the Foreign Office, was winning the influence of world Jewry. In this regard, Samuel's depiction of

⁶⁹ Levene, *War, Jews and the New Europe*, p. 98.

⁷⁰ Sykes to Samuel, 26 February 1916, Herbert Samuel Papers. Aware of Sykes' discussions and the Wolf formula, Samuel had again sent his memorandum to the Cabinet. 'Item No. 10. Interview with Mr Herbert Samuel, M.P.' Report of the CFC, No. 6, 7 April 1916, Reel 6, Frame 133, Mowschowitch-Wolf Collection, Sykes to Samuel, 26 February 1916, Memorandum and Note for the Cabinet, 16 March 1916, Herbert Samuel Papers.

⁷¹ It has been argued that Sykes was drawn to the benefits of Zionism by Captain Reginald Hall, the Director of Navy Intelligence. Friedman, *op. cit.*, p. 110-112, 119, Jacob Rosen, 'Captain Reginald Hall and the Balfour Declaration,' *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol. 14, no. 1 (1988) pp. 56-67. However, there is no evidence to suggest that Hall had spoken to Sykes on this subject, or that Sykes had read Hall's brief allusion to Jewish political interests in Palestine.

⁷² Grey was still opposed to Samuel's proposal for a British protectorate in Palestine. Minute by Grey, c.15 March 1916, PRO FO 371/2767/49669.

⁷³ See his reference to a Belgian protectorate, Sykes to Samuel, 26 February 1916, Samuel Papers. For an alternative interpretation, which claims that Sykes' interest in Zionism derived from his wish to secure British control of Palestine, see Vereté, 'The Balfour Declaration and its Makers,' pp. 9-10, 14, Hardie and Hermann, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

Zionism and the rationale behind the Wolf formula had tapped into his perceptions of Jewry, easily convincing him that this hostile power could be pacified and used by the Allied cause by gaining the support of the Zionist movement. He wrote to Arthur Nicolson,

with "great Jewry" against us there is no possible chance of getting the thing thro' . . . assume Zionists satisfied the contrary is the case, of that I am positive . . . if the Zionists think [?] proposal good enough they will want us to win- If they want us to win they will do their best which means they will a) calm their activities in Russia b) Pessimism in Germany (c) Stimulate in France England & Italy (D) Enthuse in USA.⁷⁴

When Sykes returned to London he asked Samuel to put him in touch with a Zionist leader with whom he could hold discussions. The individual recommended by Samuel was the veteran Zionist leader Haham Moses Gaster, a somewhat tempestuous but widely respected figure of considerable stature in England and abroad,⁷⁵ who he had known for many years.⁷⁶ Samuel's admiration for Gaster as an impressive spokesman for the Zionist ideal and a man with adroit political sensibilities is clear.⁷⁷ Despite having met Sokolow and Weizmann,⁷⁸ it was Gaster who Samuel decided would be most suitable and appropriate at this critical juncture to meet with Sykes.⁷⁹ It was him alone, "at least in the first instance",

⁷⁴ Sykes, Petrograd to Sir Arthur Nicolson, 18 March 1916, PRO FO 800/381.

⁷⁵ Josef Fraenkel, 'Chaim Weizmann and Haham Moses Gaster,' in Raphael Patai (ed.) *Herzl Year Book- Essays in Zionist History and Thought*, Vol. VI (New York: Herzl Press, 1964-1965) pp. 183-237, Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture and West European Jewry before the First World War*, p. 78, Renton, 'National History and Romantic Narrative Form'.

⁷⁶ Samuel to Gaster, 14 December 1905, A203/2, Gaster Papers, CZA, Gaster to Moser, 25 January, 1915, A203/220, Gaster Papers, CZA.

⁷⁷ When drafting his memorandum for the Cabinet, he had met with Gaster who provided him with articles and essays on Zionism. Gaster to Samuel, 12 January 1915, A203/220, Gaster Papers, CZA.

⁷⁸ 27 November, 1914, Diary of C.P. Scott, 'Report submitted to the members of the Executive of the International Zionist Organisation,' 7 January 1915, No. 95, Stein, *The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann*, p. 116 and Gaster to Weizmann, 20 December, 1914, A203/220, CZA.

⁷⁹ Gaster to Samuel, 27 April 1916, A203/220, Gaster Papers, CZA. Alternatively, Daniel Gutwein has contended that Samuel recommended Gaster because he shared his own 'Moderate' belief in a compromise peace. Daniel Gutwein, *The Divided Elite: Economics, Politics and Anglo-Jewry 1882-1917* (Leiden, New York, Köln: E.J. Brill, 1992) p. 384. However, there is nothing to suggest that this was the case and in fact it is quite

who Samuel felt could be trusted to deal with this matter which had to “be kept absolutely confidential.”⁸⁰

This was the first time that a Zionist had been approached by a Government representative, rather than the other way around, with an eye to pursuing a pro-Zionist policy during the war, and marked a highly significant turning point. Traditionally, however, historians of the Balfour Declaration have judged the nature and importance of these early *pourparlers* to be of very little consequence. In line with Weizmann’s narrative in *Trial and Error*,⁸¹ Gaster has generally been depicted as either an irritant that “complicated Weizmann’s tactical problems in 1915 and 1916”⁸² or an ineffectual and politically incompetent prelude to the latter’s inevitable contacts with Sykes in early 1917.⁸³ In fact, Gaster was a man of sharp political acumen and his early relationship with Sykes during 1916 marked a crucial step in the latter’s interest in pursuing a pro-Zionist policy.

But, if Sykes had already been persuaded of the need to gain the support of Jewry through Zionism, what was the use of meeting Gaster, or indeed any other Zionist? Firstly, due to his conception of their influence, it was necessary for them to be carefully sounded out and kept in hope of a sympathetic decision in their favour, as it was “in their power” to overthrow the project.⁸⁴ Secondly, in order to persuade the French and the Allies as a whole the Zionists would need to “give some demonstration of their power”. He considered that, “accentuation of German financial straits and glow of pro-allied sentiment in certain hitherto

clear that Zionism, as opposed to any wider political concern, was Samuel’s driving interest.

⁸⁰ Samuel to Gaster, 20 April 1916, A203/227, Gaster Papers, CZA.

⁸¹ In *Trial and Error* Weizmann portrayed his former friend and mentor as nothing more than a churlish, self-centered character and an ineffectual Zionist. Weizmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 117, 124, 156, 229-230.

⁸² Halpern, *Clash of Heroes: Brandeis, Weizmann, and American Zionism*, pp. 133-134.

⁸³ Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann: The Making of a Statesman*, p. 109. Also see Sanders, *op. cit.*, pp. 368-369, Friedman, *op. cit.*, pp. 120, 122.

anti-ally neutral papers would be sufficient indication.”⁸⁵ Overall, and most crucially, Sykes needed to see a Zionist movement that reflected his own preconceptions, to discuss the issue with a Zionist who grasped and echoed the nub of the matter as he saw it. After all, it would have been very easy for a Zionist to present to Sykes the fluid and divided reality of world Jewry, a collection of fragmented communities that if anything at all negated any conception of Jewish influence or power. Indeed, if we look at some of Gaster’s writings and correspondence concerning the state of world Jewry we see a distinct appreciation that unity was “the rarest thing in Jewish history.”⁸⁶

Significantly, however, Samuel had emphasised to Gaster and Weizmann in December 1915 the importance of demonstrating to the British Government that any proposal had emanated from and was backed by “international Jewry.”⁸⁷ Moreover, since 1914 Gaster himself had already been aware of the keen British desire to use propaganda to win over Jewish opinion. At the recommendation of Israel Zangwill, he had been commissioned by Wellington House to write articles for Rumanian Jewry to this end.⁸⁸ Indeed, in his discussions with Sykes in May 1916 and later with Picot it is apparent that Gaster had fundamentally grasped their key interest, what they wished to hear about the power of Jewry and Zionism, particularly in the USA, and the degree of importance to which they had begun to attach to gaining the support of the Zionist movement. After his first meeting with Sykes, in which he advised that Jewish opinion could be won by a *fait accompli*, British soldiers

⁸⁴ Sykes to the F.O., 16 March 1916, PRO FO 371/2767/49669.

⁸⁵ Sykes to the F.O., 14 March 1916, PRO FO 371/2767/49669.

⁸⁶ Gaster to Jacob De Haas, 14 May 1916, A203/220, Gasters Papers, CZA. Also see Moses Gaster, ‘The Evolution of the Modern Jew- The Dawn of Jewish Emancipation in the West,’ *The American Jewish Chronicle*, 5 October 1917, idem. ‘The Situation of Our People,’ *The American Jewish Chronicle*, 29 March 1918.

⁸⁷ ‘Report submitted to the members of the Executive of the International Zionist Organisation,’ 7 January 1915, No. 95, Stein, *The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann*, p. 116.

occupying Jerusalem, Gaster phoned Sokolow and noted in his diary the need to “prove our assertions & to work on America.”⁸⁹ In his talks with Picot, Gaster continued to emphasise the importance of bargaining for Zionism and world Jewish opinion, stating, “Against positive assurances [regarding Palestine] we would do our best for creating public opinion favourable to France.”⁹⁰ Combined with such efforts, Gaster continued to focus Sykes’ vision of Jewry through the lens of Zionist discourse, discussing Zionism and world Jewry with him.⁹¹

Gaster had impressed Sykes, so much so that he had been entrusted with highly confidential and delicate matters and had been introduced by Sykes to his French counterpart, Picot, who had originally been quite reluctant to admit the importance of Zionism.⁹² Gaster had understood and played upon the key issue that could be used to advance the Zionist cause with these influential personalities. He had endorsed and consolidated their conception of what was at stake, Jewish influence, and how it could be tied to the Allied cause, Zionism.

Gaster’s contacts with Sykes did indeed diminish after July 1916. However, this was not, as has been argued, due to a lack of faith in Gaster’s political abilities, but was in line

⁸⁸ Claude Schuster to Zangwill, 14 October 1914, A120/514, Israel Zangwill Papers, CZA.

⁸⁹ Diary of Moses Gaster, 2 May 1916, Gaster Papers, Mocatta Collection, University College London. For the way in which Gaster further built upon Sykes’ anxiety to win over Jewry through Zionism see Gaster to Sykes, 24 May 1916, Copies of the Sledmere Papers, WA and Gaster to Sykes, 3 July 1916, A203/221, Gaster Papers, CZA.

⁹⁰ Diary of Moses Gaster, 10 May and 7 July, 1916, cited in Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, n.10 and 11, p. 288, Georges Picot, ‘Les Origines de la Déclaration Balfour,’ *La Question D’Israel*, Année 17 (1939).

⁹¹ For example, he sent Sykes a copy of *Zionism and the Jewish Future*, which he quickly proceeded to read. Gaster to Sykes, 24 May 1916, Copies of the Sledmere Papers, WA and Sykes to Gaster, 5 July 1916, A203/228, Gaster Papers, CZA. The book in question was a collection of essays by Zionists such as Sokolow, Richard Gottheil, Shmuel Tolkowsky, Weizmann and Gaster and it clearly portrayed the sum of Jewish history and life in the Diaspora through the prism of Zionist discourse. It expounded the plight and misery of *Galut*, the liberal, transformative essence of the Zionist ideal, of the New Jew, the re-emergence of a proud and authentic Hebrew culture, and the scientific and practical nature of Zionist achievements in Palestine. It presented the Zionist project as one that was in touch with and emanated from the latent desires of a unified Jewish nation. Harry Sacher (ed.) *Zionism and the Jewish Future* (London: John Murray, 1916).

with the wider Foreign Office decision to step back from its discussions over Zionism in the context of official French objections and the Arab Revolt. As the Revolt had failed to lead to the destabilisation of the Ottoman Empire, and had not been followed by an Allied military campaign in the region, there was simply no point in meeting with Gaster.⁹³ But when the Lloyd George coalition replaced the Asquith government on 6 December 1916, and the Prime Minister quickly decided to pursue a campaign in Palestine,⁹⁴ thus placing Zionism back on the agenda, Sykes wished to see him again at the beginning of January.⁹⁵ Now a political secretary for the War Cabinet secretariat, charged with Near Eastern affairs, Sykes sought to advance a pro-Zionist policy.

At around this time, however, he had discussed with the well-connected Armenian National Delegation representative in London, James A. Malcolm, the issue of an alliance between Zionists and Armenian nationalists.⁹⁶ As a result of these considerations, Malcolm took the opportunity to probe into the wider machinations of the Zionist movement and it was through Malcolm's friend, and Gaster's long time and bitter adversary, Leopold Greenberg,⁹⁷ that Weizmann and then Sokolow were strongly recommended as Zionist representatives for negotiations with Sykes.⁹⁸ However, on 30 January Gaster was still

⁹² Sykes to the FO, 14 March 1916, PRO FO 371/2767/49669.

⁹³ Kedourie, *Into the Anglo-Arab Labyrinth* pp. 133-137, Nevakivi, *op. cit.*, p. 45 and Vital, *op. cit.*, pp. 203-205.

⁹⁴ 'Minutes of a meeting held at 10 Downing Street on December 28, 1916,' Papers of JCC Davidson, Private Secretary to Bonar Law, House of Lords Record Office, Rothwell, *op. cit.*, p. 128, David Woodward, *Lloyd George and the Generals* (Newark and London: University of Delaware Press and Associated University Press, 1983) p. 128.

⁹⁵ Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, p. 361.

⁹⁶ 26-30 January, 1917, Diary of C.P. Scott, Scott Papers, Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, pp. 363-367.

⁹⁷ Stuart A. Cohen, *English Zionists and British Jews- The Communal Politics of Anglo-Jewry, 1895-1920* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1982), pp. 110-113.

⁹⁸ Stein, *Balfour Declaration*, pp. 363-367, Malcolm to Sykes, 3 and 5 February, 1917, Copies of the Sledmere Papers, WA.

trusted by Sykes and had confided in him as to what urgent action would need to be taken with the immediate prospect of British occupation of Palestine.⁹⁹ But once Greenberg, Weizmann and others such as James de Rothschild had the ear of Malcolm and Sykes, Weizmann was misleadingly identified as the “Chairman” of British Zionists and Gaster, who they wished to replace, was strongly criticized as dictatorial, peripheral to the Zionist leadership in England and abroad and as having kept his negotiations with Sykes secret.¹⁰⁰ (something which Weizmann and Sokolow themselves were to be accused of later in the year.)¹⁰¹ In addition, it seems that for Picot at least, Gaster, who had always sought to put Zionist concerns first lest they become used as a pawn in imperial politics, was too extreme.¹⁰² In 1917 the representatives of the imperial powers wanted Zionists who would be willing to submit limited requests, not demands, which were subservient to and constrained by imperial interests. Sokolow and Weizmann filled that space.

Together, these factors resulted in the decision that Sokolow, the recognised Zionist leader of the WZO in London,¹⁰³ would continue the negotiations with Picot and Sykes.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁹ Diary of Gaster, 30 January 1917, quoted in Stein, *Balfour Declaration*, p. 367, Gaster to Jacob DeHaas, 31 January 1917, A203/268, Gaster Papers, CZA, Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, p. 368, Gaster to Sykes, 1 February 1917, A203/279, Gaster Papers, CZA. The only evidence that Sykes had decided to seek out alternatives to Gaster is a record of a conversation between Sykes and Aaron Aaronsohn in April 1917. 27 April, 1917, Diary of Aaron Aaronsohn, quoted in Anthony Verrier (ed.) *Agents of Empire: Anglo-Zionist Intelligence Operations 1915-1919: Brigadier Walter Gribbon, Aaron Aaronsohn and the Nili Ring* (London and Washington: Brassey's Ltd, 1995) p. 260. However, this was long after Sykes and Malcolm had been persuaded by Weizmann, Sokolow, Greenberg and Rothschild that he had been talking with the wrong man, and would seem to have been an attempt to show that he had not been duped by Gaster. In fact, it is quite apparent that even after he had met with Weizmann and Sokolow, Sykes trusted Gaster and planned with him alone what actions would need to be taken in preparation for the British occupation of Palestine.

¹⁰⁰ Malcolm to Sykes, 3, 5 February, 1917, Copies of the Sledmere Papers, WA.

¹⁰¹ See, for example, comments by Ahad Ha'am and Shmuel Tolkowsky, 23 November 1917, Diary of Shmuel Tolkowsky, A248/2, Tolkowsky Papers, CZA.

¹⁰² See, for example, Gaster to Dr Victor Jacobson, Copenhagen, 15 March 1916, A203/219, Gaster Papers, CZA, Gaster to Weizmann, 20 December 1914, A203/214, Gaster Papers, CZA. Picot, *op. cit.*, p. 678.

¹⁰³ See British Palestine Committee to Sokolow, 27 January 1917, A248/16, Sokolow Papers, CZA, Weizmann to Gaster, 9 May 1917, A203/132, Gaster Papers, CZA, 'Nahum Sokolow' Tribute Committee to Gaster, 19 March 1918, A203/244, Gaster Papers, CZA, 26 June 1917, Tolkowsky Diary, A248/2, Tolkowsky Papers,

Gaster was ostracised, referring to his displacement as a *coup d'état*,¹⁰⁵ and Weizmann, appointed as President of the English Zionist Federation to aid his position,¹⁰⁶ was to work with Sokolow as the conduit between the Zionist movement and the Government. Sokolow's position as a member of the Executive of the Zionist Organisation had made him the logical choice to head negotiations at this point, but it did not necessitate Gaster being discredited with Sykes or his complete removal. With regard to Weizmann, his new position was not the result of any of his previous meetings with Government officials or supposed stature within Government circles,¹⁰⁷ which is said to have stemmed from his scientific work for the Ministry of Munitions,¹⁰⁸ of which Sykes had no knowledge. Rather, it was the product of political manoeuvring amongst a small coterie of Zionists in London and his power building in these circles since the outbreak of war.

This appointment of Weizmann and Sokolow marked the beginning of the Government's official relations with Zionism in 1917. Whether Weizmann and his senior colleague Sokolow would succeed in securing a pro-Zionist policy depended in large part upon their ability to continue to use the strategy of those that had preceded them, Kallen, Wolf, Soares, Jabotinsky and Gaster, as the dire developments in the war made the Government interest in Jewry ever more acute and a Palestine campaign made it possible. As I have argued, it was this strategy which had resulted in members of the Foreign Office and

CZA, Note by Sir Ronald Graham, 21 April 1917, PRO FO 371/3052/82982.

¹⁰⁴ Memorandum by Nahum Sokolow on the meeting of 7 February 1917, A226/30/1, Sokolow Papers, CZA. James de Rothschild to Gaster, 7 February 1917, A203/233, Gaster to James de Rothschild, 9 February 1917, A203/299, Gaster Papers, CZA.

¹⁰⁵ Gaster to Weizmann, 10 May 1917, A203/241, Gaster to Sokolow, 7 December 1917, A203/132, Gaster Papers, CZA.

¹⁰⁶ He replaced Joseph Cowen on 11 February 1917. Cowen to Nordau, 3 July 1917, A119/247, Max Nordau Papers, CZA.

¹⁰⁷ This has been argued by Jehuda Reinharz. Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann: Making of a Statesman*, p. 110.

Sykes taking an interest in a pro-Zionist policy. Throughout, the success of this work was dependent upon an accurate understanding and manipulation of the Government's perception of Jewry as a power whose influence had to be captured from enemy and corruptive forces through the beneficent agency of nationalism.

The final part of this chapter will further my contention that the Declaration arose, in the main, from this strategy, that Weizmann's role was negligible, and that the road to the Government's adoption of a Zionist policy was highly complex, dependent upon the critical and intersecting work of a number of Zionists. This section will, in particular, emphasise the importance of Jabotinsky's diplomacy in 1917, and the strategy and achievements of Russian and American Zionists, especially Louis Brandeis.

Despite the change in Government in December 1916, which included Lloyd George as Prime Minister and Balfour as Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Balfour Declaration was still by no means inevitable. It was dependent upon the Zionists to show why Zionism was of increasing importance, to give a sense of urgency to the proceedings, and to overcome any uncertainties that did arise by providing the Government with a vision of Jewry that appeared to endorse their preconceptions.

2:3 Establishing the Motives for the Declaration in 1917

At the beginning of 1917, as had been the case in 1916, the key motive for capturing Zionism at the time of Sykes' moves in January and February had been to win over American Jewish opinion.¹⁰⁹ This was already well established. However, the February Revolution in Russia had placed a question mark against Turkey being driven out of Palestine very quickly,

¹⁰⁸ See above, p. 83, n. 22.

¹⁰⁹ 26-30 January, 1917, Diary of C.P. Scott, Scott Papers.

thus cooling any Government interest in Zionism.¹¹⁰ But by the time of the second attempt to take Gaza on 17 April by General Murray, the Chief of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force,¹¹¹ the desire to create pro-British propaganda in the USA had grown and combined with other foreign policy concerns so as to firmly crystallize the need and means for a pro-Zionist policy amongst its key advocates.

As has been widely acknowledged, between January and April 1917 the interest in Jewish influence in the USA had been accompanied by a pre-occupying concern with winning the support of Russian Jewry, which, in the wake of the February revolution, was considered to be influential, pro-German, and highly involved in pacifist socialist propaganda.¹¹² This imagined picture of Russian Jewry was readily accepted by a number of Foreign Office, War Cabinet officials and Ministers. Equally, they were predisposed to consider that Zionism was the key to this situation. However, it was only after the two issues were brought together by Zionist representatives, mirroring and manipulating their perceptions, fears and needs, that it was appropriated as part of the key aims behind a pro-Zionist policy. Crucially, this concept derived not from the minds of Weizmann or Sokolow but from Jabotinsky.

With the aid and advice of Amery, Jabotinsky had recommenced his agitation for a Jewish Legion in January, placing a memorandum before the War Cabinet, which was finally

¹¹⁰ 'Interview with Lord Milner', 16 May 1917, AK 46/1, Claude Montefiore Papers, CZA.

¹¹¹ The first battle of Gaza in March 1917 had been a complete disaster. See Matthew Hughes, *Allenby and British Strategy in the Middle East 1917-1919* (London: Frank Cass, 1999) pp. 18-19.

¹¹² Reports from Consuls in Odessa, Kiev, Mariupol, Taganrog, Nicolaieff, Berdiansk, Elizabethgrad, sent by Sir G. Buchanan, Petrograd to Balfour, 22 December 1916, PRO FO 371/2995/811, Sir R. Graham, FO to William Ormsby-Gore, War Cabinet Offices, 9 June 1917, PRO FO 371/3012/1130308 Also see, 'Appreciation of the Attached Eastern Report,' 12 April and 17 May 1917, PRO CAB 24/143.

discussed in April, and had met personally with Lloyd George.¹¹³ As in 1916, Jabotinsky had attempted to secure support for his project by tying it to foreign policy makers' interest in capturing the will of Jewry, stating that this could only be achieved by visibly wedding the innate Zionist ideal of the masses to the British cause. In his memorandum, co-written with Joseph Trumpeldor, Jabotinsky stressed the "particular importance inherent to the Jewish question in connection with this War" and the need to combat German accusations of the Entente's utter indifference to the "tragedy of the Jewish Nation."¹¹⁴ Drawing particular attention to the importance of Jewry in American society, Jabotinsky emphasised that the only means of winning Jewish sympathy was to give "a certain official recognition to the old Zionist ideal of the Jewish people and to call the Jewish youth to fight on the side of the Allies for the liberation of Palestine."¹¹⁵

Although this diplomatic strategy might have been intended to further the Legion scheme alone, its rationale justified a pro-Zionist policy as a whole. Indeed, Jabotinsky had argued in his petition to the Prime Minister and the War Cabinet that the creation of a Legion should be accompanied with an official recognition of the Zionist ideal, making use of "such language as . . . would be favourable to Zionist aspirations."¹¹⁶ For this reason, the Legion was later perceived by its Government supporters as being intrinsically linked with a public declaration. As couched by Jabotinsky, they were two different methods of attaining the same goal. Accordingly, Jabotinsky's successful diplomacy won over individuals such as Wickham

¹¹³ Amery to Jabotinsky, 22, 25 January, 16 February, 26 March, 3, 13 April 1917, 1/5/3/18, Jabotinsky Papers, Jabotinsky Institute, Minutes of the War Cabinet, 5 April 1917, PRO WO 32/11353, Amery to Lord Derby, 5 April 1917, PRO WO 32/11353. On his meeting with Lloyd George see, David Davies, a member of the Prime Minister's personal secretariat, 'Palestine and the Zionists,' 23 April 1917, PRO WO 32/11353.

¹¹⁴ Vladimir Jabotinsky and Josef Trumpeldor, Memorandum for the War Cabinet, 14 January 1917, enclosed in Trumpeldor to Sykes, 15 February 1917, Doc. 34, Sledmere Papers.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

Steed and Geoffrey Dawson, the foreign editor and editor of *The Times*, not just for the benefit of the Legion. Through their agitation in Whitehall they necessarily endorsed the reasoning for a declaration as well.¹¹⁷ In this regard, Jabotinsky's efforts also seem to have been particularly successful in Downing Street itself, which had been convinced by April to support the Legion. For Lloyd George, who had a profound interest in the propaganda aspect of the war in 1917,¹¹⁸ and one of his close advisors, Phillip Kerr,¹¹⁹ Jabotinsky's arguments regarding the Legion had clearly helped to establish the political logic of how and why Jewish national aspirations in Palestine could be used to win Jewish influence. Kerr later explained,

He [Lloyd George] thinks that there are the strongest reasons for pressing on the proposal [of the Legion] as rapidly as possible on political grounds. Jewish circles, which exercise a great deal of influence all over the world, are divided in regard to the War . . . The project of creating a Jewish Legion with special reference to the liberation of Palestine, in great measure gained his support because he felt that the creation of a definitely fighting unit for use in Palestine would create a most valuable rallying point in favour of the war among Jews all over the world.¹²⁰

It was out of this effective diplomatic strategy, through which Jabotinsky utilised what he had identified to be the concerns of the Government to advance the Zionist cause, that he then used their perceptions of Russian Jewry to endorse the need for a pro-Zionist policy. In this regard, he met with Sykes in early April and then wrote to the Foreign Office, impressing upon them that "one of the greatest dangers of the moment is the pacifist

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷ See, for example, Wickham Steed to Lord Derby, W.O., 7 September 1917, PRO W.O. 32/11353, Steed to Jabotinsky, 8 September 1917, 2/5/3/18, Jabotinsky Papers, Jabotinsky Institute, Steed to Lord Northcliffe, 14 October 1917, Balfour Declaration File, The Middle East Centre, St Antony's College, Oxford.

¹¹⁸ See above, p. 49.

¹¹⁹ Kerr, the editor of the quarterly devoted to imperial unity, *The Round Table*, was a member of Lloyd George's personal secretariat, a small body of independent policy advisors who were intended to be an "administrative intelligence department for the Prime Minister." John Turner, *Lloyd George's Secretariat* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980) pp. 1-2.

demagoguery in Russia”, and that “the importance of this factor should not be overlooked at this time.” Although he claimed that this was not solely a Jewish movement, it contained Jews who were “active and clever men.” It was therefore necessary to establish a “counter-current within the Jewish community itself- a tendency for the prosecution of the war.” Such a goal could only be Palestine, with a Jewish unit fighting in Palestine for Zionist ideals. This would “immediately counterbalance the pacifist tendencies so far as Russian Jewry is concerned.” If Jabotinsky and his friends were to be given this “powerful pro-war argument” they would endeavour to make “the united Jewish influence [in Russia] . . . in favour of a war to the end.”¹²¹

Jabotinsky’s arguments were also relayed by Leopold Greenberg to the Foreign Office. This prompted Cecil to propose a public declaration in favour of Zionist aims, and to ask for the views of Sir George Buchanan, the British Ambassador in Petrograd.¹²² It was only at this point that the Foreign Office decided to consider a declaration, as a direct result of Jabotinsky’s diplomatic strategy.¹²³ Although Buchanan flatly rejected the idea that Russian Jewry was predominantly pacifist or Zionist, the reasoning originally put forward by Jabotinsky had been instinctively accepted by Sykes, who dismissed Buchanan’s criticisms

¹²⁰ Phillip Kerr, 10 Downing Street to Lord Derby, War Office, 22 August 1917, PRO WO 32/11353.

¹²¹ Jabotinsky to Sir Ronald Graham, 20 April 1917, PRO FO 371/3101/81775. Also see, for example, Jabotinsky, to Graham, 6 May 1917, PRO WO 32/11353 and for an earlier hint towards this argument see Lord Derby’s record of his discussion with Jabotinsky, and Trumpeldor which he sent to Lloyd George. Derby to Lloyd George, 9 April 1917, F/14/4/34, Lloyd George Papers.

¹²² ‘Extract from Private Letter by:- Mr L.G. Greenberg Editor Jewish Chronicle,’ 16 April 1917, PRO FO 371/3052/82982, FO to Buchanan, Petrograd, 24 April 1917, repeated to Lord Bertie, Paris and Sir R. Wingate, PRO FO 371/3053/84256.

¹²³ Shmuel Katz has also suggested that this proposal for a declaration in April had stemmed from Jabotinsky’s call to counteract Jewish pacifism in Russia through Zionism. However, Katz focuses upon how this tactic enabled Jabotinsky to convince Downing Street and the Foreign Office to support the Jewish Legion. He does not appreciate how this strategy contributed, in a critical way, to the Government’s decision to issue the Balfour Declaration. Moreover, his analysis of the Government’s interest in Russian Jewry and Zionism is marred by his acceptance of the official belief in Jewish political power and the idea that an earlier Zionist policy could have

out of hand.¹²⁴ Clearly, Sykes and others in the Government were already inclined to accept this concept. But it was only after it had been proposed by a Zionist that they came to relate the situation in Russia to their policy towards the Zionist movement, driving them into action. This was probably the most important achievement of Zionist representatives in England during 1917. Once this tactic had been conceived it was crucially adopted and endorsed by Weizmann, tentatively following Jabotinsky's lead,¹²⁵ who in Sokolow's extended absence in France and Italy had become the main contact with the Foreign Office, and was also utilised by others such as Aaron Aaronsohn¹²⁶ with Sykes in Egypt.¹²⁷ For those such as Milner, who was not persuaded by Weizmann, other Jewish activists successfully used this tactic to great effect.¹²⁸ The end result was that this rationale for pursuing a pro-Zionist policy was firmly accepted by those who became its key proponents within the Government: Sykes, Sir Ronald Graham, the new Foreign Office liaison with the Zionists,¹²⁹ Amery and Ormsby-Gore, who were both recent additions to the War Cabinet secretariat,¹³⁰

changed the course of the war in Russia. Katz, *op. cit.*, pp. 256, 264, 266, 325.

¹²⁴ Sykes to Graham, 28 April 1917, PRO 371/3053/87897.

¹²⁵ See minutes by Graham, 11 and 24 May, 1917, PRO FO 371/2996/94865 and PRO FO 371/3012/102649. Even by this stage Weizmann had confined his attempts to convince individuals such as Cecil and Balfour to support Zionism by focusing on the strategic importance of Palestine. See Weizmann to C.P. Scott, 23 March 1917, no. 323, Stein, *The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann*, pp. 346-347 and 'Notes of an interview with Lord Robert Cecil,' 25 April 1917, Z4/1586, Papers of the London Zionist Bureau, CZA.

¹²⁶ Aaronsohn was an agronomist from the Yishuv who led a pro-British intelligence ring in Palestine known as NILI, founded in 1915. He had first met Sykes in October 1916 whilst he was in London, and proceeded to work with members of the War Office and the military in Egypt in relation to the Palestine campaign. He met Sykes again in Egypt following the latter's arrival there in April 1917. Verrier, *op. cit.*, Part 2, Stein, *op. cit.*, pp. 291-293.

¹²⁷ See Sykes to FO, sent by Wingate, Cairo, 5 June 1917, PRO FO 371/3013/112186.

¹²⁸ Milner was persuaded by information from Alshevsky, a Siberian born, former member of the Jewish Colonization Association. Milner to Cecil, 17 May 1917, PRO FO 800/198, Milner to Lloyd George, 31 May 1917, F/38/2/6, Lloyd George Papers.

¹²⁹ Sir Ronald Graham, F.O. to William Ormsby-Gore, War Cabinet Offices, 9 June 1917, PRO FO 371/3012/110308.

¹³⁰ William Ormsby-Gore returned from Egypt in April 1917. Whilst there he had met with Aaron Aaronsohn and had become convinced of the importance of Zionism in world Jewry as a pro-British force and of the achievements and potential of Zionist settlement in Palestine. See William Ormsby-Gore, 'Zionism and the

Kerr, Cecil, Lloyd George and Balfour.¹³¹

With regard to the importance of this development in the fruition of the Government's pro-Zionist policy, some have gone so far as to suggest that the Government's interest in Russian Jewry was the sole consideration behind the decision to issue the Balfour Declaration.¹³² There is indeed no doubt that as the situation in Russia worsened prior to October 1917 it became an increasingly urgent factor. But it did not constitute the whole picture. As we noted in chapter one, the need for propaganda in the USA only increased after her entrance into the war in April 1917.¹³³ As well, the desire to win the support of Russian Jewry merely strengthened the need to capture the weapon of American Jewry, who were thought to wield a powerful influence over their brethren.¹³⁴ Indeed, the Foreign Office attempted to use American Zionists, who themselves feared and fed the bogey of pacifist revolutionary Jews,¹³⁵ to try and dissuade these supposed anti-war agitators.¹³⁶ As such, at every stage before and after the Declaration Government officials referred to the need to convince "the Jews in the United States and Russia to lend their whole-hearted support in favour of carrying the war through to a successful conclusion."¹³⁷ The joint interest in both

Suggested Jewish Battalions for Egyptian Expeditionary Force,' War Cabinet Memorandum, 14 April 1917, PRO FO 800/198 and Ormsby-Gore, Offices of the War Cabinet, to Graham, FO, 30 May 1917, PRO FO 371/3012/110308.

¹³¹ See minute by Lord Robert Cecil, 29 May 1917, PRO FO 371/3055/132608, Kerr, 10 Downing Street to Sir Ronald Graham, 5 May 1917, PRO FO 371/3101/81775.

¹³² Levene, 'The Balfour Declaration,' pp. 168-170.

¹³³ See chapter one and Renton, 'Historiography of the Balfour Declaration,' pp. 120-123.

¹³⁴ Ormsby-Gore, 'Appreciation of the Attached Eastern Report,' 12 April 1917, PRO CAB 24/143.

¹³⁵ 'Interview with Professor Gottheil of Columbia University,' 24 May 1917, Box 11, Folder 277, Gottheil to Wiseman, 9 July 1917, Box 11, Folder 278, Wiseman Papers, Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University.

¹³⁶ Telegrams were organized and sent from a number of leaders from across the political spectrum of American Jewish socialists to the Council of Workman's and Soldier's deputies. Zionist and other Jewish leaders also sent telegrams to Russian Jewish figureheads. Telegram to Sir William Wiseman, 10 April 1917, cables from Wiseman, 13, 14, 18, 19 April 1917, Box 11, Folder 277, Wiseman Papers, Gottheil to Wiseman, 15 April 1917, Box 10, Folder 255, 'Russia: Intelligence and Propaganda,' Wiseman Papers.

¹³⁷ Sir Ronald Graham, FO to the Secretary of the Army Council, 7 May 1917, Masterman to Alfred Read, 7

Russian and American Jewry was a natural outcome of the logic behind a pro-Zionist policy, agreed to by a Government that was in the midst of a total war in crisis.¹³⁸ The belief in Jewish influence, and the hold of Zionism on the Jewish imagination, meant that wherever there were Jews, there was a potential weapon to help the British cause. Hence, as we shall in the next chapter, the propaganda that was created to capture Jewish opinion after the Declaration was not just distributed in Russia and the USA, but throughout world Jewry.

As we have demonstrated, this need to win Jewish opinion in both Russia and the USA, as the core justification for a pro-Zionist policy, was first firmly established in April 1917. But, for Lloyd George in particular there was an additional benefit to using Zionism which was also clarified at this time: ensuring sole British control of Palestine after the war. Unlike Balfour, Cecil and Graham in the Foreign Office,¹³⁹ Lloyd George was fixed upon securing this imperial desiderata, which had been endorsed by the Imperial War Cabinet Committee on territorial aims in the war.¹⁴⁰ Due to the perceived post-war threat of German ambitions in the Near East, it was felt that Palestine had to be secured as a British possession, so as to protect Egypt. As a result, Britain would have to extricate itself from the Sykes Picot Agreement of May 1916, which had envisioned joint control with France. As the latter

November 1917, 2/5/3/18, Jabotinsky Papers, memorandum by Graham for Balfour, 24 October 1917, PRO FO 371/3054/207495, minute by Balfour, c.20 October 1917, PRO FO 371/3054/202261, Balfour to Lloyd George, 25 October 1917, F/3/2/34(a), Lloyd George Papers, House of Lords Record Office, War Cabinet Minutes, 31 October 1917, PRO CAB 23/4/WC261.

¹³⁸ On the sense of defeatism and crisis as a driving force in Government foreign policy thinking by the middle of 1917, see Brock Millman, *Pessimism and British War Policy 1916-1918* (London and Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 2001) Chs. 2-5.

¹³⁹ C.P. Scott to Lloyd George, 5 February 1917, F/45/2/4, Lloyd George Papers, minute by Lord Robert Cecil, 20 December 1917, PRO FO 371/3061/24367 and minute by Balfour, c. 19 June 1917 cited in Stein, *The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann*, n. 17, p. 442, minute by Sir Ronald Graham, 17 April 1917, PRO FO 371/3052/78324, minutes by Graham, 21 April, 1917 and Hardinge, n.d. PRO FO 371/3052/82982, minute by Graham, 17 August 1917, PRO FO 371/3059/159558.

¹⁴⁰ 'Minutes of the Third Meeting of the Sub-Committee of the Imperial War Cabinet on Territorial Desiderata in the Terms of Peace, Held at 2 Whitehall Gardens on April 19, 1917,' PRO CAB 21/77, 'Report of Committee

continued to stake its claim in Palestine, it was proposed that Britain could use the Zionists' apparent desire for British suzerainty to justify its position, without harming the Entente.¹⁴¹ It has been argued that regardless of these considerations, the Government did not require a "Zionist halo to sanctify their staying there" due to their prospective military occupation of the country.¹⁴² But as much as Lloyd George may have believed that Britain would in the end remain in Palestine,¹⁴³ he could not risk a breach with France on this issue or underestimate the difficulty of securing this aim at a post-war peace conference that may well come without a definite Allied victory.¹⁴⁴ It is true that by June Nahum Sokolow had with marked diplomatic skill received an unprecedented declaration of support for Jewish national aspirations in Palestine from the French,¹⁴⁵ which due to the apparent Zionist desire for a British protectorate could be used as a means of justifying sole British suzerainty.¹⁴⁶ Nevertheless, in order for this diplomatic manoeuvre to be effective it was still necessary to gain the public support of world Jewry and Zionism firmly behind Great Britain in preparation for the eventual peace conference.¹⁴⁷ In addition, the need to cloak British

on Terms of Peace (Territorial Desiderata)' 28 April 1917, PRO CAB 21/77.

¹⁴¹ 'Report of Committee on Terms of Peace (Territorial Desiderata)' 28 April 1917, PRO CAB 21/77, Nevakivi, *op. cit.*, p. 47, Vereté, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-18.

¹⁴² Levene, 'The Balfour Declaration,' pp. 54, 76.

¹⁴³ See his comments to Lord Bertie on this subject in April 1917, Bertie of Thame, *The Diary of Lord Bertie of Thame 1914-1918, Vol.II* (London: Hodder and Stoughton 1924) p. 123.

¹⁴⁴ Vereté, 'The Balfour Declaration and its Makers,' pp. 17-18, Renton, 'The Historiography of the Balfour Declaration,' pp. 115-118, Rothwell, *op. cit.*, pp. 131, 137, 143, Woodward, *op. cit.*, pp. 131, 210.

¹⁴⁵ 'Precis Report of the Special Mission of Mr N. Sokolow and Mr J.A. Malcolm to Paris re- Zionist demands for a Jewish Home in Palestine,' A226/30/1, Samuel Landman Papers, CZA and Sokolow, Rome to Weizmann, 12 May 1917, A18/26, Sokolow Papers, CZA. For an account of these negotiations see Friedman, *op. cit.*, Ch. 9.

¹⁴⁶ Sykes had sought to help Sokolow for this purpose. Sykes to Hankey, 7 April 1917, 42a, Sledmere Papers. Although D.Z. Gillon has argued that Sykes was not working under the instructions of Lloyd George, Sykes consistently kept Balfour and the War Cabinet informed as to his work and intentions in this regard. Gillon, *op. cit.*, pp. 142-147.

¹⁴⁷ Friedman has argued that the interest in keeping out the French was not a contributing factor in the decision to pursue a pro-Zionist policy as the British would have had to have outdone the French declaration. Friedman, *op. cit.*, p. 285. But, as the Zionists were already thought to favour British suzerainty this would not have been

ambitions in Palestine under the guise of Zionism was exacerbated still further by the ‘no annexation’ peace policy of President Wilson and elements within the new Government in Russia. By depicting itself as a champion of national self-determination, the British Government could use Zionism here too to justify its *de facto* control in Palestine.¹⁴⁸ As Sykes put it in May 1917, “Our only weapon with these people is the theory of racial individuality and the argument that we cannot abandon conquered races to incurable oppressors like the Turks and Germans.”¹⁴⁹ For Sykes, who had worked to secure British control of Palestine only after he had been instructed to do so by Lloyd George and Curzon in April;¹⁵⁰ Zionism, like Armenian and Arab nationalism, had become both “big Entente War assets and Conference assets”.¹⁵¹ Within his mind, both uses were interlinked as they arose from his belief in the power of Zionism, which he thought could determine the outcome of the Palestine issue at a prospective peace conference.¹⁵² Later than Sykes, Amery also came to see Zionism in relation to the future of the Empire, as part of his pre-occupying concern with post-war imperial security.¹⁵³ But differing from his colleague in the War Cabinet Secretariat, this devoted imperialist was quite clear in his mind that the priority had, at least by September 1917, become the use of a Jewish presence in Palestine so as to protect Egypt

necessary. Friedman’s thesis that the driving imperial concern with regard to Palestine stemmed from the need to prevent German influence or control after the war is correct, but in order to ensure this goal it was still necessary to establish sole British suzerainty, and that required keeping out the French. *Ibid.* pp. 285-288. See French, *British Strategy and the Lloyd George Coalition*, pp. 133-34.

¹⁴⁸ Friedman, *op. cit.*, pp. 287-288, Stein, *op. cit.*, pp. 358, 422, 551, Vital, *op. cit.*, Renton, ‘Historiography of the Balfour Declaration,’ pp. 123-126.

¹⁴⁹ Sykes to Sir Percy Cox, 23 May 1917, Doc. 42c, Sledmere Papers.

¹⁵⁰ ‘Notes of a conference held at 10 Downing Street, at 3.30 pm on April 3 1917’, Doc.40, Sledmere Papers.

¹⁵¹ Sykes, ‘Memorandum on the Asia Minor Agreement,’ 14 August 1917, Doc.75, Sledmere Papers.

¹⁵² See, for example, Sykes to Wingate, 3 March 1918, PRO FO 800/221.

¹⁵³ Friedman, *op. cit.*, pp. 172-174, French, *British Strategy and the Lloyd George Coalition*, pp. 175-176.

from any future “German-Turkish oppression.”¹⁵⁴

The role of the Zionists in directly establishing the imperial motive for a pro-Zionist policy appears to have been negligible.¹⁵⁵ Although Samuel’s strategic argument had been adopted by Weizmann in his effort to persuade members of the Government to support Jewish national aspirations, he appears to have been unaware of Lloyd George’s thinking on the issue of Palestine as it came to the fore in April 1917. He had to be informed by Balfour in March that the Prime Minister held a similar interest in gaining Palestine after the war.¹⁵⁶ In his ensuing meeting with Lloyd George, Weizmann’s claim that the Zionists were opposed to Anglo-French suzerainty¹⁵⁷ may have inspired Lloyd George to consider using Zionism to keep out the French,¹⁵⁸ but it was certainly not the result of Weizmann’s deliberate efforts to do so. He was still unaware of the existence of the Sykes-Picot Agreement.¹⁵⁹ In any case, the idea that Zionism could be used to secure a British protectorate was not new to Lloyd George, having keenly embraced Samuel’s suggestions in this regard as early as November 1914.¹⁶⁰

Nevertheless, the absence of a direct Zionist contribution to this motive by no means

¹⁵⁴ Amery to Edward Carson, 4 September 1917, quoted in Barnes and Nicholson, *op. cit.*, pp. 170-171, L.S. Amery, *My Political Life- Vol. II*, (London: Hutchinson, 1953) p. 115.

¹⁵⁵ Vereté, ‘The Balfour Declaration and its Makers,’ pp.4-7, 15, 18, ‘Further Reflections on the Balfour Declaration,’ pp. 210-211, Vital, *op. cit.*, p. 236.

¹⁵⁶ Weizmann to C.P. Scott, 20 March, 1917, no. 321, Stein, *The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann*, p. 344.

¹⁵⁷ Weizmann to Sokolow, 4 April 1917, no. 329, *Ibid.* pp. 350-351 and p. 351, n. 5.

¹⁵⁸ This meeting was on 3 April and it was later that day that Lloyd George instructed Sykes to try and secure “the addition of Palestine to the British area” and emphasised “the importance of not prejudicing the Zionist movement and the possibility of its development under British auspices.” ‘Notes of a conference held at 10 Downing Street, at 3.30 pm on April 3 1917,’ Doc. 40, Sledmere Papers.

¹⁵⁹ He was informed by Harry Sacher on 14 April, who had been told by C.P. Scott. Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann: The Making of a Statesman*, p. 135.

¹⁶⁰ ‘Note on discussion with Sir Edward Grey, with an appendage concerning a meeting with Lloyd George, 9 November 1914,’ Herbert Samuel Papers.

negates the critical importance of individuals such as Jabotinsky in persuading the Government to adopt a pro-Zionist policy. This reason for using Zionism was only shared by a minority, albeit an important one, amongst its supporters in the Government, namely Lloyd George, Sykes and Amery. And with the exception of Amery it did not constitute a clear priority in their considerations. Although it is difficult, if not wholly illusory, to deduce what was the primary factor in the minds of Lloyd George and Sykes, it is readily apparent that propaganda was considered to be of the utmost significance. Lloyd George's personal interest in generating pro-British propaganda across the world was profound.¹⁶¹ And, most significantly, it was this interest in using Zionism as a propaganda tool, as opposed to the imperial motive, that was shared by all of those who pushed for an official pro-Zionist policy. In this regard, the work of Jewish activists since Kallen's letter of 1915 had been decisive.

Altogether, by April 1917, the expectation of a successful campaign in Palestine, along with the increasing need for propaganda in Russia and the USA had, thanks to the work of Zionists in London, combined to convince certain key members of the Government to actively pursue a pro-Zionist policy. In particular, Lloyd George and Balfour had already committed themselves to supporting Zionist aspirations.¹⁶² By May it was considered in Downing Street that a qualified declaration of sympathy with Zionist ideals, along with the creation of a Jewish Legion, would produce the required effect amongst Jews in Russia and America.¹⁶³ Thanks to the declaration from the French in June, the prospect of French objections, which had proved to be such a problem in 1916, had been removed. Finally, therefore, in the middle of June Balfour requested a draft formula from Zionist

¹⁶¹ See above, p. 49, and below, pp. 167-168.

¹⁶² Note by Graham for Lord Hardinge, 21 April 1917, PRO FO 371/3052/82982.

representatives, to be sent to him from Lord Rothschild.¹⁶⁴

Even at this stage it was by no means certain that these steps would definitely culminate in an official Government policy, as agreed to by the War Cabinet. Indeed, the jump from considering a pro-Zionist policy in April to the actual decision to put it into action only came about with yet another example of a Zionist activist who managed to tap into the imagined concerns of Government officials at the right moment. On this occasion, the Zionist concerned was Weizmann. It was at this point that he made a particularly important contribution, sharply exacerbating the fears of Government members who already advocated a pro-Zionist policy. This was achieved, as had been done by Zionists since 1915, by drawing on the Government's conspiratorial fear of the German menace.

In early June, Weizmann asserted to Graham and Ormsby-Gore that the German Government was seeking to use Zionism itself to influence Jewish opinion, especially in America and Russia.¹⁶⁵ Playing upon their paranoia of German intrigues amongst Jewry, Weizmann also raised the spectre of an international ring of pro-German Jewish financiers in Hamburg, Berlin, Vienna, Paris and New York.¹⁶⁶ Unsurprisingly, the Foreign Office was quick to accept the veracity of this mistaken information.¹⁶⁷ Given their mindset at this juncture, the British would have almost expected such a move from their opponents. As such,

¹⁶³ Kerr to Graham, 5 May 1917, PRO FO 371/3101/81775.

¹⁶⁴ Minute by Balfour, c. 19 June, PRO FO 371/3058/123458 and Weizmann to Harry Sacher, 20 June 1917, no. 435, Stein, *The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann*, p. 445, Sokolow to Sacher, 10 July 1917, Z4/120, Papers of the London Zionist Bureau, CZA. On the Rothschilds' perspective on the making of the Balfour Declaration, see Simon Schama, *Two Rothschilds and the Land of Israel* (London: Collins, 1978) pp. 198-208 and Niall Ferguson, *The House of Rothschild: The World's Banker*, vol. II, 1849-1998 (New York: Penguin, 2000) pp. 449-453.

¹⁶⁵ Memorandum by Graham, 13 June 1917, PRO FO 371/3058/123458, minute by Ormsby-Gore, 10 June 1917, no. 55, Sledmere Papers, minute by Harold Nicolson, 9 October 1917, PRO FO 371/3053/193643.

¹⁶⁶ Minute by Ormsby-Gore, 10 June 1917, Doc. 55, Sledmere Papers.

¹⁶⁷ Isaiah Friedman, *Germany, Turkey, Zionism, 1897-1918* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2nd ed. 1998)

Weizmann's intimations were endorsed by consular reports from Switzerland and the Hague, and were echoed by James Malcolm and then Wickham Steed in his agitation at the War Office for a Jewish Legion.¹⁶⁸

The image of a potentially pro-German Jewry that could be swept up by a German initiative at any moment had added an even greater sense of urgency, pushing Balfour to request a draft declaration from the Zionists. Yet, as in March 1916, the doubts that had been expressed by officials such as Buchanan had caused hesitation amongst certain individuals,¹⁶⁹ which could still have scuppered the possibility of a War Cabinet decision. In addition, Bonar Law, Lord Curzon and in particular Edwin Montagu, the new Secretary of State for India, were all to raise opposition in the War Cabinet to any public declaration.¹⁷⁰ Voices of dissent had also been heard in the Foreign Office and the Department of Information.¹⁷¹ These problems were compounded even further, and in part came from, a vigorous public and diplomatic campaign by the Conjoint Foreign Committee and other prominent figures in Anglo-Jewry.¹⁷² In short, a long shadow was cast over Zionist prospects in the summer and early autumn of 1917, which was not aided by the delay in the Palestine campaign.¹⁷³ Consequently, there was a palpable sense of frustration amongst those in the Foreign Office

pp. 326-328.

¹⁶⁸ Walter Townley, The Hague to Balfour, 3 August 1917, PRO FO 371/3053/154591, Heron Goodhart, Berne to Balfour, Printed for the War Cabinet, 2 October 1917, PRO FO 371/3053/193643, Wickham Steed, The Times, to Jabotinsky, 8 September 1917, 2/5/3/18, Jabotinsky Papers and James Malcolm to Nuba Pashar, 22 June 1917, PRO FO 371/3057/125022.

¹⁶⁹ Minutes by Oliphant and Graham, n.d., Cecil to Milner, 17 May 1917, PRO FO 800/198.

¹⁷⁰ Wickham Steed to Lord Northcliffe, 14 October 1917, Balfour Declaration File, St Anthony's College Middle East Centre and Diary of C.P. Scott, 19 October 1917, Scott Papers, Friedman, *op. cit.*, Ch. 16.

¹⁷¹ Minute by Lord Drogheda, 25 April 1917, PRO FO 371/3092/83962, minutes by George R. Clerk, 30 March 1917 and Hardinge n.d., PRO FO 371/3101/65760, minute by Hardinge, c.25 June 1917, PRO FO 371/3053/125543, John Buchan, Dept of Information to Jabotinsky, 4 October 1917, 2/5/3/18, Jabotinsky Papers.

¹⁷² See Levene, *War, Jews and the New Europe*, pp. 148-155, Friedman, *op. cit.*, Ch. 16.

¹⁷³ 11 September 1917, Tolkowsky Diary, A248/2, Tolkowsky Papers, CZA, Stein, *op. cit.*, p. 337.

who were anxious to pre-empt the Germans and secure a propaganda weapon to win American and Russian Jewish opinion.¹⁷⁴

One major obstacle was removed when the War Cabinet was informed in August that General Allenby, who had replaced the failing Murray in June, would finally obtain by the middle of September the necessary troops and material needed to take Jerusalem.¹⁷⁵ Allenby launched the third battle of Gaza by assaulting Beersheba on 30 October. The obstacle posed by the CFC, however, was much more threatening to the hopes of the Zionist leadership in London. The protests of Wolf and others challenged the very basis of a Government pro-Zionist policy. They consistently attempted to reveal to the British Government and the public the fallacy of a policy which was based upon a vision of a united, nationalist world Jewry.¹⁷⁶ Hence, in the summer and Autumn of 1917, it was absolutely critical that Sokolow, Weizmann and Jabotinsky, amongst others, presented the British Government with a Jewry that was focused upon the future destiny of Palestine. Although the *Weltanschauung* of certain Government officials made them ready to accept such a viewpoint, and the crisis context of the war made the question of Jewish influence increasingly relevant, it had to be

¹⁷⁴ See memorandum by Graham for Balfour, 24 October 1917, PRO FO 371/3054/207495, minute by Balfour, c.20 October 1917, PRO FO 371/3054/202261, Balfour to Lloyd George, 25 October 1917, F/3/2/34(a), Lloyd George Papers, House of Lords Record Office, 11 September and 31 October 1917, Tolkowsky Diary, A248/2, Tolkowsky Papers, CZA.

¹⁷⁵ Faced with yet another disastrous military failure with the on-going Third battle of Ypres, begun on 31 July, which Lloyd George failed to stop, he pushed harder for the Palestine campaign but had to persuade an opposed General Staff and a suspicious French Government to take the men and materials from Salonika. Hughes, *op. cit.*, pp. 29-31, Chief, London to Chief, Egypt Force, 10 August 1917, PRO WO 158/611. Trevor Wilson and Robin Prior, 'British Decision-making 1917: Lloyd George, The Generals and Passchendaele,' in Hugh Cecil and Peter Liddle (eds) *Facing Armageddon: The First World War Experienced* (London: Leo Cooper, 1996) pp. 93-102.

¹⁷⁶ Claude Montefiore, 'Interview with Lord Milner May 16 1917' AK 46/1, Claude Montefiore Papers, CZA, memorandum by Wolf, 18 May 1917, PRO FO 371/3012/102649, (Edwin Montagu?) to Montefiore, 4 October 1917, A77/3/2, Wolf Papers, CZA, Wolf to Montefiore, 5 April 1917, AK 46/1, Claude Montefiore Papers, CZA. 'The Future of the Jews- Palestine and Zionism- Views of Anglo-Jewry,' Statement by David Alexander, President of the Board of Deputies of British Jews and Claude Montefiore, President of the Anglo-Jewish Association, 24 May 1917, *The Times*.

endorsed for the more sceptical, if not opposed, members of the Government to accede to an official policy.

Fortunately for the Zionists in London, the public spectacle of intra-Jewish divisions over the question of Zionism in the UK was essentially neutralized when the Board of Deputies, largely due to a power struggle within the elites of Anglo-Jewry, voted to censure the CFC's public polemic against Zionism.¹⁷⁷ Even though the vote had been passed by a very small margin, the Foreign Office willingly accepted it as a sign of Zionist strength and gladly witnessed the apparent downfall of Lucien Wolf.¹⁷⁸ The continued opposition by Wolf, Montagu and their supporters was surmountable so long as their protests could be demonstrated to be the death-throes of a privileged elite that was out of touch with the sentiments of the masses in the UK, but more importantly, in the USA and Russia.¹⁷⁹

By October the Zionist leadership, through a campaign by the EZF,¹⁸⁰ had managed to obtain for the attention of the Government a substantial list of some 250 organizations and synagogues in the UK that had supported a resolution favouring the reconstitution of Palestine as the home of the Jewish people. No attempt was made by the Foreign Office to verify these findings or how they related to a predominantly non-Zionist Jewish community.¹⁸¹ It simply reflected what those responsible already believed and wished to see. Graham wrote, "Outside a small influential clique Jewish feeling appears almost

¹⁷⁷ Cohen, *op. cit.*, pp. 243-276.

¹⁷⁸ Memorandum by Ronald Graham, 18 June 1917, PRO FO 371/3058/123458. In fact Wolf continued to play an important role in Anglo-Jewish politics, and in British-Jewish diplomacy at the Paris Peace Conference. Levene, *War, Jews and the New Europe*, pp. 155-159, Pt. IV.

¹⁷⁹ For Weizmann's remonstrations on this point, see Weizmann to Balfour, 2 October 1917, no. 514, Stein, *The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann*, pp. 521-22, Weizmann to Kerr, 7 October 1917, no. 517, *Ibid.* pp. 526-528, Weizmann to Hankey, no. 524, *Ibid.* pp. 533-534, referred to in Cohen, *op. cit.*, pp. 161-162, n. 10.

¹⁸⁰ Stein, *The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann*, no. 531, p. 539, n. 1.

¹⁸¹ Cohen, *op. cit.*, pp. 249-255, 282-285.

unanimously favourable to the Zionist idea.”¹⁸²

Despite the force of such beliefs held by Graham and his like-minded colleagues, the small group of self-appointed Zionist representatives in London alone could not have finally succeeded in depicting a world Jewry that was Zionist and could be won over through a British declaration. Indeed, they were very aware of their precarious position and the need to try and create a consensus within the international leadership. Great efforts were made to inform and gain the support of the Smaller Actions Committee (through the Copenhagen office),¹⁸³ the leadership in both Russia and America¹⁸⁴ and individuals such as the revered, symbolic figure of political Zionism, Max Nordau.¹⁸⁵ As Sokolow wrote to Sacher in July 1917, who had cited a need for even more inter-communication, “The idea that cohesion and unity of purpose and method between ourselves and our Russian friends are indispensable is too much of a truism to require special emphasis . . . The importance of being in unison with our American friends is also obvious.”¹⁸⁶

Nevertheless, Tschlenow and his Zionist colleagues in Russia did not abandon the official neutral policy of the Smaller Actions Committee, greatly disturbing Zionists in London,¹⁸⁷ and were highly sceptical of their colleagues’ overt focus on Britain.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸² Graham to Weizmann, 23 October 1917, PRO FO 371/3054/204486.

¹⁸³ See, for example, Sokolow to Victor Jacobson, 22 August 1917, Z3/400, Papers of the Central Zionist Office, Berlin, CZA, A. Oettinger to Julius Simon, The Hague, 16 September 1917, L6/692, ‘Protokoll der Sitzung des Actions-Comités vom 10 und 11 Juni 1915,’ L6/593, Papers of the Copenhagen Zionist Office, CZA. In July 1917 Boris Goldberg was sent to Russia from London, stopping in Copenhagen. There he fully updated Tschlenow, Max Warburg, Arthur Hantke and Victor Jacobson. ‘Protokoll: der Sitzung des Engeren Aktions-Komites am 29. bis 31 Juli 1917 im Zionistischen Bureau in Kopenhagen,’ L6/592, Papers of the Copenhagen Zionist Office, CZA.

¹⁸⁴ Sokolow to Harry Sacher, 10 July 1917, Z4/120, Papers of the London Zionist Bureau, CZA.

¹⁸⁵ Leopold Greenberg to Max Nordau, 24 February 1916, Joseph Cowen to Max Nordau, 16 December 1916 and 3 July 1917, Sokolow to Nordau, Madrid, 22 August 1917, A115/248, Max Nordau Papers, CZA.

¹⁸⁶ Sokolow to Sacher, 10 July 1917, Z4/120, Papers of the London Zionist Bureau, CZA.

¹⁸⁷ Harry Sacher to Sokolow, 10 July 1917, Z4/120, Papers of the London Zionist Bureau, CZA.

Nevertheless, the apparent demonstrations of Zionist strength in Russian Jewry through mass conferences and the like were sufficient for British officials to see what they had anticipated, and to believe that their Zionist contacts accurately reflected Russian Jewish opinion.¹⁸⁹

Such work by Russian Zionists, who had themselves gained the sympathy of the Russian Government, was essential.¹⁹⁰ The perceived edifice of a nationalist world Jewry had to have some kind of tangible manifestations which could be used to endorse the pre-existing assumptions of Government officials, both for themselves and as evidence for their less inclined colleagues. This was even more so in the case of American Jewry, which had been the original and on-going concern for those that had become interested in gaining the support of Zionism.

We have previously shown that elements in the Zionist leadership in the USA had pro-actively pursued a policy of winning the sympathy of the British Government since the beginning of the war. Brandeis, however, differed substantially from his colleagues in London with regard to strategy. He passionately believed that political work could only be effective if it was combined with a substantial growth in the membership and finances of the movement itself. The practical and the political were intrinsically linked. Understanding the determining impact of public opinion on Government policy, fellow Zionists abroad were told, “The Zionist tendencies must be developed into effective organization so that the masses of our Jewish population may become a real power.”¹⁹¹ It was this practical work and its apparent results which allowed American Zionism to be seen as a dynamic force that was

¹⁸⁸ Yehiel Tschlenow to Sokolow and Weizmann, 11-24 September 1917, A18/41/2/8, Sokolow Papers, CZA.

¹⁸⁹ See ‘The Zionist Movement’, printed for the War Cabinet, 17 October 1917, Appendix III, Herbert Samuel Papers, memorandum by Sir Ronald Graham, 13 June 1917, PRO FO 371/3058/123458.

¹⁹⁰ Yehiel Tschlenow to Sokolow and Weizmann, 11-24 September 1917, A18/41/2/8, Sokolow Papers, CZA.

capturing the hearts of American Jewry. Of particular significance in 1917 was the Zionist leadership's skilful handling of the elections to the American Jewish Congress in June and its postponement, so as to prevent any public display of the sharp communal divisions that existed regarding Zionism. The Congress could therefore be pointed to as a tangible symbol of Zionist strength.¹⁹²

The deliberate attempt to safeguard the edifice of a united Jewry under the banner of Zionism was no coincidence. Correspondence from London, the visits of E. W. Lewin-Epstein to England, Sacher to the USA and the participation of Frankfurter, Lewin-Epstein and Weizmann in the Morgenthau mission¹⁹³ of June 1917 were all used by both sides to be kept as informed as possible, presenting a united front.¹⁹⁴

When Balfour visited the USA during April and May he met with Brandeis, who was thought by the British to have the ear of President Wilson.¹⁹⁵ Brandeis readily advocated "a national home for Jews in Palestine" under a British protectorate.¹⁹⁶ In addition, American Zionists had enlisted the support of Canadian Zionists, arranging for them to present a

¹⁹¹ Circular from Brandeis and Shmarya-Levin to Chaim Weizmann, 15 October 1915. Also see, circular from idem. to Chaim Weizmann, 28 March 1915, WA.

¹⁹² Frankel, 'The Jewish Socialists and the American Jewish Congress Movement,' pp. 302-308.

¹⁹³ This was the doomed peace mission of the ex-American Ambassador to Constantinople, Henry Morgenthau, who wished to broker a deal with the Turks. Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann: Making of a Statesman*, pp. 154-160, Stephen Wise to Horace Kallen, 5 June 1917, Box 31, Folder 22, Horace Kallen Papers, Brandeis to Weizmann, 10 August 1917, Z4/1593, Papers of the London Zionist Bureau, CZA, Weizmann to Brandeis, 7 October 1917, Balfour Declaration File, Reel 2866, Brandeis Papers.

¹⁹⁴ Gaster to De Haas, 31 January 1917, A203/268, Gaster Papers, CZA, De Haas to Brandeis, 12 April 1917, Reel 2865, Brandeis Papers, Louis Brandeis to Sokolow, 4 November 1915, A18/41/2/1-4, Sokolow Papers, CZA, Lewin-Epstein to Weizmann, 22 December 1916, WA, Kallen to Leon Simon, 29 July 1916, Box 28, Folder 8, Horace Kallen Papers.

¹⁹⁵ Minute by Edward Drummond, 18 June 1917, PRO FO 371/3053/117744. On this relationship see Philippa Strum, *Louis D. Brandeis- Justice for the People* (Cambridge, MS and London: Harvard University Press, 1984) Chs. 12 and 13, Bruce Allen Murphy, *The Brandeis/Frankfurter Connection- The Secret Political Activities of Two Supreme Court Justices* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982) pp. 55-56, Urofsky, *op. cit.*, pp. 120-126.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

memorandum in agreement with the position of English Zionists in their meetings with Balfour's mission.¹⁹⁷ As a demonstration of Zionist strength to help their colleagues in London in the struggle with their opponents, a concerted attempt was also made to bring Jacob Schiff publicly into the Zionist camp, whose alleged pro-Germanism had been a prominent symbol of Allied fears.¹⁹⁸

Notwithstanding the efforts of Wise, De Haas and Brandeis to influence Colonel House and Wilson to privately endorse Zionism and the attitude of the British Government since April,¹⁹⁹ it has been said that in the final stages, when Wilson was requested by HMG to approve the Declaration in September, "their direct attempts to influence American policy at the fountainhead were decidedly restrained."²⁰⁰ It could be said that Brandeis in particular felt constrained by American interests, did not consider it wise to place overt political pressure on Wilson, and had his eye more firmly fixed on American influence at the final peace conference. And, as we have noted, his wartime policy was fundamentally based upon the importance of practical work based upon the mantra "Men, Money, Discipline!", building

¹⁹⁷ Jacob De Haas, Memorandum for the Political Committee, 1 May 1917, telegram from De Haas to Weizmann, 30 April 1917, Clarence de Sola, Consulat de Belgique, Montreal to The President and Officers of the Provisional Executive Committee for General Zionist Affairs, New York, n.d., Reel 2865, Brandeis Papers.

¹⁹⁸ Copy of De Haas to Brandeis, 6 November 1917, Reel 105, Microfilm of Stephen Wise Papers, American Jewish Historical Society, AJA, Elisha M. Friedman to Jacob Schiff, 21 September 1917, Box 1071, Papers of Jacob Schiff, AJA, 'Memorandum of Conversation between Jacob Schiff & Elisha Friedman,' 20 October 1917, Small Collections-10965, Copies from Box 196, Eugene Meyer Papers, Library of Congress, AJA.

¹⁹⁹ Wise to Kallen, 12 April 1917, Box 31, Folder 21, Horace Kallen Papers, Wise to Brandeis, 9 April 1917, Wise to Brandeis, 17 October 1917, Box 105, Wise to De Haas, 9 April 1917, Box 107, Microfilm of Stephen Wise Papers, American Jewish Historical Society, AJA, De Haas to Brandeis, 12 April 1917, Reel 2865, Brandeis Papers. In his correspondence De Haas referred to the will of Russian Zionists to use their influence in support of Wilson's war message to the Russian people. De Haas to George Tumulty, Secretary to the President, 13 June 1917, Reel 2866, Brandeis Papers, Diary of Colonel House, 22, 29 September and 16 October 1917, Reel 5, Colonel House Papers, Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University, New Haven.

²⁰⁰ Ben Halpern, 'Brandeis and the Origins of the Balfour Declaration,' *Studies in Zionism*, vol. 1 No. 7 (Spring 1983) p. 99.

up the Zionist organization in real terms.²⁰¹ But, it was precisely Brandeis' faith in the overriding importance of establishing practical facts on the ground, as opposed to the machinations of secret diplomacy, which was absolutely decisive. To see this policy as apolitical, demonstrating the absence of a consistent or thought out political strategy,²⁰² would be to overlook the political essence of Brandeis' strategic thinking, based upon a very real grasp of the function of mass opinion in shaping Government foreign policy during this period. In fact Brandeis was correct. British interest in Zionism from 1916 was in part a direct product of his policy.

From the very beginning of the Foreign Office interest in Zionism, the marked growth in the American organisation was a critical factor. When in April 1917 Zionists in England were confronted with the need to endorse their claims with "the organization of the Zionist will, and its assertion in a concrete form",²⁰³ an issue which they had ignored throughout the war,²⁰⁴ the American Zionist political committee could state that "the demonstration is in process and is being proven through Shekel payers, organized membership and a free giving of money."²⁰⁵

As a result, by 31 October 1917, when the British War Cabinet finally approved the publication of a declaration, the Zionists in London had been able to provide their supporters in the Government with sufficient evidence of Zionist influence amongst world Jewry.²⁰⁶ In the absence of Montagu, who had departed for India, and with the received approval of

²⁰¹ *Ibid.* p. 75. See Urofsky, *op. cit.*, Ch.4.

²⁰² See Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann: The Making of a Statesman*, pp. 142, 144, 145, 166.

²⁰³ See Boris Goldberg to Lewin-Epstein, 8 April 1917, Reel 2866, Balfour Declaration File, Brandeis Papers.

²⁰⁴ On Weizmann's neglect of building up the Zionist organisation through a communal strategy in favour of a sole focus on political work see Cohen, *op. cit.*, p. 279.

²⁰⁵ De Haas to Brandeis, c.27 August 1917, Reel 2866, Brandeis Papers.

President Wilson,²⁰⁷ the War Cabinet had agreed upon a Declaration to capture the war asset of Zionism. Though he had initially opposed a declaration, due to the size of the Arab population in Palestine and the unrealisable aims of Zionist colonization, (a charge countered by Sykes ²⁰⁸) even Curzon had acknowledged “the important political reasons” behind such a policy.²⁰⁹ Revealing a belief in both the need to win Jewish influence through an appeal to their national selves, and the conspiratorial threat of the German menace, Curzon argued that Zionism “appears to be recommended by considerations of the highest expediency, and to be urgently demanded as a check or counterblast to the scarcely concealed and sinister political designs of the Germans.”²¹⁰ Finally, on 31 October Balfour concluded,

everyone was now agreed that, from a purely diplomatic and political point of view, it was desirable that some declaration favourable to the aspirations of the Jewish nationalists should now be made. The vast majority of Jews in Russia and America, as, indeed, all over the world, now appeared to be favourable to Zionism. If we could make a declaration favourable to such an ideal, we should be able to carry on extremely useful propaganda both in Russia and America.²¹¹

As we have argued, this decision to issue the Balfour Declaration was a direct result of the effective diplomacy and political strategy of a number of Jewish activists, whose efforts had combined in a highly complex, cumulative and somewhat fortuitous manner. At every stage, the Government’s interest in developing a pro-Zionist policy derived solely from proposals put forward by Jewish activists, who conceived the rationale and objectives of policy. Their success was reliant upon whether they understood and how they responded to

²⁰⁶ See ‘The Zionist Movement,’ 17 October 1917, printed for the War Cabinet, Herbert Samuel Papers.

²⁰⁷ Vital, *op. cit.*, pp. 285-289.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.* p. 292.

²⁰⁹ Friedman, *op. cit.*, p. 277, David Gilmour, ‘The Unregarded Prophet: Lord Curzon and the Palestine Question,’ *Journal of Palestine Studies*, vol. 25, no. 3 (Spring 1996) pp. 63-64, Lord Curzon, ‘The Future of Palestine,’ 26 October 1917, PRO CAB 24/30/GT 2406.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹¹ War Cabinet Minutes, 31 October 1917, PRO CAB 23/4/WC261.

the wider propaganda needs of foreign policy makers as the war developed, and the perceptions that underpinned official thinking on this matter. Fundamentally, they influenced policy by endorsing the Government's image of Jewry as a hostile power that had to be won to the British cause, and by providing a solution that was equally in tune with the Government mindset, Zionism. From this perspective, Weizmann's contribution to the fruition of the Government's pro-Zionist policy was of minor significance. He followed rather than led the formulation and application of an effective diplomatic strategy. Conversely, Kallen, Wolf, Soares, Gaster and particularly Jabotinsky were pioneers who had successfully seized upon what was required. Clearly, it was essential that Weizmann eventually grasped what was necessary. But even then his ability to secure the Declaration, which required the visible demonstration of a united Zionist Jewry, was dependent upon the previous work of other Zionist leaders, particularly Brandeis. Thanks to this team effort the Balfour Declaration was won. But what in essence had been achieved?

The key advocates of a Declaration had clearly been convinced of how they could use Zionism for their own ends, winning Jewish opinion, particularly in Russia and the USA. For Sykes, Lloyd George and Amery this also meant manipulating the will of Jewry so as to secure British control of Palestine at the prospective peace conference. In short, the Zionists had struggled successfully to show the British Government how they could be used to further British interests. This is quite apparent if we consider what exactly they received in return. For Gaster, the Balfour Declaration had been the fulfilment of his worst fears. In 1916 he had been extremely anxious that if Zionists did not play upon what he understood to be the Allies desperate desire to win over world Jewry, then Zionism could easily be used and lose any

chance to gain in any concrete sense.²¹² Thus, he saw the Declaration as a deliberately vague and tenuous document that was issued to justify British occupation of Palestine and gain the support of Jewry in the war, but did not constitute any tangible achievement of the goals of the Zionist Organisation and the realisation of the Basle Programme.²¹³ He observed with bitter irony that “it was [now] the time for the Jews to crawl upon their bellies and to express unbounded gratitude [for] a mere platonic non-committal declaration.” He lamented that for the Great Powers, “we are only food enough, as food for the trenches, or as pawns in their own political game.” But what is clear is that the Zionists themselves had proposed and readily acquiesced to a non-committal British policy. Ironically enough it was Jabotinsky himself, who later became such a vociferous critic of Zionist subservience to Britain, who had originally suggested this line of policy. In his petition to the War Cabinet in January 1917 he had argued for using “such language as- perhaps without tying the Government down to a particular form of political settlement for the future of Palestine, would be favourable to Zionist aspirations.”²¹⁴ This line of thought clearly predominated within the Government itself, with the consideration that “the British Government can affirm their sympathy for Zionist ideals without committing themselves to the full Zionist programme.”²¹⁵

This development was hardly surprising given the basic premise of Zionist diplomacy in the fruition of the Balfour Declaration. They had not persuaded the Government to support Zionism for its own sake, but as a propaganda weapon, a way to alter Jewish perceptions of

²¹² See, for example, Gaster to Dr Victor Jacobson, Copenhagen, 15 March 1916, Gaster Papers, A203/219 and Gaster to Weizmann, 20 December 1914, A203/214, Gaster Papers, CZA.

²¹³ Report of conversation between Gaster and Yehiel Tschlenow, Diary of Gaster, 4 November 1917, Copy, A203/175, Gaster Papers, CZA.

²¹⁴ Vladimir Jabotinsky and Josef Trumpeldor, Memorandum for the War Cabinet, 14 January 1917, enclosed in Trumpeldor to Sykes, 15 February 1917, Doc. 34, Sledmere Papers.

²¹⁵ Kerr, 10 Downing Street to Sir Ronald Graham, 5 May 1917, PRO FO 371/3101/81775.

the war. For this reason, the issuance of the Declaration was followed by an extensive propaganda campaign, conducted with the ever present advice and work of the Government's Zionist supporters. Necessarily determined by the Government's nationalist conception of Jewish identity, its purpose was to convince world Jewry that the Balfour Declaration heralded a new dawn and warranted their support in the war. Specifically, they sought to create and communicate a discourse of Jewish national rebirth, a mythical edifice, which would capture the Jewish imagination but would in no way commit the Government to anything that might compromise its own interests. This was the sum of British policy towards the Zionist movement for the remainder of the war and is the subject of the rest of this thesis.

Chapter 3: The Jewish Section of the Department of Information and the Invention of the Balfour Declaration as History

In the main, historians' analyses of British policy towards the Zionist movement during the First World War end with the issuing of the Balfour Declaration.¹ Scholars have devoted a tremendous amount of time and energy to detailing and debating the intricate history that led to the War Cabinet's decision to pursue a pro-Zionist policy, but have given just cursory attention,² if any, to how this propaganda policy was put into practice during the war years. To a large extent, this traditional approach was a logical consequence of the dominant explanation that the Declaration was borne out of the Government's wish to secure sole control of Palestine at the prospective peace conference. To be sure, the propaganda purpose of the Declaration was, as we have noted, given certain attention in the historiography, although it remained a secondary and largely unexplored area. But, perhaps due to the Zionist proclivities of the scholars who predominantly wrote on this subject, it was generally assumed that in any case the Declaration had immediately achieved this objective, provoking an instantaneous wave of elation throughout Jewry.³ Although the propaganda motive has been given much greater prominence in recent studies, no serious effort has been made to investigate how the advocates of the Declaration sought to ensure that it won the prize of Jewish power, which, according to certain historians, preyed on their minds to such a

¹ Friedman, *The Question of Palestine*, Stein, *op. cit.*, Vereté, 'The Balfour Declaration and its Makers', Levene, *War, Jews and the New Europe*, Vital, *Zionism: The Crucial Phase*, Sanders, *op. cit.*, Kadish, *op. cit.*, Ch. 4, Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann: The Making of a Statesman*, Kimche, *op. cit.*, Hardie and Herman, *op. cit.*, Segev, *op. cit.*, Ch. 2, Fromkin, *op. cit.*, Chs. 32-34, Karsh and Karsh, *op. cit.*

² Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, pp. 567-569, Friedman, *The Question of Palestine*, p. 297, Howard M. Sacher, *The Emergence of the Middle East: 1914-1924* (London: Allen Lane, 1970) p. 215, Doreen Ingrams, *Palestine Papers 1917-1922- Seeds of Conflict* (London: John Murray, 1972) p. 19, Aharon Cohen, *Israel and the Arab World*, (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1970) p. 124, Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann: The Making of a Statesman*, pp. 213-214.

³ See, for example, Friedman, *The Question of Palestine*, pp. 291-292, 296, 299 and Stein, *op. cit.*, pp. 569, 585-586.

degree.⁴ But as much as the advocates of a pro-Zionist policy believed that the Declaration would have an immediate propaganda effect, it will be argued here that this statement of intent was only considered as a first step, or platform, from which the Government could entreat the support of world Jewry, for the Entente war effort and a British Palestine. Indeed, from the wake of the Declaration until the end of the war, the British Government, together with its Zionist supporters in London, embarked upon an elaborate and extensive propaganda campaign to this end. Following the argument that we have elaborated in the previous two chapters, it is apparent that this project was the purpose for which the Declaration had been published. As such, this campaign was as integral to the Government's Zionist policy during the war as the Declaration itself. It is clear, therefore, that by limiting their attention to the history of the Declaration alone previous scholars have based their conclusions on an examination of only one part of the picture. This chapter and the two that follow seek to rectify this omission, and to give this propaganda the attention that is required in order to have a fuller understanding of the Government's wartime Zionist policy.

Provided with this extended analytical lens, we shall further our re-evaluation of what lay at the core of the Government's apparent support for the Zionist movement during the Great War. In essence, the overwhelming concern of British foreign policy makers in this endeavour was to use the Declaration as a means of capturing Jewish opinion, rather than helping the Zionist movement in any real sense. By revealing the degree to which Zionists in London worked together with the Government to achieve this goal during the war, which has not previously been acknowledged, we will therefore build upon our argument from chapter two and show the extent to which they were willingly used by the British Government. In

⁴ Levene, *War, Jews and the New Europe*, Chs. 4 and 6, idem. 'The Balfour Declaration: A Case of Mistaken Identity,' Kadish, *op. cit.*, Segev, *op. cit.*, Ch.2.

addition, these chapters will continue to demonstrate the critical importance of how the discourse of nationalism determined the British Government's policy towards Jewry.

Whereas in chapters one and two we examined its role in driving the decision to use Zionism as a means of winning the Jewish imagination for British interests, we shall now explore how the shared British/Zionist perception of Jewish identity shaped the way in which this policy was carried out, determining both the form and content of the propaganda that was produced.

In the first part of this chapter special attention will be given to the British Government's creation of the cornerstone of their Zionist propaganda project, the Jewish Section of the Department of Information. Headed by the Zionist Albert Hyamson, the Jewish Section was established in December 1917 and was run in cooperation with the London Zionist Bureau. This office utilised the vast propaganda machinery of the British Government in an attempt to dominate the Jewish public space and determine the Jewish imagination of Zionism, the war, Britain and the future of Palestine. In this analysis I not only seek to show the far-reaching scale of this previously overlooked project but will contend that it constituted the implementation of the Government's Zionist policy, as it had been conceived by the makers of the Balfour Declaration. In addition, I will show that in this endeavour there existed a symbiotic relationship between the Zionists and their British masters, in which the former actively showed the Government how best to undertake this propaganda, and did the lion share of the work, as willing agents of HMG. As this propaganda was the chief concern of the Government's Zionist policy, and there was no reciprocal interest in helping the Zionist movement in real terms, this chapter will underscore the extent to which the Zionists were voluntarily used by the Government to serve British ambitions alone.

Whereas the first part of this chapter is concerned with the apparatus and machinery of propaganda, the second part will begin to examine the content of the materials that were

distributed across world Jewry. These sources have hitherto received scant attention by scholars, who have, in the main, not been aware that they were produced and disseminated by the British Government.⁵ In this discussion I will contend that these texts were produced to construct and communicate a discourse in which the Balfour Declaration was depicted as a seminal turning point in the past, present and future of world Jewry, encoding the meaning of the Declaration through representation for the Jewish audience, its historical and cultural context, its implications and consequences.⁶ Specifically, the Declaration was to be signified, by using the system of Zionist discourse, as heralding the rebirth of Jewish nationhood in Palestine. This provided the prism through which the British/Zionist entente wished the Declaration to be seen and understood. In this chapter it will be shown that due to the central function of history within Zionist and nationalist thought and culture, the myth of national rebirth was in part mediated and endorsed through the Zionist narrative of the Jewish past, casting the Declaration as its redemptive climax. Equated with national restoration the Declaration was presented as having ended the misery of Exile, inaugurating a new epoch of national renaissance.

3:1 The Jewish Section of the Department of Information

In the immediate wake of the Declaration, the first concrete step that was taken to utilise the British Government's Declaration in order to further pro-British propaganda was to send

⁵ As an exception David Cesarani has noted that the *Jewish Chronicle* was used by the British Government for its propaganda campaign across world Jewry, with the wide circulation of its reports and statements in Foreign Office material that was published in several languages. David Cesarani, *The Jewish Chronicle and Anglo-Jewry, 1841-1991* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) p. 126. For a list of the pamphlets and books that were published by Wellington House, see Wellington House Schedule, Wellington House Papers, Imperial War Museum Library.

⁶ As Cultural Studies scholars such as Stuart Hall have shown, for an occurrence to become an event that is consumed and understood as having specific meanings by a given audience, it must be constructed and mediated through the conventions and apparatus of representation. Whether an event is relayed through film, text, art or photography, it must first be given narrative form and encoded with meaning through discourse. Stuart Hall, 'Encoding, Decoding,' in Simon During (ed.) *The Cultural Studies Reader* (London and New York: Routledge 1993) pp. 90-103. It would seem that in essence the nature and importance of this process was implicitly

Zionist representatives to Russia and America. It was decided at a conference at the Foreign Office that Yehiel Tchlenov, Nahum Sokolow and Vladimir Jabotinsky would go to Russia and Aaron Aaronsohn would go to America.⁷ Although the Bolshevik Revolution prevented the mission to Russia, Aaronsohn had departed for New York by 19 November 1917.⁸ Aaronsohn was principally the choice of the British Government rather than Weizmann and Sokolow.⁹ Sykes in particular attached great importance to Aaronsohn's ability to further the Government's propaganda in America, probably due to his relationship with influential Zionists such as Julian W. Mack.¹⁰ Thus, although Aaronsohn had wished to travel to Egypt, he was told by Sykes that he would have to go to America and "carry all the instructions given to him" by the Foreign Office.¹¹ The Zionists were, after all, expected to be serving the interests of the British Government, not following their own individual agendas. To that end, Aaronsohn was directed by Sykes to liase with Zionists in America, particularly Louis Brandeis, to help forward pro-British and pro-Entente propaganda, to bind together "the oppressed races of the Ottoman Empire in USA and to further utmost common action and goodwill between Armenians, Arabs and Zionists, investigate possibility of USA co-operation in Palestine, [and] to stimulate Zionism per se."¹² But as much as Aaronsohn's mission to America was considered to be an important part of the British effort to further the propaganda that it believed would result from the Balfour Declaration, a much more systematic and far-reaching method of creating pro-British sentiment

understood by those that were behind the Government's Zionist propaganda policy.

⁷ 'Notes on Zionism,' 1 February 1918, MS dep. 140, Milner Papers, Bodleian Library, Oxford. This unsigned report, containing three memoranda, was written by Charles Webster, then a junior officer on the staff of the Director of Military Intelligence. Stein, *Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann*, pp. xvii-xviii.

⁸ F.O. to Sir C. Spring-Rice, Washington, 19 November 1917, PRO FO 371/3054/222300.

⁹ 23 November 1917, Diary of Shmuel Tolkowsky, A248/2, Papers of Shmuel Tolkowsky, CZA.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* Harry Barnard, *The Forging of an American Jew: The Life and Times of Judge Julian W. Mack* (New York: Herzl Press, 1974) pp. 107-110, 163-168, 174, 193-194.

¹¹ 16 November 1917, Diary of Vera Weizmann, WA.

¹² Sykes to ? (presumably Aaronsohn), 12 November 1917, WA. Also see, FO to Sir C. Spring-Rice, Washington, 19 November 1917, PRO FO 371/3054/222300.

was necessary if the Government was to make full use of its pro-Zionist policy.

At the beginning of October 1917 Vladimir Jabotinsky had submitted a proposal for a special bureau for Jewish pro-Entente propaganda to John Buchan, the head of the Department of Information. Although Buchan was sympathetic to Jabotinsky's suggestion he considered that there existed the "serious difficulty that Zionism is not a question on which all Jews are united, and before we ran an organisation for separate Jewish propaganda we should have to take sides in the matter, and this would involve us in considerable controversy."¹³ Although this accurate perception of Jewry as being seriously divided on the issue of Zionism caused Buchan to question the wisdom of pursuing such a plan, Jabotinsky was well aware that such fears were not shared by many influential members of the War Cabinet and Foreign Office. In fact, the concept of an organised Jewish propaganda office that was Zionist in orientation met their desire to win the hearts and minds of world Jewry, particularly in Russia and America, and their perception that this could only be achieved through Zionism. Jabotinsky's proposal for a special bureau for Jewish propaganda again revealed his awareness of the key concerns and mindset of these individuals, anticipating their needs and following them through to their logical conclusion. Hence, in light of Buchan's unsure position Jabotinsky proceeded to entreat their support, sending his proposal for an office for Jewish propaganda and a covering letter to Lord Robert Cecil, Sir Mark Sykes, Leopold Amery, William Ormsby-Gore, Sir Ronald Graham, Phillip Kerr, Wickham Steed and C.F.G. Masterman.¹⁴

In this letter Jabotinsky argued that a bureau for Jewish pro-entente propaganda was "only a natural sequel to the Jewish Regiment scheme." He wrote, "I need hardly remind you

¹³ John Buchan, Department of Information to Jabotinsky, 4 October 1917, 2/5/3/18, Jabotinsky Papers

¹⁴ Jabotinsky to Lord Robert Cecil, Sir Mark Sykes, Captain Amery, William Ormsby-Gore, Sir Ronald Graham,

that what attracted your sympathy to the project of a Jewish Legion for Palestine was mainly its obvious value for purposes of pro-entente and pro-victory propaganda among the non-assimilated Jewish masses of America, Russia and the neutral countries.”¹⁵ Jabotinsky added a sense of urgency to this appeal, playing upon the anxiety of these members of the Government who were already convinced of the need to use Zionism to win Jewish support for the war. He asserted that, “the necessity of influencing Jewish opinion in Allied and neutral countries in favour of a war to complete victory is now, more evident than ever, and every wasted day means an appreciable loss for the cause of the Entente.”¹⁶

Jabotinsky’s portrayal of Jewry and the urgent need for a special bureau for Jewish propaganda was readily accepted. Amery, Kerr, Ormsby-Gore and Masterman all wrote or spoke to Buchan in support of the Jewish propaganda bureau.¹⁷ Masterman explained to Jabotinsky that Buchan “was quite sympathetic towards them [his proposals], but he said that it would not be possible to take action at present until the War Cabinet have given their decision on the question of policy: and that it will be in accordance with the policy which you and he [Buchan] and I desire.”¹⁸ Ormsby-Gore wrote that he very much welcomed the project but noted “the one obstacle . . . are the activities of the anti-nationalist Jews.” As Ormsby-Gore, like his colleagues, saw Zionism as the only authentic and honest manifestation of Jewish identity, he was perplexed by the Jews “who seem to object to anything distinctively Jewish, & who deny that they are anything but, Russians, Englishmen,

Phillip Kerr, Wickham Steed, Major D. Davies, 25 October 1917, 7/2/18, Jabotinsky Papers

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Ormsby-Gore, Offices of the War Cabinet to Jabotinsky, 29 October 1917, Amery to Jabotinsky, Offices of the War Cabinet to Jabotinsky, 30 October 1917, Kerr, 10 Downing Street to Jabotinsky, 31 October 191, CFG Masterman, Wellington House to Jabotinsky, 30 October 1917, 2/5/3/18, Jabotinsky Papers.

¹⁸ CFG Masterman, Wellington House to Jabotinsky, 30 October 1917, *Ibid.*

Dutch, etc as the case may be.”¹⁹ So, as much as the objections of liberal English Jews to a British Zionist policy may have resulted in the qualification of the final text of the Balfour Declaration,²⁰ once the War Cabinet had decided to pursue a pro-Zionist policy on 31 October 1917, their protests could not put off the group behind the Declaration from their determined attempt to wage a pro-British propaganda campaign amongst world Jewry, particularly in the USA and Russia.

Indeed, as we have seen, the Declaration was designed specifically for this purpose. As Masterman explained to the War Office: “Some of us- Mark Sykes, Amery, the “Times” and others . . . have been pressing for some time for some such statement as this for months past- especially to influence American (& New York) and Russian feeling.” The end product was therefore described as “a most important piece of propaganda amongst Jewry throughout the world.”²¹ As such, merely publishing the Declaration was not enough. By its very nature the Government’s Zionist policy necessitated that the Declaration would be followed by an elaborate propaganda campaign, in which it would be used as a means of winning the support of world Jewry. Those behind the Declaration had only considered it to be the starting point, rather than the culmination, of their Zionist propaganda policy. As Ronald Graham put it, “If the War Cabinet gives the assurance [approving the Balfour Declaration] we can then, at last, make full use of Jewish propaganda wherever it will be useful to use.”²² Summing up why the War Cabinet finally did so, Balfour stated, “If we could make a declaration favourable to such an ideal [Zionism], we should be able to carry on extremely useful propaganda both in

¹⁹ Ormsby-Gore, Offices of the War Cabinet to Jabotinsky, 29 October 1917, *Ibid*.

²⁰ In Balfour’s original draft of August 1917 it was stated that “Palestine should be reconstituted as the national home of the Jewish people,” but in the final version the text was changed to, “His Majesty’s Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people,” with the caveat, “it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice . . . the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.” Stein, *op. cit.*, pp. 520 and 548, Friedman, *op. cit.*, pp. 265-267.

²¹ CFG Masterman, Wellington House to Alfred Read, 7 November 1917, 2/5/3/18, Jabotinsky Papers.

Russia and America.²³

As a result, it was not long before Jabotinsky's proposal for a special bureau for Jewish propaganda was taken up by the Foreign Office. But, Jabotinsky's pre-occupation with the Jewish Regiment and his desire to enlist and travel to Palestine meant that when the decision was taken by the British Government to set up a Jewish branch of the Foreign Office's Department of Information, he declined the offer of running it.²⁴ Instead, it was Albert Hyamson, a civil servant in the Post Office and a Zionist activist, who took the post.

During the First World War, Hyamson had been one of the most active Zionist propagandists in England. He had written material that had been published by the British Palestine Committee²⁵, the Zionist leadership in London²⁶ and also in the secular British press. Lloyd George claimed that it was an article in *The New Statesman* written by Hyamson that had, in part, stirred his interest in Zionism.²⁷ This was no minor achievement. In 1917 Hyamson became the editor of *The Zionist Review*, the semi-official monthly publication of the English Zionist Federation.²⁸ But despite these accomplishments, by June 1917 Hyamson had felt "that most of the time I have been devoting to Zionist matters seems to have been wasted. If I did a thing . . . I did it blindly. I feel that to a large extent I have been writing for

²² Minute by Graham, 22 October 1917, PRO FO 371/3055/201862.

²³ War Cabinet Minutes, 31 October 1917, PRO CAB 23/4/WC261.

²⁴ J.H. Patterson to Jabotinsky, 29 November 1917, 2/5/3/1/8, Jabotinsky Papers.

²⁵ Albert Hyamson, *British Projects for the Restoration of the Jews* (London: The British Palestine Committee, Publication No. 1, 1917) The British Palestine Committee was founded towards the end of 1916 by the Manchester based Zionists Harry Sacher, Simon Marks and Israel Sieff, in close co-operation with *The Manchester Guardian* journalist Herbert Sidebotham. It was formed to "interest English people, English men and women, in the idea of a Jewish Palestine under the British Crown." Stein, *op. cit.*, p. 301.

²⁶ With Leon Simon and Harry Sacher, Hyamson arranged and supervised the production of the book *Zionism and the Jewish Future*. Harry Sacher (ed.) *Zionism and the Jewish Future* (London: John Murray, 1916), p. v. Albert Hyamson, 'Anti-Semitism,' *Ibid.* pp. 59-86. This book was believed to have had a particular influence on the British Establishment. Weizmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 231-232. Lord Cromer's review in *The Spectator* was part of a collection of supporting material that was presented to the War Cabinet on the day that it decided to issue a pro-Zionist declaration. 'The Zionist Movement- (Note by the Secretary),' War Cabinet Memorandum, G -164, Appendix III, October 1917, Herbert Samuel Papers.

²⁷ 27 November 1914, Diary of C.P. Scott, Scott Papers.

the wastepaper basket . . .”²⁹ He considered that his work at the Post Office had prevented him from being more actively involved in Zionist work and since April 1917 had been pressing Weizmann to facilitate a move to the Foreign Office, overestimating the latter’s influence in Government circles.³⁰ Hence, when Jabotinsky turned down the opportunity to head the new Jewish Section of the Department of Information, Hyamson was the logical choice. He already worked for the Government, had considerable experience and interest in propaganda and did not have the commitments of his more senior Zionist colleagues. From the Government’s perspective, Hyamson was a staunch supporter of the British war effort and had already been active in publishing propaganda material that sought to justify and explain the relationship between Zionism and Great Britain.³¹

Hyamson began his work as the head of the Jewish Section of the Department of Information in the first few weeks of December 1917.³² He continued his work under the broad assumptions that had underpinned the international propaganda that had been conducted by the London Zionist bureau since April 1917, with the active support of the

²⁸ Hyamson to Weizmann, 22 June 1917, WA.

²⁹ Hyamson to Weizmann, 22 June 1917, WA.

³⁰ Hyamson to Weizmann, 28 April, 16 May, 7 September 1917, WA.

³¹ See, for example, Albert Hyamson, *British Projects for the Restoration of the Jews* (London: The British Palestine Committee, Publication No. 1, 1917).

³² In response to the British Government’s Zionist policy, the German Government also set up its own Jewish Section of the Berlin Foreign Office in early 1918, run by a Jewish specialist in Near Eastern affairs, Professor Morritz Sobernheim. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, p. 603, Richard Lichtheim, *Rückkehr: Lebenserinnerungen aus der Frühzeit des deutschen Zionismus* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1970) p. 377, Adolf Böhm, *Die Zionistische Bewegung bis zum Ende des Weltkrieges*, vol. I, (Berlin: Juedischer Verlag, 1935) p. 675, Nahum Goldman, *Memories- The Autobiography of Nahum Goldman, The Story of a Lifelong Battle by World Jewry’s Ambassador at Large*, Translated by Helen Sebba (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1969) pp. 52, 57. Prior to this a ‘Committee for the East’ had been established by Zionists in 1914, and included a coalition of German Jewish organisations. It worked with the German Government to ameliorate the position of East European Jews who were in German occupied territories, and to disseminate pro-German propaganda amongst East European Jewry. Friedman, *Germany, Turkey, Zionism*, pp. 230-236, 376, Stephen M. Poppel, *Zionism in Germany, 1897-1933: The Shaping of a Jewish Identity* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1977) p. 79. On the reaction of the British Foreign Office to the Germans’ attempt to capture the support of the Zionist movement in 1918, see below, pp. 177-178.

British Government.³³ They had sought to popularise the idea of a Jewish Palestine under British auspices, particularly in America, attempted to demonstrate that Zionism had the support of the Entente and aimed to “give publicity to all news which would undermine the position of Turkey with the Jews and consequently of Germans and Austria also. In short, it [had] endeavoured to win world Jewry, not only to the Zionist cause but also to the side of the Entente.”³⁴

In terms of policy, Hyamson began by continuing the distribution of news items that fitted in within the remit of demonstrating the support of the British Government for Zionism and the growing dominance of Zionism amongst world Jewry.³⁵ At this early stage of his work Hyamson and the Foreign Office were only beginning to form an established method of effective distribution for Jewish news and did not have a clear or systematic approach. With regard to his work in America, which was a key focus, Hyamson began with a limited distribution of his cables to two English language Jewish weekly newspapers, *The American Hebrew* and *The American Jewish Chronicle*. This initial absence of a systematic and effective distribution of propaganda was highlighted by the representative of the Department of Information in New York, Geoffrey Butler,

I have so far contented myself with a rough method provided by getting “New York Times” to publish your Jewish telegrams. They have generally done so and I am assured these are usually taken up in Yiddish Press whilst “Times” is much read by prosperous Jews. This is obviously inadequate and I am taking special pains to get into touch with Jewry during the next fortnight and hope to perfect machinery

³³ “The machinery of the secret service was placed at the disposal of the London Bureau. Telegraphic messages and correspondence was sent for them through military agents to all parts of the world, and a rapid and effective means of communication thus secured between the London centre and the Zionist organizations and supporters in other countries.” ‘Notes on Zionism,’ 1 February 1918, Milner Papers.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ See, for example, telegrams on the occupation of Jerusalem, the support for the British declaration published in *Judische Rundschau*, the official organ of German Zionists, and the positive response of Russian Zionists and the Greek Foreign Minister to the Declaration. FO to Mr Bayley, New York, 14 December 1917, minute by Hyamson, 14 December 1917, Buchan, F.O. to Butler, New York 22 December 1917. PRO FO 395/86/237667.

rapidly.³⁶

In addition to the efforts of Butler to “perfect [the] machinery rapidly”, a propaganda committee was created by the London Zionist Bureau to formulate an overall strategy of work with the Department of Information. The first meeting of the committee was held on 14 December 1917 with Hyamson elected as chairman. The other members of the committee were Simon Marks, Leon Simon and Shmuel Tolkowsky with Samuel Landman as Hyamson’s secretary. In the main, the committee focused on three areas, “(1) propaganda by means of the press (2) Publication of books and pamphlets (3) Lectures and visits to Jewish and non-Jewish audiences.” The organisation, methods and objectives of this work were outlined by Hyamson in a scheme that he devised in mid-December 1917, for agitation in the USA, which was the initial and main focus for his office.

The objectives of the Jewish Branch of the Department of Information were, according to Hyamson’s definition, twofold. Firstly, it was to conduct British propaganda amongst Jews in all parts of the world, “giving it specific tone required by Jewish temperament . . .”³⁷ This qualification made it clear that the work to be carried out was to be specifically designed to resonate with and impact upon a Jewish audience, utilising the system of Zionist discourse and culture that had developed prior to the First World War.³⁸ Secondly, the Jewish Branch was to promote the Zionist movement.³⁹ With regard to the latter, Nahum Sokolow reminded Sykes in June 1918 that, “In December 1917 it was agreed that Zionist propaganda amongst Jews was desirable in order to encourage and organise among the Jews of the World support of the Zionist programme as adopted by the Cabinet

³⁶ Telegram from Butler, New York to Buchan, F.O., 19 December 1917. PRO FO 395/86/244217.

³⁷ Memorandum by Albert Hyamson, c.13 December 1917, PRO FO 395/86/237667.

³⁸ See Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture and West European Jewry before the First World War*, Silberstein, *The Postzionism Debates*, Ch.1.

and develop among them a sentiment friendly to the Zionist idea. Incidentally it may be mentioned that this work was also the best & practically the only available form of pro-British propaganda among foreign Jews.”⁴⁰ Although the War Cabinet had made the decision to support this movement in order to create pro-British feeling amongst Jewry, which was perceived to be pre-dominantly Zionist, Hyamson’s branch intended to use the machinery and resources of the British Government to further the Zionist cause amongst the disparate and divided reality of world Jewry. From its inception, therefore, it was suggested that the Branch should “as far as practicable cooperate closely with Jewish bodies especially Zionist organizations.” In particular, Hyamson’s office was run in very close contact with the London Zionist Bureau. Indeed, most of the material that was to be produced by the Branch, in terms of pamphlets, newspaper articles and the supply of news cables, was in the main written by members of the London Zionist Bureau. This policy was in keeping with the Department of Information’s policy of attempting to mask the official nature of its propaganda.⁴¹ At the same time, however, it served to give Zionists a free hand to produce material to promote their movement, which was distributed in neutral and Allied countries by the British Government’s vast propaganda machine. As late as June 1918, Hyamson explained that in the USA Zionist propaganda was in full swing with the distribution being managed by American Zionists, but with regard to non-Zionist British propaganda amongst Jews, Hyamson noted “I have no organisation”.⁴² But, although Hyamson appeared to place more emphasis on Zionist

³⁹ Memorandum by Albert Hyamson, c.13 December 1917, PRO FO 395/86/237667.

⁴⁰ Draft letter from Sokolow to Sykes, June 1918, Z4/177 IV, Papers of the London Zionist Bureau, CZA.

⁴¹ Sanders and Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

⁴² Minute by A. Hyamson for Colonel Woodwark, British Bureau of Information, New York, 11 June 1918, PRO FO 395/213/242073. This is not to suggest that there were no efforts to create pro-British propaganda amongst Jewry that did not relate to Zionism or Palestine. See, for example, the pamphlet *Jews Among the Entente Leaders*, in which it was attempted to demonstrate that Entente countries had a number of Jews in senior positions of government in order for Jewry to identify with the cause. But, the Jewish Section of the Department of Information, and then the Ministry of Information, paid much more attention to propaganda that directly benefited the aims of Zionist leaders in

propaganda, this was in itself inextricably linked with promoting Jewish support for Great Britain. It was, after all, the Declaration together with the prospect of a British Palestine, which represented the new Zionist claim to being a serious and recognised movement. Hence, in July 1918 Hyamson lauded the fact that *The American Jewish Chronicle*, which he saw as “the principal American Jewish newspaper,”⁴³ but was thought to have been run by a German agent, had come out strongly in favour of Britain being the sole power to hold the protectorate of Palestine after the war.⁴⁴ He wrote that British control “is the English Zionist solution, not without favour at the F.O., and one of the functions of the Jewish Branch is to bring the Jews of the world to this view.”⁴⁵

With regard to the forms of propaganda that were proposed in December 1917, Hyamson and the Zionist Propaganda Committee paid special attention to visual media such as film, picture postcards, posters, illustrated lectures and Yiddish plays.⁴⁶ This attention to the importance of tapping into the visual imagination in the attempt to impact upon the Jewish reader had been an integral part of Zionist propaganda since its inception.⁴⁷ The means and resources to produce and distribute such materials on a significant scale were provided by the British Government. Visual propaganda was a key component of the propaganda work of the Department of Information and Wellington House.⁴⁸ In particular,

England. *Jews Among the Entente Leaders* (London: R. Clay and Sons. Ltd, 1918), no. 1083, Wellington House Schedule, Wellington House Papers, Imperial War Museum Library.

⁴³ Minute by Hyamson, 18 July 1918, PRO FO 395/237/12718.

⁴⁴ As part of his effort to demonstrate the success of Hyamson’s department Sokolow also drew attention to this alleged volte-face. Draft letter from Sokolow to Sykes, June 1918, Z4/177 IV, Papers of the London Zionist Bureau, CZA.

⁴⁵ Minute by Hyamson, 18 July 1918, PRO FO 395/237/12718.

⁴⁶ Memorandum by Hyamson, c.13 December 1917, PRO FO 395/86/237667, ‘Early Proposal for Propaganda Department,’ n.d., Z4/3824, Papers of the London Zionist Office, CZA.

⁴⁷ Berkowitz, *op. cit.*, Ch. 6.

⁴⁸ See below, p. 165, n. 4.

the founder of British propaganda during the war, CFG Masterman, was an ardent believer in the power of the image to alter the perceptions and attitudes of the masses.⁴⁹

As part of Hyamson's overall propaganda strategy he planned to use these propaganda materials, both visual and textual, to infiltrate the Jewish public space, to determine and shape the Jewish ethnic imagination in relation to the war and Zionism. To that end, particularly in America, he sought to gain access to all Jewish periodicals, press, Jewish clubs, libraries and literary societies. The development of his propaganda campaign was also to be re-active, responding to "regular reports from all important Jewish centres on currents of opinion and needs of propaganda . . . [,] copies of principal Jewish newspapers in English, Yiddish, Hebrew" and a list of addresses of all Jewish periodicals with details of circulation, status and attitude towards Zionism."⁵⁰

The objectives of Hyamson's ambitious plan seemed to have been attained by the middle of 1918. According to the Zionist Propaganda Committee's report on the period from 14 December-30 June 1918, "a system of distribution of Zionist news has been built up under which every week, one can almost say every day, the communiques or other items of news originating from the Bureau or otherwise calculated to further the Zionist cause are published in the press, Jewish and non-Jewish, of every Jewish centre throughout the world."⁵¹ The committee sent a weekly bulletin of news to "every Jewish periodical whose existence is known" and telegraphed news items that were considered to be of particular importance.⁵² This work was greatly facilitated by co-operation with Zionist publicity offices abroad,

⁴⁹ Meiron and Susie Harries, *The War Artists: British Official War Art of the Twentieth Century* (London: Michael Joseph in association with The Imperial War Museum and the Tate Gallery, 1983) p. 7.

⁵⁰ Memorandum by Hyamson, c.13 December 1917, PRO FO 395/86/237667.

⁵¹ 'Report of Meeting of Propaganda Committee, 14th December-30 June 1918,' Zionist Organisation, (London Bureau). Z4/243 Papers of the London Zionist Bureau, CZA.

⁵² *Ibid.*

particularly in the USA.⁵³ In a report from Harold Killock, Publicity Secretary of the Provisional Executive for General Zionist Affairs, it was estimated that one story, released in February 1918, was published in a hundred cities.⁵⁴ By July 1918, A.H. Fromenson, Killock's Publicity Director, had all news relating to Palestine, Zionism or Jewish conditions in Europe disseminated through him via the British Military Mission in Washington D.C. Fromenson considered that his mailing list included every Anglo-Jewish weekly published in the USA and some 200 secular dailies, as well as the Associated Press and the International News Service. Fromenson informed Simon Marks in London that "by a system of "releases", I secure simultaneous publication in the great bulk of this list for almost every item issued."⁵⁵ Significantly, the official nature of these news stories remained hidden. Hyamson made sure that they were "received indirectly from a source which shows no British official connection."⁵⁶

The wide-ranging impact of Zionist news distribution was only possible due to the financial, material and organisational support of the Department of Information, which in February 1918 became the Ministry of Information, headed by Lord Beaverbrook.⁵⁷ The stark transformation in the ability of the Zionist office in London to extend its influence, in order to undertake its work for the Government, was evident from the distribution of its official publication, *The Zionist Review*. Prior to the formation of the Jewish Section of the Department of Information, Hyamson had struggled to have a thousand copies of *The Zionist*

⁵³ With regard to Zionist propaganda in the United States the distribution was undertaken by Jacob deHaas, a leading member of the Zionist Organization of America and editor of *The Jewish Advocate* in Boston and A.H. Fromenson, the Publicity Director of the Z.O.A. Minute for Colonel Woodwark, British Bureau of Information, New York by A. Hyamson, 11 June 1918. PRO FO 395/213/242073.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ A.H. Fromenson, Publicity Director Department, Zionist Organizations of America, to Simon Marks, London, 1 July 1918, Z4/177 IV, Papers of the London Zionist Bureau, CZA.

⁵⁶ Memorandum by Hyamson, 18 July 1918, PRO FO 395/237/12718.

Review printed.⁵⁸ By 1 February 1918, the Foreign Office was printing half a million copies for distribution outside of Great Britain.⁵⁹ As a report of the Zionist Propaganda Committee put it, in a rather understated manner,

The propaganda Committee had the good fortune from the commencement of its work of having one of its members in charge of the Jewish Department of the Ministry of Information. As a result, the great facilities of the Ministry of Information in the way of distribution of news, printing of pamphlets, etc, were able to be utilised by the Committee . . . The small amount expended in proportion to the large output of propaganda material is accounted for in this way.⁶⁰

The amount of pamphlets alone that were either in preparation or had already been printed and distributed by the British Government between January and July 1918 numbered just over one million. This propaganda campaign was intended to have an impact across the geographical, social and linguistic spectrum of the Jewish Diaspora. As such, pamphlets were printed in a wide array of languages, including, Yiddish, Ladino,⁶¹ Hebrew, Spanish, Dutch, French, Portugese, Danish, German, English and Swedish.⁶² In particular, Yiddish was seen by Hyamson and members of the British Government as the language of the Jewish masses, which were a main focus in the attempt to counter supposed pacifist and revolutionary sentiment.⁶³ It was considered by the British representative in Zurich, for example, that

⁵⁷ Sanders and Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 78-89.

⁵⁸ Hyamson to Weizmann, n.d., WA.

⁵⁹ 'Notes on Zionism,' 1 February 1918, Milner Papers.

⁶⁰ 'Report of Meeting of Propaganda Committee, 14 December-30 June 1918, Zionist Organisation, (London Bureau),' Z4/243- Papers of the London Zionist Bureau, CZA

⁶¹ The Ladino speaking population of Salonika was considered by the British Government to be one of the most important Jewish communities in the world. 'Memorandum on the Attitude of Enemy Governments towards Zionism,' Intelligence Bureau, Department of Information, Section Environment, 13 February 1918. PRO FO 371/3388/29730. For a recent discussion of the influence of the Zionist movement amongst Salonikan Jewry during this period, see Maria Vassilikou, *Politics of the Jewish Community of Salonika in the Inter-War Years: Party Ideologies and Party Competition* (PhD Thesis, University of London, 2000) pp. 121-126. On the prevalent belief in the political power of Salonikan Jewry amongst British policy makers during this period, see Kedourie, 'Young Turks, Freemasons and Jews,' pp. 243-262.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ The Yiddish editions were made for distribution in the USA, Switzerland, Austria, Germany, Russia, and the

Yiddish editions were most essential.

[I]n neutral countries like Switzerland, Holland, Denmark, and Sweden there are a large number of Jews who understand Yiddish better than any other language. There are also numbers of Yiddish-speaking Jews in America. We should likewise endeavour to send as many copies as possible of the Yiddish edition to Poland, Ukraine, and the other sections of Russian territory now under German rule, because it is there probably that the greatest danger exists of German influence being brought to bear on the Jewish masses.⁶⁴

Inevitably, the sheer volume and vigorous nature of the overall propaganda campaign amongst much of world Jewry meant that Zionist imagery, news and literature came to infiltrate Jewish public thought in 1918. But, although the intention had been to reach Jews throughout the world, Russian Jewry lay outside of the reach of Hyamson's bureau. The breakdown in communications that followed the Bolshevik Revolution and the German occupation of South Russia in February 1918 made it impossible for British propaganda agencies to operate there. For those British politicians who had advocated a pro-Zionist policy to try and counter pacifist and revolutionary activity in Russia this development was particularly frustrating. Russian Jewry had continued to figure prominently in British assessments of the changing situation in Russia into early 1918.⁶⁵ It was considered that the Jews of South Russia, particularly the Ukraine, were of great importance, as "the connections between Russian and German Jews makes the Jews the natural channel for the exploitation of Russian resources by the Central Powers."⁶⁶ But by March 1918 it was conceded that, "the

UK. Hyamson to Roderick Jones, FO, 3 May 1918, PRO FO 395/202/44452. The pamphlet, *Jewry's Celebration of its National Charter*, for example, had 200,000 copies printed in Yiddish as opposed to 42,000 in Hebrew. 'Report of Meeting of Propaganda Committee, 14 December-30 June 1918, Zionist Organisation, (London Bureau),' Z4/243- Papers of the London Zionist Bureau, CZA.

⁶⁴ Beak, Zurich to H. Rumbold, Berne, 7 March 1918, PRO FO 395/202/44452.

⁶⁵ As well, the Bolshevik leadership was well aware that the British Government had in part issued the Declaration in an attempt to foster anti-Bolshevik sentiment amongst Russian Jewry, and as a result was anxious to combat the influence of Zionism and British propaganda. Ran Marom, 'The Bolsheviks and the Balfour Declaration 1917-1920' *The Wiener Library Bulletin*, vol. 29, No. 37/38, (1976) pp. 20-29.

⁶⁶ 'Memorandum on the Attitude of Enemy Governments towards Zionism,' Intelligence Bureau, Department of Information, Section Environment, 13 February 1918. PRO FO 371/3388/29730

greater part of Russian Jewry is cut off from communication with England. In these circumstances nothing is to be immediately expected from the Zionist movement in Russia.”⁶⁷ Nevertheless, British intelligence clung onto the belief that the Zionist movement in Russia “is always present there as a latent force, and its indirect bearings on the establishment of commercial relations between South Russia and the Central Powers may be considerable.”⁶⁸ Despite this hope, the fact was that Russian Jewry was out of the reach of the Jewish Department of the Ministry of Information. A full-scale propaganda campaign with unrestricted distribution of news, pamphlets, film and images could only have been achieved in neutral and Allied countries.⁶⁹ Even so, there was a strong effort, keenly supported by the Foreign Office, to try and disseminate propaganda in the states of the Central Powers.⁷⁰

Wherever it was possible, the Jewish Department of the Ministry of Information had succeeded in establishing a systematic and extensive apparatus for covertly infiltrating the Jewish public space with its propaganda. This far-reaching project, which attempted to extend its reach across the Jewish world, from South America to North Africa,⁷¹ was commissioned and developed by the British Government as the means through which it hoped to use the Balfour Declaration to win the support of world Jewry, for the war and for a

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, Notes on Zionism, ‘Communications of the Zionist Organization II, January-March 1918’

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ Initially, the Jewish Section of the Ministry of Information only operated in foreign countries and not in Great Britain. See Hyamson to Jabotinsky, 14 January 1918, 2/5/3/1/8, Jabotinsky Papers. But, by May 1918 Hyamson had been authorized to conduct propaganda among the Yiddish speaking Jews of England. Hyamson to Sir Roderick Jones, Foreign Office, 3 May 1918, PRO FO 395/202/44452.

⁷⁰ This distribution of news into countries occupied by the Central Powers was attempted by working with Hyamson’s contacts with the Jewish Correspondence Bureau at the Hague (which he was put in touch with by Jabotinsky, see Hyamson to Jabotinsky, 21 December 1917, 2/5/3/1/8, Jabotinsky Papers) and similar institutions in Copenhagen and Berne. Ormsby-Gore, Offices of the War Cabinet to Harold Nicholson, F.O., 21 September 1918, PRO FO 371/3409/156603. For Hyamson’s links and communications for Jewish propaganda in Berne, through Dr Pinkus, editor of *The Swiss Export Review*, see, PRO FO 395/202/11851, 23805, 37336, 37338, 33312, 38112, 44452, 59467, 65185, 65520, 241070.

post-war British Palestine. This was, to a large extent, the purpose for which the Declaration had been created. As such, the establishment of the Jewish Section, and the work which it undertook, constituted the implementation of the Government's Zionist policy, as it had been envisioned by its makers. Extending our analysis of the Government's wartime Zionist policy in this way, beyond the making of the Declaration, the degree to which Zionists in London, with their likeminded colleagues in the USA and elsewhere, worked to serve British interests becomes readily apparent. They were not only supported by the British Government but were incorporated within it. Armed with British financial and material resources, they embarked upon the ambitious task of shaping the way in which world Jewry viewed Zionism, the war and the future of Palestine. As defined by the nature of the Government's pro-Zionist policy, this joint propaganda enterprise was the crux of the British/Zionist alliance and the co-operation that was evinced here was far and above any reciprocal British interest in helping the Zionists to build up the Jewish national home in Palestine during the war.⁷² So, just as the Jewish Section was busily undertaking its work in February 1918, Balfour re-assured the War Cabinet that it was bound to the Zionists "only by the limited assurances given to Lord Rothschild."⁷³ For those members of the Government who had worked for the Balfour Declaration it was propaganda that was their fundamental concern, constituting as it did their key if not sole interest in Zionism, and the fulfilment of the Declaration as they saw it. To be sure, the Jewish Section, and the policy behind it, was not attributed with such importance, or even supported, by every foreign policy maker or official in the Government. For example, it was decided by Lord Reading, as the British Ambassador in America, not to go so far as to

⁷¹ See below, p. 177.

⁷² See Ch. 5.

⁷³ A.J. Balfour, 'Synopsis of Our Obligations to our Allies and Others', February 1918 CAB 24/45/3917, quoted in Professor D.E. Knox, 'Weizmann's First Visit to Palestine,' *Wiener Library Bulletin*, vol. XXVIII, no.

launch a special Jewish branch of the British propaganda office in New York, as suggested by the Ministry of Information.⁷⁴ Much more significantly, in September 1918 Beaverbrook tried to close the Jewish Section.⁷⁵ This was due “to his determination not to conduct any more “religious” propaganda . . . (II) The extent to which the League of British Jews have worried him.⁷⁶ [and] (III) The [Russian] parentage of . . . [Hyamson’s] staff.”⁷⁷ However, due to the significance that was attributed to Hyamson’s department by Ormsby-Gore, Sykes, Balfour and other influential individuals, it was simply re-housed in Lord Northcliffe’s department for Enemy propaganda in Crewe House, so as to circumvent Beaverbrook’s opposition.⁷⁸ Hyamson’s office had been described as “a weapon which has been carefully prepared”⁷⁹, and it was considered, “nothing short of a tragedy that Lord Beaverbrook should lightly throw away so important an instrument”. Ormsby-Gore went so far as to say that, “there is no more important branch of propaganda than Jewish propaganda.”⁸⁰ He explained:

[Jews] may play in the future- as they have often played in the past- a big part in guiding the course of human history and we should leave no stone unturned to encourage those elements [read Zionist] which wish to guide it aright and in

33, (1975) p. 3.

⁷⁴ Butler, British Pictorial Service, New York, to Lt-Col. G.C. Bryan, Ministry of Information, 18 June 1918, PRO FO 395/237/12718

⁷⁵ In his memoirs, Beaverbrook gave a different picture of his attitude towards the Jewish Section, claiming that he had recognised the importance of the Declaration for British propaganda and had sought to make the most of it. Max Beaverbrook, *Men and Power* (London: Hutchison, 1956) p. 291.

⁷⁶ In the summer of 1918 Beaverbrook had been lobbied by Lord Swaythling and Sir Charles Henry M.P., members of the League of British Jews, who were opposed to the Government’s Zionist policy. Friedman, *op. cit.*, p. 297, Stein, *op. cit.*, p. 566. The League had been founded in November 1917 by influential members of the Anglo-Jewish establishment. Its guiding spirits were Lucien Wolf, Israel Abrahams and Claude Montefiore, with Lionel de Rothschild elected as President and Lord Swaythling as vice-President. On the activities and impact of the League on Anglo-Jewish politics in 1918, see Cohen, *op. cit.*, pp. 303-312.

⁷⁷ Hyamson to Nicolson, 12 September 1918, PRO FO 371/3409/156603.

⁷⁸ Minute by C.J.P., 19 September 1918, Ormsby-Gore, Offices of the War Cabinet to Nicholson, FO, 13 September 1918, Minute by Hardinge, n.d., PRO FO 371/3409/156603. The conflict with Beaverbrook over the Jewish Section was part of a wider clash between him and the Foreign Office, which was sharply opposed to his attempts to direct foreign propaganda policy. The groundswell in opposition to his Ministry eventually culminated in his resignation in October 1918. Anne Chisholm and Michael Davie, *Beaverbrook- A Life* (London: Pimlico, 1993) pp. 160-162, 165-168. Sanders and Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 79-89.

⁷⁹ Minute by Lord Hardinge, n.d., PRO FO 371/3409/156603.

⁸⁰ Ormsby-Gore, Offices of the War Cabinet to Nicholson, FO, 13 September 1918, PRO FO 371/3409/156603.

accordance with our ideas and our interests.⁸¹

In this discussion of the creation, objectives and machinery of the Jewish Section I have begun to show the extent of the Government's ongoing Zionist policy during the war, which has not previously been acknowledged. Through this analysis, I have challenged the view that the Zionists were not used by the Government to serve British interests alone, by illustrating the degree of their involvement in carrying out Whitehall's Zionist propaganda policy. I will now further this argument by examining the materials that the Jewish Section produced to manipulate Jewish opinion, and will develop my contention that the British Government's policy was determined by their nationalist perception of Jewish identity.

3:2 The Historicization of the Balfour Declaration

Permeating the propaganda materials that were disseminated amongst world Jewry, utilising various media of representation, there lay a discourse that was constructed to appropriate the Balfour Declaration with meaning for the Jewish audience. The interpretation of the Declaration, the way in which the text of the letter from Balfour to Lord Rothschild related to and was perceived by Jewry, was of course shaped by Jews' pre-existing views of Zionism, Great Britain and the war, as defined by their own particular *Weltanschauung*. However, with the support and resources of the British Government's propaganda machine, the Jewish section of the Department of Information attempted to infiltrate the Jewish public space and shape the meanings, connotations and significance of the Declaration for the Jewish reader. Due to the perception that Jewry was driven by an innate Zionist identity, this goal was to be achieved by framing the Declaration as the realisation of the Zionist dream, heralding the restoration of the Jewish nation in Palestine. And as history played such a

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

pivotal role in Zionist thought and culture,⁸² relaying and validating its ideology, this discourse was in part mediated, and given significance, by representing it through the Zionist narrative of Jewish history.⁸³ In line with the Zionist teleological view of the Jewish past, marching toward the redemptive point of Return,⁸⁴ the Declaration, as national restoration, was thus portrayed as its dramatic climax, ending the period of Exile and all it was seen to represent in Zionist discourse, an era of unremitting physical, spiritual and cultural degeneration and suffering. The meaning of the Declaration was thus encoded by placing it within this Romantic narrative form of fall and redemption, representing it as its culmination.⁸⁵ The British Government was thereby signified as nothing less than the agent of national deliverance. The redemptive essence and impact of this narrative for the Jewish reader was in part communicated through the use of Messianic language and metaphor, which was a common rhetorical device within Zionist culture.⁸⁶

⁸² David Myers has gone so far as to contend that “the Zionist fixation with the past” was such that “it seems appropriate to affirm that history itself became “the crucible of Zionist thinking.”” David N. Myers, *Re-Inventing the Jewish Past: European Intellectuals and the Zionist Return to History* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995) p. 5.

⁸³ On the Zionist invention of the Jewish past as a means of endorsing Zionist ideology, see Zerubavel, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-36, Uri Ram, ‘Zionist Historiography and the Invention of Modern Jewish Nationhood: The Case of Ben Zion Dinur,’ *History and Memory*, Vol. 7 (1995) pp. 91-124, Raz-Krakotzkin, *op. cit.*, Silberstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 177-182, *Ibid.* Ch. 1, pp. 52, 74-75, 78, 79. In large part, this work on Zionism and history stems from the wider scholarly interest in the use and invention of history within nationalism. Of particular influence has been the seminal work of Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger. Hobsbawm and Ranger, *op. cit.* Although Anthony D. Smith has argued that the re-construction of a nation’s past is constrained and determined by its pre-existing ethnic ‘historical-myth complex’, and cannot simply be invented, he nevertheless highlights the critical importance of how history is re-shaped to serve the needs of the nation, and that history lies at the centre of the nationalist project. See, for example, Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, pp. 170-208. Beyond the field of nationalism and Zionism studies, the study of the nature and functions of history and collective memory in Jewish culture has received a growing degree of attention, inspired in large part by the work of Yosef Haim Yerushalmi. Yosef Haim Yerushalmi, *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1982) For a critical view of Yerushalmi’s work, see Amos Funkenstein, *Perceptions of Jewish History* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford: University of California Press, 1993) p. 11.

⁸⁴ Ram, *op. cit.*, pp. 93, 113.

⁸⁵ On the way in which the content and meaning of history is ‘emplotted’ by the adoption of a specific literary narrative form, and a discussion of the Romantic narrative form, see Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1973) pp. 7-9 and idem. *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1987) p. 44.

⁸⁶ Eli Lederhendler and Yaacov Shavit have argued that the Zionist use of Messianic metaphors and language

The most printed pamphlet that was distributed and produced by the Jewish Department of the Ministry of Information as part of its effort to construct and mediate this discourse was *Great Britain, Palestine and the Jews: Jewry's Celebration of its National Charter*.⁸⁷ By June 1918, over 300, 000 copies had been printed in several languages, with another 250,000 in preparation.⁸⁸ This pamphlet unequivocally framed the Balfour Declaration as heralding the imminent restoration of Jewish national sovereignty, transforming the qualified letter from Balfour to Lord Rothschild into the consummation of the Zionist narrative of Jewish history. As it was put by the British Zionist Joseph Cowen, in one of the speeches of celebration that was printed in the text, "the Declaration was Restoration; it was perhaps the one thing which, say 500 years hence, would be singled out as the most historic act of this world-war, it seemed so transcendently important not only to Jews, but likewise to the world."⁸⁹ This rhetoric was baldly summed up for the reader in the introduction to the pamphlet, "The Declaration . . . constitutes the greatest event in the history of the Jews since the dispersion."⁹⁰

In part, the text strove to endorse this image of the Declaration as a major turning point in Jewish history through its depiction of a world Jewry that was instinctively overcome by "boundless enthusiasm and overflowing gratitude". By doing so, it can be suggested that the text attempted to condition the reader's conception of the Declaration through the

were rhetoric devices, or a cultural code, that did not reflect any genuine eschatological belief system that had been transposed into the Zionist movement from Jewish tradition. Eli Lederhendler, 'Interpreting Messianic Rhetoric in the Russian Haskalah and Early Zionism,' *Studies in Contemporary Jewry*, vol. 7 (1991) pp. 14-33, Yaacov Shavit, 'Realism and Messianism in Zionism and the Yishuv,' *Ibid.* pp. 100-127.

⁸⁷ *Great Britain, Palestine and the Jews: Jewry's Celebration of its National Charter* (London: The Zionist Organisation, London Bureau, 1918), no. 952, Wellington House Schedule, Wellington House Papers, Imperial War Museum Library.

⁸⁸ 'Report of Meeting of Propaganda Committee, 14 December-30 June 1918, Zionist Organisation, (London Bureau),' Z4/243- Papers of the London Zionist Bureau, CZA.

⁸⁹ *Great Britain, Palestine and the Jews: Jewry's Celebration of its National Charter*, p. 42.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.* p. iii.

construct of an imagined community that was defined by its united and simultaneous rapture in the wake of this momentous act. The pamphlet thereby represented the Declaration as the answer to the yearnings of the Jewish nation, not just by means its own rhetoric or argument, but through its exhibition of the nation's response. As a whole, "The House of Israel" was said to be "fully conscious of the high significance of the pledge of the British Government concerning its restoration."⁹¹ Balfour's letter had, after all, proclaimed "the forthcoming fulfilment of what has always been a religious ideal in Jewry; and it was therefore but right that the letter should have been read in numerous synagogues during the Sabbath service and formed the text of countless sermons."⁹²

Substantiating this vision of the Jewish nation as being collectively inspired by this historical event, cutting across the divisions created by the war and the entire spread of the Diaspora, the pamphlet quoted the resolutions, statements and messages of Zionist and other Jewish organisations in England, the United States, Morocco, Russia, France, Holland, Germany, Canada, Switzerland, Belgium, Scandinavia and Greece. The rest of the text consists of speeches given at celebratory demonstrations that had been held at the London Opera House, Carnegie Hall, New York, Odessa and in Egypt, as well as selected quotations of praise for the British Declaration from international Jewish press. The overall impression was of a unified Jewry that felt itself to be on the crest of a new dawn, ushered in by the historic act of the British Government. As one example, Judge Julian W. Mack, President of the Provisional Committee for General Zionist Affairs in America, declared, "American Jews rejoice with the Jews of all countries that the British Government has issued this epoch-making Declaration. The dreams and prayers of twenty centuries, embodied in the famous

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² *Ibid.* p. iv.

Basle Zionist declaration that Palestine may again become the homeland of the Jewish people . . . is approaching realization.”⁹³

The motif of the Declaration inaugurating a new future for the Jewish people was also a salient theme in the pamphlet, *A National Home for the Jewish People: The British Government's Recognition of the Zionist Movement*,⁹⁴ published in December 1917. It was reprinted from *The Jewish Chronicle* and was probably penned by its editor, Leopold Greenberg, who “was engaged in his editorial capacity in propaganda work for the [British] Government”.⁹⁵ In a revelatory and messianic tone the writer exclaimed, “The declaration of His Majesty’s Government as to the future of Palestine in relation to the Jewish people marks a new epoch for our race . . . [it] must have effects, far-reaching and vital, upon the future of Jews and Judaism.”⁹⁶ This depiction of the Declaration as heralding a new epoch in Jewish history was again mediated through the narrative of the Diaspora as a period of oppression and suffering, which was now being brought to an end with the return of national life: “there has thus arisen for the Jews a great light. It is the perceptible lifting of the cloud of centuries, the palpable sign that the Jew- condemned for two thousand years to unparalleled wrong- is

⁹³ *Ibid.* pp. 14-15. At the demonstration at the London Opera House on 2 December 1917 “Lord Rothschild said they were met on the most momentous occasion in the history of Judaism for the last 1800 years . . . [the Declaration] marked an epoch in Jewish history of outstanding importance.” *Ibid.* p. 16. The Canadian Zionist Federation exclaimed, “This Declaration is one of the most momentous in Jewish history . . . The undying hopes for which Jews suffered martyrdom for twenty centuries will now be realised and Israel re-born.” *Ibid.* p. 6

⁹⁴ *A National Home for the Jewish People: The British Government's Recognition of the Zionist Movement*, Reprinted from “The Jewish Chronicle” (London: Clay and Sons, 1917), no. 776, Wellington House Schedule, Wellington House Papers, Imperial War Museum Library.

⁹⁵ Greenberg explained to the Ministry of National Service, in order to justify his assistant being kept out of the army, that he “is engaged in his editorial capacity in propaganda work for the Government”. A J Toynbee confirmed that, “Mr Greenberg is a leading British Zionist, and his work is extremely valuable in connection with HMG’s Palestine policy.” Sykes added, “The Jewish Chronicle is very useful.” P. Newbury, Ministry of National Service to Sykes, FO, 18 June 1918. Minutes by Toynbee 25 June 1918 and Sykes n.d. PRO FO 371/3409/109404. On the British Government’s use of the *Jewish Chronicle* for its propaganda, also see David Cesarani, *The Jewish Chronicle and Anglo-Jewry, 1841-1991* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) p. 126.

⁹⁶ *A National Home for the Jewish People: The British Government's Recognition of the Zionist Movement*, pp. 4-5.

at last coming to his right.”⁹⁷ This redemption of the anational Jew of Exile, as expressed through the aesthetic tropes of Zionist discourse, would, as a result of the British Declaration, allow him to be able to “stand proud and erect, endowed with national being.” The transformative effect of the Declaration for Jewry was such that it would release “the soul of our people” which had been cramped and bound” by life in the Diaspora.⁹⁸ Overall, the Declaration was hailed as an invitation to collective normalization and emancipation, with which Jewry would enter into “the family of the Nations of the Earth endowed with the franchise of Nationhood.” Viewed through this Zionist lens, the Declaration was thus presented as opening a new epoch in Jewish history: “The Government declaration marks the definite opening of a new chapter, we believe a great and glorious chapter, in the history of our people. It is a memorable day for Israel: “This is the day the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad therein.”⁹⁹

Clearly, the fundamental element in this narration of the Declaration as “the greatest event in Jewish history” was that it was borne out of the British Government’s genuine intention to inaugurate the veritable rebirth of Jewish national life, rescuing Jewry from the fall of Exile. But in order for this myth to be persuasively conveyed, the motivation behind the Declaration and its origins had to be explained, and required a narrative that demonstrated the Government’s authentic commitment to Zionism. Only then could the British Government and her Zionist allies hope to convince Jewry that their destiny was intrinsically tied to the pursuit of a British victory in the war, and that Britain was the natural protector of Zionism in Palestine.

To some extent, this was attempted by portraying the Declaration as an act of

⁹⁷ *Ibid* p. 4.

⁹⁸ *Ibid* p. 10.

benevolence, driven by a mixture of idealism, religious belief and a desire to redress the past suffering of the Jewish people. At the London Opera House demonstration on 2 December 1917, Ormsby-Gore, for example, exclaimed, “I support it [the Zionist movement] as a member of the Church of England. Sir Mark Sykes has spoken as a Roman Catholic principally . . . [and] I feel that behind it there is the finger of Almighty God.”¹⁰⁰ Whereas, Moses Gaster declared, “the British Government had now made itself the champion of reparation to the Jewish people for the wrongs done to them by the world.”¹⁰¹ This particularist concern for Jewry was said to be the result of Great Britain’s universal commitment to securing freedom and peace throughout the world, a nation whose spirit was the very embodiment of justice and liberty. Nahum Sokolow stated, “England is the main propulsive force of the world’s destiny, and that the diffusion of her spirit is the most valuable promise of true peace . . . [T]here is no free people to-day that has not fed from Great Britain’s experience and copied her institutions.”¹⁰² Ormsby-Gore put it more explicitly, “it [the Declaration] shows that Britain is not out for gain for herself, but is out in a greater spirit for the ideal of freedom, of self-development, and nationality.”¹⁰³

A crucial aspect of this construction of the Declaration as a product of British benevolence, as opposed to *realpolitik*, was the demonstration that the British had a natural and deep-rooted concern for the rights of Jews and specifically their national restoration, which was an ingrained part of their culture and history. Narrated in this way, the Declaration was shown to be a natural, almost pre-ordained event. Hence, Zionism, in the shape of the Declaration, was presented not just as the *telos* of Jewish history but also of British history.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.* pp. 10-11.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.* p. 33.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.* p. 26.

¹⁰² Speech given at a demonstration in Manchester, 9 December 1917, printed in *Ibid.* p. 50.

The narrative form of national/Zionist history developing towards a single point of destiny and redemption allowed for, indeed required, such an explanation. The myth of British ‘proto-Zionism’, which has had such a longstanding influence on the historiography of the Balfour Declaration, was thus produced, so as to serve the needs of Zionist propagandists working for the British Government.¹⁰⁴

To this end, Hyamson wrote and published the pamphlet, *Great Britain and the Jews*.¹⁰⁵ In the first paragraph of the text, he stated,

To those to whom the History of the Jews in England is familiar the adoption by the British Government of the Zionist cause . . . will not have come altogether as a surprise, for both as regards the restoration of the Jews to Palestine and the position of the Jews in the Diaspora, without as well as within the British Empire, successive governments ever since the time of Oliver Cromwell have been consistently sympathetic . . .¹⁰⁶

Hyamson then proceeded to document the role of successive English kings and governments in protecting the rights of Jews since Cromwell. With regard to recent times, he drew attention to the actions of Lord Palmerston, particularly with the Damascus Affair, the British demand for Jewish rights at the Berlin Congress of 1878, the petitioning of Czarist Russia and Romania by successive British governments on Jewish rights, as well as British labour laws which allowed Jews to work on the Christian Sabbath, and the general will of the

¹⁰³ *Ibid.* p. 33.

¹⁰⁴ Eitan Bar-Yosef has persuasively shown that in fact during the nineteenth century ‘proto-Zionism’, or Christian Zionism, was an extremely marginal and derided phenomenon within British culture. Bar-Yosef, *Images of the Holy Land in British Culture*, Ch.5. One of the most influential expositions of this myth was Nahum Sokolow’s *History of Zionism*, which had from its inception been devised as a propaganda tool to justify Jewish support for Great Britain. Minute by H.A. Cumberbatch, 13 April 1916, PRO FO 371/2817/54791. For the impact of this narrative on the historiography of the Balfour Declaration, see above, p. 3, n. 2. Alternatively, David Cesarani has argued that this historical narrative was constructed by Zionist propagandists in the 1920s as a way of buttressing their attempt to wed their Zionist identity with their loyalty to Britain, or as he terms it ‘Patriotic Zionism’. David Cesarani, *Zionism in England, 1917-1939* (DPhil thesis, University of Oxford, 1986) pp. 406-408.

¹⁰⁵ Albert Hyamson, *Great Britain and the Jews* (London: The Edinburgh Press, 1918) no. 936, Wellington House Schedule, Wellington House Papers, Imperial War Museum Library.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.* p. 3.

British Parliament to consider Jewish sensibilities when it considered legislation that might affect them. In terms of supporting Zionism, Hyamson wrote that, “Great Britain is by no means a recent convert. The British Government’s declaration of policy of November 1917 is in fact the coping-stone of an edifice which has been in process of construction for the past seventy years.”¹⁰⁷ He drew attention to the Zionist sympathies of individuals such as Lord Palmerston, the Earl of Shaftesbury, Lord Salisbury, Laurence Oliphant as well as the El Arish project of 1902 and the offer of territory in British East Africa for an autonomous settlement in 1903. Hyamson wrote that the latter was “but one event in the full stream of Britain’s historic tradition . . .” The use of the metaphor of a “full stream” to describe this British historical tradition connoted a continuing and interconnected current which flowed towards the British national destiny of facilitating the national redemption of the Jewish people. With reference to the Declaration, Hyamson referred to it as the “latest link in the Anglo-Jewish chain . . .” Although it was described as “the strongest” link in that chain, the key point was that it was part of a clear and natural historical development, the logical next step of an ordered, pre-determined and progressive view of the past, present and future. According to this constructed historical narrative the Declaration was but the culmination of a long and ingrained process, “Crowning the work and aspirations of two and a half centuries . . .”¹⁰⁸ This discourse, in which the Declaration was painted as the outcome of historical destiny, was a common motif in British/Zionist propaganda.¹⁰⁹ In *The Zionist Review* of December 1917, for example, the code of Messianic rhetoric was used to hail the British as

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.* p. 8.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.* p. 12.

¹⁰⁹ For example, in an interview with Sir Alfred Mond, M.P., which Hyamson wished to use for propaganda in America, it was stated that, “Sir Alfred is an Englishman who is proud of his Jewish race, and it is a matter of satisfaction, almost of joy to him, that the country of his birth should be marked out by destiny to raise once again the people from whom he draws his origin, to the rank of a self-dependent nation.” Beak to Randall, 5 February 1918 and Hyamson to Randall, 28 February 1918, PRO FO 395/202/28688.

the destined agent of Return, “since the birth of the Zionist organization Zionists have confidently believed that the political power of Great Britain would on every suitable occasion be exercised towards the *Geulah* [Redemption] . . . [I]f there be such a thing as manifest destiny it is in this initiative which England has taken in the redemption of the Jewish nation. It is a turning point in the history of our people, and it is a turning point in the history of the British Empire and of humanity.”¹¹⁰

Added to this portrayal of the Declaration as the natural culmination of a teleological, linear history, its representation as heralding the imminent restoration of the Jewish nation was also endorsed through its conflation with a past myth of Return from Jewish tradition, reflecting the cyclical as well as linear ways in which history was viewed and constructed within Zionist discourse.¹¹¹ For this purpose, the Balfour Declaration was compared to the edict given by Cyrus, the King of Persia,¹¹² which had ended the Babylonian exile and inaugurated the building of the Second Temple in 539 B.C.E.¹¹³ Hyamson wrote, “Britain to-

¹¹⁰ ‘The Debt to England,’ *The Zionist Review* (December 1917). The myth that the Declaration was the natural manifestation of a longstanding and profound support for Zionism throughout British culture and society was also disseminated with the publication of the pamphlet, *Great Britain, Palestine and the Jews- A Survey of Christian Opinion*. (London: The Zionist Organisation, 1918) No. 938, Wellington House Schedule, Wellington House Papers, Imperial War Museum Library.

¹¹¹ As Zerubavel has contended, despite the tendency to associate modernity with temporal linearity, there exists an ongoing “tension between the linear and cyclical perceptions of history [which] often underlies the construction of collective memory.” Zerubavel, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

¹¹² Although the material that was produced by the Jewish Section of the Department of Information referred to the Declaration as a re-enactment of the edict given by Cyrus, using this saga of Jewish tradition to encode the Declaration with meaning for the Jewish reader, there was little attempt to portray it as the fulfilment of the modern Zionist vision and Herzl’s belief in the need to petition the Great Powers to secure a Jewish national charter in Palestine. One could speculate that this was a result of their wish to present the Declaration as a Jewish victory, and not solely a Zionist triumph, so as not to alienate the parts of Jewry that were opposed to political Herzlian Zionism. Conversely, some Zionists in America, for example, portrayed the Declaration as the fulfilment of the prophecy of Herzl. It was seen as the recognition and exultation of the “living spirit of our immortal leader.” *The Maccabean*, December, 1917. That for some Zionists the Declaration would be perceived in relation to Herzl is understandable. His memory had been a focal point of Zionist national consciousness since his death in 1904. Berkowitz, *op. cit.*, pp. 99-103 and Robert Wistrich, ‘Theodor Herzl: Zionist Icon, Myth-Maker and Social Utopian,’ in idem. and David Ohana (eds) *The Shaping of Israeli Identity* (London: Frank Cass, 1995) pp. 2-3.

¹¹³ As Yaacov Shavit has argued, the particular historical saga that is invoked to rationalise, endorse and envision the outcome of present events depends on its specific nature, to what degree it fits the way in which an

day occupies the position of Persia in the days of Cyrus and of Ezra, how through the agency of Great Britain we, the Jews are once more on the threshold of our ancient home.”¹¹⁴ And Dr. Joseph Herman Hertz, Chief Rabbi of Great Britain and the British Empire, declared at the celebration of 2 December 1917 at the London Opera House, which was published by Hyamson’s department,¹¹⁵

In the face of an event of such infinite importance to the Jewish people, ordinary words of appreciation or the usual phrases of gratitude were hopelessly weak and inadequate. For the interpretation of their true feelings to-day they must turn to Scripture. Twenty-five hundred years ago Cyrus issued his edict of liberation to the Jewish exiles in Babylon; and an eye-witness of that glorious day had left them in the 126th Psalm a record of how their fathers received the announcement of their deliverance. “when the Lord brought back those that returned to Zion”- **היינו כחלמים** - “we were like unto them that dream. Then said they among the nations: ‘The Lord hath done great things for them.’ The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad.” Theirs was a similar feeling of joy and wonder. With them likewise it was the astonishment of the nations, the reassuring approbation of statesmen and rulers that caused them to explain: ‘We shall see it done, and done consummately, the thing so many have thought could never be done!’ (Cheers.)¹¹⁶

The invocation of this parallel in Jewish history connoted that just like the edict of Cyrus, the Balfour Declaration would also result in national restoration and deliverance, warranting a response of “joy and wonder” that at least matched that which had been felt by their ancestors. As one Zionist observer wrote in 1918, the Declaration was “history

event is to be encoded and constructed by the signifier. Yaacov Shavit, ‘Cyrus King of Persia and the Return to Zion: A Case of Neglected Memory,’ *History and Memory*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (Fall 1990) p. 73. In this regard, Shavit has explored why this parallel between the edict of Cyrus and the Balfour Declaration became so prevalent in Zionist public thought in the wake of the Declaration through an analysis of the social and cultural processes of collective memory. However, the emphasis here is on how this myth was consciously invoked in order to further the propaganda effect of the Declaration for the British Government.

¹¹⁴ Hyamson, *Great Britain and the Jews*, p. 12.

¹¹⁵ *Great Britain, Palestine and the Jews: Jewry’s Celebration of its National Charter*, pp. 23-24.

¹¹⁶ The audience at these demonstrations were not absent from the text. The desired response from the reader was encouraged through the insertion of “such cries as “We will, we will,” and the punctuation of the speech by cheers at the proper places.” With regard to his speech at the demonstration in Manchester, which the Foreign Office believed should be produced as a pamphlet for use especially in the USA, Sykes was insistent on these insertions in the text. He considered that, “it would have much more of an effect if given with the exact circumstances of delivery.” S. Gaselee, FO to T.O. Wilson, Wellington House, 12 December 1917, PRO FO 395/152/236066.

repeating itself,” and Cyrus’s declaration was “the historical present.”¹¹⁷ There had thus arrived, thanks to the British Government, “the set time, to which Israel had been looking forward through 2,000 years of anguish and tribulation”.¹¹⁸

As we have seen this historicization of the Balfour Declaration as a turning point in Jewish history, inaugurating the Return, was dependent upon the utilization of the Zionist narrative of the Diaspora as a period of suffering and Exile. In addition, though, the representation of the Declaration as an event of glorious liberation for Jewry and Palestine was endorsed through the creation of another climactic narrative, derived to serve the imperialist desiderata of the British Government. As influential figures such as Lloyd George wished to ensure British control of Palestine after the war, the period of Ottoman rule was also constructed as an era of unremitting oppression for the Jewish population in Palestine, with the employment of the pre-existing Orientalist image of the Turk¹¹⁹ as an innately despotic, barbaric and degenerative type.¹²⁰ The invocation and dissemination of this narrative was part of the wider propaganda campaign that had been requested by Lloyd George,¹²¹ under the slogan “The Turk must go”, to prepare public opinion for the

¹¹⁷ S. Ben Zion, ‘*El Mul Penei Hahistoriyah*,’ in *Shay Shel Sifrut*, supplement to *The Palestine News*, 5 July 1918, quoted in Shavit, ‘Realism and Messianism in Zionism and the Yishuv,’ p.125.

¹¹⁸ In this text, published by the *Jewish Chronicle*, the writer had contended that the Declaration was “something more” than the edict of Cyrus, which was an act of clemency. Rather, the Declaration was “a trumpet call to the Hebrew people to take their worthy part in the settlement of the world’s affairs and the establishment of a new order”. ‘A Sermon of the Week’, *Jewish Chronicle*, 23 November 1917.

¹¹⁹ On the emergence of this dominant image of the Turk within European culture in the eighteenth, and into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, see Asli Çirakman, *From the “Terror of the world” to the “Sick Man of Europe” – European Images of Ottoman Empire and Society from the Sixteenth Century to the Nineteenth* (New York, Washington, D.C./Baltimore, Bern, Frankfurt am Main, Berlin, Brussels, Vienna, Oxford: Peter Lang, 2002) Chs. 3 and 4. On the impact of the narrative of Palestine’s decline and atrophy during the Ottoman period in historical literature, see Beshara B. Doumani, ‘Rediscovering Ottoman Palestine,’ in Ilan Pappé, *The Israel/Palestine Question* (New York and London: Routledge 1999) pp. 11-40.

¹²⁰ See, for example, Sir Mark Sykes, ‘The Clean Fighting Turk’, *The Times*, 28 January 1917. PRO FO 395/139/42318. This article was published as a leaflet and by March 1917 32,000 copies had been distributed in the USA, 24,000 in the Dominions, 2000 in Holland, and one thousand in Mediterranean ports. H. Montgomery, News Dept, to Sykes, 26 March 1917, PRO FO 395/139/42320.

¹²¹ Memorandum by Lloyd George for Captain Buchan, 19 February 1917, FO 395/139/42320, John Buchan to

dismantling of the Ottoman Empire. For this purpose British propagandists had been instructed to pen an “historical argument”, which included an “account of the recent treatment of the Jews” and “the history of Palestine”.¹²²

Therefore, combined with the loaded refrain of 2,000 years of Exile, the 400 years of Ottoman rule were framed as a period of oppression and misrule from which the construct of the civilized British liberator, the binary of the Turkish Other, was to emancipate the Yishuv, along with the other subjugated peoples of the Near East. That this narrative can be seen as a re-conceptualisation of the Ottoman period, at least within Hyamson’s mind, was apparent from his earlier writings. In early 1917 he considered that despite certain drawbacks, “Turkish rule is by no means unfavourable to the Jewish development in Palestine, and a change may very well be for the worse.”¹²³ But under his authority the Jewish Section of the Ministry of Information strove to paint the Ottoman Empire as a despotic and murderous regime.¹²⁴ The Balfour Declaration was thus created as an event that signalled both liberation from Exile but also Ottoman oppression.

This discourse of the immutable iniquity of the Turk and the need for British suzerainty in Palestine was, as we have said, one aspect of the British Government’s effort to justify the dismantling of the Ottoman Empire as a whole. As a result, the British Government and the Zionist leadership in London also sought to convey the importance, and historical authenticity, of an *entente cordiale* between Jews, Arabs and Armenians,¹²⁵ the

Montgomery, 25 March 1917, PRO FO 395/139/64927. Also see Friedman, *The Question of Palestine*, pp. 169-171.

¹²² Phillip Kerr to John Buchan, 22 March 1917, PRO FO 395/139/63739, John Buchan to Montgomery, 25 March 1917, PRO FO 395/139/64927.

¹²³ Albert Hyamson, *Palestine- The Rebirth of an Ancient People* (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1917) p. 278

¹²⁴ See below, pp. 196-207.

¹²⁵ The irony of this development was that when Herzl had considered the Ottoman Empire to be the future guardian for the building up of a Jewish state he had gone to great lengths to portray Sultan Abd al-Hamid II as a

oppressed nations of the region. Within this context, the Government's pro-Zionist policy was shown to be part of the restoration of the Near East to its pre-Ottoman Golden Age.¹²⁶ In his speech at the London Opera House,¹²⁷ Nahum Sokolow argued,

we are one with the Arabs and Armenians to-day in the determination to secure for each of us the free choice of our own destinies. We look with fraternal love at the creation of the Arab kingdom, re-establishing Semitic nationality for the realisation of their national hopes in their old Armenia. Our roots were united in the past, our destinies will be bound together in the future.¹²⁸

Once again, therefore, Sokolow, together with his Zionist colleagues in London, communicated discourse through the invention of historical myth. In this particular narrative, Jewish restoration was portrayed as but one manifestation of a wider return to national freedom across the Near East, previously repressed by the Ottomans, but now possible under the benevolent tutelage of Great Britain.

As I have argued, the construction of these narratives and their dissemination across world Jewry by the Jewish Section of the Department of Information and the Zionist

beneficent ruler, and sought to downplay Ottoman persecution of its Armenian minority in the press. He even went so far as to try and bring about a reconciliation between the Armenians and the Sultan, so as to help him in his negotiations with the latter. Auran, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-121 and Edward Timms, 'Ambassador Herzl and the Blueprint for a Modern Jewish State,' in Ritchie Robertson and Edward Timms (eds) *Theodor Herzl and the Origins of Zionism*, Austrian Studies VIII (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), pp. 18-22.

¹²⁶ Lloyd George had instructed Buchan to disseminate articles throughout the world "as to the fertility and greatness of the lands now covered by the Turkish Empire, before the advent of the devastator." Memorandum by Lloyd George for Captain Buchan, 19 February 1917, PRO FO 395/139/42320. Government propagandists were therefore requested to publish material on "the civilisation that once flourished in Mesopotamia, upon the history of Palestine, upon Syrian civilisation, upon the struggles of the Armenians to preserve Christianity, upon the cities of Asia Minor." Phillip Kerr to John Buchan, 22 March 1917, PRO FO 395/139/63739.

¹²⁷ The importance of this *entente cordiale* in British propaganda regarding the future of the Near East was also made clear by the presence of Arab and Armenian representatives who spoke at the meeting, Shahk Ismail Abdul-Al-Akki, Wadia Kesrawani, a Syrian Christian and the Armenian leader, M.H.N. Mostditchian.

¹²⁸ *Great Britain, Palestine and the Jews: Jewry's Celebration of its National Charter*, p. 32. Also see the speech given by Sykes at a demonstration held in Manchester, *Ibid.* pp. 40-42. The attempt to portray a genuine *entente cordiale* between Great Britain, Zionism, Armenians and Arabs continued to be an important part of British propaganda towards Jewry. The staged funeral of the Russian Zionist leader Yehiel Tschlenow, for example, was used as a visible symbol of this union. It was attended by Sir Mark Sykes, Sir Ronald Graham, James Malcolm, the leader of the Armenian Commission, Arab Legion Lieutenant Hussein, Lord Fitzmaurice, former Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs and Russian Consul-General. News of this event was sent to the United States for distribution by the Foreign Office on 6 February 1918, PRO FO 395/237/12461.

leadership in London was one part of an extensive and far reaching propaganda campaign undertaken for, and in intimate partnership with, the British Government. This chapter has suggested that this project, which has largely been ignored in the historiography, was the nub of the British Government's on-going wartime Zionist policy after the Balfour Declaration, and has thereby demonstrated the extent to which the Zionists voluntarily sought to serve British interests, but received almost nothing in return. The chief purpose of the British/Zionist entente was to capture Jewish opinion for the British cause and a post-war British Palestine, by creating the illusion that the Balfour Declaration genuinely meant the restoration of the Jewish nation in Palestine. I have also shown that this discourse of Jewish national rebirth was in part mediated through the Zionist meta-narrative of the Jewish past, which further supports my argument that the Government's Zionist policy was borne out of and shaped by its makers' nationalist perception of Jewish identity.

Chapter 4: National Space and the Narrative of a New Epoch in Palestine

This chapter is about how the landscape and space of Palestine was used, through visual and textual representation, to communicate to world Jewry the discourse of a new era of Jewish national rebirth under British auspices. It seeks to show that alongside the medium of history, geography was utilised as an integral part of the British Government's Zionist propaganda project, and will demonstrate the ways in which this undertaking was shaped by the shared British and Zionist imagining of Jewish national identity. Unlike other studies of the Government's Palestine propaganda campaign I will pay special attention to how the space of the land itself, through textual and especially visual representation,¹ was utilised as a means of both constructing and mediating the Government's propaganda narratives.²

As scholars of British national and imperial culture have argued, with the advent of photography and graphic technology in the nineteenth century, the visualisation of space was used as a critical means of relaying ideological narratives of identity and culture.³ As such,

¹ On landscape as a culturally produced text, a vessel of ideology and discourse, mediated through representation, see, for example, Trevor J. Barnes and James S. Duncan, 'Introduction- Writing Worlds,' in (eds), *Writing Worlds: Discourse, text and metaphor in the representation of landscape* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992) pp. 5-6 (pp. 1-17) On the importance of the study of space and its function in culture, as against the traditional focus upon history in western thought, see Edward Soja, 'History: geography: modernity,' in Simon During, *The Cultural Studies Reader* (London and New York: Routledge 1993) p. 136.

² In the main, discussions of this subject have treated the visual representations of Britain's capture of Jerusalem and Palestine that were produced by the British Government as transparent reflections of events, rather than constructed texts of representation that were produced to disseminate discourse. See, for example, Luke McKernan, '“The Supreme Moment of the War”: General Allenby's Entry into Jerusalem', *Historical Journal of Film, Radio, and Television*, 13, 2 (1993), pp. 169-180. In contrast, Eitan Bar Yosef has recently analysed how British propagandists orchestrated General Allenby's entrance into Jerusalem and the Palestine campaign as a means of conveying propaganda narratives, and the way in which this was influenced by perceptions of the Holy Land in English culture. Bar Yosef, 'Images of the Holy Land in English Culture, 1798-1917', Ch.6, *idem*. 'British Propaganda and the Palestine Campaign'. However, Bar Yosef has not examined how the literal space of the land was represented and used as part of this propaganda.

³ On the visualization of the Empire and its functions in British culture, see, for example, Timothy Mitchell, 'Orientalism and the Exhibitionary Order' in Nicholas Mirzoeff (ed.) *The Visual Culture Reader* (London and New York: Routledge 1998) p. 294, Nicholas Mirzoeff, Introduction to 'Race and identity in colonial and postcolonial culture' in *Ibid.* p. 283 and James R. Ryan, *Picturing Empire: Photography and the Visualization of the British Empire* (London: Reaktion, 1997). On the generic role of space and landscape in national culture and mythology, see Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, pp. 170-208. On its role in English national culture, see,

visual media came to play a central role in the British attempt to shape the public imagination during the First World War.⁴ In addition, by this time there had developed a system of Zionist discourse in which, as Michael Berkowitz has shown, visual representations of Palestine were both a key conduit and fundamental part of Zionist ideology, culture and identity.⁵ Within both Zionist and British culture, therefore, there existed a shared belief in the power of space and its function as a vessel of constructed narrative through representation. Moreover, as I have argued in the previous chapters, the British Government's nationalist perception of Jewish identity meant that it saw Palestine, and particularly Jerusalem, as the spatial centre of the Jewish imagination. In this chapter I will further this argument by demonstrating how this shared vision of Jewish identity and national space determined the way in which the Jewish Section of the Ministry of Information sought to use the space of Jerusalem and Palestine, following its occupation by the British in December 1917, to construct the Balfour Declaration as a seminal turning point in time, inaugurating a new epoch of Jewish national rebirth under the guardianship of imperial Britain.

This argument will be illustrated by placing the representations of Palestine that were created for world Jewry within the broader context of the British Government's Jerusalem and Palestine propaganda campaign. In contrast with the traditional view that this campaign

for example, Howkins, *op. cit.*, Stephen Daniels, *Fields of Vision: Landscape Imagery and National Identity in England and the US* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1993) and David Peters Corbett, Ysanne Holt and Fiona Russell (eds) *The Geographies of Englishness- Landscape and the National Past 1880-1940* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002).

⁴ Sanders and Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 121, Nicholas Reeves, *Official British Film Propaganda During the First World War*, Published in Association with the Imperial War Museum (London, Sydney, Wolfeboro, New Hampshire: Croom Helm, 1986), Luke McKernan, *Topical Budget: The Great British News Film* (London: British Film Institute, 1992), Harries, *The War Artists: British Official War Art of the Twentieth Century, A Concise catalogue of Paintings, Drawings and Sculpture of the First World War 1914-1918* (London: Imperial War Museum, 2nd ed., 1963), Philip M. Taylor and Andrew Kelly (eds) 'Britain and the Cinema in the First World War,' *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television- Special Issue*, Vol. 13, no. 2 (1993), E. Demm, 'Propaganda and Caricature in the First World War,' *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 28 (1993) pp. 163-192.

was primarily designed to boost morale in Britain,⁶ I will contend that, in large part, it was a product of the Government's wider line of ethnic and religious propaganda policy thinking.

As I argued in chapter one, British foreign policy makers believed that ethnic and religious groups were forces of power, whose influence had to be captured for the Allied cause through appeals to their identity. Due to the looming presence of the Holy Land and Jerusalem within British culture, individuals such as Lloyd George considered that the capture of Jerusalem held the key to winning the support of Christians, Jews and Muslims across the world. As such the capture of Jerusalem on 9 December 1917 was followed by an extensive campaign through which the space of the Holy City and Palestine was used as a means of engendering the support of these groups. The centre piece of this project was the spectacle of General Allenby's orchestrated entrance into Jerusalem.

It will be shown that running through the propaganda that was created for Christians, Muslims and Jews there was an underlying narrative of Ottoman oppression and civilized British liberation, which had brought redemption for the peoples and land of Palestine. It is suggested here that this narrative had a two-fold objective, creating pro-British sentiment and justifying Britain's control of Palestine. More significantly for my main argument, this narrative was constructed and communicated in differing ways for these different audiences, as defined by how British officials' perceived the identity of each group, and how they were thought to relate to the land. Through textual and especially visual representation, Government propagandists produced three different spatial constructions of Palestine, which drew upon, and manipulated, what they considered to be pre-existing ethno-religious

⁵ Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture and West European Jewry before the First World War*, Ch. 5 and 6.

⁶ See, for example, French, *The Strategy of the Lloyd George Coalition*, p. 7, Trevor Wilson, *The Myriad Faces of the Great War, 1914-1918* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1986) p. 499, Hughes, *op. cit.*, pp. 27, 40-42, 158, Bar Yosef, 'Images of the Holy Land in English Culture, 1798-1917', Ch.6, *idem*. 'British Propaganda and the Palestine Campaign'. For a recent military history of the Palestine campaign, see Anthony Bruce, *The Last*

geographies. This comparative analysis will give sharp focus to how the Government's Zionist perception of Jewish identity determined the way in which the British occupation of Palestine was constructed for the Jewish audience, as part of the wider discourse of Jewish national rebirth under British auspices. Framed through the system of Zionist culture that had developed prior to the Great War, Palestine was cast as the site of the Jewish national renaissance, redeeming an otherwise barren and desolate land, which had hitherto been repressed by the despotic Oriental Turk, but would now reach its full potential under the benevolent tutelage of Great Britain, the apotheosis of civilized imperialism.

4:1 The Capture of Jerusalem and the Discourse of British Liberation

As we have seen, the central motif of British propaganda towards world Jewry following the publication of the Balfour Declaration was the effort to present it as a statement of genuine significance that would in very real terms change the future of the Jewish people. The challenge that faced those in the British Government who wished to gain the support of Jewry was to persuade them that the Declaration was not simply "a scrap of paper."⁷ Of course, the most important factor that could be used to endorse the Declaration was the British occupation of southern Palestine and Jerusalem in the weeks that followed its publication.⁸

The campaign for Jerusalem that had been pursued by Lloyd George from the time that he had taken office as Prime Minister in December 1916 was from its inception a military struggle designed in large part for propaganda purposes.⁹ Jerusalem was considered

Crusade: The Palestine Campaign in the First World War (London: John Murray, 2001).

⁷ William Ormsby-Gore, 'The Jewish Volunteer Movement in Judaea,' Jerusalem, 2 July 1918, PRO FO 371/3409.

⁸ In January 1918 Sykes wrote, "Palestine and our Zionist declaration combined gives us and the Entente as a whole a hold over the vital, vocal and sentimental forces of Jewry." 'The Palestine and West Arabian Situation-Memorandum by Sir Mark Sykes,' 1 January 1918, PRO FO 371/3388/3767.

⁹ Clearly, the Palestine campaign as a whole was also the result of military and imperial considerations. Due to

by the British military authorities, and in particular the C.I.G.S. General Robertson, as having no conventional strategic value.¹⁰ But, for Lloyd George and members of the War Cabinet the nature of total war had combined with their perception of the power of public opinion, particularly ethnic and religious sentiment, to make propaganda a critical element in their war strategy. With regard to Jerusalem, its prominent place within the British imagination,¹¹ and the resulting belief that it lay at the centre of the ethno-religious gaze of Christians, Jews and Muslims, meant that Lloyd George,¹² and influential advisors to the War Cabinet such as Sykes, considered its capture to be a panacea for British propaganda. In one fell swoop, it could, it was thought, be used to win the allegiance and influence of these groups the world over. To be sure, as has recently been shown by Bar Yosef, the occupation of Jerusalem was used to try and boost the morale of the British public.¹³ However, what has not been acknowledged is that this was only one small part of a much wider and far-reaching international campaign, which was fundamentally born out of foreign policy makers' broader effort to win, and their belief in, the imagined power of ethnic and religious groups across the globe.¹⁴ As Sykes, who is said to have controlled the propaganda for the Palestine

his belief in the extended length of the war, and the failure of the campaign on the western front, in 1917 Lloyd George wished to destabilize Germany by attacking her allies and to preserve British military forces for use during and after the fighting, by focusing on other theatres of operation. Hughes, *op. cit.*, p. 28, French, *The Strategy of the Lloyd George Coalition, 1916-1918*, pp. 156-158. In 1918, following the Treaty of Brest Litovsk, operations in the Middle East also became increasingly important for geo-political reasons, due to the perceived German threat to the security of Britain's eastern position and the Empire. Benjamin Schwarz, 'Divided Attention: Britain's Perception of a German Threat to Her Eastern Position in 1918,' *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 28, no. 1, (January 1993) pp. 103-121, French, *op. cit.*, pp. 175-178.

¹⁰ See, for example, Memorandum by General W.R. Robertson, 19 July 1917, PRO WO 106/718.

¹¹ See above, pp. 37-38.

¹² For Lloyd George's belief that the land of Palestine was "engraved on the hearts of the world", see his end of year report to the House of Commons, 20 December 1917, *Hansard*, fifth serv., vol. c, col. 875, quoted in John Grigg, *Lloyd George: War Leader 1916-1918* (London: Allen Lane, the Penguin Press, 2002) p. 344.

¹³ Bar Yosef, 'Images of the Holy Land in English Culture, 1798-1917', Ch.6, *idem*. 'British Propaganda and the Palestine Campaign'.

¹⁴ Admittedly, Bar Yosef refers to the fact that the capture of Jerusalem was used to create propaganda for a number of different audiences. However, this is only referred to in passing and is not explained. *Ibid.* pp. 102, 103.

campaign,¹⁵ stated in reference to Zionism, the Vatican and the Orthodox Church; with the capture of Jerusalem, “we can get much atmospheric advantage where ever these influences have effect.”¹⁶ Indeed, the occupation of the Holy City was intended to win over groups as diverse as the “New York Irish; Orthodox Balkan peasants and mujiks; . . . Jews throughout the world; Indian and Algerian Moslems.”¹⁷

Beneath these considerations lay an underlying conception of the relationship between space and ethnic identity, or ethnic geographies. It was believed that there existed an intrinsic, if not organic, link with specific spaces, a physicality which functioned as the root and embodiment of the collective self, operating as a mystical centre of group cohesion.

As a result, once Jerusalem had been occupied on 9 December 1917, and even before its capture,¹⁸ it was the very space of the city itself which had to be used as the vehicle through which the British Government sought to win the hearts and minds of these audiences. As mediated by visual and textual representation, the capture of Jerusalem was to be created and relayed as an event of supreme magnitude, heralding an era of liberation and freedom for the Holy Land and its inhabitants.¹⁹ Essential to this propaganda was the construction of an

¹⁵ *Ibid.* p. 88, n. 7.

¹⁶ FO to Wingate, Cairo, 14 January 1918, PRO FO 371/3388/6074. For Balfour, Lord Robert Cecil and General Macdonogh’s profound desire to use the capture of Jerusalem for propaganda in the USA, see Dept of Information to Sir George Riddell, 26 January 1918. PRO FO 395/237/21732. Also see minute by Sykes, c. 28 January 1918. PRO FO 395/215/4684.

¹⁷ Sir Mark Sykes to G.F. Clayton, 16 January 1918, PRO FO 371/3383/13, quoted in Bernard Wasserstein, *Divided Jerusalem: The Struggle for the Holy City* (London: Profile Books, 2001) p. 80.

¹⁸ Reflecting the degree of interest and preparation for creating visual propaganda concerning the Palestine campaign, James McBey had been commissioned as the official war artist for the campaign by Wellington House in April 1917. Indeed, he was approached as early as January 1917, but it took three months before he received his official commission. R.M. Brade, War Office to CFG Masterman, 17 January 1917, Copy of Commission, April 1917, Bound Volume 83-3 James McBey 1917-1928 PT.1, Ministry of Information File M1001/9 McBey, Art Department, Imperial War Museum. The visualization of Jerusalem had been considered to be of such importance in the attempt to capture the attention of the world audience in the immediate wake of the British occupation that photographs of the City and its environs, “with special letterpress”, were widely distributed across Allied and neutral countries in America and Europe in anticipation of Allenby’s official entrance. Ivor Nicolson, Wellington House to Department of Information, 7 January 1918, PRO FO 395/213/3691.

¹⁹ To this end, in the months preceding the capture of Jerusalem, when it was realized that success was imminent, there had been a planned effort to prepare world public opinion. American press correspondents, for

underlying narrative of Ottoman oppression and British liberation.²⁰ Although this overarching narrative was communicated to different audiences in different ways it was the bedrock of the Government's depiction of the occupation of Jerusalem, without which the discourse of liberation would have no meaning. Moreover, it must be stressed that running in tandem with the effort to win hearts and minds for the war, this propaganda served to justify Lloyd George's long-term imperial goal of British control of Palestine after the war, and should be seen in the context of his campaign, 'The Turk Must Go'.

The nexus through which the narrative of the British as the agent of Western civilization and liberation from the despotic Turk was visually wedded with the space of Jerusalem, was the official entrance of General Allenby, the Commander-in-Chief of the Palestine campaign, into the old city through the Jaffa Gate, his proclamation of martial law, which was symbolically given at the foot of the Citadel of David,²¹ and his reception of the notables of the city and the heads of the religious communities on 11 December 1917. As a whole, the ceremony was carefully choreographed by the Foreign Office in cooperation with the British authorities in Egypt. To emphasise British humility and reverence for the Holy City, Allenby, as the iconic and heroic symbol of liberation,²² was asked by the Director of Military Intelligence to enter by foot, which was considered "the sort of touch which

example, were briefed specifically on "the importance of the event." *Ibid.*

²⁰ See, for example, 'Jerusalem Captured: The Holy City Wrested from the Turks, illustrated poster- To commemorate General Allenby's entry into the Holy City as a liberator' No. 758, The Official Schedule of Wellington House, Wellington House Papers, Imperial War Museum Library. 4,000 copies of this poster were distributed in cigar shops in the USA. Ivor Nicolson, Wellington House to Department of Information, 7 January 1918, PRO FO 395/213/3691.

²¹ The "symbol of both the former Ottoman and Jewish seats of power." Annelies Moors and Steve Machlin, 'Postcards of Palestine (1890-1948) - Photographic Essay,' *Critique of Anthropology*, Vol. VII, No. 2 (Autumn 1987) p. 72.

²² The introduction of Allenby as a recognisable character, or iconic symbol, was considered to be of particular importance by British propaganda agencies in the preparation for the fall of Jerusalem. In October 1917 official photographs of him were circulated through all neutral and Allied countries for reproduction in the press. Ivor Nicolson, Wellington House to Department of Information, 7 January 1918, PRO FO 395/213/3691.

appeal[s] to Eastern feeling”²³ and a marked contrast to the Kaiser’s ornate and arrogant entrance by horseback in 1898.²⁴ Despite a particular will to stress British respect for Islam, so as to prevent any Muslim hostility in the British Empire,²⁵ the overall intention, as expressed through the proclamation of martial law, was to depict Britain as the selfless champion and protector of religious rights, and freedom for all,²⁶ in sharp contrast to the Ottoman Turk. This message was necessarily expressed in relation to the space of Jerusalem, by exhibiting Britain’s awareness of the sanctity of its buildings, shrines, monuments and very soil for Christians, Jews and Muslims, and her dedication to protecting and maintaining them according to the customs and beliefs of each community.²⁷ The British therefore justified their occupation of Jerusalem by framing themselves as a paternalistic, knowledgeable and civilized liberator.

Lest any of you should be alarmed by reason of your experience at the hands of the enemy who has retired, I hereby inform you that it is my desire that every person should pursue his lawful business without fear of interruption. Furthermore since your city [Jerusalem] is regarded with affection by the adherents of the great religions of mankind, and its soil has been consecrated by the prayers and pilgrimages of multitudes of devout people of these three religions for many centuries, therefore do I make known to you that every sacred building, monument, Holy spot, shrine, traditional site, endowment, pious bequest, or customary place of prayer, of whatsoever form of the three religions, will be maintained and protected according to the existing customs and beliefs of those to whose faiths they are sacred.²⁸

²³ Minute by Sir Ronald Graham, Foreign Office, c. 19 November 1917, PRO FO 371/3061/221385.

²⁴ Bar Yosef, ‘British Propaganda and the Palestine Campaign,’ pp. 100-101.

²⁵ *Ibid.* pp. 98-99.

²⁶ The attempt to portray Britain as the champion of all religious and ethnic interests in Jerusalem through Allenby’s proclamation was deliberately emphasized by it being read in a number of languages, including Arabic, Hebrew, English, French, Italian, Greek and Russian. ‘General Sir E.H.H. Allenby, K.C.B., reports:- Jerusalem 2 pm, 11 December 1917,’ PRO FO 371/3061/236700, Wasserstein, *Divided Jerusalem*, p. 80.

²⁷ *Ibid.* The Prime Minister had instructed Allenby, via the War Office, to establish Britain’s image as a protector of religious rights and independence through this proclamation of martial law, to which Lloyd George had wished to refer in his first announcement on the capture of Jerusalem in the House of Commons. Significantly, Lloyd George’s first instructions were confined to securing religious monuments, sites and places of worship. C.I.G.S, War Office to G.O.C., GHQ, Egypt, 21 November 1917, PRO FO 371/3061/223209.

²⁸ ‘General Sir E.H.H. Allenby, K.C.B., reports:- Jerusalem 2 pm, 11 December 1917,’ PRO FO 371/3061/236700.

The ceremonial entrance of Allenby as a totality of meaning, including his proclamation and reception of civil and religious dignitaries, was used by British propaganda agencies to put across the carefully devised and controlled image²⁹ of the liberation of Jerusalem as ushering in a new dawn of freedom for the Holy Land. It was produced as an event through the media of film,³⁰ art³¹ and photography [Figures 1, 2 and 3]³² by official British personnel that had been sent to Jerusalem for this purpose and was documented in reports that were composed in Palestine and London.³³ The sheer size of the propaganda campaign and the distribution of these images, in which the British Government utilised its vast propaganda machine to place this occasion at the centre of the world's attention,³⁴ quickly turned Allenby's entrance into an event of mythical renown.³⁵

²⁹ On the War Cabinet's efforts to secure official control over the dissemination of reports and photographs of the occupation of the City, see Bar Yosef, 'British Propaganda and the Palestine Campaign,' p. 98.

³⁰ Harold Jeapes, McKernan, *Topical Budget*, pp. 48-49.

³¹ James McBey, No. 2599 'The Allies Entering Jerusalem, 11 December 1917: General Allenby entered Jerusalem on 11th December, 1917. The excitement was intense. With difficulty the troops and ex-Turkish police kept the road clear. The representatives of the Allied Powers entered by the old Jaffa Gate on foot. To the left is the Tower of David and the breach in the walls which was made by the Turks for the entry of the Kaiser when he visited Jerusalem in 1898,' Insc. James McBey Jerusalem December 1917, Pen and water colour, 18x23 ½. No. 1525 'The Presentation of the Notables, Jerusalem- The ecclesiastical and civil dignitaries are being presented to the Commander-in-Chief. He is shaking hands with the mayor of the city,' Insc. James McBey, 11 December 1917, Pencil and water-colour, 16 3/4x24, *A Concise catalogue of Paintings, Drawings and Sculpture of the First World War 1914-1918*.

³² Sergeant Westmoreland, 'General Allenby's official entry into Jerusalem 11th December 1917,' Q.12616, 'Official entry to Jerusalem, 11th December 1917. General Allenby at the steps of the Citadel (entrance to David's Tower) listening to the reading of the Proclamation of Occupation in seven languages,' Q.12618, 'Official entry into Jerusalem, 11th December 1917. General Allenby receiving the notables of the city and heads of religious communities in the Barrack Square, 1917,' Q.12619, Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum.

³³ 'General Sir E.H.H. Allenby, K.C.B., reports:- Jerusalem 2 pm, 11 December 1917,' FO to Wingate, Cairo, 13 December 1917, PRO FO 371/3061/236700. In addition, a book on the Jerusalem campaign was published by Wellington House in 1918. E.W.G. Masterman, *The Deliverance of Jerusalem*, With maps and illustrations (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1918) No. 830, Wellington House Schedule, Wellington House Papers, Imperial War Museum Library.

³⁴ For example, it was said that Allenby's report on the fall of Jerusalem "was repeated in *extenso* by Reuter". Viceroy, Foreign Department, India to the India Office, 27 December 1917, PRO FO 395/152/244987.

³⁵ As early as February 1918 the *Jewish Chronicle* referred to Allenby's reading of his "famous proclamation." PRO FO 395/202/59467.



Figure 1: 'General Allenby's official entry into Jerusalem, 11th December 1917,' Q.12614, Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum



Figure 2: 'Official entry to Jerusalem, 11th December 1917. General Allenby at the steps of the Citadel (entrance to David's Tower) listening to the reading of the Proclamation of Occupation in seven languages,' Q.12618, Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum



Figure 3: 'Official entry into Jerusalem, 11th December 1917. General Allenby receiving the notables of the city and heads of religious communities in the Barrack Square,' Q.12619, Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum

The explicit message of this ceremony, as it stood, was one of liberation and championing religious freedom and independence, not giving overt attention to, or more to the point, not alienating, any individual interest group.³⁶ But, in order to entice the support of specific target audiences the capture of Jerusalem was to be portrayed by British propagandists as having special, if not redemptive, meaning for the perceived identity of each particular community. In sum, the liberation of Jerusalem was simultaneously presented as heralding a new epoch for Jews and Christians, (relayed in differing ways for Roman Catholics,³⁷ and the Russian³⁸ and Greek Orthodox³⁹), whilst also attempting to

³⁶ The acute desire to placate the sensibilities of all concerned was apparent from the Foreign Office's response to Armenian concerns that the Armenian Patriarch in Jerusalem had not been present at the ceremony. Balfour and Sir Ronald Graham quickly decided that it was necessary to publish a press release through the Reuter's News Agency denying that this was the case. G. Hagopian, London to the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 17 December 1917, PRO FO 371/3061/239634, Minutes by Graham and Balfour, c.17 December 1917, Wingate, Cairo to FO, 16 December 1917, PRO FO 371/3061/237717. Also, as part of Allenby's procession into Jerusalem, British authorities were careful to include Italian and French representatives. Nevertheless, Sykes considered there to be great resentment in France over their marginal role, and he made continued efforts to allay their fears. 'Report on Visit to Paris Communicated by Sir Mark Sykes,' 25 December 1917, PRO FO 371/3056/245878 and FO to Wingate, Cairo, 19 December 1917, PRO FO 395/152/240543

³⁷ FO to Count de Salis, Vatican, 10 December 1917, PRO FO 371/3061/234308, Count de Salis, Vatican to Balfour, FO, received 22 December 1917, PRO FO 371/3061/241921. Arthur H. Hardinge, Madrid to Balfour, FO, 17 December 1917, PRO FO 371/3061/243292.

³⁸ It was believed by Sir Edward Carson, the member of the War Cabinet responsible for supervising propaganda, that "nothing that could happen would have greater effect in enlisting Russian sympathy on the side of the Allies [than the capture of Jerusalem]" Pembroke Wicks, Offices of the War Cabinet to Colonel J. Buchan, 6 December 1917, PRO FO 395/152/233683, Minute by S. Gaselee, 31 December 1917 PRO FO

demonstrate British respect for Muslim religious sensibilities.⁴⁰

Indeed, particular attention was paid to maximising the effect upon the Jewish audience. This was such that by October 1918 Ormsby-Gore felt it necessary to caution that, “it is very important that Palestine should not become the “exclusive” interest of the Jewish Section of the Ministry of Information or the source of pure Jewish propaganda.”⁴¹ Although this was certainly not the case in the immediate wake of the capture of Jerusalem, the degree of attention that was placed on Zionism in the public sphere by British propaganda agencies was such that it was thought to have created suspicion and resentment amongst Catholics in Spain and the United States.⁴²

The discourse that was created for the Jewish reader had resulted in the British capture of Jerusalem being perceived and discussed by Zionists as heralding the imminent realisation of the Balfour Declaration, signalling a new epoch for the Jewish nation in Palestine.⁴³ In contrast to the discourse of a new dawn for Christianity in the Holy Land, the British were attempting to use the capture of Jerusalem as a symbol of their commitment to Zionism. It was considered by British intelligence that in the attempt to win Jewish sympathy for the Allies, the capture of Jerusalem was their “bird in the hand.”⁴⁴ The city was perceived

395/152/245648.

³⁹ Earl Granville, Athens to FO, 28 December 1917, PRO FO 371/3386/7435.

⁴⁰ See, for example, telegram from Wingate, Cairo to FO, India, 13 December 1917, PRO FO 395/152/236464 and Wingate, Cairo to FO, 24 December 1917, Minute by S. Gaselee, FO, 28 December 1917, PRO FO 371/3061/242948. As a result, British propaganda agencies were caught in a delicate balancing act. On the tension between the fear of alienating the British Empire’s Muslim population and the inclination to use Crusader imagery to appeal to Christian audiences, see Bar Yosef, ‘The Last Crusade? British Propaganda and the Palestine Campaign,’ pp. 98-99.

⁴¹ Minute by Ormsby-Gore, 30 October 1918, PRO FO 395/237/241537.

⁴² Arthur H. Hardinge, Madrid to Balfour, FO, 17 December 1917, PRO FO 371/3061/243292. Telegram from Bayley, New York to FO, 7 January 1918 and telegram from Buchan, FO to Butler, New York, 28 January 1918, PRO FO 395/215/4684.

⁴³ See, for example, telegrams from Dr Yahuda, Madrid, Spain, PRO FO 371/3061/238175 and Mr Medhurst, San Salvador, 24 December 1917, PRO FO 371/3061/242303.

⁴⁴ ‘Memorandum on the Attitude of Enemy Governments towards Zionism,’ by the Intelligence Bureau, Department of Information, Section E, 13 February 1918, PRO FO 371/3388/29730.

to be the spatial centre of Jewish identity, the focus of the Jewish imagination and thus its occupation was considered to have given the British “an incalculable advantage in the historic-religious sphere.”⁴⁵ It was depicted as a Jewish victory, an event that signalled a turning point in their history. Lord Robert Cecil wrote for one Jewish publication, “The liberation of Jerusalem is a dramatic event of historic importance. May it presage a new chapter in the history of the Jewish race . . .”⁴⁶ In his article 'The Deliverance of Jerusalem' the Russian Zionist leader Yehiel Tschlenow, who was then in London, reflected this discourse of national redemption and rebirth, exclaiming with Messianic fervour,

Fellow-Jews! Eighteen centuries and a half have passed since the enemy drove our forefathers from our- their native land . . . And during the term of the persecutions that swept over it, along the whole of the thorny path of its wanderings, the people did not cease to believe that the dawn would again appear, that Jerusalem would arise from her ruins and that free labour and joyous song would prevail in her midst.

Brethren! The moment is now arriving. The deliverance of Jerusalem heralds a new dawn. Great Britain has announced to the whole world the destiny of the land to be rejuvenated. Only a few weeks ago she declared through the lips of one her leading statesmen: "Judea must be given to the Jews."⁴⁷

In addition to press releases and newspaper articles the Jewish Section of the Department of Information utilised the medium of film to appropriate the occupation of Jerusalem with meaning for a Jewish audience. By relating Allenby's occupation to the Balfour Declaration and a discourse of national redemption this event was transformed from a British military victory into the liberation of Palestine for the Jewish nation, with, for example, the film 'The British Re-conquering Palestine for the Jews'.⁴⁸ As part of this attempt to encode Allenby's entrance into Jerusalem as an event of great importance for the

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ Draft telegram from Lord Robert Cecil to Herman Bernstein, Editor of *The American Hebrew*, n.d., FO 371/3061/237762. This message was used as a front page headline by *The American Hebrew* alongside a picture of Lord Cecil, “Lord Cecil's Message: Famous British Statesman Sees in Liberation of Jerusalem a New Chapter in History of Jewish People,” *The American Hebrew*, 21 December 1917.

⁴⁷ Yehiel Tschlenow, 'The Deliverance of Jerusalem,' *The Zionist Review* (Vol. II, no. 3 July 1918) p. 36.

Jewish audience, and signifying the special attention given to Jewry by the British Government, an edition of the film of his entrance was made with Hebrew subtitles. This film was despatched in March and April 1918 to a large number of Jewish centres around the world including, Buenos Aires, Curacao, Vladivostok, Cairo, Alexandria, Morocco City, Fez, Mogador, Tangier, Tetuan, Magazan, Algiers, Oran, Constantine, Gerba, Paris, Amsterdam and Salonika.⁴⁹ Through the use of Hebrew language in British film, a symbol of Zionist culture and national renaissance, the Jewish reader was signified as a focus of this world event, which in itself could be perceived as a mode of empowerment and endorsement of the discourse of national redemption.⁵⁰

Despite the extensive work that was carried out by the Jewish Section of the Ministry of Information to create pro-British sentiment in light of the Declaration and the capture of Jerusalem, at the beginning of 1918 certain members of the British Government were anxious that not enough was being done to ensure the total support of Jewry.⁵¹ This sense of uncertainty was compounded by reports that the Turkish and German Governments were attempting to formulate their own pro-Zionist policy.⁵² It was reported that Talaat Pasha, the Ottoman leader, had despatched Emmanuel Carasso, a Jewish member of the Turkish parliament, to Berlin with full powers to deal with the Jewish question. Carasso had met with

⁴⁸ Hyamson to Sir William Jury, 26 April 1918, PRO FO 395/202/59467.

⁴⁹ W. Arthur Bartham, Cinematograph Department, Ministry of Information to Hyamson, 3 May 1918, PRO FO 395/202/59467.

⁵⁰ Regarding a showing of this film for the Jewish community in Buenos Aires, the British Consul wrote that it "evoked immense enthusiasm, and special pleasure was derived from the Hebrew inscriptions on the pictures. This was rightly regarded as a special attention to the Jewish Community on the part of the Ministry of Information. In the various speeches made at the entertainment every reference to the declarations of His Majesty's Government with regard to the restoration of Palestine to the Jews was the signal for prolonged applause." Sir Reginald Tower, Buenos Aires to FO, 24 September 1918, PRO FO 371/3399/186715 There were also positive reports received from Salonika on the response by the Jewish community to this film. McKernan, *Tropical Budget*, p. 60.

⁵¹ See, for example, Walter Wilson, Offices of the War Cabinet to Wingate, on behalf of Sykes for the attention of General Clayton, 5 January 1918. PRO FO 395/237/4282.

leading Jews in Berlin and formed an Advisory Committee on the subject which proposed forming a chartered company of all Jews in Asia Minor, which would be empowered to confer autonomy on districts inhabited by Jews not only in Palestine but anywhere in the Turkish Empire.⁵³ In light of this news the Department of Information's Intelligence Bureau compiled a report to assess the threat that the 'Carasso Scheme' posed to Britain's pro-Zionist policy.⁵⁴ In their analysis it was contended that the British Declaration and the occupation of Jerusalem on 9 December 1917 had "produced an enormous impression of the Jews of Russia and neutral countries [and] have evidently affected Jewish opinion in the Central Empires as well . . ." It was therefore stated that, "the cards seem to be in our hands, and it ought to be easy for us to dispose of the Karasso [sic] scheme by counter-propaganda" but it was concluded that, "we cannot afford to leave it unanswered."⁵⁵

4:2 Different Visions of Palestine

The continuing need to create pro-British sentiment amongst Jewry was met, to a degree, by utilising the space of Jerusalem and Palestine to visually signify the discourse of a new era of national re-birth. This was part of a wider process in which the geography of the land, in terms of landscapes and urban spaces, was used to construct differing visions of Palestine to appeal to Christian, Muslim and Jewish audiences. The discourse of British

⁵² Sir R. Paget, Copenhagen to FO, 2 January 1918. PRO FO 371/3388/1495.

⁵³ Telegram from FO to Lord Reading, Washington D.C., 19 February 1918. PRO FO 371/3388/27066. Qualified statements were indeed made by Talaat Pasha on 31 December 1917 and by the Wilhemstrasse on 5 January 1918, supporting Jewish autonomy and immigration in Palestine. No mention was made of Jewish autonomy in the rest of the Ottoman Empire. Following intimations made by Talaat Pasha, Carasso had acted as an intermediary with the Ottoman Government from January. Up until August there were negotiations between Jewish representatives and Talaat, supported by the German Foreign Office, concerning an official declaration in favour of a Jewish centre in Palestine under Ottoman protection, but they failed to reach an agreement. Isaiah Friedman, *Germany, Turkey, and Zionism*, pp. 378-382, 386-388, 395-398, 405-413. In addition to news about the so-called 'Carasso scheme', Dr Pinkus of Zurich, Switzerland had compiled a report on the European response to the Balfour Declaration for the British Government that was far from positive. Beak, Zurich to Department of Information, FO, 18 February 1918. PRO FO 395/202/37338

⁵⁴ 'Memorandum on the Attitude of Enemy Governments towards Zionism,' Intelligence Bureau, Department of Information, Section E, 13 February 1918. PRO FO 371/3388/29730.

liberation was communicated to these groups by utilising the pre-existing ways in which they were thought to relate to and see the Holy Land. The choice and use of these imagined ethnic geographies was determined by how British officials' understood the identity of each audience.

For the Christian world, Lloyd George, Buchan, Balfour, Lord Robert Cecil and MacDonogh wished to emphasise the “sentimental, romantic and religious” aspect of this part of the war.⁵⁶ It was considered that in America in particular the general public had a historical and religious fascination with Palestine, which could be used to create fervent support for the Entente.⁵⁷ As such, the visual imagery that was created for this audience utilised the dominant western representations of Palestine that came to prominence in the late nineteenth century, portraying Allied troops as fighting on the unchanged landscape of the Bible; a geographical space that was frozen in time.⁵⁸ [Figures 4 and 5]

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ News Dept, FO to Benson, The Master, Magdalene College, Cambridge, 10 April 1917, PRO FO 395/139/79335.

⁵⁷ See Dept of Information to Sir George Riddell, 26 January 1918, FO 395/237/21732 and margin note by E. Drummond, on Amery, War Cabinet to Balfour, 16 August 1918, ADD 49775, Balfour Papers. On the prevalence of the Holy Land in American culture, see John Davis, *The Landscape of Belief: The holy Land in Nineteenth Century American Art and Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), Hilton Obenzinger, *American Palestine: Melville, Twain, and the Holy Land Mania* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), Lester Vogel, *To See a Promised Land: Americans and the Holy Land in the Nineteenth Century* (University Park, Penn.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993).

⁵⁸ On the representation of Palestine as the unchanged landscape of the Bible, see, for example, Moors and Machlin, *op. cit.*, p. 65, Kathleen Stewart Howe, *Revealing the Holy Land: The Photographic Exploration of Palestine* (California: Santa Barbara Museum of Art 1997) Issam Nassar, *Photographing Jerusalem: The Image of the City in Nineteenth-Century Photography* (Boulder: East European Monographs, 1997), Eyal Onne, *Photographic Heritage of the Holy Land, 1839-1919* (Manchester: Institute of Advance Studies, Manchester Polytechnic, 1980), Yeshayahu Nir, *The Bible and the Image: The History of Photography in the Holy Land, 1839-1899* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), Ben-Arieh, *The Rediscovery of the Holy Land in the Nineteenth Century*, Bar Yosef, *Images of the Holy Land in English Culture*, pp.149, 151. For the portrayal of Palestine as the landscape of the Bible in textual propaganda that was commissioned and distributed by Wellington House, see William Canton, *Dawn in Palestine*, Preface by Lord Bryce (London: The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge published for The Syria and Palestine Relief Fund, 1918) pp. v-vi, *Souvenir of the Occupation of Jerusalem by the British Troops 9 December 1917- Views and Accurate Description of Jerusalem etc.*, (Jerusalem: R. & W. Silverstone Bros., n.d.), Masterman, *op. cit.*, Basil Matthews, *The Freedom of Jerusalem* (London, New York, Toronto: Hodder and Stoughton, 1918).



Figure 4: 'Hebron. The wooded hill is said to have been the ancient stronghold of David,' Q.12599, Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum



Figure 5: "THE PLAIN OF AJALON- The Lowland troops crossing the plain. On the left are the two Beth Horons from which the Israelites, with Joshua as leader and the sun as an apparent accomplice, pursued the Philistines down the vale." Insc. James McBey, 2 December 1917, Pencil and water-colour, 15 1/4 x 22, No. 1523, Imperial War Museum, *op. cit.*

Whereas, for the Muslim audience, the British occupation of Palestine was visualized through images of Imperial Indian Muslim soldiers guarding the Mosque of Omar, a symbol of British respect for Islam.⁵⁹ [Figure 6]

⁵⁹ 'Changing the Mohammedan Guard outside the Mosque of Omar: Jerusalem,' Q12633, Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum. This scene was also documented in film produced by the Ministry of Information. See IWM 45, Film Archive, Imperial War Museum. As part of his wider attempt to utilise the capture of Jerusalem for creating pro-British propaganda Sykes requested articles to be written for Moslems, which were to be about the Mosque of Omar. The Foreign Office told Reuter and their wireless service "to make the most of the presence of Indian troops at the shrines." Minute by S. Gaselee, 2 February 1918, PRO FO 395/152/236464. British officials were also shown to participate in Muslim religious festivals, hence endorsing the discourse of British respect for Islam. See, for example, 'The Military Governor of Jerusalem, Col. Ronald Storrs, and the heads of the Chief Mohammedan families waiting to receive the Nebi Musa Pilgrims in Jerusalem, 26th April 1918,' Q.12794, Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum.



Figure 6: 'Changing the Mohammedan Guard outside the Mosque of Omar, Jerusalem,' Q.12633, Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum

As part of this attempt to create pro-British propaganda through the use of what were perceived to be pre-existing ethno-religious discursive formations, Sykes decided that it was absolutely essential that a Christian journalist should be sent “to write up Jerusalem,” stressing that this individual should be “interested in archaeological, historical, and theological problems from the Christian point of view . . .”⁶⁰ In direct contrast, the visualization of Palestine that the British Government wished to construct for and about Jewry was formed through the prism of modern nationalism in the shape of Zionism, due to policy makers’ Zionist perception of Jewish identity. As Sykes put it, “Rivet Britain onto Holy Land, Bible and New Testament. Jam Catholics on Holy Places . . . Fix Orthodox on ditto . . . Rally Moslems on absolute Moslem control of Mosque of Omar” and “concentrate

⁶⁰ S. Gaselee, Dept of Information to Hyamson, 24 January 1918. PRO FO 395/237/13683. This appointment was considered to be of the utmost importance by Balfour, Lord Robert Cecil and General Macdonogh, who were key members of the Foreign Office Eastern Committee, which formulated British policy in the Middle East. In particular, they wished to create propaganda for the American Christian audience. Dept of Information to Sir George Riddell, 26 January 1918. PRO FO 395/237/21732. The writer that was commissioned by the Department of Information to produce articles for Christian audiences on the subject of Palestine was Father Waggett, described by Buchan as “a well-known English High Church clergyman.” Buchan to Sir Roderick Jones, 21 March 1918. PRO FO 395/237/51993.

The proposed propaganda that was to be created for Christian audiences, in countries such as Ireland, the United States and Italy, also included various visual media, including cinema films, drawings and photographs for illustrated papers. FO to General Clayton, Jerusalem, 21 March 1918. PRO FO 395/237/52848, Minute by Sykes, c. 28 January 1918. PRO FO 395/215/4684.

Jews on full details of colonies and institutes and wailing places.”⁶¹ As such, the Department of Information instructed Hyamson that in addition to the Christian journalist that was to be sent to Palestine, “the other ought to be a clever Jewish journalist with Zionist proclivities.”⁶² Rather than overtly direct the style and content of what these writers would produce, the Department of Information commissioned individuals that genuinely saw the world in the way that the British wished it to be seen for a particular audience.

4:3 Palestine as the Site of Jewish National Transformation

Conceptions of space and physicality were intrinsically linked to what many conceived to be the essence of the Zionist project, the cultural, spiritual and physical regeneration of the Jew through the rekindling of its organic bond with the land of its ancestors.⁶³ Through photography, art and written text Palestine was mapped as the site of the transformation and normalisation of the Jew through the restoration of a complete Jewish national society and culture, a visual edifice that was utilised to engender the identification of Diaspora Jewry with the Zionist project.⁶⁴ This enterprise included the depiction of the return to nature and agricultural life, as was common within neo-Romantic nationalist thought, whilst at the same time embracing modernity, science and technology.⁶⁵ This endeavour also encompassed Zionist visual representations of new Jewish urban spaces, “reinventing the city as a gleaming component to their agriculturally based communal life”.⁶⁶ Together with this depiction of Palestine as the site of Jewish national rebirth, Zionism sought to visually

⁶¹ Sir Mark Sykes to G.F. Clayton, 16 January 1918, PRO FO 371/3383/13, quoted in Wasserstein, *Divided Jerusalem*, pp. 80-81.

⁶² S. Gaselee, Department of Information to Hyamson, 24 January 1918. PRO FO 395/237/13683.

⁶³ Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture and West European Jewry before the First World War*, pp. 116-118, 145-146, 168-169.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.* Ch. 5, 6 and 7.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.* pp. 146-147.

⁶⁶ Idem., ‘Zion’s Cities: Projections of Urbanism and German-Jewish Self-Consciousness, 1909-1933,’ *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook*, Vol. XLII (1997) p. 115.

represent itself as an agent of European civilization in the backward Orient, justifying its settlement of the land and de-legitimising Palestinian Arab society through the intertwining discourses of Orientalism and Colonialism.⁶⁷

As a whole, this pre-existing visual discourse was used by the Jewish Section of the Ministry of Information to exhibit the achievements of the Zionist movement for its Jewish audience but also for the non-Jewish public. By visibly and textually depicting Zionism as an agent of European civilization it could be seen as a national movement that represented the values of the imperial enterprise, whilst at the same time being shown as an oppressed national group that required the tutelage of Great Britain to safeguard its transformation from degenerative Diaspora to a rooted and developed nation.

Significantly, Hyamson himself, as the director of Jewish propaganda for the Ministry of Information, perceived Palestine through the lens of Zionist visual discourse and culture which had emerged before the First World War. In his work, *Palestine- The Rebirth of an Ancient People*, which was published in 1917, and distributed to statesmen and others whom the London Zionist Bureau wished to influence, he constructed and exhibited Palestine, through text and photographs, as the site of the regeneration and redemption of the nation and the land, the latter having been “laid waste . . . for centuries.”⁶⁸ Reflecting the dominant

⁶⁷ Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture and West European Jewry before the First World War*, p. 147, Silberstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 85-87, 182-3, 191. It would be both a simplification and distortion to discuss Zionist discourse and settlement solely through the prism of Colonialism. See Derek J. Penslar, ‘Zionism, Colonialism and Postcolonialism,’ *The Journal of Israeli History*, vol. 20, nos.2/3 (Summer/Autumn 2001) pp. 84-98 and Avi Bareli, ‘Forgetting Europe: Perspectives on the Debate about Zionism and Colonialism,’ *Ibid.* pp. 99-121. Nevertheless, the intertwined discourses of European Colonialism and Orientalism shaped, in part, the ways in which mainstream Zionist discourse imagined both the space, society and culture of the indigenous population of Palestine and how Zionist settlement, as an agent of Western civilization, would redeem the land and society. Silberstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 85-87, 182-3, 191. To be sure, there existed an ongoing tension within Zionism as it sought to portray itself as an authentic part of the East, rooted in the Orient, whilst also bringing all the benefits of Western civilization. See below, pp. 233-234. However, this was often confined in practice to the superficial use of what were seen to be the aesthetics of the East, which were themselves a product of the Western imagination. See below, p. 234, n. 89.

⁶⁸ Hyamson, *Palestine- The Rebirth of an Ancient People*, pp. 257-259. Copies of this book were distributed by the propaganda committee of the London Zionist Bureau, “to Statesmen, administrators, publicists, military men

Zionist imagining of the land, Hyamson mapped Palestine as the blossoming site of the revival of authentic national life, its national language and culture, agriculture, embryonic cities and the educational institutions that were shaping the new national type.⁶⁹

At the suggestion of Hyamson, Vladimir Jabotinsky, who was about to leave for Egypt with the 38th Royal Fusiliers, was made the official British journalist for Zionist affairs in Palestine. As intended, Jabotinsky's portrayals of Palestine, which were published anonymously,⁷⁰ were in large part defined by the system of Zionist discourse.⁷¹ But, the particular ideological perspective of this writer also shaped his representations of Zionist settlement, reflecting the tension between an individual author and a discursive system.⁷² To a degree, the influence of Futurism, the Italian artistic movement that emerged in the 1910s, on Jabotinsky's vision of Zionist culture and colonization, which has not previously been acknowledged, distinguished his work from mainstream Zionist discourse during this period. The Futurists, as embodied in the 'Manifesto of Futurism' penned by its leading advocate, F.T. Marinetti, posited a rejection of the antiquarian fascination with the past that was

and others whose views it has been considered desirable to influence." 'Report of Meeting of Propaganda Committee, 14th December-30 June 1918 Zionist Organisation, (London Bureau)', Z4/243, Papers of the London Zionist Bureau, CZA.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.* Ch. XII 'The Colonies in Detail- I. Judaea,' pp. 122-139, Ch. XIII 'The Colonies in Detail- II. Galilee,' pp. 140-149, Ch. XIV 'The Colonies in Detail- III. Samaria and Transjordan,' pp. 151-155, Ch. XXI, 'Education in Palestine- The New Jew,' pp. 234-248, 85-89.

⁷⁰ These articles were published anonymously and were distributed by the Foreign Office and the Ministry of Information. See, for example, S. Gaselee, FO to C.P. Scott, Editor of *The Manchester Guardian*, 19 September 1918.

⁷¹ Jabotinsky's writings were complemented by other Zionists working in Palestine, such as Leon Simon, whose reports were disseminated for propaganda purposes by the London Zionist Bureau and whose work was equally shaped by the established system of Zionist discourse. See, for example, Leon Simon's series of articles on life in the Jewish colonies and the Yishuv during his time working with the Zionist Commission, *The Zionist Review*, Vol. II, no. 3, July - no. 6 October 1918. Also see Walter E. Myers, 'Assistant to the Chairman of the Commission, The Colonies of Liberated Judaea- Notes on a Trip Made by the Zionist Commission Through Some of the Judaeian Colonies,' *The Maccabean* (October 1918).

⁷² On the multiplicity of influences that shaped Zionist discourse, and its resulting internal conflicts, see Silberstein, *op. cit.*, p. 18. The role of the individual author in the shaping of ideas, meaning and discourse is also part of a much wider debate in which scholars such as Foucault and Roland Barthes have dismissed the author as a mere reflection or vessel of existing discursive forms. Thomas Flynn, 'Foucault's Mapping of History' in Gary Cutting (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Foucault* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P 1994) p. 39. For an

perceived to dominate European public, intellectual and artistic thought at the *fin de siècle*.⁷³

With regard to their vision of society, architecture, and culture, Futurists hailed the aesthetics of modern urbanisation and industry, which they saw as embodying the forces of progress.⁷⁴

The influence of this ideology on Jabotinsky during his time in writing for the Ministry of Information is quite apparent. He explicitly distinguished the Zionist vision of Palestine, which he defined in Futurist terms, from the historical-religious discourse that was prevalent in America and Europe during this period. Jabotinsky framed Palestine as a Futurist utopia. Yet, he did not present this as his personal vision, but as being at the root of the inner consciousness of the modern Zionist. He equated Zionism with Futurism. Writing in his article, 'With the Jewish Regiment: The Jewish Colonies,' he stated,

Crossing the borders of Palestine is for a Zionist an inward experience quite unlike that of any other traveller, whether Jew or Gentile. Both may be deeply loved, but the character of their emotion is different. The ordinary traveller is troubled by visions of the past; the scenery seems to him to be haunted by Miriam, Samson, Gideon. Strangely and naturally enough the modern Zionist is essentially a futurist; great as his pride in past glories may be his keenness for the future is uppermost . . . the Zionist dreams of a new town with white marble palaces and asphalted avenues, gardens, schools, ploughed fields all around, perhaps factory smoke in the background, and certainly the smoke of hundreds of funnels in the harbour, and crowds of bright healthy men and women with hammers in their hands, giving the Holy Land once again the true holiness of youth, life and work.

Lovers of antiquity who are anxious to keep the Holy Land for ever a museum of dead things must not feel shocked. The modern Zionist is as keen as they in conserving the alas! not very abundant memorials of old glory, provided that the dirt and squalor are not perpetuated under historic pretences . . . When the time comes for creative work some fair compromise will be found reconciling the Holy Land and the national home . . . But for the present we are at war for the rights of

alternative view, see Janet Wolff, *The Social Production of Art* (London: Macmillan 2nd ed. 1993) Ch.6.

⁷³ Günther Berghaus, *Futurism and Politics* (Oxford: Berghahn 1996) p. 8, F.T. Marinetti, 'The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism 1909' in Umbro Apollonio (ed.) *Futurist Manifestos* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1973) p. 22.

⁷⁴ Berghaus, *op. cit.*, p. 22. Despite his attempt to claim that Jabotinsky's Zionism was the product of *fin de siècle* nineteenth century European culture, particularly Russian positivism, he, like other scholars, has failed to appreciate the influence of Futurism on Jabotinsky's world-view. See Stanislawski, *op. cit.*, Chs. 6-9. On the influence of Futurism on West European nationalism, see George Mosse, *Confronting the Nation: Jewish and Western Nationalism* (Hanover and London: Brandeis University Press, 1993) Ch. 6.

life and the renaissance, and the Zionist crossing the border of Palestine in a military train may be forgiven if what resounds in his ears is not so much biblical quotations as some prophetic words about the future.⁷⁵

Despite this fervour for a Futurist vision that divorced history from the essence of Zionism, a landscape that was free from the past and embraced a will to a pristine modernity, the poetics of a land that physically embodied the memories of Jewish national sovereignty of Antiquity were an essential element of mainstream Zionist discourse. They served to authentically tie the Zionist movement to the land of Palestine, casting it as the site of the Golden Age of national life which would return through the agency of the Zionist project.⁷⁶ Indeed, as Jabotinsky attempted in his representations of the Jewish Regiments, reflecting the ambiguities of his conception of Zionist identity,⁷⁷ the myths, metaphors and symbols of Ancient Israel were a fundamental means of signifying the discourse of national rebirth. Hence, in a description of the space of Palestine written by Leon Simon, we find the poetics of collective memory that served to link the Golden Age of Antiquity with modern Zionist settlement. This signifying practice was a crucial aspect of the attempt by Zionist propaganda agencies to encode the landscape of Palestine as the site of an era of national rebirth, as inaugurated by the Balfour Declaration.

You enter Palestine by railway . . . As the train goes on you see the welcome green displace the sand . . . you come in sight of some of the Jewish colonies, with their red-tiled roofs and smiling fields and eucalyptus trees and orange groves . . . And side by side with these physical impressions, memories of events and figures in Jewish history- of the exodus, of the revelations on Mount Sinai, of Samson and David, and Rabbi Jochanan ben Zakkai- crowd upon the mind, and eye and memory together create a vision of a new chapter of Jewish history which is yet to be written in this fertile land. You feel that you have not simply entered a territory called Palestine: you have entered Erez Israel, the land where the Jewish spirit lived once

⁷⁵ Vladimir Jabotinsky, 'With the Jewish Regiment- The Jewish Colonies,' c. March 1918, PRO FO 395/237/60273.

⁷⁶ Zerubavel, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

⁷⁷ See below, pp. 238, 241.

and will live again.⁷⁸

Although Jabotinsky's representation of Zionism as being essentially Futurist was not in line with the dominant Zionist discourse and therefore the vision that tended to be imparted by the Jewish Section of the Ministry of Information, his description of a regenerated national type, "crowds of bright healthy men and women with hammers in their hands, giving the Holy Land once again the true holiness of youth, life and work", reflected a basic tenet of Zionist ideology. Indeed, the construct of the New Jew was a fundamental element of the Zionist project. It symbolised the transformative and liberal essence of Zionist thought, re-forming the degenerative Jew of Exile into a normative national type, as defined by late nineteenth and early twentieth century European nationalist discourse.⁷⁹

The agency and manifestation of this physical, spiritual and cultural change, the Jewish Colony, was therefore a salient element of Zionist culture.⁸⁰ As such, the Jewish Section of the Ministry of Information made it a prominent part of its portrayals of Jewish life in Palestine. In an article, Jabotinsky hailed the Jewish Colony as a civilizing force in the otherwise "surrounding desolation" of Palestine.⁸¹

Due to the colony's importance in Zionist discourse, it meant that, in contrast with the

⁷⁸ Leon Simon, 'With the Zionist Commission. (1) First Impressions,' 8 April 1918, *The Zionist Review*, Vol. II, No. 3 (July 1918) p. 39.

⁷⁹ George Mosse, 'Max Nordau: Liberalism and the New Jew' in idem. *Confronting the Nation*, pp. 161-175, Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture and West European Jewry before the First World War*, pp. 2-3, Ch. 4. This aspect of Zionist culture was a product of nationalist discourse but was also a response, and appropriation of, anti-Semitic stereotypes of Jews as being weak, feminine, unhealthy, alienated from nature and honest labour. In short, the Jew functioned as the binary opposite of normative European bourgeois culture, categorized as Other. George Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*, (New York: Howard Fertig 1985) Ch. 7, Sander Gilman, *The Jew's Body* (London and New York: Routledge 1991) pp. 63-64, p. 134, 137. Tamar Garb, 'Modernity, Identity, Textuality,' in Nochlin and Garb, *op. cit.*, p.26. On the gendered aspects of the Zionist discourse of the New Jew, see below, pp. 221-223. For an alternative interpretation of Nordau's Zionism and the concept of the New Jew, which seeks to dismiss the previous historiography on the subject by claiming that it was a product of social Darwinism rather than liberalism, see Stanislawski, *op. cit.*, Chs. 2-4.

⁸⁰ Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture and West European Jewry*, Ch. 6.

⁸¹ Vladimir Jabotinsky, 'With the Jewish Regiment- The Jewish Colonies,' c. March 1918, PRO FO

historical-religious nature of propaganda produced for Christian audiences, there was a marked spatial difference in the visions of Palestine produced by Zionists for the Jewish audience. Representations of Jerusalem, religious monuments, and sweeping barren landscapes mediated a vision of a pre-modern land frozen in time, embodying the narratives of the Bible and a romanticized Orient for the Western Christian reader. Conversely, the Zionist image of Palestine as the stage of the rebirth of a bustling, vibrant national life and society constituted the visual construct of the land that was produced and disseminated by the Jewish Section of the Ministry of Information. As such, the main focus of these representations were the colonies and Tel Aviv as they embodied the values and desired self-image of Zionist discourse, and were believed by Sykes to be the focus of the Jewish gaze towards Palestine. This was despite the fact that the majority of the Jewish population, which tended to be religious and non-Zionist, lived in Jerusalem.⁸² However, as we shall see in the following chapter, Jerusalem was also to be constructed for the Jewish reader as a site, if not the seat, of the national renaissance that was said to have followed British liberation.

In Jabotinsky's work, the colonies were depicted as vehicles of his widely shared perceptions of Western progress and society, as reflected by the aesthetics of order, planning and utilitarianism. He wrote that the Jewish Colony was "certainly no dream, but a real bit of Europe⁸³- beautiful straight rows of orange trees, regular canals running along even squares, plantations, lovely neat little houses on a hill in the background."⁸⁴ He proudly stated that

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⁸² Alexander Schölch, 'Jerusalem in the Nineteenth Century (1831-1917 A.D.),' in Kamil J. Asali (ed.) *Jerusalem in History: 3000 BC to the Present Day*, (London and New York: Kegan Paul International 2nd ed., 1997) pp. 231-232.

⁸³ According to Shlomo Avineri, Jabotinsky saw Zionism as "an expression of European culture," superior to non-European culture, and condemned "any sort of idealization of the Orient, which sometimes became very popular in Zionism and modern Hebrew literature." Shlomo Avineri, *The Making of Modern Zionism: The Intellectual Origins of the Jewish State* (New York: Basic Books 1981) p. 179.

⁸⁴ Vladimir Jabotinsky, 'With the Jewish Regiment- The Jewish Colonies,' c. March 1918, PRO FO

this model of society provided “thousands of British soldiers . . . [with] the only chance of civilised intercourse, and redeeming what would otherwise be practically no change from the desert of Sinai.”⁸⁵ In these representations of Palestine Jabotinsky did not make explicit reference to Palestinian Arab society, but through its omission it was constructed as the binary opposite of the Jewish colony “the only chance of civilised intercourse.” With the metaphor of “the desert of the Sinai” the sum of Palestinian Arab society was portrayed as backward, inert and barren, to be redeemed by the Jewish colony, a microcosm of European civilization.

Furthermore, the Jewish Colony was described as being the arbiter of Zionist national culture and an embryonic state that demonstrated the Zionist ability for self-government.

Jabotinsky wrote,

in following letters I shall have an opportunity of describing these settlements, their fields, vineyards, their grandiose wine cellars, libraries, the schools which boast the revival of a dead language as the mother tongue- an achievement unique in history- their complicated organisations, their problems, strifes, orthodoxy, iconoclasm, socialism- all this miniature but astonishingly complete state within a state. But to-day it will suffice to say that these colonies speak to the foreign deliverer in clear language, showing what the Jewish colonist would be capable of had he only been given a full chance.⁸⁶

The argument that the Jewish colonies served as a sign of the Zionist ability to

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⁸⁵ Jabotinsky had been asked by Hyamson discuss in his reports “the general relationship between the Jewish population and army activities.” Hyamson to Jabotinsky, Egypt, 22 May 1918, PRO FO 395/237/91941. In his articles, Jabotinsky portrayed the British soldier as being overtly impressed by Zionist achievements, lifestyle and culture. This image was in direct contrast to Jabotinsky’s private frustrations with the attitudes and policies of British troops and authorities in Palestine later in 1918. See Jabotinsky, Zionist Commission, Palestine to Weizmann, 12 November 1918. 7/2/1 8, Jabotinsky Papers. The frequently cited anti-Zionism of the military administration will be discussed in the following chapter. Perhaps in anticipation of such attitudes, there had been a deliberate effort to disseminate pro-Zionist propaganda amongst British troops serving in Palestine. See Hyamson, Department of Information to Weizmann, 13 February 1918 and Hyamson, Department of Information to Samuel Landman, London Zionist Bureau, 15 March 1918. Z4/177 I, Papers of the London Zionist Bureau, CZA.

⁸⁶ Vladimir Jabotinsky, ‘With the Jewish Regiment- The Jewish Colonies,’ c. March 1918, PRO FO

reconstitute a national home in Palestine was also advanced by the agricultural engineer Shmuel Tolkowsky, in a pamphlet that was printed and distributed by the Ministry of Information.⁸⁷ He claimed that Palestine, “a land that was desolate” for two thousand years had been “restored to its pristine fertility.” Moreover, through contact with the soil, the revival of Palestine had resulted in the regeneration of the Jew. Primarily, Tolkowsky framed his description of the life and achievements of Jewish colonization in Palestine through the intertwined discourses of colonialism and Orientalism. It was again portrayed as a vehicle of European civilization redeeming the East with its focus on hygiene, public health, organization, self-government, policing and democracy which were contrasted with the binary opposites that were perceived to define the Orient.⁸⁸ In his discussion of Tel Aviv, Tolkowsky made this stark comparison particularly explicit. As “the first Hebrew city” was a suburb of the largely Arab town of Jaffa, the two spaces were commonly encoded within Zionist culture as vehicles that signified the imagined polarity between the essence of Hebrew and Arab being.⁸⁹ Hence, Tolkowsky gave the following description of Tel Aviv,

Broad streets, lined with well-built houses surrounded by little gardens; green trees alongside the streets and flowers in the squares; everywhere a neatness which is probably without parallel in the whole of Palestine and Syria, and is particularly striking at the very gates of Jaffa, the town of dust and evil smells in summer and of mud and evil smells in winter. Tel-Aviv is, at the doors of the Orient, a true model and object-lesson of western cleanliness and hygiene.⁹⁰

In Hyamson’s own description of Tel-Aviv, it was portrayed as comprising an autonomous and complete model of healthy national urban life, with “all the concomitants of

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⁸⁷ Shmuel Tolkowsky, *The Jewish Colonisation in Palestine* (London: The Zionist Organization, London Bureau 1918), p. 2.

⁸⁸ Said, *op. cit.*, pp. 2-10.

⁸⁹ Barbara Mann, ‘Tel Aviv’s Rothschild: When a Boulevard Becomes a Monument,’ *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (Winter 2001) pp. 2-3. On how Tel Aviv was also later discussed and displayed in Zionist culture as an Oriental space, an authentic part of the landscape of the Middle East, see Joachim Schlör, *Tel Aviv: From Dream to City* (London: Reaktion Books, 1999) Ch. 4.

intellectual communal life in Europe.”⁹¹ He wrote, “Tel Aviv is the finest illustration of the benefits the recent Jewish colonization of Palestine has brought to the land. The traveller on his first arrival has at hand both this splendid Jewish settlement and also the squalid Arab streets and houses which were characteristic of the country before the Jews arrived.”⁹²

The Jewish agricultural colony, as the rural embodiment of this Zionist discourse, of Jews redeeming the desolation of the land, was also the subject of two newsreels filmed and distributed by the Ministry of Information. The first was entitled “Jewish Colonies in Palestine Rishon le Zion” and was filmed in Autumn 1917 during the Palestine campaign. It begins with the brass band of the Australian Light Horse playing on a band stand, surrounded by children of the colony. It portrayed the youth of the colony relaxed, if not perplexed by the spectacle of the Entente forces. It then cuts to a shot taken from the top of the refrigerator building where the wines that were produced in the colony were kept, panning across the white, ordered courtyard of the colony and across the vista of palm trees that surrounded it. Through this brief film, the viewer was presented with a glimpse of the achievements of the colony, as defined by both Zionist and Western discourses of civilization, utilitarian settlement and the colonialist redemption of Palestine, its land and society.⁹³ Such films functioned as exhibits of the spectacle of Zionist achievement, justifying their claim to the land for both Jewish and non-Jewish audiences.

The second film that was made by the Ministry of Information to depict life in the Jewish colonies was also set in Rishon le Zion and was a step-by-step documentary of its wine making industry. The film begins with scenes of workers in the vinery picking grapes

⁹⁰ Tolkowsky, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

⁹¹ Hyamson, *Palestine: The Rebirth of an Ancient People*, pp. 85-86.

⁹² *Ibid.* p. 87.

and working amicably with one overseer, who at one point stand together and smile for the camera, connoting the contentment and ease of the agricultural Jewish worker with manual labour and the soil. The film then cuts back to a container full of grapes, a symbol of the success, health and vibrant life of the colony, and is followed by further scenes of the colonists at work. At one point the camera pauses on a close up of a woman carrying a basket on her head, whilst she stands still, holding and encouraging the gaze of the viewer, signifying the space and power of the mythical New Jewish woman of the colonies.⁹⁴ It then cuts to men off-loading the baskets of grapes from a cart, who then proceed to pour the crop into a large vat. The view of the camera then finally shifts to the inside of the building in which a large number of vats are systematically arranged, connoting a scientific, systematic modern industrial process. This *mise en scène* is the final image of the text.⁹⁵

⁹³ 'Jewish Colonies in Palestine Rishon le Zion,' IWM 18, Film Archive, Imperial War Museum.

⁹⁴ Although the myth of sexual equality and the working-woman pioneer were important elements of Zionist culture, it was seldom realized in reality. In the main, the norms of gender difference in European national culture were perpetuated in the Yishuv. Berkowitz, *West European Jewry and the Zionist Project*, pp. 180-181, 185, Deborah Bernstein (ed.) *Pioneers and Homemakers: Jewish Women in Pre-State Israel* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), pp. 143-199, Margalit Shilo, 'The Transformation of the Role of Women in the First Aliya 1882-1903,' *Jewish Social Studies: History, Culture and Society*, no. 2 (1996), pp. 64-86. Moreover, within Zionist discourse there was an equally, if not more powerful will, to signify the manliness of the New Jew by firmly polarizing gender roles in the new society and thereby marginalizing women. See below, p. 222, n. 44.

⁹⁵ This film was accompanied by still photographs of the wine making process at Rishon le Zion which were distributed by the Ministry of Information. This still photograph documentary included a picture of the chemical laboratory which was not seen in the film. 'Richon [sic] le Zion Wine Industry. The Chemical Laboratory. In addition to other work, the soil of the vineyards is tested here to ascertain its suitability for growing different types of vine,' Q.12909, Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum. The documentation of the wine making industry at Rishon le Zion, from the laboratory to the fermentation process, was portrayed in the following series of photographs, 'Grape Pickers in the vineyard at Richon le Zion,' Q.12904, 'Girls carrying baskets of grapes balanced on the head. Richon le Zion,' Q.12905, 'Richon le Zion Wine Industry. Arrival of grapes at the Press for Crushing,' Q.12907 'The wine industry. Richon le Zion. The grapes are emptied into the crushing machine where the juice runs into a tank. The uncrushed fruit and residue is discharged and put into the press (on the right of picture) for further crushing at a later stage.' Q12908 'Richon le Zion Wine Industry. The freshly extracted juice is pumped into the vats for preliminary fermentation,' Q12903, 'Office of the Wine Company at Richon le Zion,' Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum.



Figure 7: 'Office of the Wine Company at Richon [sic] le Zion,' Q. 12903, Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum



Figure 8: 'Grape Pickers in the vineyard at Richon le Zion,' Q. 12904, Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum



Figure 9: 'Girls carrying baskets of grapes balanced on the head. Richon le Zion Wine Industry,' Q. 12905, Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum



Figure 10: 'Arrival of grapes at the press for crushing,' Q.12906, Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum



Figure 11: 'The wine industry. Richon le Zion. The grapes are emptied into the crushing machine where the juice runs into the tank. The uncrushed fruit and residue are discharged and put into the press (on the right of the picture) for further crushing at a later stage.' Q.12907, Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum



Figure 12: 'Richon le Zion Wine Industry. The freshly extracted juice is pumped into the vats for preliminary fermentation.' Q.12908, Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum

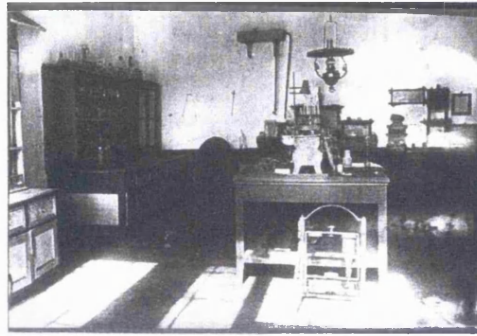


Figure 13: 'Richon le Zion Wine Industry. The Chemical Laboratory. In addition to other work, the soil of the vineyards is tested here to ascertain its suitability for growing different types of vine.' Q.12909, Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum

The function of this film was to document the spectacle of the praxis of Zionism for the western voyeur. The need to document step-by-step the process of Zionist industry was a product of the wider “modern representational order” that was used to shape the colonial and western comprehension of the spectacle of the world, which “was being ordered up as an endless exhibition.”⁹⁶ As Timothy Mitchell and Nicholas Mirzoeff have argued, this exhibitionary order “sought to use visual imagery to represent the grand narratives of the imperial world-view both to domestic populations and also to subject peoples.”⁹⁷ Although the colonial and imperial visualization of the Orient was in the main used to demarcate it as Other, this film sought to place Zionist colonization as a vehicle of western civilization, the active antithesis of its polar opposite, the Orient, and in that sense a part of the colonial project. By placing the Zionist movement as part of the colonial order, it justified British and western support for its civilizing mission. As a whole, the visualization of a systematic and scientific Zionist agriculture, redeeming “an otherwise desolate land”⁹⁸ through the successful cultivation of the fruits of the vine, visibly showing the Jew at ease and at home with the land, represented Zionist colonization in Palestine as a developed, practicable

⁹⁶ Timothy Mitchell, ‘Orientalism and the Exhibitionary Order’ in Mirzoeff, *The Visual Culture Reader*, p. 294.

⁹⁷ Nicholas Mirzoeff, Introduction to ‘Race and identity in colonial and postcolonial culture’ in *Ibid.* p. 283.

⁹⁸ See, for example, Tolkowsky, *op. cit.*

movement that was already in the process of building the national home, thereby substantiating the Zionist will and capacity to realize its mission of national regeneration. At the same time, however, the portrayal of Zionist achievements was used to depict it as a movement of inherent potential, rather than an accomplished fact, which had been held back by Ottoman rule, justifying the need for a British protectorate that would champion the rights of national self-determination.

4:4 The Zionist Landscape and the Narrative of Ottoman Oppression/British Liberation

As part of the representation of Ottoman rule as a degenerative, corrupting and repressive regime, the landscape of Palestine was used as a text, an aesthetic metaphor, to mediate these narratives. Lloyd George had instructed the head of the Department of Information in February 1917, "See that articles are disseminated throughout the world as to the fertility and greatness of the lands now covered by the Turkish Empire, before the advent of the devastator . . . How the Turk, by his rule, made all the arts of industry and husbandry impossible, and how these once rich lands have become a wilderness."⁹⁹ In his work, *With the Turks in Palestine*,¹⁰⁰ Alexander Aaronsohn, the pro-British Zionist propagandist from the Yishuv,¹⁰¹ wrote,

When one crossed the boundary from Turkish Palestine into the [formerly autonomous] Lebanon province, what a change met his eyes! - peaceful and prosperous villages, schools filled with children, immense plantations of mulberry trees and olives, the slopes of the mountains terraced with beautiful vineyards, a handsome and sturdy population, police on every road to help the stranger, and young girls and women with happy laugh and chatter working in the fields."¹⁰²

The Lebanon was here cast as the site of a healthy, blossoming landscape that mirrored the

⁹⁹ Memorandum by David Lloyd George, 19 February 1917, PRO FO 395/139/42320.

¹⁰⁰ Alexander Aaronsohn, *With the Turks in Palestine* (London: Constable and Company, 1917).

¹⁰¹ See, S. Gaselee, FO to Captain P. Kenny, MI7 (B), Adastral House, 8 December 1917, PRO FO 395/152/239839, Aaron, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

¹⁰² Aaronsohn, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

peace, prosperity, order and freedom of a country that was not inflicted with the oppressive domination of the Ottoman Turk.

In the Zionist “master commemorative narrative” it was the rupture of Exile, the separation of the Jewish nation from its soil, which resulted in the land of Palestine losing its fertility, falling from its past glory into a neglected and barren expanse.¹⁰³ But within the discourse that was created to justify the expulsion of the Turks from Palestine, the period of Ottoman rule was portrayed as the agent of this desolation. In a statement of his thoughts on the liberated parts of Palestine, Ormsby-Gore declared,

My first general impression of southern Palestine was that the country is one that has been devastated not so much by four years of war as by four hundred years of Ottoman rule. The sand dunes have been allowed to invade a rich and fertile plain. The rivers which bring down the ample winter rains from the hills have become fever-stricken swamps and marshes. The trees have everywhere been cut down and no new ones planted. The terraces on the hills have been washed away, leaving these hills barren and uncultivated . . . The whole land of Palestine is a valley of dry bones from which the flesh has perished, but which can under an enlightened government be made to live again.¹⁰⁴

Under the patronage of the enlightened and civilized British liberator Jewish colonization would redeem the land.

The Jewish colonies built up in the last thirty years are like oases in a desert. They are an example on a small scale of what can be done on a big one. They show that the apparently barren lands can be cultivated and can produce magnificent crops of fruit, almonds, vines, corn, and forage. These new Jewish villages are delightful-clean white houses with red roofs set in the midst of groves of eucalyptus trees, oranges or mulberries. The Jewish colonists regard the British as the liberators of the country . . .¹⁰⁵

In his article on the Jewish Colonies, Jabotinsky placed the blame for the fact that Zionist colonization had not been more successful squarely at the door of the Turkish

¹⁰³ Zerubavel, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

¹⁰⁴ ‘Major Ormsby-Gore and the Future of Palestine,’ *The Zionist Review*, vol. II no. 6 (October 1918) p. 90.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

authorities, advancing the maxim of British propaganda with regard to the Middle East, “Turkey must go”: “Little as it is it [Zionist Colonization] shows firstly that the Jewish Nation possesses quite first-rate colonising capacities’ secondly that Turkey must disappear from the land.”¹⁰⁶ He continued to paint a picture of the Turkish authorities in Palestine as an anti-Zionist regime, focusing on the suffering and atrocities against Jews during the war in his article ‘To be Avenged.’ Fulfilling the desire of American Zionist leaders to “embroider news regarding atrocities perpetrated on Jews”¹⁰⁷, which had been communicated to the Foreign Office and Hyamson’s department, Jabotinsky described the fate of members of *Ha-Shomer*, the Jewish watchmen organization that protected Zionist settlements, who did not manage to escape the Turkish authorities; “Over a hundred young men and several women were brought to Nazareth and Zikron Jacob, and a horrible orgy of tortures began until their heels were lumps of ragged flesh and blood.”¹⁰⁸

This graphic and bloody description was part of the wider attempt to construct Ottoman Palestine within both the Jewish and non-Jewish imagination as the site of an all-pervasive reign of unremitting terror and persecution. To that end, written accounts and testimonies were used to disseminate the narratives of Ottoman despotism, immorality and the negation of its right to rule.¹⁰⁹ Faced with the savage and untiring brutality of the Ottoman oppressor, the Yishuv was depicted as being essentially powerless, “Whenever the Turkish authorities wished, the horrors of the Armenian massacres would live again in

¹⁰⁶ Vladimir Jabotinsky, ‘With the Jewish Regiment- The Jewish Colonies,’ c. March 1918, PRO FO 395/237/60273.

¹⁰⁷ In a telegram from British representatives in Washington that had met with Zionist leaders such as Louis Brandeis and Felix Frankfurter, it was suggested “that Army should be accompanied by Jewish correspondents who should be permitted to describe in detail conditions of Palestine and also that of Jewish settlements and synagogues and embroider news regarding atrocities perpetrated on Jews. At present correspondents either dismiss these details in a sentence or omit them altogether.” Bayley, New York to FO, c. January 1918, PRO FO 395/237/12461.

¹⁰⁸ Vladimir Jabotinsky, ‘To be Avenged.’ 1918, PRO FO 395/237/60273.

Zicron-Jacob.”¹¹⁰

This juxtaposition of the Armenian genocide of 1915¹¹¹ with the fate of the Yishuv was a common signifying practice that was utilized to represent the Ottoman Turk as a barbarous type that not only persecuted the Jews of Palestine but was violently intent on wiping out the sum of Jewish national life and slaughtering the population. From early 1917 Lloyd George had instructed the newly created Department of Information to use the Armenian tragedy as a means of creating anti-Turkish propaganda.¹¹² This work did not solely focus on the Armenian genocide itself but was used to paint the Turk as innately murderous, bringing death and devastation in his wake. The Ottoman Empire was cast as a landscape haunted by gallows, disease and famine.¹¹³ Within this discourse, therefore, the massacre of the Armenian population was portrayed as being symptomatic of the Ottoman character, the nature of its rule and desire. “From the beginning the Turk has been a curse to the countries under his rule . . . his annals reek with rapine and carnage, but from Selim to Abdul Hamid neither lure of power nor lust of blood carried him so far as to attempt the establishment of a Pan-Turkish empire by an undisguised policy of massacre, planned and executed by the Government. That is the mad ambition of the Nationalist *régime*.”¹¹⁴ As a

¹⁰⁹ See, for example, Aaronsohn, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-55, Canton, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

¹¹⁰ Aaronsohn, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

¹¹¹ See, for example, Vahakn N. Dadrian, *The History of the Armenian Genocide: Ethnic Conflict from the Balkans to Anatolia to the Caucasus* (Providence, R.I., and Oxford: Bergahn Books, 1995).

¹¹² Memorandum by David Lloyd George, 19 February 1917, FO 395/139/42320 On the British Government's use of the Armenian genocide for propaganda, see Akaby Nassibian, *Britain and the Armenian Question, 1915-1923* (London and Sydney: Croom Helm, London: St Martin's, 1984) pp. 69-70, 73,-88, 112-113-116, 119. The most prominent publication that was commissioned by the British Government on the subject of the Armenian genocide was a parliamentary blue book, which consisted of a collection of documentary evidence, compiled by James Bryce and Arnold Toynbee, and presented to Sir Edward Grey in 1916. James Bryce and Arnold Toynbee, *The Treatment of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, 1915-16- Documents presented to Viscount Grey of Falloden by Viscount Bryce. Uncensored Edition*, edited with an introduction by Ara Sarafian (Princeton, NJ: Gomidas Institute, 2000).

¹¹³ See, for example, Canton, *op. cit.*, pp. 76-77.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.* p. 73.

result, the fate of the Armenians was used as evidence of what would sooner or later befall the Yishuv. Indeed, in Figure 14, a photograph that was distributed by the Ministry of Information, the massacre of the Armenians was explicitly tied to the Turkish policy towards Jews. Both groups were portrayed as being victims of the same atrocity. This visualization of the moment of death, of victims hanging from the gallows,¹¹⁵ combined with an image of stern and unemotional Turkish officers, served to represent the Oriental Turk as a cold murderous type that was calmly overseeing its mission of wiping out both Armenians and Jews.



Figure 14: 'Constantinople: Massacre of Armenians and Jews by the Turks.' Q.105515, Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum

Within this context, the forced evacuation of Jaffa that was ordered by the Turkish Commander Djemal Pasha on 9 April 1917 had been used as key proof of the Ottoman intent to wipe out Jewish life in Palestine. It was discussed alongside the highly publicized Armenian genocide,¹¹⁶ thus playing on the image of the insatiably murderous and fanatic

¹¹⁵ Similarly, Aaron Aaronsohn had stated in a report that was published by Reuters in May 1917 that two Yemenite Jews had been “hung at the entrance to Tel Aviv so that all might see”. This statement proved to be untrue. Auran, *op. cit.*, p. 77. Although Auran claims that Aaronsohn did not purposely fabricate this story, the veracity of such reports was certainly of no concern to British propagandists. *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ “Tel Aviv had been sacked, ten thousand had been made homeless, Djemal Pasha had declared that Armenian policy would be applied to Jews . . . the whole Yishuv threatened with destruction.” Boris Goldberg, London

Turk, and was created as an event that was thought would help engender Jewish backing for the British war effort and destroy any support for Ottoman control of Palestine after the war. As such, the evacuation, as presented through the rhetoric of impending massacre, had been widely publicized throughout the Jewish world by Zionists in London and the British Government.¹¹⁷ Indeed, Ormsby-Gore had written to Sykes, “we ought to use pogroms in Palestine as propaganda. Any spicy tales of atrocity would be eagerly welcomed by the propaganda people here [London]- & Aaron Aaronsohn could send some lurid stories to the Jewish papers.”¹¹⁸ Through the resulting narrative the Turk was encoded as the antithesis of the construct of the civilized British liberator, which sought to free the oppressed, thereby setting the plot for the poetics of Jewish liberation and national redemption that would follow the British occupation of Palestine. In order to perpetuate this narrative following the British liberation of Jerusalem, providing this climactic drama with further meaning, writers such as Jabotinsky were to narrate atrocities that had occurred during the war.¹¹⁹ As a massacre never took place these efforts also stretched to descriptions of the starvation and suffering that had affected the Yishuv, particularly in Jerusalem.¹²⁰ Indeed, the “blight of the Turk”¹²¹ was to be shown to have affected almost every symbol of Zionist culture in Palestine.

Zionist Bureau to Copenhagen Zionist Office, 5 May 1917 quoted in Friedman, *Germany, Turkey, Zionism, 1897-1918*, p. 354.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.* pp. 354-355.

¹¹⁸ Ormsby-Gore to Sykes, 8 May 1917, Document no. 47, Sledmere Papers. Atrocity propaganda was a central part of the British Government’s propaganda work during the war, which was taken up, in particular, by Wellington House. Sanders and Taylor, *op. cit.*, pp. 142-149, Haste, *op. cit.*, Ch. 6.

¹¹⁹ For a magazine entitled *Lion* that was to be published for the members of the Jewish Regiments in 1918, the editor requested from Jabotinsky a piece on the Hebrew poet Bialik and an “anti-Turkish article [regarding] atrocities on the colonists.” H.B. Samuel to Jabotinsky, 13 February 1918, 2/5/3/18, Jabotinsky Papers.

¹²⁰ Vladimir Jabotinsky, ‘To be Avenged,’ PRO FO 395/237/60273. Yael Aueron has argued that despite the very real sense of fear within the Yishuv concerning an impending massacre, and the material suffering that the community endured during the war, with the expulsion from Tel Aviv, a sharp decline in foreign aid, numerous confiscations and requisitions by the Turks, and the plague of locusts that befell agriculture in the middle of 1915, the Yishuv “fared much better than any other Asian region under Turkish control.” Aueron, *op. cit.*, p. 95, Ch. 2. On the Yishuv during the war, also see Mordechai Eliav (ed.) *Ba-Matzor u-va-Matzok: Eretz Yisra’el be-Milhemet ha-‘olam ha-rishonah* [*Siege and Distress: Eretz Israel during the First World War*] (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, 1990) For a contemporaneous Zionist report that considered that the colonies were actually in

One of the quintessential elements of the Zionist project was the invention of Hebrew culture, which by the time of the war had become a unifying source of cohesion in the Zionist movement and was held up as a symbol of national regeneration.¹²² As Yael Zerubavel has observed, “the emergence of Hebrew as the primary and official language of the Yishuv was ultimately seen as a critical link to the ancient past, as constructed in Zionist collective memory.”¹²³ Moreover, for many Zionists, including the leadership in London, the revival of Hebrew as the national vernacular was seen to be an integral part of the Jewish national renaissance, in which language, land and culture were perceived to be the interlinked vessels of the ‘Hebrew spirit.’¹²⁴ As such, the myth of the Hebrew revival was used by the Jewish Section of the Ministry of Information as a sign of the development and success of Zionism in the attempt to convince Jews and non-Jewish society of their claim to the land, to demonstrate the fruits of Jewish national culture, and to mediate the narrative of Ottoman oppression and British liberation. Hence, alongside depictions of Jewish life in the colonies

good condition “and apparently suffered little from the ravages of war”, see W.E.M. ‘Visit of the Zionist Commission to the Judean Colonies,’ 24 May 1918, Z4/1731, Papers of the London Zionist Office, CZA.

¹²¹ Canton, *op. cit.*, Ch. IX, ‘The Blight of the Turk’, pp. 72-81.

¹²² Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture and West European Jewry before the First World War*, Ch. 2. Although the focus on Hebrew culture was widely supported within the movement there was also a significant degree of dissent from religious Zionists who saw it as a secular threat to Orthodox Judaism as well as those that warned against ignoring Yiddish, the language of the masses of Ashkenzi Jewry and others that feared that a focus on culture detracted from more pressing political matters. *Ibid.* pp. 59, 62, 69-73.

¹²³ Zerubavel, *op. cit.*, p. 31. For a critical analysis of the development and functions of the Hebrew revival in the Zionist project, see Benjamin Harshav, *Language in Time of Revolution* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1993), Part II.

¹²⁴ This system of thought was primarily associated with the writer and thinker Asher Ginsberg, Achad Ha’am, who was himself in London at that time. Steven J. Zipperstein, *Elusive Prophet: Ahad Ha’am and the Origins of Zionism* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California, 1993) pp. 300-308. Regarding the influence of this ideology on Weizmann, see David Vital, *Zionism: the Formative Years* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1982) pp. 190-198 and Jehuda Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann: The Making of a Zionist Leader* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985) p. 39 and Ch. 5. In particular, Nahum Sokolow had been a central and key figure in the Hebrew cultural work of the Zionist movement since the first Zionist Congress in 1897. Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture and West European Jewry*, pp. 48, 63, 68-69. Also see Leon Simon, ‘The Hebrew Revival,’ in H. Sacher (ed.), *Zionism and the Jewish Future* (London: John Murray 1916) pp. 99-116 and Harry Sacher, *A Hebrew University for Jerusalem*, Zionist Pamphlets: No.4 (London: “The Zionist” 1915) p. 5.

under the British, the Jewish Section sought to highlight “Hebrew education and the expansion of Hebrew.”¹²⁵

The focus of Jabotinsky’s article on the growth of Hebrew was the success of Hebrew education in Palestine, laying emphasis on the iconic status of the Hebrew teacher. He depicted the Hebrew revival in the Diaspora as an abstract ideal that was only made a reality by “the Palestinian teacher.”¹²⁶ It could be said that this depiction of the Palestinian teacher served to demonstrate that the national renaissance could only be achieved in the Ancient Homeland, the space of productive national being, where pioneers could perform miracles. When these teachers arrived, “there were no school-books, no proper terminology for profane science, no trace of a Hebrew speaking milieu in or outside the schools, and in addition his own Hebrew sounded as yet timid, poor and stuttering.” Yet, as a result of the perseverance and devotion of the Palestinian Hebrew teacher there existed “a strong and natural Hebrew-speaking milieu . . .” which impacted upon the growth of the Modern Hebrew library in Palestine and had a radiating influence throughout the Diaspora. However, as with Jabotinsky’s other articles on Jewish life in Palestine he drew attention to the way in which the Turkish authorities had badly affected Hebrew education. He stressed the fact that the Hebrew Gymnasium in Jaffa, a key symbol of Zionist culture,¹²⁷ and schools in Jerusalem, had remained closed since the Turkish authorities expelled or deported all their teachers and male pupils. But in line with the narrative of British liberation, Jabotinsky claimed that in the wake of the British occupation efforts were being made to re-open educational institutions.¹²⁸

¹²⁵ Hyamson to Jabotinsky, Egypt, 22 May 1918, PRO FO 395/237/91941.

¹²⁶ Vladimir Jabotinsky, ‘Hebrew Schoolwork,’ c. August 1918, PRO FO 395/237/146793.

¹²⁷ See Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture and West European Jewry before the First World War*, pp. 154-155.

¹²⁸ Vladimir Jabotinsky, ‘Hebrew Schoolwork,’ c. August 1918, PRO FO 395/237/146793.

As Hebrew was a symbol of national life in Palestine, the British were constructed as its protector with the Ottoman Turks and Germans being cast as a corporeal threat to its very existence. To that end, Wellington House printed and distributed the pamphlet *The German Attack on Hebrew Schools in Palestine* which recounted the struggle over the language of instruction at schools that were run by the liberal German-Jewish philanthropic organisation, *Hilfsverein der deutschen Juden*, and particularly the Haifa *Technikum* that was founded in 1913.¹²⁹ It was contended that in the few years before the war the *Hilfsverein* had undertaken a policy of displacing Hebrew with German and that this “policy was due to secret pressure exercised by the German Government with a view to making the Jewish schools nurseries of Prussian ‘Kultur.’ [Nevertheless] This sinister intention was ignominiously defeated through Palestinian Jewry rising to the defence of the Hebrew language as of its most holy possession.”¹³⁰ The idealism and self-sacrifice that was evinced by Palestinian Jewry in this struggle, when it was “still under the blasting rule of the Turk”, led the author to state, “with what passionate devotion will they not foster their national culture when they rejoice in the blessings of freedom!”¹³¹ This use of Hebrew culture was part of the wider discourse of representation, conveyed through the prism of Zionist discourse, with which the construct of the despotic Oriental Turk was framed as the binary opposite of the British Empire, the champion of liberty, national self-determination and western civilization.

¹²⁹ See Emile Marmorstein, *Heaven at Bay: The Jewish Kulturkampf in the Holy Land* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969).

¹³⁰ Israel Cohen, *The German Attack on Hebrew Schools in Palestine* (London: Offices of the “Jewish Chronicle” and the “Jewish World” 1918) pp. 18-19. “An account of the German endeavour to convert Jewish schools into nurseries of Prussian ‘Kultur’, and of the resistance of public-spirited Jews,” No. 951, Wellington House Schedule, Wellington House Papers, Imperial War Museum Library. Hyamson wanted this pamphlet, which was commissioned by his department, to be published “under the cover of the Zionist Organization”, and although this was approved it was finally published through the offices of Leopold Greenberg’s newspapers the *Jewish Chronicle* and the *Jewish World*. Hyamson, Dept of Information, House of Lords to Simon Marks, Zionist Bureau, 15 February 1918, Z4/177 I, Papers of the London Zionist Bureau, CZA. Isaiah Friedman has shown that there is no proof to suggest that the policy of the *Hilfsverein* was in any way influenced by the German Government. Friedman, *Germany, Turkey, Zionism 1897-1918*, p. 161.

However, Jabotinsky's article on Hebrew in the Yishuv, which he wrote for the Jewish Section of the Ministry of Information, was not confined to criticizing the former Ottoman administration. In addition, he berated the work of the schools in Jerusalem that were run by the philanthropic institutions the Anglo-Jewish Association and the *Alliance Israelite Universelle*, in which English and French were the main languages of instruction. Jabotinsky used the British Declaration and the Entente's support for the Zionist movement to suggest that they bring their schools into line with the Zionist model.¹³² He wrote, "the language in which the young generations get accustomed to ask, count, think, reason and dream must be Hebrew and only Hebrew."¹³³ However, the main subject of this criticism was the reluctance of extreme Orthodoxy to join the Hebrew revival as they still clung "to their obsolete jargons." He referred to their objection to the renaissance of the national language, which he saw as a hallmark of European culture, as "one of the puzzles of the tortuous oriental mentality." Although he noted that "the spirit of the times" and the work of the Zionist Commission had led to some change in the orthodox attitude¹³⁴ his attack on Orthodoxy was described by Sykes as "unnecessarily bellicose."¹³⁵ Such a divisive article was far from the type of propaganda material that Hyamson and the British authorities wished to disseminate. Sykes considered another similar piece penned by Jabotinsky¹³⁶, in which he referred to Orthodox Jews as "professional beggars", to be "bad and controversial"

¹³¹ Cohen, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

¹³² The Zionist Commission had planned to incorporate the schools of the Anglo-Jewish Association, the *Alliance Israelite Universelle* and the *Hilfsverein* into a uniform Zionist educational system. No. 165, Letter from Weizmann and Israel Sieff, Zionist Commission, Tel-Aviv to Nahum Sokolow, London, 18 April, 1918, Devorah Barzilay and Barnet Litvinoff, *The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann- Volume VIII, Series A, November 1917-October 1918* (New Brunswick, N.J. and Jerusalem: Transaction and Israel Universities Press 1977) p. 142. However, such unification did not materialize as the schools of the Alliance and the Anglo-Jewish Association refused to use Hebrew as their language of instruction. *Ibid.* n. 25

¹³³ *Ibid.*

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵ Note by Sykes, n.d., PRO FO 395/237/146793

and thought that it should be suppressed. Hyamson went so far as to say that, “the time is near when Lt. Jabotinsky should return to the fighting ranks!”¹³⁷ Jabotinsky’s article may have expressed the divisions that were felt between Zionists and the Orthodox community in Palestine¹³⁸ but it did not portray the positive, unified image of Zionism and the Yishuv that was required. Within the texts of representation that were created by members of the British Government and the Zionist leadership in London, Palestine was to be constructed as the space of an advanced Jewish national culture that had been repressed by the barbarous and despotic rule of the Ottoman Turk, but was to be the site of an irrepressible renaissance in the wake of British liberation. The parameters of this field of representation did not allow for discussions of the contested and divided reality of the Yishuv, particularly in Jerusalem. Jerusalem was considered to be the spatial centre of the Jewish imagination, and was therefore to be depicted as a pre-eminent site of the rebirth of the nation that had been inaugurated by the Balfour Declaration. Contrasted with Jabotinsky’s suppressed article, for example, a piece entitled ‘The Jewish Schools of Jerusalem’ penned under the pseudonym ‘Watchman’, described the growth of Hebrew school education after the victory over the *Hilfsverein* before the war, its oppression under the Turk and the tenacious spirit and will that had kept it alive.¹³⁹ Within this picture of Jerusalem, defined by its growth of Zionist education, the symbols of the Bezalel School of Arts and Crafts and “the new Hebrew system of schools”, there was no reference to the Orthodox *Yeshivot* and *Hederim*, let alone their

¹³⁶ Vladimir Jabotinsky, ‘No Idlers,’ c. July 1918, PRO FO 395/237/125849.

¹³⁷ Minute by Sykes, n.d. Minute by S. Gaselee, 26 July 1918, PRO FO 395/237/125849 By this point Jabotinsky’s writings were failing to find favour in the Foreign Office and the Jewish Section of the Ministry of Information. Unlike the articles written by Father Waggett for the Christian audience in Allied countries and the USA, Jabotinsky’s work had not fitted in with the vision that had been desired by these officials. Although Sykes and Ormsby-Gore petitioned the Treasury to extend Waggett’s employment until 31 December 1918, Jabotinsky spent months trying to find out what his remuneration would be only to find that his services were no longer required. Minute by Ormsby-Gore, 30 October 1918, PRO FO 395/237/241537, Katz, *op. cit.*, pp. 430-431.

¹³⁸ Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture and West European Jewry before the First World War*, p. 160.

opposition to what they saw as profane secular education. Rather, Jerusalem was framed as the guardian of the national spirit and the seedbed of its restoration that was to come following British liberation,

Neither the blandishments of the German Jewish institutions with greater material resources, nor the arbitrary expulsions of the Turkish authorities seeking to remove every directing force in the Jewish communities, could prevail over the popular enthusiasm for the national language, and the popular pride in the creation of a national system of education. The language and the system emerge the stronger from the ordeal by famine. When Jaffa, which has been the spiritual head of the *Yishub*, was emptied a year ago of its Jews, Jerusalem preserved intact the erection of the national will. The schools of Jerusalem are the solid foundation on which the future of Jewish culture will be built in the new era of the *Geulah* [redemption] which this Passover feast proclaims to all Jewry.¹⁴⁰

As I have shown in this chapter, this article was one part of a far-reaching undertaking in which the space of the land of Palestine was, through textual and visual representation, used to construct and communicate propaganda discourse by the British Government. Before, during and after the British capture of Jerusalem in December 1917, British and Zionist propaganda agencies had sought to create it as an event that would signify “the new era of *Geulah*.” The spectacle of Allenby’s entrance was followed by a prolonged and elaborate effort to construct differing visions of Palestine for Christians, Muslims and Jews. The narratives of Ottoman oppression and British liberation were mediated through what were considered to be pre-existing ethnic geographies, an attempt to have an intended effect on a given audience through a manipulation of the discourses that were perceived to shape their understanding of the world. Representation was constructed through the codes and language that it was thought would be understood as having meaning for the anticipated reader. As a result of British perceptions of Jewish identity, the attempt to impact specifically upon the Jewish imagination was conducted through the prism of the Zionist discourse that had

¹³⁹ Watchman, ‘The Jewish Schools of Jerusalem,’ *The Zionist Review*, Vol. II, No. 3 (July 1918), pp. 38-39.

developed prior to the First World War. The display of Zionist achievements, Ottoman brutality and British liberation set the stage for a discourse of national rebirth, an imminent redemption that would be signposted through the symbols, language and poetics of national Return.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.* p. 39.

Chapter 5: Performance and the Discourse of Jewish National Rebirth

In this chapter I seek to show how the discourse of Jewish national rebirth in Palestine was visibly acted out for the Jewish audience- relayed through performance. The British Government and the Zionist leadership based in London sought to create visible symbols that would both signify and map a new era of national life through spectacle and theatrical performance on the stage of Palestine,¹ constructing and appropriating it as the site of imminent Jewish national rebirth through British liberation. The protagonists in this drama, cast as the physical representation and agents of British policy, were the Zionist Commission (the founder of the Hebrew University), the American Zionist Medical Unit and the Jewish Legion.² Although historians have acknowledged the propaganda purpose of these enterprises, no serious attention has been given to why or how they were supposed to achieve this task.³ Indeed, the majority of work on these projects has been confined to discussing their individual activities in Palestine, rather than their representation in propaganda materials.⁴ However, it will be argued here that they were each conceived and employed by

¹ The paradigm of representation as theatre performance against the stage of geographical space was used by Said in his seminal work on Orientalism. Said, *op. cit.* p. 63. The analogies of theatre, spectacle and text are being increasingly used in cultural studies and cultural geography to understand the relationship between space, culture and representation. See, for example, Stephen Daniels and Denis Cosgrove, 'Spectacle and Text: Landscape metaphors in cultural geography,' in James Duncan and David Ley (eds) *Place/Culture/Representation* (London and New York: Routledge 1993) pp. 57-58. On the use of this approach in recent studies of British culture during this period see, for example, David Cannadine, 'The Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual: The British Monarchy and the Invention of Tradition,' in Hobsbawm and Ranger, *op. cit.*, pp. 101-64, Felix Driver and David Gilbert, *Imperial Metropolis. Landscape, Space and Performance in London, 1850-1950* (London: University of London, 1997) and idem. (eds) *Imperial Cities: Landscape, Display and Identity* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999).

² The Jewish Legion also had a domestic purpose in Britain. It was used, quite unsuccessfully, by the Home Office as a way of enlisting Russian born Jews who did not wish to join the British army, and had become the subject of anti-alien and anti-Semitic hostility in British society. Cesarani, 'An Embattled Minority', pp. 65-71, Kadish, *op. cit.*, 223-226.

³ See, for example, Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann: The Making of a Statesman*, pp. 213-265.

⁴ See, for example, *Ibid.*, D. Edward Knox, 'Weizmann's First Visit to Palestine,' *Wiener Library Bulletin*, vol. 28, no.33 (1975) pp. 2-13, Elias Gilner, *War and Hope: A History of the Jewish Legion* (New York: Herzl Press, 1969), Donald H. Miller, *A History of Hadassah, 1912-1935* (Ph.D. dissertation, New York University, 1968) Ch. 4, Carol Bosworth Kutscher, *The Early Years of Hadassah, 1912-1921* (Ph.D. dissertation, Brandeis University, 1976) pp. 179-190, 213, Evyatar Friesel, *Ha-Medinyut ha-Tsionit le-ahar hats'harat Balfour, 1917-1922* [Zionist policy after the Balfour Declaration, 1917-1922] (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 1977) Ch.

the British Government for the purpose of signifying and representing one overarching discourse of Jewish national rebirth, which was mediated through visual and written texts. In short, they were intended not so much for any practical purpose, but to perform a show for world Jewry, convincing it that the British had genuinely inaugurated a new epoch of Jewish national life. In my analysis of this process, I will further augment my contention that the Government Zionist's propaganda was determined by a nationalist/Zionist understanding of Jewish identity. This chapter will demonstrate that the nature of this performance, and the edifices that were chosen to represent national revival, were defined by what was believed to signpost national life in the interlinked realms of European nationalist and Zionist thought during this period,⁵ and was communicated through Zionist discourses of culture, history, space and gender. In particular, I will draw attention to the way in which the existing Zionist landscape of Palestine, its urban and agricultural sites of national transformation, and its population of pioneers, the quintessential symbol of the Zionist project, were used as the stage and actors to visibly represent and validate the narrative of rebirth and liberation under British auspices.

This propaganda show was the primary purpose for which the Zionist Commission, the Medical Unit and the Jewish Legion were permitted to go to Palestine by the British Government. Reflecting the limits and objectives of the Government's wartime policy towards the Zionist movement, which we have outlined in the previous chapters, these Zionist ventures would not be permitted to undertake any political steps that might further commit the Government to Zionism, or complicate its own interests in Palestine. Although it is not the focus of this chapter, I will suggest that this deliberate obstruction was not, as has

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⁵ On the integral relationship between Zionism and European culture, see, for example, Avineri, *op. cit.*, Derek J. Penslar, *Zionism and Technocracy: The Engineering of Jewish Settlement in Palestine, 1870-1918* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1991) and Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture and West European Jewry before the First World War*.

previously been thought, a product of the ambivalence, if not outright anti-Zionism, of the British military administration in Palestine, the Occupied Enemy Territory Administration (South).⁶ Rather, this policy was wholly in accordance with the wishes of the War Cabinet, whose pre-eminent concern during the war was to convey the impression that the Balfour Declaration meant the restoration of the Jewish nation in Palestine, but without actually doing anything to that end.

5:1 A Visible Symbol of the British/Zionist Entente- The Zionist Commission

In order for the performance of Jewish national rebirth to be acted out on the stage of national self, Palestine, a visible symbol and agent of this restoration had to be created. To this end, a Zionist Commission was dispatched to Palestine in March 1918, arriving on 3 April.⁷ It had been proposed by the Zionist leadership as early as November 1917 and had specified practical objectives, such as co-ordinating relief work in Palestine and to help ameliorate relations with the Arab population and the French authorities.⁸ However, it was considered to be necessary and urgent by the War Cabinet's Middle East Committee primarily due to its perceived propaganda value. The Committee, which was chaired by Balfour and included Lord Curzon, Sykes and General Macdonogh, stressed the "important political results that had accrued from the declaration of His Majesty's Government to the

⁶ For an example of the traditional Zionist exposition of this view, see Weizmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 272-281. For a riposte to such accusations by a former senior member of the OETA, see Ronald Storrs, *Orientations* (London: Ivor Nicholson and Watson, 1937) pp. 423-438. Although in his classic work on Britain during the Mandate period Bernard Wasserstein discounts the traditional Zionist view that the OETA was driven by an acute anti-Zionism, he still sees a sharp dichotomy between the activities and attitudes of the military administration and the War Cabinet's Zionist policy. Undoubtedly, this was the case during the Mandate period, but was not so up until the end of the war. Bernard Wasserstein, *The British in Palestine: The Mandatory Government and the Arab-Jewish Conflict 1917-1929* (Oxford and Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell, 2nd ed., 1991) pp. 11-12, Ch. 1 esp. pp. 24-26, pp. 41-42.

⁷ At the request of the military authorities in Palestine the Commission was detained in Egypt until after the Easter-Passover period, 27 March-2 April 1918. Barzilay and Litvinoff, *The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann*, p. 105.

⁸ Weizmann to Sir Ronald Graham, 17 December 1917, no. 34, Barzilay and Litvinoff, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-29.

Zionists and the need for putting the assurance given in this declaration into practice.”⁹

Weizmann had argued that it “would give a clear indication to the Jews that the Declaration of HM Government is being put into effect, and so help to keep up the enthusiasm which is at present existing, and I am sure it would have a far reaching effect, especially in Russia.”¹⁰

The Commission included the English Zionists Joseph Cowen, Leon Simon and Israel Sieff as Secretary, Dr Eder as a representative of Zangwill’s International Territorialist Organisation, Professor Sylvain Levi of the *Alliance Israelite Universelle*, who was attached at the request of the French Government, and Chaim Weizmann who was made President of the Commission. Attached to the Commission was Aaron Aaronsohn,¹¹ Jules Rosenheck, an official of Baron Edmond Rothschild’s Jewish Colonization Association, David Levontin as the representative of the Anglo-Palestine Bank (Jewish Colonial Trust), Walter Meyer from the USA, who came privately at Weizmann’s request, William Ormsby-Gore as British political officer and Major James de Rothschild, who was enlisted in the 39th Royal Fusiliers and joined the Commission as Ormsby-Gore’s ‘aide-de-camp.’¹² The inclusion of the two French representatives served to placate the French Government due to its desire to have a visible stake in affairs in Palestine. The broad make up of the Commission, including members that were representatives of Jewish organisations that were known for being opposed to the Zionist movement, could be seen as an attempt to create the impression that Britain’s pro-Zionist policy was widely accepted by Jewry as a whole.¹³ Indeed, given the

⁹ ‘Draft Minutes of the Middle East Committee held in Secretary of State’s Room at the Foreign Office, Saturday, 19 January 1918,’ Printed for the War Cabinet, January 1918, PRO FO 371/3394/19932. According to the minutes, the Committee also felt that the Zionist representatives in Palestine and Egypt were currently inadequate and that the British authorities and the Arabs should be brought into contact with “the responsible leaders of the organisation in *Entente* countries.” *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Weizmann to Sir Ronald Graham, 17 December 1917, PRO FO 371/3054/239129.

¹¹ Aaronsohn had returned from the USA with Felix Frankfurter on 16 February 1918. *Ibid.* p. 69.

¹² ‘Notes on Zionism,’ Milner Papers, Weizmann to Ormsby-Gore, 19 February 1918, no. 108, Barzilai and Litvinoff, *op. cit.*, p. 86 and p. viii.

¹³ *Ibid.* The inclusion of Sylvain Levi was used by Sokolow to suggest that “the Alliance Israelite and the

Commission's function as an edifice of meaning, a physical symbol that was to be used to mediate discourse through performance and representation, its membership was of great significance. Its broad make up signified a unified Jewry, united behind the banner of British support for the restoration of Jewish national life in Palestine.

Crucially, though, the Commission had no official representatives from American or Russian Jewry, due, respectively, to the opposition of the American State Department, as America was not at war with Turkey, and the difficulty of leaving Russia at that time.¹⁴ Due to the symbolic purpose of the Zionist Commission, the absence of any official American or Russian representation was a great handicap to the propaganda that Zionists in London and the British Government wished to create for Russian and American Jewry. In particular, it was American Jewry that was of primary concern, as Russian Jewry was considered to be paralysed in the wake of the Bolshevik Revolution.¹⁵

5:2 Exhibiting the American Zionist Medical Unit

In light of the lack of official American Zionist representation on the Zionist Commission the British Government looked to the American Zionist Medical Unit as an alternative way of focusing the gaze of American Jewry on British policy in Palestine. As early as May 1917 Zionists in America had proposed to send a medical unit to be attached to the British army in Egypt in order to undertake relief work as the British forces advanced into Palestine.¹⁶ Initially the War Office stated that such a unit would be of no military value and that due to transportation difficulties it would not be possible for it to travel to the region.

prominent Jews of France hitherto hostile are now quite quiescent". Sokolow to Sykes, June 1918. Z4/177 IV, Papers of the Zionist London Bureau, CZA.

¹⁴ 'Notes on Zionism,' Milner Papers.

¹⁵ Weizmann to Louis Brandeis, 14 January 1918, No. 63, Barzilay and Litvinoff, *op. cit.*, p. 48, Weizmann to Ormsby-Gore, 30 January 1918, No. 86, *Ibid.* p. 74, Sykes to Clayton, 24 May 1918, PRO FO 371/3392/93985.

¹⁶ Mr Barclay, Washington to FO, 30 May 1917, PRO FO 371/3057/108146.

But, it soon withdrew its opposition in the face of Balfour's insistence that, "the employment of this Unit in conjunction with His Majesty's Forces in Egypt would, in his opinion, have a political effect of a far reaching character not only in the United States but among the Jewish communities throughout the world."¹⁷ By 1918 the Medical Unit had not yet been organised, but the British desire to visibly endorse its pro-Zionist policy in the wake of the Declaration, and in light of the Carasso scheme, meant that the Foreign Office was especially keen for it to be sent to Palestine. Sykes considered that "if a Zionist unit went it would be very advantageous in identifying USA with Zionism and strengthen the hands of the pro-Entente Jews in USA."¹⁸

The Zionist Medical Unit was established by Hadassah, the American women's Zionist organisation,¹⁹ and finally departed for Palestine, via London, in July 1918.²⁰ In total, the Unit had forty members, including nurses, physicians, specialists and representatives of the Zionist Organization of America and Hadassah.²¹ Although the ostensible purpose of the Medical Unit was simply to provide medical relief, along with other missions that were being sent by the American Red Cross, it was discussed by Zionists through the discourse of imminent national restoration that had been disseminated in the wake of the Balfour Declaration. It was hailed by one Zionist publication as "the foundation

¹⁷ Secretary to the Army Council, War Office to the Foreign Office, 20 June 1917 and reply from Sir Ronald Graham, Foreign Office to the Secretary to the Army Council, 25 June 1917. PRO FO 371/3057/122874, FO to Sir C. Spring-Rice, Washington 24 July 1917, PRO FO 371/3057/143608.

¹⁸ Sykes to Clayton, 24 May 1918, PRO FO 371/3392/93985. Also see, minute by Harold Nicolson, 7 February 1918, FO 371/3392/23165, Earl Reading, Washington to FO, 28 February 1918, PRO FO 371/3392/38683.

¹⁹ Berkowitz, *Western Jewry and the Zionist Project*, p. 186, Joan Dash, *Summoned to Jerusalem- The Life of Henrietta Szold* (New York, Hagerstown, San Francisco, London: Harper & Row, 1979) p. 116.

²⁰ Anon., report, 4 July 1918, PRO FO 371/3092/118026. Once the Zionist Medical Unit arrived in London in May 1918, the Foreign Office noted that, "considerable importance is attributed to the early arrival of this unit in Palestine." Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to General Macdonogh, Director of Military Intelligence, 6 July 1918, PRO FO 371/3392/117497.

²¹ Eliahu Lewin-Epstein was made the head of Medical Unit, which made it possible for a senior Zionist to be able to work with the Zionist Commission upon its arrival in Palestine.

for the Department of Public Health of the future Jewish State.”²²

The British Government and the Zionist leadership in London consciously endeavoured to use the Medical Unit as a means of endorsing this discourse of national rebirth. Thus, when the Unit visited London on its way to Palestine it was utilised as a publicly displayed symbol, constructed as an edifice of meaning for the Jewish reader. To this end, on 14 July 1918 a mass meeting to officially welcome the Medical Unit was held by both the British Government and the Zionist leadership at the London Opera House,²³ the site of the original celebration of the Declaration, which in itself tied it to the discourse of national restoration.²⁴ Indeed, this event was represented as a re-affirmation of the Balfour Declaration.²⁵ It included speakers from the War Cabinet, the House of Commons, the Zionist leadership in London, and the Medical Unit itself.²⁶

Through this display the Zionist Medical Unit was encoded as a totem of both British and American support of the regeneration of Palestine, through Zionism, and could thus be seen as a tangible result of the Balfour Declaration. Beneath this perception of the Medical Unit as a significant instrument and symbol of regeneration lay the conception that Western knowledge of science, health and hygiene constituted the basis of any modern nation, if not civilization in general. This discourse was a fundamental part of the Zionist self-image, of a Western movement civilizing the backward and degenerate Orient, and was utilized by

²² ‘The Medical Unit and Its Mission,’ *The Maccabean* July 1918.

²³ The Medical Unit was also personally welcomed by Balfour when it was introduced by Sokolow on 28 June. Balfour was said to have declared that, “Palestine had made a unique contribution to humanity and its destruction 1,900 years before was one of the injustices the Allied powers were trying to correct. Balfour expressed the hope that Jews would return to live a full national life.” Weizmann, Tel-Aviv to Sokolow, London, 15 July 1918, no. 230, Barzilay and Litvinoff, *op. cit.*, p. 227, n. 1.

²⁴ This point was made in the speech given by Nahum Sokolow. ‘Re-Affirming the Declaration: British Government Welcomes the Hadassah Unit,’ *The Zionist Review*, vol. II, no. 4 (August 1918) p. 65.

²⁵ *Ibid.* Also see *Jewish Chronicle*, 19 July 1918.

²⁶ ‘Re-Affirming the Declaration: British Government Welcomes the Hadassah Unit,’ *The Zionist Review*, vol. II, no. 4 (August 1918) pp. 64, 65.

speakers at the Opera House, as they attempted to demonstrate the symbolic function and importance of the Unit in the restoration of the nation in Palestine.²⁷ Overall, the Zionist Medical Unit as a vehicle of representation, embodying the interlinked narratives of modern medicine, science, power and Western civilization, Ottoman stagnation, British liberation and the humanistic essence of the Zionist project, was clear from the speech of George Barnes M.P., the representative of the British War Cabinet:

I want to welcome them [the Zionist Medical Unit] because they are taking health, hope and succour to peoples long down-trodden. They are about to apply their skill, knowledge and science to the rescue of a land which is the shrine of all that is best in modern civilization. For three hundred years Palestine has suffered from Ottoman oppression. It is a great thought that the first definite act of Zionism is to go East and to take part in the realization of a great ideal for the uplifting of all people, irrespective of class, creed or conditions of any kind whatsoever. It is a great idea, and I congratulate our visitors on being pioneers in its achievements. You are going to lay that basis of sanitation and healthy life which is the chief foundation of civilization. The work of the Unit is of interest not only to the Jewish race but to the whole world. The land they are visiting is a land holy to all of us. It has been the privilege of the Allies to rescue this land from the sacrilegious hands of Germans and Turks.²⁸

In addition to the Medical Unit, and therefore Zionism, being framed as a bearer of civilization for a regenerated Palestine, it was necessarily placed within the discourse of Jewish national renaissance. Colonel J. Wedgewood exclaimed during his speech of welcome, "For twenty centuries the Jews have survived in spite of every persecution. You are going to do something even greater than lay the foundation of a Hebrew University. You are to lay a foundation-stone to convert a race into a nation- more than a nation, an inter-nation. You Jews come from all quarters of the globe. In Palestine you are to set up your own house."²⁹

²⁷ See the comments by Lord Rothschild and Leon Simon, *Ibid.* pp. 64, 66.

²⁸ 'Re-Affirming the Declaration: British Government Welcomes the Hadassah Unit,' *The Zionist Review*, vol. II, no. 4 (August 1918) p.65.

²⁹ *Ibid.* p. 66.

5:3 Performance and the Discourse of National Liberation in Palestine- The Zionist Commission

Despite the attention that would be given to the Hadassah Medical Unit in British and Zionist propaganda,³⁰ it was the Zionist Commission that was utilized as the pre-eminent symbol of Jewish national restoration. The Commission could be seen as the official and political representation of the Zionist movement and the paramount symbol of its entente with the British Government.³¹ Its function as a visible sign of pro-Zionist British policy in praxis manifested itself through a series of theatrical acts, determined and represented through the codes and language of the Zionist discourse of history, culture and landscape, that visually marked Palestine as the site and stage of national re-birth under the auspices of the civilized British liberator. These acts therefore built upon the visual representation of Zionist discourse that had been undertaken by the Ministry of Information prior to the arrival of the Commission, but introduced the British as the visible active instrument of change.³² As the visual element was a fundamental aspect of this theatrical performance its representation in film and photography was equally important. These images were not used to transparently convey what took place in Palestine, but functioned as a means of encoding meaning through

³⁰ This included a film of the Medical Unit. 'Report of Meeting of Propaganda Committee, 14th December-30 June 1918, Zionist Organisation, (London Bureau),' Z4/243, Papers of the London Zionist Bureau, CZA. Unfortunately, however, no copies of this film remain in the film archives of the Ministry of Information.

³¹ The Foreign Office considered it "most important" to "obtain authority for [the] commission in [the] eyes of [the] Jewish world". F.O. to Wingate, Cairo, 13 February 1918, 148/5/3, Reginald Wingate Papers, Sudan Archive, University of Durham. The official nature of the Commission and the degree of importance that was attached to it by the British Government was emphasized by the meeting of Weizmann, the President of the Commission, with King George V prior to its departure for Palestine on 4 March 1918, which had been arranged at the initiative of Sykes. Weizmann, London to Aaron Aaronsohn, Washington, 16 January 1918, no. 66, Barzilay and Litvinoff, *op. cit.*, p. 56, Weizmann, Paris to Brandeis, Washington, 5 March 1918, no. 121, *Ibid.* p. 96. This meeting was used to show the official nature of the Commission and was stressed, for example, by Felix Frankfurter in a reported public address that he gave in Washington upon his return from England in May 1918. See, for example, *The American Jewish Chronicle*, 10 May, 1918.

³² The activities of the Zionist Commission were visually documented in photographs and film from the moment of its arrival. 'The arrival of Dr Weizmann, Chairman of the Zionist Commission, at G.H.Q. Palestine, 24 May 1918,' Q.13183, 'The arrival of members of the Zionist Commission at G.H.Q. Palestine,' 3rd April 1918, Q13184, Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum. 'Arrival of Zionist Commission,' IWM 30- Reel 2 and 'The New Zionist Commission in Palestine' IWM 45- Reel 2, Film Archive, Imperial War Museum. On the urgent need for reports on the Commission following its arrival, see Sykes to Ormsby-Gore, 20 March 1918, 148/7/19, Wingate Papers.

a selective re-presentation of the activities of the Commission, utilizing codes and iconic language that were defined and framed within the wider discourse of national restoration.³³ One aspect of this process was that through these texts, the spectator of the events in which the Commission participated was transformed into a significant actor, acting as a visible testimony to the ideology of the image.³⁴ The depiction of the Jewish population's response to the Commission had an important function in both the attempt to inspire the Jewish reader and to substantiate the image of the British as the welcomed liberator, justifying the permanent expulsion of the Ottoman Empire. As Sykes remarked with regard to visual propaganda for the Christian audience, "Line should be to explode theory of Turkish indispensability and exhibit simplicity of our task owing to general goodwill."³⁵ Therefore, Hyamson wrote to Weizmann that as part of "the general demand for Palestine information" there was a necessary need for Palestine films, "especially of demonstrations in which [the] Commission participates."³⁶

As a theatrical performance of national redemption, the Zionist Commission was filmed and photographed for the audience of world Jewry from the very moment of its arrival,³⁷ depicting it as a moment of historical significance and as a cause for national celebration.³⁸ The photographic and film propaganda that followed documented a series of

³³ On how meaning is encoded in visual representation through the use of iconic signs, or discursive language, see Hall, 'Encoding, Decoding,' pp. 91, 95.

³⁴ This relates to Daniels and Cosgrove's discussion of the role of the spectator in Renaissance Venetian narrative painting, but is equally applicable to representations of the theatrical performances that are discussed here. Daniels and Cosgrove, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

³⁵ FO to General Clayton, Jerusalem, 21 March 1918, PRO FO 395/237/52848.

³⁶ Hyamson, Ministry of Information to Weizmann, Zionist Commission, Jerusalem, 5 April 1918, Z4/177 II, Papers of the London Zionist Bureau, CZA.

³⁷ 'The arrival of members of the Zionist Commission at G.H.Q. Palestine,' 3rd April 1918, Q13184, Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum. 'Arrival of Zionist Commission,' IWM 30- Reel 2 and 'The New Zionist Commission in Palestine' IWM 45- Reel 2, Film Archive, Imperial War Museum.

³⁸ On the arrival of the Zionist Commission in Tel Aviv and then Jerusalem as events of great significance, meeting an overwhelming response from the Jewish population, see 'The Commission in Palestine,' *Jewish Chronicle*, 26 April 1918.

staged spectacles that cast both the agricultural and urban visions of the embryonic Jewish national home as sites of this discourse, mapping ideology through geographical representation.

This effort to represent the Yishuv as being overwhelmed in its enthusiastic response to the symbol of British support for the Zionist project was soon undertaken after the Zionist Commission's arrival in the Yishuv in April 1918, with an organized tour of the Jewish colonies. A consistent theme of the reports of these staged events was of a joyful and rapturous welcome. In one account, it was stated that, "Arches and Banners, addresses of welcome, singing by school children, services of thanksgiving greeted the Commission in each Colony. It was as if each element of the Community, from the Yemenites to the leaders of the Colony, had endeavoured to outdo the other in manifestation of respect and in expressions of joy for the new era which the advent of the Commission symbolised."³⁹ The nature of the symbolism of the Commission, heralding a new era in Palestine, was communicated through the re-presentation of these staged visits to Zionist schools and colonies. In keeping with the Zionist emphasis on youth and the educational institutions which were creating the New Jew in Palestine,⁴⁰ the Commission was photographed at a school at *Nes Zionah* (The Flag of Zion). [Figure 1]

³⁹ W.E.M. 'Visit of the Zionist Commission to the Judean Colonies,' Tel Aviv, 24 May 1918, Z4/1731, Papers of the London Zionist Bureau, CZA, Walter E. Myers, 'Assistant to the Chairman of the Commission, The Colonies of Liberated Judaea- Notes on a Trip Made by the Zionist Commission Through Some of the Judaeian Colonies,' *The Maccabean*, October 1918.

⁴⁰ Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture and West European Jewry before the First World War*, Ch. 4 and 6.



Figure 1: 'The tour of the Zionist Commission through the Jewish Colonies. Outside the school at Nes Zionah. 16th April 1918' Q.13192, Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum.

In this image, Weizmann, along with other members of the Commission, is shown at the centre of a crammed gathering of Jewish youth, the future of the Jewish national home. Standing next to Weizmann is Edwin Samuel, who was attached to the Commission as a liaison officer to the army.⁴¹ Dressed in military uniform, he visually represented the British army of occupation. The image of him smiling, holding a baby, at ease with and welcomed by the Jewish community was in direct contrast to the ubiquitous characterization of the brutal Ottoman soldier. It implied that the Zionist project, the creation of a new national culture and society, as encapsulated in the New Jew that was born and educated in Palestine, was safe and happy in the hands of the British soldier. The overall visual impact of this picture was of a community that welcomed British occupation, which in the context of the British support of the Zionist movement and the depiction of the Turk as an iniquitous oppressor, could be understood as a glorious liberation.

⁴¹ Segev, *op. cit.*, p. 70, Edwin Samuel, *A Lifetime in Jerusalem: The Memoirs of the Second Viscount Samuel* (London: Valentine, Mitchell, 1970) pp. 37-38.



Figure 2: 'Zionist Commission in Palestine. Banquet in the Palm Alley under the wine cellars. Rishon-le-Zion. 16th April 1918,' Q.13194, Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum

In addition to visiting Zionist schools, the Commission visited agricultural settlements. On 16 April 1918 it attended a large banquet in Rishon-le-Zion which was held in its honour and was prepared and served by the women of the colony. The feast was held in Palm Alley under the vines, amidst the palm trees and greenery of this part of the colony. The images that were taken of this event again re-enforced the visual representation of the ideals of Zionism and its desired self-image of Jewish life in Palestine. The depiction of the "fair maidens of the colony in attendance"⁴², serving but separate from the men, on the periphery of this theatrical event, illustrated the "heirarchical polarization of the sexes" apparent in Zionist discourse.⁴³ Overall, this re-presentation depicted a vibrant colony at one with a

⁴² Leon Simon, 'With the Zionist Commission- IV. The Judean Colonies,' *The Zionist Review*, vol. II, No. 6 (October 1918) p. 94.

⁴³ Michael Gluzman, 'Longing for Heterosexuality: Zionism and Sexuality in Herzl's *Altneuland*' (in Hebrew) *Theory and Criticism*, no. 11 (Winter, 1997) pp. 145-162 quoted and discussed in Silberstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 198-199. Also see Matti Bunzl, 'Theodor Herzl's Zionism as Gendered Discourse' in Robertson and Timms, *op. cit.*, pp. 82-83. On gender polarization in European national culture, see George L. Mosse, *Nationalism and*

blooming, green natural environment, symbolising the redemption of the land. It was a successful example of Zionist agricultural life. The purity of the colonists, in touch with and transformed by nature, was signified by the woman to the right of the picture, dressed in a white tunic that is tied with a belt adorned with leaves and flowers. This image reflected the wider discourse of the transformative effect of life in the colonies, the creation of a normative national type.⁴⁴ Altogether, this depiction of a Jewish colony, the pride of Zionist culture, welcoming the Zionist Commission through ceremonious celebration functioned as a display of the mythical *Halutz* [pioneer], the seed of the new society, visibly endorsing the new bond between Zionism and imperial Britain.

The New Jew, whether a school child or colonist, was a consistent and prominent character of the symbolic visits and acts of the Zionist Commission which were documented by the official British photographers and cinematographers that accompanied them. In the Commission's official visits to the town the New Jew was represented by the participation of the Maccabee youth, the Zionist athletic organisation. The Maccabee represented the bond between the Jewish nation and sport, health and fitness, at a time when the state of the body was seen to mirror the condition of the inner-self.⁴⁵ In line with Max Nordau's call for *Muskeljudentum* [muscular Jewry], of steely-eyed, strong men, in response to the anti-Semitic European conception, appropriated by Zionists, of the Jewish male as effeminate and weak,⁴⁶

Sexuality- Respectability and Abnormal Sexuality in Modern Europe (New York: Fertig 1985) Ch. 5, pp. 90-113.

⁴⁴ Captain Redcliffe N. Salaman, M.D. to Mrs Salaman, 28 July 1918, in, Redcliffe Salaman, M.D, *Palestine Reclaimed: Letters from a Jewish Officer in Palestine- with an introduction by The Hon. William Ormsby-Gore, M.P.* (London: Routledge, 1920) p. 37.

⁴⁵ Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture and West European Jewry before the First World War*, pp. 106-107. Also see Mosse, *Toward the Final Solution*.

⁴⁶ Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*, p. 144 and Daniel Boyarin, *Unheroic Conduct: The Rise of Heterosexuality and the Invention of the Jewish Man* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California 1997) p. 277. On the concept of *Muskeljudentum* in Zionist thought, also see David Biale, *Eros and the Jews: From Biblical Israel to America* (New York: Basic Books, 1992) pp. 177-179, Shmuel Almog, *Zionism and History: The Rise of a New Jewish Consciousness* (New York and Jerusalem: St Martin's Press and The Magnes Press, 1987) pp. 108-118, Anita Shapira, *Land and Power: The Zionist Resort to Force, 1881-1948* (New York

sport and gymnastics had come to be an important part of Zionist culture and the creation of the new Jewish man.⁴⁷ The Zionist gymnastic organisations such as Bar Kochba in Germany⁴⁸ and Maccabee in Palestine were a symbol and agency of the regeneration of the Jewish male after the model defined by the dominant European discourse of masculinity and nationalism, the two being intrinsically linked during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Athletics and gymnastics were the physical expression of the new Jewish man. However, in the ceremonial demonstrations that accompanied the arrival and symbolic acts of the Zionist Commission the Maccabee did not solely act as a sports association but functioned as the aesthetic representation of the tropes of militarist nationalism, the symbolic guardians of the new Jewish national home. This symbolism was embodied in its very name, Maccabee, after the Maccabean warriors that regained Jewish national sovereignty from the Hellenising rule of the Syrian Greek Antiochus Epiphanes in the second century B.C.E. Although, the warrior, as embodied in Judah Ha-Maccabee, was far from celebrated in traditional Rabbinic Judaism, its metaphorical value was of particular importance in Zionist culture and discourse as it encapsulated the values of strength, activism and masculinity that were so central to European nationalist thought.⁴⁹

This discourse was acted out in a ceremonial march in Tel-Aviv on 6 April that was performed to signify the welcome of the Zionist Commission and the inauguration of an era of national rebirth. Symbolizing the metaphor of Return, the Torah scrolls that had been hidden outside of the city during the war were paraded from a triumphal arch that was erected at the gates of Tel-Aviv. Evincing the militarist discourse that permeated Europe during the

and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992) p. 13.

⁴⁷ Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture and West European Jewry*, pp. 99-118.

⁴⁸ See *Ibid.* p. 108, Mark H. Gelber, *Melancholy Pride- Nation, Race, and Gender in the German Literature of Cultural Zionism* (Tübingen: Max Miemeyer Verlag, 2000) pp. 59-60.

⁴⁹ Boyarin, *op. cit.*, pp. 273-274. Also, see Gelber, *op. cit.*, pp. 66-67, Shapira, *op. cit.*, p. 14, Eliezer Don-Yehiya, 'Hanukkah and the Myth of the Maccabees in Zionist ideology and Israeli Society,' *The Jewish Journal of Jewish Sociology* vol. 34 (1992) pp. 5-24.

war, the Maccabee youth, dressed in its white uniforms, welcomed the Commission to Tel Aviv with this march through the town, carrying banners, draped in nationalist symbols and slogans.



Figure 3: Q.13203, Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum

In Figure 3, the chapter from the Jewish settlement Petach Tikvah holds aloft its banner, proudly depicting the Magen David and the motto, "Healthy Body, Healthy Soul." The visual representation of this procession depicted key tenets of Zionist discourse, Jewish empowerment, pride and a vibrant, healthy and idealistic new Jewish youth that was produced and lived on the national soil. Moreover, it marked Tel-Aviv, the new Jewish city, as both the theatrical stage and embodiment of this new Zionist culture, a space that imbibed the purity, hygiene and idealism of the white clad Maccabee youth. Primarily, though, this image functioned as a visual document of the spontaneous and elative response of the pioneers of Zionist culture and society in Palestine to the Zionist Commission, which

symbolized the Balfour Declaration and British support of the Zionist movement.⁵⁰ In this sense, the visual depiction of this procession, along with the overall reception of the Commission by the Yishuv, was a part of the wider effort to show Jewry as being overwhelmed by its fervent support for the British declaration, as depicted in pamphlets, press, film and photography.



Figure 4: 'The Reception to the Commander-in-Chief, Sir E.H.H. Allenby, in Jerusalem, by the Jewish Community, 24th May 1918. Guard of Honour of the Members of the Makkabi Athletic Association (Jewish Boy Scouts),' Q13211, Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum

The theatrical celebration of British liberation was also acted out in a ceremony that was held in Jerusalem on 24 May 1918. The militarist depiction of the Maccabee youth was

⁵⁰ See Leon Simon, 'With the Zionist Commission. (1) First Impressions,' 8 April 1918, *The Zionist Review*, vol. II, no. 3 (July 1918) p. 39.

explicit in this carefully choreographed reception of the Jewish community for General Allenby and the British forces.⁵¹ During the ceremony, the Maccabee maintained order and in Figure 4, which was distributed by the Ministry of Information, were framed as Allenby's "Guard of Honour." In this image they are shown in uniform, standing to attention and saluting the British General, reflecting the tropes of military discipline. Again this image demonstrated the popular reception of the British forces as an army of liberation (behind the Guard of Honour is a large banner with the Hebrew words *b'ruchim haba'im* [welcome]) and implied a mutual recognition through the motifs of military ceremony.

This image served to appropriate and represent the Jewish community and the city of Jerusalem as a Zionist space, which marginalized both the non-Jewish population but also the non-Zionist religious Jewish population. The traditional Jews of Jerusalem made up the majority of the Jewish population of this city that featured so prominently in the Western imagination of Palestine. Not only were they not Zionist, but within Zionist discourse they functioned as the binary opposite of the New Jew that was being created in the Zionist colonies.⁵² The Orthodox Jews of Jerusalem were commonly described as being weak, emaciated, idle, dependent on charity from the Diaspora and living in unsanitary conditions.⁵³ Given this negative perception of the Orthodox Jewish population of Jerusalem it is not surprising that the Zionist Commission used a Maccabee Guard of Honour, the proud product of the Zionist colony, to officially welcome General Allenby in Jerusalem. The Zionist nature

⁵¹ For a description of this ceremony, see Chaim Weizmann, Tel-Aviv to Vera Weizmann, London, 26 May 1918, no.207, Barzilay and Litvinoff, *op. cit.*, p. 196. The ceremony as a whole was recorded in film and photographs that were disseminated by the Ministry of Information. See, Q.13206, Q.13207, Q.13208, Q.13209, Q.13210, Q.13211, Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum and 'Arrival of Zionist Commission,' IWM 30-Reel 2, Film Archive, Imperial War Museum.

⁵² Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture and West European Jewry before the First World War*, p. 160.

⁵³ See, for example, Ormsby-Gore, 'Report on the existing Political Situation in Palestine and Contiguous Areas by the Political Officer in charge of the Zionist Commission, August 1918,' 26 August 1918 FO 371/3339/147225, Jabotinsky, 'Hebrew Schoolwork,' and 'No Idlers,' 1918, FO 395/237/125849, 146793, Captain Salaman, Medical Officer, 38th Battalion, Royal Fusiliers, Palestine to Mrs Salaman, 28 July 1918, p. 36.

of the ceremony as a whole allowed Weizmann to describe it as “a magnificent Jerusalem display.”⁵⁴ But, the fabricated nature of this representation of Jerusalem as a Zionist space was clear from the film of the ceremony that was made by the Ministry of Information. Behind the lines of pristine Maccabee youth that lined the crowd and constituted Allenby’s “Guard of Honour,” one sees a throbbing crowd made up of traditionally dressed Orthodox Jews.⁵⁵

Through the carefully cropped photographs of this event the Jewish reader in Britain, America, South America and elsewhere saw a different Jerusalem, a space that was shaped to reflect the values of Zionist culture and discourse. This is not to say that Jerusalem was devoid of Zionist activity and work. After all, some of the most significant symbols of pre-war Zionist culture, the Bezalel School of Arts and Crafts, the Jewish National Museum and the National Library, were located in Jerusalem.⁵⁶ But in the main, the centres of Zionist activity in the Yishuv during this period were in the agricultural colonies and Tel Aviv, where tellingly, the Zionist Commission had its headquarters. However, much was to be gained by appropriating Jerusalem as a Zionist space through visual and textual representation for non-Jewish as well as Jewish audiences. Such ceremonies should be seen in the wider context of the Zionist Commission’s efforts to establish a set of *fait accompli*, constituting the *de facto* basis of the national home, that would help to influence the outcome of the expected Peace Conference in its favour.⁵⁷ These included a land acquisition scheme in southern Palestine and the symbolic appropriation and recognition of Jerusalem as the centre of the national home, through the purchase of the site of the Wailing Wall and the foundation of the Hebrew

⁵⁴ Weizmann, Tel-Aviv to Vera Weizmann, London, 26 May 1918, no. 207, Barzilay and Litvinoff *op. cit.*, p. 197.

⁵⁵ See ‘Arrival of Zionist Commission,’ IWM 30- Reel 2, Film Archive, Imperial War Museum.

⁵⁶ See Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture and West European Jewry before the First World War*, pp.139-142, 160.

⁵⁷ William Ormsby-Gore, ‘Report on the Existing Political Situation in Palestine and Contiguous Areas by the Political Officer in charge of the Zionist Commission, August 1918,’ PRO FO 371/3339/147225.

University on Mount Scopus.⁵⁸

But despite Weizmann's efforts to persuade Balfour of the propaganda value of the land acquisition⁵⁹ and Wailing Wall schemes,⁶⁰ the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs did not wish to commit the British Government to such politically charged and delicate matters.⁶¹ Rather, it was felt that the foundation of the Hebrew University was a sufficient enough symbol of the British Government's pro-Zionist policy,⁶² and of course, unlike the other two proposals it involved no clear political commitments.⁶³ For both the British and Zionist leadership in London, the laying of the foundation stones of the University was therefore a part of the wider attempt to convince world Jewry of the sincerity of the Government's pledge to facilitate the creation of a Jewish national home. Balfour stated in a letter to Weizmann that, "by itself [the University] should constitute a visible sign to the world that a new era in Palestine has been initiated."⁶⁴ As determined by the objectives of the War Cabinet's Zionist policy, it was the projection of this myth of a "new era in Palestine" that was its overwhelming concern. Balfour and his colleagues had no intention whatsoever of allowing the Zionists to do anything in Palestine that might have any serious political

⁵⁸ See Weizmann and Israel Sieff, Zionist Commission, Tel-Aviv to Sokolow, London, 18 April 1918, no. 165, Barzilay and Litvinoff, *op. cit.*, p. 141 and Weizmann, Zionist Commission, Tel-Aviv to Balfour, F.O., 30 May 1918, no. 208, *Ibid.* pp. 197-206.

⁵⁹ This scheme was intended to pave the way to bringing "crown, waste and unoccupied lands" in southern Palestine, which for Weizmann included almost all of this part of the country, "under cultivation by Jewish labour." *Ibid.* At the recommendation of Ormsby-Gore, land purchase in the region had been unofficially prohibited by the military administration since May 1918. Although changes of ownership continued to take place the pace and scope of Jewish land purchase was held back by a lack of funds. Kenneth Stein, *The Land Question in Palestine, 1917-1939* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1984) pp. 37, 40-41. It would seem that Weizmann's scheme was intended to circumvent this on-going problem.

⁶⁰ Weizmann, Zionist Commission, Tel-Aviv to Balfour, FO, 30 May 1918, no. 208, Barzilay and Litvinoff, *op. cit.*, pp. 204-205.

⁶¹ At the same time, although the Wailing Wall was not legally appropriated by the Zionist Organization it could still be used as a symbol and site of national return in the wake of British liberation. See the newsreel produced to record the visit by the Zionist Commission, IWM 45, Film Archive, Imperial War Museum

⁶² Balfour, FO to Weizmann, Zionist Commission, 26 July 1918, PRO FO 371/3395/125475.

⁶³ Nevertheless, Weizmann tried to persuade Brandeis that "it would mark a political step of first importance." Weizmann, London to Brandeis, Washington, 14 January 1918, no. 63, Barzilay and Litvinoff, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

⁶⁴ Balfour, FO to Weizmann, 26 July 1918. PRO FO 371/3395/125475.

ramifications. The rejection of the Wailing Wall and land schemes was not therefore derived from the opposition of the military administration alone,⁶⁵ but was fully in line with the desires of the War Cabinet.

The depiction of Jerusalem as a Zionist space and indeed the centre of the national home that was promised by the British Declaration was therefore reduced to the laying of the foundation stones of the Hebrew University on Mount Scopus on 24 July 1918. The idea of a Jewish University had first been proposed by Professor Herman Shapira at the Second Zionist Congress in 1898 and had become an important plank of the cultural programme of the Democratic Faction that was founded in 1902 by Martin Buber, Berthold Feivel and Weizmann. The project had been resurrected upon the eve of the war and in 1913 the eleventh Zionist Congress had adopted a resolution supporting the establishment of a Hebrew University in Jerusalem.⁶⁶ It was considered that such an institution was the next logical step in the creation of an educational infrastructure of the Yishuv, was essential for the scientific and modern development of the new society in Palestine and would constitute a symbolic centre of Hebrew culture.⁶⁷ In a letter to Weizmann in August 1918, that was released for publication, Achad Ha'am wrote, "the brighter the prospects for the re-establishment of our National Home in Palestine, the more urgent is the need for laying the spiritual foundations of that home on a corresponding scale, which can only be conceived in the form of a Hebrew University."⁶⁸ The European conception of the university as the zenith of national culture and one of the defining conduits and manifestations of civilisation, led Jabotinsky to write in

⁶⁵ On the accusation, made by Zionists at the time, that the Wailing Wall scheme had failed due to the deliberate obstruction of Ronald Storrs, the Governor of Jerusalem, see Storrs, *op. cit.*, p. 426.

⁶⁶ See Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann: The Making of a Zionist Leader*, pp.375-401. Also see Myers, *op. cit.*, Ch.2.

⁶⁷ See, for example, Bertram B. Benas, 'The Meaning of a Hebrew University,' in Harry Sacher (ed.), *Zionism and the Jewish Future* (London: John Murray, 1916) pp. 190-195.

⁶⁸ Achad Ha'am to Weizmann, 12 August 1918, quoted in Ben Zion Mossinsohn, 'A Hebrew University in Jerusalem,' *The Menorah Journal*, vol. 4, No. 6 (December 1918)..

an article for the Ministry of Information, "In Palestine herself the University will definitely secure our moral position as the foremost civilising element, thus helping to counterbalance in political matters our temporary numerical inferiority."⁶⁹ Similar to the perceived relationship between the Berlin University and German national culture,⁷⁰ a Hebrew University was seen to be the ultimate emanation of the national spirit, bringing together the essential elements of national culture, the soil, *bildung*, language and national genius in the renaissance of the nation.⁷¹

The theatrical ceremony of the laying of the foundation stones was therefore utilized as a key symbol of the discourse of national re-birth, with film and photographs of the event being taken and distributed by the Ministry of Information.⁷² Twelve stones, representing the twelve tribes of Ancient Israel,⁷³ were to be laid, signifying the connection between the Golden Age of national sovereignty and this moment of national renaissance. In line with the function of the ceremony, and the discourse of imminent national re-birth of which it was a part, symbolizing a seminal turning point in the past, present and future of the Jewish people, the last stone was laid by four young boys and girls who represented "the next generation," described by one onlooker as "a delicious and prophetic climax."⁷⁴ At the culmination of the

⁶⁹ Vladimir Jabotinsky, 'The Hebrew University,' c. August 1918, PRO FO 395/237/146793.

⁷⁰ On the relationship between the Berlin University and the renaissance of German national culture as an illustration of the role that would be played by the Hebrew University, see Sacher, *A Hebrew University for Jerusalem*, p. 10.

⁷¹ See, for example, Ben Zion Mossinsohn, *op. cit.*, pp. 329-336.

⁷² 'Laying the twelve foundation stones of the Hebrew University on Mount Scopus near Jerusalem. Arrival of Major General Sir A.W. Money, Dr. C. Weizmann, and others. 24 July 1918,' Q.13212, Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum. 'Wine Industry and Laying of the Foundation Stone of the Jewish Universities [sic]. . .,' Film Archive, Imperial War Museum. Although these pictures were used to document the event, the actual scene of the stone laying was not included in the film that was distributed.

⁷³ At the ceremony an extra stone was laid by Weizmann "in the name of Zionism." Segev, *op. cit.*, p. 74. However, due to the symbolic function of the ceremony it was referred to as the laying of twelve foundation stones. See, for example, "Laying the twelve foundation stones of the Hebrew University on Mount Scopus near Jerusalem. Arrival of Major General Sir A.W. Money, Dr. C. Weizmann, and others. 24 July 1918,' Q.13212, Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum.

⁷⁴ Captain Redcliffe N. Salaman, Cairo to Mrs Salaman, 28 July 1918 in Salaman, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

ceremony, the emerging ritual of the singing of the Zionist and British national anthems, through which the bond of Zionism and the British nation was expressed through the performance of musical national symbols, was acted out by a Zionist band.

The significance of the ceremony was marked by its location on Mount Scopus, overlooking Jerusalem and the surrounding sites of the national past,⁷⁵ through which national rebirth was validated by the landscape of Ancient national myth. Weizmann wrote, “There was the Dead Sea spread out before us and the mountains of Judaea and Ephraim and Moab looking as if they were amazed at what was taking place.”⁷⁶ The performance of the foundation of the Hebrew University endorsed the discourse of national rebirth by placing it within the atemporal space, or vessel, in which Ancient national myth was eternally bound and inextricably linked. Time, in the national sense, may have been frozen by exile, awaiting its release by national redemption, but it was space that was the guardian of the national past and the site of its destiny. As such, within the nationalist discourse of space and time, an authentic claim of rebirth could only be performed or consummated at the site of its past incarnation.⁷⁷ As Captain Salaman, the British medical officer for the battalions wrote, “no university in all the world has such a site, and none can ever have such a soul-inspiring stimulus which nature and tradition seem to have marked out as a turning-point in the world’s

⁷⁵ This point has been made by Arthur A. Goren in his analysis of the invention of the historical-geography and ceremonies that surrounded the foundation of the University, particularly leading up to and including 1925. However, Goren’s analysis does not focus on the ceremony of 1918 or its construction and representation in relation to the wider discourse of rebirth at the time. Arthur A. Goren, ‘Sanctifying Scopus: Locating the Hebrew University on Mount Scopus,’ in E. Carlebach, J.M. Efron, D.N. Myers (eds) *Jewish History and Jewish Memory- Essays in Honor of Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi* (Hanover and London: Brandeis University Press, 1998) p. 331.

⁷⁶ Chaim Weizmann, Tel-Aviv to Vera Weizmann, 27 July 1918, no. 236, Barzilay and Litvinoff, *op. cit.*, p. 238.

⁷⁷ The function of this constructed space of national collective memory as a validation of the discourse of imminent national re-birth, by linking it with the national golden age, can also be seen in a report of an earlier visit to Mount Scopus by Weizmann and the Commission, that was published in the Ministry of Information sponsored *Zionist Review*. ‘Ivri’ ‘A Link with Isaiah’, *The Zionist Review* (July 1918). Also see V. Jabotinsky, ‘The Zionist Commission at Jerusalem,’ April 1918, PRO FO 395/237/67362, ‘Zionist Commission in Palestine. Jews gathered round the platform on Mount Scopus, the site of the Hebrew University, looking towards the Jordan Valley, Jerusalem,’ Q.13191, Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum.

history. Surely if ever “the law shall go out from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem,” here is its starting place.”⁷⁸ Significantly, Mount Scopus was also the place from which Titus had launched his attack on Jerusalem, symbolically marking the end of Ancient national sovereignty, which would now be the site of national empowerment and Return. Weizmann declared in December 1918, “Here we were, on the very mountain from which Titus destroyed Jerusalem, laying the foundation-stone of this institution which will rebuild a regenerated Judaea.”⁷⁹ In sum, therefore, the foundation ceremony of the Hebrew University was devised and used as a pre-eminent symbol of the true re-birth of the Jewish nation under British auspices, inaugurating a cultural renaissance which would have a radiating effect on Jewish consciousness throughout the Diaspora.⁸⁰

Alongside the Zionist Commission’s attempts to perform the restoration of the Jewish nation, appropriating the land through theatrical performance, it intended to portray Zionism as a movement that was at peace and had common cause with the indigenous Arab population. Juxtaposed uneasily with the discourse of Zionism as a western civilizing force, the narrative of the Jew as part of a Semitic race, rooted in the culture and landscape of the Middle East,⁸¹ was used to rationalize the *entente cordiale* between Jews and Arabs that the British Government and the London Zionist Bureau had emphasized since the Balfour Declaration. The Hebrew nation of the future was framed as contributing to “the problem of

⁷⁸ Captain Redcliffe N. Salaman, Cairo to Mrs Salaman, 28 July 1918 in Salaman, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

⁷⁹ ‘Dr Weizmann’s Report,’ Special Supplement- Special Conference of the English Zionist Federation: Report of the Zionist Commission, *The Zionist Review* (December 1918) p.141. This imagery was later a more explicit part of the poetic rhetoric that was used to signpost the opening of the University in 1925 as the empowered rebirth of the Jewish nation. See, Goren, *op. cit.*, p. 334.

⁸⁰ See, for example, Bertram B. Benas, ‘The Jewish University in Jerusalem,’ *The Zionist Review* (January 1918), Speech delivered by Chaim Weizmann at the foundation ceremony of the Hebrew University, 24 July 1918, reprinted in *The Zionist Review* (October 1918), Vladimir Jabotinsky, ‘The Hebrew University,’ c. August 1918. FO 395/237/ , ‘The Jewish University- Foundation Stone Laid,’ *Jewish Chronicle*, 2 and 9 August, 1918

⁸¹ This discourse had already been articulated within pre-war Zionist culture, and in European Jewish culture before Zionism in the nineteenth century. See, Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture and West European Jewry*, p. 152, Ivan Davidson Kalmar, “Moorish Style: Orientalism, the Jews, and Synagogue Architecture,” *Jewish Social Studies: History, Culture, and Society*, vol. 7, no. 3 (2001) pp. 68-100.

harmonizing the divergent conceptions of East and West”, wedding the “eastern passion for righteousness, for ideas, for God” with the civilization of the West, giving their Arab kin the benefits of modernity, as defined by the Western Orientalist mind.⁸² Despite this rhetoric, however, the Arab population of Palestine had shown great disquiet in the wake of the Declaration, fearing a Zionist attempt to take political control of the country. As a result, one of the main purposes of the Zionist Commission was to allay these fears and establish good relations with the Arab community.⁸³ Notwithstanding Weizmann’s own Orientalist conception of Arabs as qualitatively inferior to Jews and that there was no Arab national people in Palestine,⁸⁴ he attempted to publicly show that the Zionist movement had no intention to take political control of Palestine after the war and that they wished “to live at peace with all, on the basis of mutual regard and respect.”⁸⁵ But instead of the Zionist Commission attempting to form an agreement with Palestinian notables, it was with Prince Feisel, the son of the Sherif of Mecca and leader of the Arab Revolt, that an attempt was made to forge an agreement between Arabs and Jews.⁸⁶ As a result, the discourse of national Semitic brotherhood was finally performed through the display of Weizmann and Feisel, the embodiment of the national and therefore regenerative Jewish and Arab types. [Figure 5]

⁸² ‘Palestine and Jewish Nationalism’, *The Round Table* (March 1918) reprinted in *The Maccabean* (June 1918) pp. 151-152. This article was written by a member of the London Zionist Bureau’s Propaganda Committee and was given “special mention” in its report of propaganda that was supplied to the non-Jewish press. ‘Report of Meeting of Propaganda Committee, 14 December-30 June 1918, Zionist Organisation, (London Bureau),’ Z4/243, Papers of the London Zionist Bureau, CZA.

⁸³ See ‘Draft Minutes of the Middle East Committee held in Secretary of State’s Room at the Foreign Office, Saturday, 19 January, 1918’ PRO FO 371/3394/19932.

⁸⁴ See Weizmann, Tel-Aviv to Balfour, FO, 30 May 1918, no. 208, Barzilay and Litvinoff, *op. cit.*, pp. 202, 204.

⁸⁵ ‘Speech given at a dinner in Jerusalem held by the Military Governor on 27 April 1918,’ Clayton, Jerusalem to Balfour, FO, 7 May 1918, PRO FO 371/3395/98470.

⁸⁶ Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict, 1881-1999* (London: John Murray 1999) p. 79-81, Wasserstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 29-31. On the antagonism that developed between Weizmann and Palestinian Arab notables soon after his arrival, also see, Knox, *op. cit.*, pp. 5-12.



Figure 5: Chaim Weizmann with Prince Feisel, June 1918 ⁸⁷

In this visual representation of discourse Weizmann dons a *Keffiyah*, the traditional Arab headdress, signifying respect, mutual understanding and a cultural bond through this signpost of Semitic/Oriental culture and identity.⁸⁸ Although this image could be seen as a part of the depiction of the restoration of the Jewish national home as a humanist, peaceful enterprise that was a genuine part of the landscape and culture of the East, this discourse was essentially utilized for political purposes. It does not seem to have been considered by British and Zionist propagandists as having a strong appeal to the collective memory and identity of the Jewish reader in the Diaspora. For this reason, although the discourse of Semitic kinship remained a theme that was referred to by Zionist leaders such as Sokolow and Weizmann, it was not a central element of the discourse of Jewish national rebirth that was intended to inspire Jewish support for the British war effort and its future control over Palestine.

Revealingly, however, the vision of the resurrected Hebrew warrior, the collective manifestation of manliness and empowerment, bearing the national flag and fighting on the

⁸⁷ Barzilay and Litvinoff, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

⁸⁸ On the use of the *keffiyah* in orientalist artistic representations of Biblical Jews during the nineteenth century, and the appropriation of such imagery by Zionists, see Ivan Davidson Kalmar, 'Jews in Turbans: Orientalism, Christianity and Western Art,' in idem and Derek J. Penslar (eds) *Orientalism: The Jewish Dimension* (University of California Press, forthcoming). I am grateful to Profesor Kalmar for allowing me to refer to this work.

landscape of Ancient national self, was a central and critical part of the theatrical performance of national rebirth.

5:4 The Jewish Legion- “A Political Performing Company”.

From its inception, symbolism had been the *raison d'être* of Jabotinsky's proposal of a Jewish Legion fighting with the British army for the liberation of Palestine. In a letter to Herbert Samuel in March 1916, he wrote, “evidently I realize that a Jewish Legion will not be able to “conquer” Palestine, and I do not even exaggerate its importance in helping the Allies to conquer it.”⁸⁹ Instead, Jabotinsky considered that of all the possible manifestations of Zionism that could advance the cause, “the Jewish Legion would be one- perhaps the clearest, the most palpable, the most easily understood by Christian minds.”⁹⁰

Jabotinsky's belief that a Jewish fighting force would be the most effective symbol of nationalism that would resound with the Western mind was perhaps influenced by his Futurist sensibilities. Marinetti's Futurist manifesto had declared, “We will glorify war- the world's only hygiene- militarism, patriotism . . .”⁹¹ But although this intrinsic link between nationalism, militarism and war was particularly explicit in Futurism from 1909, by the time of the First World War it had become a dominant theme in European and British nationalist discourse in general.⁹² The belief that heroism on the battlefield justified the existence of a

⁸⁹ Jabotinsky, London to Herbert Samuel, London, 19 March 1916, 6/2/18, Jabotinsky Papers.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ Apollonio, *op. cit.*, p. 22. Futurists, influenced predominantly by their understanding of Nietzsche and Sorel, conceived of war as revolution, a *Guerra buona*, or as Marinetti termed it, “war as the sole hygiene of the world.” Berghaus, *op. cit.*, pp. 8, 49, 55.

⁹² George L. Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990) Chs.2 and 4. On militarism in pre-war British culture, see Gerard deGroot, *Blighty: British Society in the Era of the Great War* (London: Longman, 1996) pp. 37-39, Anne Summers, ‘Edwardian Militarism’ in Raphael Samuel (ed.) *Patriotism: The Making and Unmaking of British National Identity, vol. I History and Politics* (London and New York: Routledge, 1989) pp. 236-256, Mark Girouard, *The Return to Camelot: Chivalry and the English Gentleman* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981) pp. 276-282.

nation had led other nationalist movements such as the Poles and Czechs to raise legions to fight with the Great Powers in the war.⁹³ Since the late nineteenth century participation in war had increasingly been seen as the greatest measure of the national type. Battle was the apotheosis of the values of the nation: manliness, honour, pride, camaraderie, strength, discipline, sacrifice and heroism.⁹⁴ Thus, a national army in time of war and peace was seen as the symbol of the inward nature of the nation. In itself a national army represented the justification of a nation's self-determination, a sign of its claim to be a part of the community of nations. With regard to Jewish nationalism, the need to overtly demonstrate the attributes of the nation that were represented by a national legion was of particular importance. Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century, the Jewish man had been represented as the binary opposite of nationalist bourgeois values in European culture, commonly portrayed in art, literature, intellectual and public discourse as weak, bent over, cowardly, feminine and essentially Other.⁹⁵ A national army could therefore be seen as a collective symbol of the regeneration and normalization of the Jewish man,⁹⁶ and therefore the nation,⁹⁷ through the nexus of nationalism, militarism and gender, which was particularly prevalent in British culture during the war.⁹⁸ As viewed through this prism, the Jewish Legion, fighting in Palestine, could be presented and understood by Jabotinsky and British officials as marking the return of the nation.

⁹³ Roshwald, *Ethnic Nationalism and the Fall of Empires*, pp. 146-152.

⁹⁴ Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*, Ch. 6.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.* Ch. 7, pp. 133-152 Gilman, *The Jew's Body*, pp. 63-64, p. 134, 137. Garb, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

⁹⁶ In general, during the First World War Jewish men across Europe and in the United States seized the opportunity to assert their manliness and patriotism by joining the fighting ranks. See Berkowitz, *Western Jewry and the Zionist Project 1914-1933* pp. 10-11, Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*, p. 114.

⁹⁷ See Louis Metz to Jabotinsky, 26 August 1917. 2/5/3/18, Jabotinsky Papers.

⁹⁸ Since 1904 Jabotinsky had, in line with Nordau, expounded his belief in the need for *Muskejudentum*, transforming the bent over Jew of the Ghetto into a new Jewish man, of courage, strength and self-defense. See Stanislawski, *op. cit.*, pp. 194-197, 202. On the relationship between manliness and military service in British national culture before and during the war, see M. Adams, *The Great Adventure: Male Desire and the Coming of World War I* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1990), Joanna Bourke, *Dismembering the Male: Men's Bodies, Britain and the Great War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996) pp. 76-123.

But in order for the Legion to be conceived as a genuine signifier of Jewish national rebirth it had to be portrayed for both Jews and other nations as part of the authentic tradition of the national Jew. The true nature of the Jew in its natural, national setting was depicted as a fighter and to this end the myth of the Maccabees was central to the discourse of the Jewish Legion, utilising the poetics of what was considered by Jabotinsky to be part of the Jewish collective memory.⁹⁹ Although the Maccabean revolt was only one episode in the long span of Jewish history, it served to endorse the desired self-image of the Jew as a natural warrior. Despite the temporal leap, the Maccabeans were emphasized as the ancestors of the Jew and as a result, their honour, heroism and bravery were seen as a dormant, but eternal part of the national Jewish spirit which would return during the time of national re-birth.¹⁰⁰ The need to historicize the Jewish type as being inherently adept at war was part of a wider European trend in which, for example, Germans were said to carry “war in their blood . . . like their ancestors the Roman Legions or the German Landsers in the Middle Ages.”¹⁰¹

As it was believed by Jabotinsky, and those that supported him in the British Government such as Lloyd George, that such imagery of Jewish warriors fighting for Palestine with the British would inspire Jews in Russia and America to support the Allies,¹⁰² Zionist symbolism that recalled the age of the Maccabees and Ancient independence was absolutely central to the Jewish Legion project. Influenced by neo-Romantic nationalist discourse, Jabotinsky, like Herzl,¹⁰³ considered that nationalist symbols and colours had a

⁹⁹ Yaacov Shavit has argued that, “active historical memory is that repertoire of historical facts used by society and culture not only to preserve the past but also to make the past present and functioning in the culture.” Shavit, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

¹⁰⁰ See V. Jabotinsky, *The Right Way*, c. August 1917, PRO FO 371/3101/172257 *The Maccabean* (September 1918).

¹⁰¹ Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality*, p. 124.

¹⁰² Jabotinsky to Sir Ronald Graham, FO, 6 May 1917, PRO WO 32/11353, Kerr, 10 Downing Street to Lord Derby, War Office, 22 August 1917, PRO WO 32/11353.

¹⁰³ Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture and West European Jewry before the First World War*, pp. 24-25.

particular power that tapped into the Jewish national imagination. They could impact upon an individual's emotions, will and behaviour, infusing and inspiring national consciousness. Jabotinsky made these thoughts clear in a conversation with A. Campbell Geddes of the British War Office. He described the Jews as "a very sentimental and symbolically minded people" who would prefer a badge and colours of their own. "He [Jabotinsky] tells me that the badge of the Jew is King David's shield which is two interlacing equilateral triangles with the lion in the middle . . . He also told me that the colours of the Jews are blue and white . . . if some blue and white could be added to the collar of the ordinary khaki jacket it would undoubtedly help very much in recruiting [for a Jewish Legion]." ¹⁰⁴ Altogether, Jabotinsky firmly considered that the combination of fighting in Palestine with a Jewish name and badge were essential in order "to infuse the men with a full and undiluted feeling of Jewish national responsibility." ¹⁰⁵

A Jewish Legion fighting with the British for the liberation of Palestine adorned with nationalist symbolism, under the Zionist flag and officially known as the Maccabees was not only considered to be of great significance for Zionists such as Jabotinsky but was of tremendous concern to influential British Jews who were vehemently opposed to being labelled as a separate nation. ¹⁰⁶ Beneath the struggle that ensued over the name and badge of the proposed Jewish Legion ¹⁰⁷ in August and September 1917 was the perception that it was a symbolic and public endorsement of Zionist ideology by the British Government. Such

¹⁰⁴ Minute by A.C. Geddes, War Office, c. April 1917, PRO WO 32/11353. The Star of David had become a ubiquitous symbol in visual Zionist discourse since the foundation of the Zionist Organisation. See, Berkowitz, *Zionist Culture and West European Jewry before the First World War*, pp. 23-26.

¹⁰⁵ Jabotinsky to Colonel French, War Office, 2 January 1918. PRO WO32/11353.

¹⁰⁶ Jabotinsky's scheme was also opposed by a number of Zionists in England and the Actions Committee in Copenhagen, which passed a resolution stating that Zionists were not permitted to support the Legion. It was considered that the Legion compromised the professed neutrality of the Zionist movement in the war, and could, by having Jewish units fighting with the British in Palestine, threaten the safety of the Yishuv under the Turks. Vital, *Zionism: The Crucial Phase*, p. 229, Kadish, *op. cit.*, p. 225, Stein, *op. cit.*, p. 494, Katz, *op. cit.*, pp. 175-178.

¹⁰⁷ Sanders, *op. cit.*, pp. 567-568.

symbols, loaded with meaning concerning Jewish identity, were seen as a threat to the desired self-image of patriotism and citizenship that liberal Jews wished to convey in the public space.¹⁰⁸

Although the War Office was initially pressured by a number of British politicians, including Lloyd George himself,¹⁰⁹ and influential Jews such as Israel Zangwill and Lord Rothschild,¹¹⁰ not to do anything to hinder the formation of a Jewish Legion, the decision was made to placate those that had vociferously and publicly opposed the idea. There was to be no Jewish name or badge.¹¹¹ Instead a battalion, the 38th Royal Fusiliers, was formed exclusively for Jewish troops. This decision seemed to cut at the very essence of Jabotinsky's Legion as a visible signifier of national rebirth. But as Jabotinsky noted, "In spite of the opposition which partially succeeded in obliterating its Jewish national character it still holds, if properly presented, a powerful appeal to Jewish sentiment throughout the world."¹¹² As a result, an unofficial system of imagery, language and symbols were created and utilized to frame the Fusiliers as the revival of the national Jewish warrior, embodying the return of the Maccabean spirit, which could therefore be used to show the rebirth of the Golden Age of national life: empowerment, independence and the edifice of the warrior heterosexual male, a visible totem of the gender polarization of the re-constituted nation, casting it as a normative part of the established order of European nationalist discourse.

¹⁰⁸ Cesarani, 'An Embattled Minority,' pp. 71-72.

¹⁰⁹ Lord Derby, War Office to Kerr, 10 Downing Street, 22 August, 1917, Amery, Offices of the War Cabinet to Lord Derby, War Office, 1 September 1917, Wickham Steed, Foreign Editor, *The Times* to Lord Derby, War Office, 7 September 1917. WO 32/11353. Wickham Steed to Jabotinsky, 8 September 1917 and C.P. Scott, Editor, *The Manchester Guardian* to Jabotinsky, 3 September 1917, 2/5/3/18, Jabotinsky Papers.

¹¹⁰ 'Statement by Israel Zangwill,' 5 September 1917, Lord Derby, War Office to Phillip Kerr, 10 Downing Street, 22 August 1917. PRO WO 32/11353.

¹¹¹ However, Lord Derby had attempted to placate the petitions of Leopold Amery in September 1917 by stating that a "special name" or "special badge" would be awarded once the Fusiliers had "earned it by good service in the field." Amery to A.C. Geddes, 4 December 1918. PRO WO 32/11353.

¹¹² Jabotinsky sent to Lord Robert Cecil, Sykes, Amery, Ormsby-Gore, Sir Ronald Graham, Phillip Kerr, Wickham Steed and Major Davies, 25 October 1917, 7/2/18, Jabotinsky Papers.

With regard to the name of the battalion, through which it could be encoded with these narratives of rebirth, the War Office had been convinced to allow the battalion to be referred to in the Jewish press as “the Judeans.”¹¹³ Although the Maccabeans had been the preferred moniker advanced by those who had supported the idea of the Jewish Legion,¹¹⁴ it was considered by Jabotinsky that the Judeans would be “agreeable to all sides.”¹¹⁵ This appellation cast the members of the 38th Royal Fusiliers as the national type of the Ancient Kingdom of Judea, whose dissolution by the Roman Empire in 70 C.E. was seen as the moment of national fall, inaugurating the period of Exile and degeneration. Hence, as the Judeans the Jewish Regiment could be perceived as the vanguard of national Return, signifying the end of Exile and the ushering in of an epoch of national renaissance. This discourse was strikingly exhibited through a medal that was given to every recruit, a text which was photographed and disseminated by the Ministry of Information. [Figure 6]¹¹⁶

¹¹³ Leopold Greenberg, editor of the *Jewish Chronicle* had suggested this compromise to the War Office. Leopold Greenberg to A.C. Geddes, War Office, 21 December 1917. Reply from War Office to Greenberg, n.d. PRO WO 32/11353. Although he had supported Jabotinsky’s Regiment Greenberg had been opposed to the use of an official Jewish name and badge for fear of accusations of discrimination or exceptionalism towards Jews. Cesarani, *The Jewish Chronicle and Anglo-Jewry*, pp. 119-120.

¹¹⁴ Colonel Patterson, the British Officer commanding the Zion Mule Corps, Cape Helles, Gallipoli, to Jabotinsky, 10 November 1915, Israel Zangwill to Jabotinsky, 22 December 1915, 3/3/18, Patterson to Jabotinsky, 28 June 1917, 1/5/3/18, Leopold Amery to Jabotinsky, 5 September 1917, Wickham Steed, *The Times*, to Jabotinsky, 8 September 1917, 2/5/3/18, Jabotinsky Papers.

¹¹⁵ Jabotinsky to Colonel French, War Office, 2 January 1918, 7/2/18, Jabotinsky Papers.

¹¹⁶ ‘Medal given to every recruit,’ Q.12684, Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum.



Figure 6: 'Medal given to every recruit,'
Q.12684, Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum



Figure 7: IVDEA CAPTA, 71 C.E., Mint of Rome¹¹⁷

This medal was based upon a coin, IVDEA CAPTA,¹¹⁸ [Judaea captured] [Figure 7] that was minted by the Roman Empire as part of the grandiose displays of Roman power and Judaeans emasculation that were made to mark the triumphal victory of Titus Flavius Vespasian over the Jewish revolt and his taking of Judaea in 70 C.E. Disseminated throughout the Roman Empire this symbol exhibited the humiliating fall of Jewish national sovereignty, the servitude and powerlessness of a dispossessed nation cast into Exile. In the original IVDEA CAPTA, these narratives were conveyed through a series of iconic codes. The coin depicts a dejected, weeping woman, kneeling with her head in her hand, symbolising the emasculated and therefore feminised Jewish nation. She is facing away from a palm tree, the symbol of the land of Judaea, projecting her crestfallen gaze toward Exile. On the other side of the tree, is a Roman soldier standing tall and upright, dominating the space of the text, leaning on his long spear and holding his sword erect. His foot is defiantly placed on a helmet, the powerful master and victorious man of battle, the converse of the

¹¹⁷ Arie Kindler (ed.) *Coins of the Land of Israel: Collection of the Bank of Israel- a catalogue* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1974) p. 115.

¹¹⁸ This was one of a series of IVDEA CAPTA coins that were minted. *Ibid.* pp. 113-123. It would seem that this particular coin was the basis of the medal for the Judaeans as it was the most explicit symbol of Roman domination over defeated Judaea.

defeated and subjugated victim. As a whole, this image represented the turning point of the Jewish nation's fall from independence to Exile and degeneration, a people stripped of its masculinity and its land, chained to a life of subjugation and humiliation. In the medal that was made for recruits to the Jewish Regiment, this symbol of degradation was transformed into an icon of absolute empowerment, resolutely marking the end of Exile by turning the imagery that had been used to denigrate the Jewish people into a symbol of their newfound power. As well, the very act of creating the medal, a symbol of glorification and power, identified the story of the Judaeans as a saga of great historical importance that warranted commemoration. In the image itself, the young woman is now standing, awoken from her despair and looking out in anticipation. She is no longer stood over by the Roman soldier who is now shown raising a shield and holding a lowered sword, symbolising fear and impotence, in his attempt to flee. This text was signified as displaying the liberation of Judaea by the Hebrew inscription *Yehuda Ha-Mishtakhreret* (the redemption of Judah), replacing the Latin IVDEA CAPTA. In itself the use and display of the Jewish national language, a symbol of a living national life and culture, marked the transition from foreign occupation to national rebirth and empowerment. In this text, this national liberation and restoration was brought about solely by the Judaeans, the bearers of this trophy, the vision of whom alone had caused the oppressors of the nation to flee. They represented the return of the Jewish warrior of Judaea, the edifice of masculinity that was to rescue the emasculated nation from the servitude and passivity of Exile.

With such imagery the Jewish Regiments were portrayed as the sole redeemers of the nation, encoded through their very name. The function of the soldiers themselves as standard bearers and actors of the performance of this discourse was further augmented by being unofficially permitted to use the Star of David as their flag, and on armbands worn by

recruits.¹¹⁹ Most importantly, it was to be stated publicly that the Regiment was to be sent to Palestine,¹²⁰ fighting for national independence on the landscape of Ancient national self, thus enabling the Regiment to be represented, through performance, as a signifier of the discourse of national rebirth. The significance that was attached to the symbolic effect of the Jewish Regiment was such that Lord Reading, the British Ambassador in the United States, considered that the mere publication of its departure to Palestine would “help to stimulate pro-British sentiments throughout the Jewish community” in America.¹²¹ Lord Hardinge considered in February 1918 that “it[s departure] should be published as soon as possible in order to take some of the wind out of [Maxim] Litvinoff’s sails [the Bolshevik propagandist and Ambassador to England]”¹²²

In addition to the 38th Royal Fusiliers two other battalions were to be formed, the 39th and 40th. As the focus of British propaganda towards the Zionist movement was directed at winning over American Jewry efforts had been made to recruit a battalion in the United States.¹²³ However, as was the case with the Zionist Commission, American neutrality with Turkey meant that the State Department had not allowed citizens to participate.¹²⁴ Instead, Jews that did not have American nationality or were under age for American service were permitted to join the 39th Battalion.¹²⁵ The 40th Battalion was mainly made up of recruits from the Yishuv.

¹¹⁹ Report by Gershon Agronsky, 40th Battalion Royal Fusiliers, to Samuel Landman, Secretary to the Zionist Propaganda Committee, London Zionist Bureau, Lag B’Omer, 5769 (1918) Z4/17, Papers of the London Zionist Bureau, CZA.

¹²⁰ Jabotinsky, London to Colonel French, War Office, 2 January 1918, 7/2/18, Jabotinsky Papers.

¹²¹ Lord Reading, Washington to FO, 13 February 1918, PRO FO 371/3399/28940.

¹²² Minute by Lord Hardinge, c. February 1918, PRO FO 371/3399/28940, Kadish, *op. cit.*, pp.230-231.

¹²³ Copy of cable from Lewin-Epstein and DeHaas to Weizmann through the British Consul, 28 August 1917, DeHaas to Brandeis, 1 August 1917, Microfilm reel 2866, Brandeis Papers, AJA.

¹²⁴ Brandeis to Weizmann, 31 December 1917, Microfilm reel 2866, Brandeis Papers, AJA.

¹²⁵ ‘Notes on Zionism,’ Communications of the Zionist Organization II, January-March 1918, Milner Papers.

The battalions were from their inception utilised for propaganda purposes. Given the focus on the visual symbolism of a Jewish fighting force in the considerations that lay behind its formation, it was clear that photographs and cinema film were to play a prominent part. As early as September 1917, the News Department of the Foreign Office had considered it necessary to obtain a photo of a Jewish battalion on parade in order to “produce fraternizing sympathy” with American Jews “of whom there are a great many on the slacker side . . .”¹²⁶ In the same report it was noted that the cinematograph had an excellent effect in terms of propaganda in general and had done “a good deal of good in reaching people who cannot well be reached in any other way.”¹²⁷ As a result, in December 1917 the 38th Battalion was promptly photographed and filmed during its training in Plymouth.¹²⁸

Together with members of the British Government, Jabotinsky firmly believed, at this early stage in his career as a Zionist leader,¹²⁹ in the effects of the aesthetics of military ceremony, with the disciplined parade of troops in uniform, on national consciousness.¹³⁰ As such, the 38th Royal Fusiliers’ symbolic function as the realisation and representation of the discourse of national rebirth was mediated through theatrical military performance. Or as one member of the regiment put it, “self-advertising marches”.¹³¹ The centre piece of this propaganda was the march of the Regiment through London on 4 February 1918, the day before its departure for Egypt. Adding to the symbolic importance of the event, the Regiment was quartered in the Tower of London the previous night and had been granted the

¹²⁶ Geoffrey Butler, New York to John Buchan, 27 August 1917 and unsigned minute, 28 September 1917. PRO FO 395/80/185484.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²⁸ Colonel Patterson to Jabotinsky, 1 December 1917, 2/5/3/18, Jabotinsky Papers.

¹²⁹ Yaacov Shavit has argued that Jabotinsky and the Revisionist movement, which he founded in 1925, was primarily influenced by Polish nationalism. Yaakov Shavit, ‘Politics and Messianism: The Zionist Revisionist Political Culture,’ *Studies in Zionism*, Vol. 6, No.2 (1985) pp. 229-246. Although Jabotinsky was clearly influenced by the neo-Romantic model of Polish nationalism from the 1920s, his focus on the aesthetics of militarism were already evident in the First World War.

¹³⁰ See Jabotinsky to Sir Ronald Graham, 6 May 1917. PRO WO 32/11353.

¹³¹ Horace B. Samuel, *Unholy Memories of the Holy Land* (London: Hogarth Press, 1930) p. 13.

exceptional privilege of bearing fixed bayonets in their march through the City. The Regiment marched in full uniform carrying their arms and was preceded by the band of the Coldstream Guards, from the East End to the City of London where the Lord Mayor received their salute.¹³² The Battalion carried both the Zionist flag and the Union Jack, signifying the union between Zionism and Great Britain, and was cheered by large crowds waving flags adorned with the Star of David. This performance, which was filmed by the Ministry of Information,¹³³ functioned as a visual representation and enactment of the normalisation of the Jew through the codes of European nationalist discourse: manliness,¹³⁴ control, discipline, selfless idealism and empowerment.¹³⁵ At the same time, although this act signified its participants as a part of normative European culture, their collective particularity, their Jewishness, was stressed through the bearing of the perceived national colours, blue and white, and the symbol of Ancient Jewish national sovereignty, the Star of David. Through this juxtaposition, the Zionist flag was encoded as a banner of strength, independence and the values that have just been outlined above.¹³⁶ The site of the march, through the city of London, can also be seen to have been of particular significance. As the heart of the British Empire, the landscape of Imperial monuments and power,¹³⁷ the choice of this site cast the Empire as the home of the rebirth of the Jewish nation, emphasizing the fundamental role

¹³² Lieutenant-Colonel J.H. Patterson, *With the Judeans in the Palestine Campaign* (London: Hutchinson & Co. 1922) pp. 43-44.

¹³³ IWM 662a, Film Archive, Imperial War Museum. There was also a version made with Spanish subtitles. IWM 651c, Film Archive, Imperial War Museum.

¹³⁴ One article in the *Jewish Chronicle* referred to, "the throngs of girls who hung out of windows frankly admiring the lads who deserved all the admiration showered on them for their sturdy bearing, for their rhythmic swing, and the graceful poise of their bodies. . . [T]hey had gained a certificate of manhood which they had been brutally told they had forfeited". *Jewish Chronicle*, 8 February 1918.

¹³⁵ See 'London's Welcome to the "Judeans"' *Ibid*.

¹³⁶ "The Jewish flag! . . . It was a symbol, and it was everywhere . . . It fluttered proudly, blue and white, with the Shield of David as a kind of protecting emblem." *Ibid*.

¹³⁷ On the space of London as the landscape of imperial power, see, for example, David Gilbert and Felix Driver 'Heart of Empire? Landscape, space and performance in imperial London,' *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, no. 16 (1998) pp. 11-28, Deborah Epstein, *Walking the Victorian Streets: Women, Representation, and the City* (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 1995), M H Port, *Imperial London: Civil Government and Building in London, 1851-1915* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995) I am grateful to Ben Gidley for referring me to these works.

played by Imperial Britain and the importance to which she attached to its fulfillment.

Although the stage of this march of the 38th Royal Fusiliers can be seen to have been significant, their destination was considered by those behind the Regiment to be of greater importance. The depiction of a Jewish fighting force, the standard-bearers of a new epoch of national life and empowerment, being sent to help the Entente to liberate the Ancient homeland was central to the symbolism that was constructed around the Jewish Regiments.¹³⁸ This message was conveyed through the film representation of the 38th Royal Fusiliers' parade through London with its title, "To Garrison Jerusalem?"¹³⁹ Building upon this imagery, and utilizing the codes of Messianic rhetoric and national rebirth, one writer for the *Jewish Chronicle* transformed this march into the veritable resurrection of the Maccabeans, and, conflating two distant episodes in Jewish history, depicted them as re-enacting the Exodus from Egypt and the revelation at Mount Sinai, carrying the mantle of freedom and prophecy toward Palestine.¹⁴⁰

Once recruits started to arrive from America they too were photographed on parade¹⁴¹ as were Jews recruited for the Palestinian battalion. The enthusiasm for joining the Palestinian regiment and fighting with the Allies was a prominent motif of the photographs that were taken and distributed amongst Jewish press in countries such as the United

¹³⁸ Jabotinsky later framed this march of the 38th Royal Fusiliers through London as a glorious, mythical display of Jewish honour and holy mission, "unexampled since the day when Bar-Kochbar, in Betar, through himself upon his sword", that was rapturously received by thousands of Jews. Vladimir Jabotinsky, *The Story of the Jewish Legion*. Translated by Shmuel Katz with a foreword by Colonel J.H. Patterson (New York: Bernard Ackerman 1945) p. 104.

¹³⁹ IWM 662a, Film Archive, Imperial War Museum.

¹⁴⁰ M.J.L. 'Some Impressions on the Way,' *Jewish Chronicle*, 8 February 1918. On how J.H. Patterson saw the Legion as the re-enactment of the Exodus from Egypt, see Pendlebury, *Jerusalem in Ragtime*, pp. 158-160.

¹⁴¹ See, for example, 'The American Judaeans in England: Glimpses of the Life of the American Jewish Legionaries previous to their Departure for the Battlefield in Palestine,' *The New Maccabean*, September 1918. It included photographs entitled, for example, 'A Group of American Judaeans in Front of the Orderly Room (Note the Jewish Flag in the Background)' and 'Some of the Boys of the First Contingent of American Judaeans'.

States.¹⁴² As was the case with the pamphlets that were produced for Jewish audiences on the subject of the Declaration, the intention was to play on an ethnic group's perceived fraternizing sympathies. By constructing an image of an individual's imagined ethnic group as having certain attitudes and beliefs it was considered that it would affect that individual's own conceptions of the war. It was this belief that lay behind Jabotinsky's argument that a Jewish Legion would act as a "as a live link connecting every Jew with the fortunes of the war."¹⁴³ Through photographic, film and print media the British Government and the Jewish Section of the Ministry of Information sought to construct an imagined Jewish community which was marked by an overwhelming enthusiasm for Britain's pro-Zionist policy, a hatred of the Turk, and a will to join in the Allies struggle for freedom and liberation. The Jewish soldiers of the Royal Fusiliers, particularly those that were recruited in Palestine, were used to this end.

In an article entitled, 'The Jewish Volunteer Movement in Judaea,' Ormsby-Gore, the political officer attached to the Zionist Commission, attempted to convey an image of the Yishuv as being caught up by a fever of enthusiasm for the Jewish Regiment. He wrote that, "The "Gehûd" [sic] or "regiment" has become the all absorbing topic of interest in practically all sections of Palestinian Jewry, orthodox as well as non-orthodox." In order to stress the enthusiasm that existed in the Yishuv for serving with the British in the liberation of Palestine from "the hated Turk", Ormsby-Gore stressed that the volunteer movement¹⁴⁴ was wholly spontaneous and had begun prior to the arrival of both the Zionist Commission and the 38th Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers. The Balfour Declaration, the hatred of Turkish misrule and a

¹⁴² See, for example, the pictorial section of *The New Maccabean*, October 1918 with pictures such as 'Recruits on Parade in Jerusalem. Street Scene' and 'Relatives of Recruits throng the Station.'

¹⁴³ Jabotinsky to Sir Ronald Graham, FO, 6 May 1917, PRO WO 32/11353.

¹⁴⁴ On the volunteer movement, which was instigated by a group of students at the Herzilya Hebrew Gymnasia, headed by Eliahu Golomb, see Shapira, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

growth of national consciousness in Palestine were said to have combined “to stimulate an almost passionate eagerness for military service in and with the British Army.” In a message to Colonel Patterson, the Commanding Officer of the 38th Battalion, the volunteers were supposed to have written,

you can understand the feelings of men who for the first time after nearly 2000 years of slavery have forged their plough shares into swords to fight for freedom . . . We are convinced that Britain’s victory is ours and our victory Britain’s. This war and Balfour’s declaration have made us a sister nation of England. We hope to convince by our fighting that the soul of the Maccabees has not dried up and that we know how to countersign Balfour’s Declaration with our own blood.

Ormsby-Gore wrote that these words were “not in the least exaggerated or hypocritical.” He claimed that as soon as the recruiting offices were open there was a rush to the doors with scenes that were reminiscent of the outbreak of war in England in August 1914.¹⁴⁵ The New Jew of the Zionist colonies, as the key symbol of the Zionist project, was used to represent the narratives of national fervour for sacrifice and idealism that had been inspired by the Balfour Declaration. “From the colonies Petach Tikvah (The Gate of Hope) and Rishon-le-Zion (The first in Zion) these Jewish lads are coming forward willing sacrifices on the altar of a new national idealism the first fruits of that “risorgimento” of the Jewish people . . .”

This representation of the Yishuv as being marked by a wave of spontaneous elation and enthusiasm for its support of Great Britain, was concluded by a statement that reflected the basic essence of the discourse that had been created by the British Government since November 1917, the depiction of the Balfour Declaration as a momentous turning point in the history of the Jewish nation, “Their total numbers may be small, but . . . when the opportunity offered the Zionists of Judaea gave their all, and in doing so committed their cause finally

¹⁴⁵ For a critique of the myth of war enthusiasm in August 1914, see Ferguson, *The Pity of War*, Ch. 7.

and irrevocably to the British people in whom they put their trust. They feel that the Balfour declaration, which for them has only one historical parallel, namely the decree of Cyrus the Mede, is not a scrap of paper.”¹⁴⁶

The image of the Yishuv being swept up by an overwhelming desire to fight for the liberation of Palestine with the British was also represented and disseminated through visual texts.¹⁴⁷ In the film ‘Arrival of Zionist Commission’, for example, the departure of a train packed with recruits to the 40th Royal Fusiliers is shown, depicting scenes of great enthusiasm amongst the soldiers and the crowd bidding them farewell.¹⁴⁸ These images were also disseminated by the Jewish Section of the Ministry of Information in the form of photographs.¹⁴⁹ In these texts, the Yishuv was exhibited as the site of a youthful manly nation, rushing to the colours and infused with an ecstatic and climactic will to join the fight for its liberation under the wings of its saviour, Imperial Britain.

¹⁴⁶ William Ormsby-Gore, ‘The Jewish Volunteer Movement in Judaea,’ Jerusalem, 2 July 1918, PRO FO 371/3409.

¹⁴⁷ On the importance of visual propaganda in disseminating the myth of war enthusiasm, see Jay M. Winter, ‘Nationalism, The Visual Arts, and the Myth of War Enthusiasm in 1914’ *History of European Ideas*, Vol. 15, No. 1-3 (1992) pp.357-362.

¹⁴⁸ ‘Arrival of Zionist Commission,’ IWM 30- Reel2, Film Archive, Imperial War Museum.

¹⁴⁹ Also see ‘Some of the 1,000 recruits for the 40th (Palestinian) Battalion Royal Fusiliers, obtained in Jerusalem, Summer 1918,’ Q.12671, Q.12672, ‘Assembling recruits for the 40th (Palestinian) Battalion, Royal Fusiliers, at Jaffa, before their departure to Helmieh for training. Summer 1918,’ Q.12673, ‘Relatives of the recruits for the Palestinian (40th) Battalion of the Royal Fusiliers at Jaffa Station to watch their departure for Helmieh. Summer 1918,’ Q.12676, Q.12677, Q.12678, Q.12679, Q.12681, Q.12682, Q.12683 and ‘Major James de Rothschild of the 39th (Jewish) Battalion, Royal Fusiliers, in charge of the enlistment of Jewish volunteers in Egypt and Palestine at Jaffa with some recruits, Summer 1918.’ Q. 12680, Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum.



Figure 8: 'Some of the 1,000 recruits for the 40th (Palestinian) Battalion, Royal Fusiliers, obtained in Jerusalem, Summer 1918.' Q. 12672, Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum

In Figure 8 a group of recruits are displayed and specified as “some of the 1,000 recruits for the 40th (Palestinian) Battalion, Royal Fusiliers, obtained in Jerusalem.”¹⁵⁰ This representation depicts a wide and diverse collection of Jews divided by age, ethnic background, dress and religion but who were united by their sense of national identity and desire to join in the armed struggle for national independence under the British, which was signified both by their armbands and the uniformed soldiers standing either side of them.¹⁵¹

In contrast to the image of the Jewish Regiments being so enthusiastically received and celebrated by the Yishuv and their portrayal as a symbol of the honourable, proud and strong spirit of the Maccabees, their actual record proved to be a grave disappointment for Jabotinsky. With regard to recruitment, it is true that amongst the nucleus of volunteers there

¹⁵⁰ 'Some of the 1,000 recruits for the 40th (Palestinian) Battalion Royal Fusiliers, obtained in Jerusalem, Summer 1918.' Q. 12672, Photograph Archive, Imperial War Museum.

¹⁵¹ Despite this image of unity the divisions within the Yishuv, at least during the period of training, seemed to carry over to life in the 40th Royal Fusiliers in which “the Jaffa men hold the Jerusalem men in contempt.” Captain Salaman, Cairo to Mrs Salaman, 19 July 1918, Salaman, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

was a sense of fervent idealism and will to enlist,¹⁵² but particularly in Jerusalem, the Jewish Legion also found itself up against both indifference and active opposition,¹⁵³ especially amongst the Orthodox population.¹⁵⁴

Aside from this opposition, the reality of the Jewish Regiments, compared to Jabotinsky's vision of the foundation of a heroic Jewish Army, proved to be a frustrating failure. Many recruits were stationed in Egypt and never fought in Palestine, let alone for its liberation. Those that did see combat were confined to peripheral action in the Jordan Valley and were attached to other battalions, with large numbers of soldiers being struck down by malaria.¹⁵⁵ Reflecting the great gulf between the mythical discourse that was created around the Jewish Legion and its actual record, Jabotinsky wrote to Sykes in November 1918, "The American recruits, who have been so officially fêted in America and England, feel . . . discouraged and humiliated."¹⁵⁶ Confronted with the damning bitterness and despondency of Jewish volunteers who had travelled from "two hemispheres" to participate in the revival of the Jewish warrior and the liberation of the national home, Jabotinsky was left in a state of utter despair. He exclaimed, "I feel like shooting myself when I think of this, shooting myself for my blunder in believing in fair play."¹⁵⁷ Jabotinsky lamented to Weizmann, "No name, no badge,¹⁵⁸ no mention, quartered outside of Palestine or in Rafa- this is the sum total of my, of

¹⁵² Shapira, *op. cit.*, pp. 90.

¹⁵³ See Segev, *op. cit.*, p. 76, Shapira, *op. cit.*, p. 92-93, 95-96. Katz, *op. cit.*, pp. 350-351.

¹⁵⁴ 'Weekly Summary for the period June 24th to 30th [1918] inclusive,' Political Intelligence Officer Jerusalem, DS 125, Sledmere Papers.

¹⁵⁵ Patterson, *op. cit.*, pp. 110, 123, 157-158.

¹⁵⁶ Jabotinsky, Zionist Commission to Sykes, 18 November 1918, 7/2/18, Jabotinsky Papers. Also see, Jabotinsky, Zionist Commission to Weizmann, 12 November 1918, 7/2/18, Jabotinsky Papers. On the frustrations of life in the Legion that were felt by a Russian immigrant who was conscripted in 1918, as contrasted with a memoir by a recruit that was published after the formation of the State of Israel, see Pendlebury, *Jerusalem in Ragtime*, pp. 203-204.

¹⁵⁷ Jabotinsky, Zionist Commission to Sykes, 18 November 1918, 7/2/18, Jabotinsky Papers.

¹⁵⁸ The badge that was finally given to the Jewish Regiments further entrenched its Maccabean symbolism. It was an image of a menorah with the word *Kadimah* (forward), which encapsulated the activism and self-empowerment that the Legion was supposed to represent. This badge and the name 'The First Judaeans' were

our efforts to lay the foundation of a Jewish Army.”¹⁵⁹

Jabotinsky had apparently failed to see the inherent incompatibility of what he had persuaded the British Government to create, a signifier of discourse, a vehicle for the theatrical performance of national rebirth, with his later desire for a real, independent Hebrew army. The British Government had supported the formation of a Jewish Legion solely for its propaganda value. Their only concern was to create an image of a Jewish fighting force that could be used to demonstrate their commitment to the Zionist cause. It was established in order to provide the Jewish reader, through texts and visual imagery, a tangible manifestation in Palestine of the perceived link between Zionist hopes and the outcome of the war. As Jabotinsky was said to have put it, “We are not merely a regiment- we are a political performing company!”¹⁶⁰ The British Government certainly had no intention of creating a serious Jewish fighting force in Palestine that could complicate its ability to dictate events on the ground or the future administration of the region. The Jewish Regiments were created to appeal to Jews in the Diaspora, particularly in America. In Palestine itself, the British authorities were more concerned with placating the Arab population¹⁶¹ and their own geopolitical considerations. The military administration’s efforts to prevent the Jewish Legion from seeing combat, or being stationed in Palestine, were fully in line with the Zionist policy of the War Cabinet.

In sum, I have argued that throughout 1918 the British Government and the Zionist leadership based in London attempted to endorse and act out the discourse of an epoch of

not permitted for use officially until 1919. Patterson, *op. cit.*, pp. 260-261.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁰ Samuel, *Unholy Memories of the Holy Land*, p. 13.

¹⁶¹ As a result of the British desire to placate Arab sensibilities the actions of the Jewish Regiment in the Jordan Valley were not mentioned in the official dispatch that was published in Egypt, but were lauded in the dispatch released in the West. Jabotinsky, Zionist Commission to Weizmann, 12 November 1918, 7/2/18, Jabotinsky Papers.

national rebirth, as inaugurated by the Balfour Declaration, through the nexus of text, space and theatrical performance. The staged activities and display of the Zionist Commission, the American Zionist Medical Unit, the foundation of the Hebrew University and the creation of the Jewish Regiments were used to signify and map the revival of a national society and culture. Due to the nationalist conception of Jewish identity that was shared by those who formulated the Government's Zionist policy and their Zionist allies it was considered that this performance would consolidate the support of world Jewry for the British war effort and its post-war control of Palestine. As we have argued, the creation of such propaganda was the singular purpose of the Government's Zionist policy during the war. Hence, in contrast to the resources that were ploughed into what was little short of a traveling circus that had been commissioned by HMG to project a show for world Jewry, there was no corresponding effort to lay the foundations of a Jewish National Home in Palestine, whatever that might have meant. Indeed, the decision was taken to avoid making any further commitments that went beyond the deliberately vague Balfour Declaration, and to circumvent Zionist attempts to create "facts on the ground" in Palestine. In this sense, the much discussed opposition of the OETA to Zionism did not constitute a divergence between the men on the spot and Whitehall. Rather, the actions of the military administration reflected, in the main, the real face of the Government's policy.

On the eve of the armistice, the empty nature of the Government's Zionist policy was finally becoming apparent to even the most ardent supporters of the British/Zionist entente. In October 1918, the *Jewish Chronicle* complained, "nearly twelve months have elapsed [and] not a single syllable concerning the policy whereby the Declaration is to be carried into effect has yet been vouchsafed".¹⁶² By 8 November, the newspaper protested, "the majestic visions

¹⁶² *Jewish Chronicle*, 18 October 1918.

of other days seem to have shrunk to such an extent that it must indeed be difficult, we imagine, for the average Zionist to envisage the “Home” or decry its “National” character.”¹⁶³

¹⁶³ *Jewish Chronicle*, 8 November 1918. On the *Jewish Chronicle*’s criticisms of Weizmann’s policy at this time, also see Cesarani, *The Jewish Chronicle and Anglo-Jewry*, p.127.

Conclusion

Unlike previous work on this subject, this thesis has argued that British policy towards the Zionist movement during the First World War was the product of a much wider phenomenon of ethnic propaganda politics. This was underpinned and determined by a web of perceptions of how ethnicity and ethnic groups functioned and their role in the fighting of total war. I have argued that, as part of this broader frame of thought and policy making, the British engagement with Zionism was shaped less by a realist diplomatic decision-making process, and was essentially born out of a number of interweaving discourses which filtered and shaped how foreign policy makers viewed reality and created policy. Their cultural mindset, or world-view, was the overriding and determining factor. The belief in the power of ethnic groups within society and politics, the conspiratorial fear of the enemy Other, and above all, the conception that nationalism was the key to the ethnic imagination constituted the basis for the Government's propaganda policies towards ethnic groups, including Jews. Utilising this comparative analytical model we have provided a new way of understanding not only the origins of the British Government's Zionist policy, but also the way it came to fruition, what it meant and how it was implemented.

The traditional diplomatic histories of our subject had undoubtedly illuminated the highly complex narrative of how the Balfour Declaration came about, negotiating a vast amount of archival material. But this impressive body of work has largely been, by the nature of its methodology and the traditional focus of the historical literature, confined to a debate over the political motives for the Balfour Declaration, without considering or acknowledging, in any serious way, the assumptions that lay beneath the Government's policy. Alternatively, those scholars who have endeavoured to break this mould have, by limiting their attention to the Jewish case alone, provided

us with only a partial picture, with their contention that the Declaration was the product of anti-Semitic beliefs in Jewish power and the myth of the Bolshevik Jew. Conversely, we have shown that as much as this myth of Jewish power was clearly shared by those members of the Government who pushed for a Zionist policy, the decision to win over Jewish influence was part of the wider belief in ethnic power and the perceived need to capture it as a weapon in the struggle against the German menace. More significantly, the anti-Semitism model fails to answer a fundamental question that lies, by its very essence, at the root of this subject: why was nationalism seen to be the key to the Jewish imagination? I have argued that this perception was the result of the hegemonic power of race/nation thinking in British culture during this period, in which ethnic groups were seen to be unitary racial groups, imbued with an innate national consciousness. Jewry was therefore but one of many ethnic groups whose influence was to be won through nationalist propaganda policies. Notwithstanding the anti-Semitic designation of the Jew as racially Other, and the thick presence of the Bible in British culture, which combined to enable Jewry to be imagined as a nation, it was ultimately the discourse of the nation itself and its influence on the official mind that predisposed members of the Government to accept the tenets of an ideology that mirrored their own sense of self.

As this study has shown, the influence of this nationalist discourse of ethnic and Jewish identity on British policy towards the Zionist movement went well beyond the decision to adopt a Zionist policy. It also shaped and determined the ways in which members of the Government sought to achieve their goal of capturing the support of world Jewry for the British war effort and a post-war British Palestine, through an elaborate and extensive propaganda campaign. In contrast to previous studies, it has been argued that this project constituted the sum of the Government's

Zionist policy during the war, for which the Balfour Declaration had been created. Whereas the historical literature had overwhelmingly confined its attention to the history of the Declaration, it has been contended in this work that the Declaration was designed to be just the starting point for its Zionist propaganda, and therefore its policy. By ignoring what followed, historians had overlooked a critical part of the story. In our efforts to rectify this omission, the degree to which the Government's policy was defined by policy maker's nationalist/Zionist perception of Jewish identity is readily apparent. Not only was the effort to win Jewish hearts and minds centred upon the construction of the Balfour Declaration as ushering in the restoration of the Jewish nation in Palestine, but the ways in which this narrative was mediated was also defined by the discourse of the nation, utilising the discursive practices of national history, space, culture and ceremony. The Balfour Declaration was narrated, through the Zionist lens, as the redemptive culmination of Jewish history. Palestine was, for the eyes of Jewry, represented as the site of a national rebirth, inaugurated by the Declaration and British liberation of the land from the despotism of the Ottoman Turk. And through the creation and display of the Zionist Commission, the Zionist Medical Unit, the Jewish Legion and the foundation ceremony of the Hebrew University, the return to national existence in Palestine was exhibited and performed. As determined by the conception of ethnicity that was held by British foreign policy makers it was believed that this propaganda would capture the imagination and allegiance of Jewry. This thesis has therefore argued that the culture of nationalism defined both the decision to capture the Jewish imagination through Zionism, and how this policy was carried out. In sum, it has sought to place the British Government's Zionist policy within the context which it ultimately belongs, the historical moment which witnessed the zenith of nationalism as a mode of thought,

positing the nation-state as the natural basis of the world, which contributed to the re-drawing of the map of Europe and the Middle East and sowed the seeds for a great deal of the national conflict that haunted the rest of the twentieth century.¹

By demonstrating that the Government's Zionist policy was only one manifestation of a much larger phenomenon, it gives greater significance to this study and its implications for students of British foreign policy during the First World War. Whereas the anti-Semitism model implied that the misconceptions behind the Balfour Declaration constituted a unique case, our argument suggests that the Jewish example serves to highlight the degree to which the Foreign Office and the War Cabinet formulated policies that were predicated upon illusory fears and misapprehensions, which were more the product of their imagination, culture and world-view rather than any corresponding reality. Beyond the study of how minorities and nationalism were seen, and how this impacted upon policy, our thesis certainly serves to demonstrate the way in which the Germanophobia that played no small part in the events that led to Britain's entrance into the war,² continued to influence foreign policy decision making.

My argument that the Government's Zionist policy emerged from a wider dynamic of ethnic propaganda politics has also allowed us to re-examine the history of how this policy came into being and what it meant during the war. In particular, we have addressed the question of the role of the Zionists, what they achieved and whether or not they were used by the British Government. With regard to the winning of the Balfour Declaration, I have argued that, in contrast to the views of scholars who have dismissed the importance of the Zionists, it was as a result of their efforts that

¹ See, for example, Seamus Dunn and T.G. Fraser, (eds.) *Europe and Ethnicity: World War I and Contemporary Ethnic Conflict* (New York: Routledge, 1996), Anderson, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

² Ferguson, *The Pity of War*, pp. 68-76.

the Government was persuaded to pursue a policy of supporting Zionism so as to win over world Jewry, particularly in Russia and the USA. They achieved this goal by re-enforcing the British perception that Jewry, like other ethnic groups, was a potentially hostile force of influence, courted by German propagandists, and by providing an answer that was also in line with their *Weltanschauung*, Zionism. However, by assessing Zionist diplomatic success in this way, it is clear that the myth of Chaim Weizmann's central role in the begetting of the Declaration, which has continued to have such a profound influence on the historical literature, does not hold up. Instead, this study has revealed that the Declaration resulted from the cumulative activities of a number of Jewish activists, whose individual efforts converged in a highly complex manner, one that belies the linear, heroic narrative that had ordered these events into an inspirational national myth constructed around the figure of Weizmann. Individuals such as Herbert Samuel, Moses Gaster, Lucien Wolf, Horace Kallen, Louis Brandeis and, in particular, Vladimir Jabotinsky all performed a crucial part in persuading members of the British Government to adopt a Zionist policy. Although Weizmann managed to secure his position as a trusted conduit with the Foreign Office and War Cabinet in 1917, this was more the result of his power building within Zionist circles during the war. His contribution to paving the path towards the Balfour Declaration was minimal. Out of all of the Zionists who helped to establish the Government's rationale for seeking the support of the Zionist movement, and showed them how to put it into practice, Jabotinsky was probably the individual who was most consistently attuned to what the British wanted, as reflected by his agitation for the Jewish Legion, his proposal for a Jewish Section of the Department of Information and as the official Zionist journalist for the British in Palestine. However, this revisionism has not constituted the replacement of one heroic narrative with another. In our re-

conceptualisation of what the Balfour Declaration and the Government's Zionist policy actually meant for the Zionist movement during the war, it is questionable whether the winning of the Declaration was the grand achievement that it has predominantly been seen to be. By confining our analysis to what transpired after the Declaration during the war, and not jumping ahead to the creation of the mandate, as has usually been the case in the historical literature, this has become painfully apparent. The extensive propaganda campaign that the British Government undertook after the Declaration was the sum and extent of its interest in Zionism. The amount of resources and energy that were invested in this project were not matched by any corresponding efforts to consider what facilitating the establishment of a Jewish National Home in Palestine could mean in practice, let alone taking any steps towards putting it into effect. The guiding principle for the War Cabinet and the responsible Government agencies was to create a show for world Jewry, convincing it that the Declaration meant the restoration of the Jewish nation, but without doing anything that might commit Britain politically to aiding the development of the Zionist project in Palestine. What was perhaps so striking about this endeavour was the degree of Zionist involvement. Despite their acute awareness of the true motives for the Declaration, the Zionist leadership in London were wholly complicit in this effort to persuade Jewry that the Declaration was driven by a genuine British desire to inaugurate the Return. They advised British propagandists how it should be done and eagerly threw themselves into carrying it out, going so far as to staff and work with a Foreign Office bureau that was established for this purpose.

The limits of this British/Zionist Entente were, however, all too clear, as Jabotinsky soon found with the Jewish Legion and Weizmann discovered with the constraints that were placed upon the Zionist Commission in Palestine. This was not

due to any significant divergence between the aims and interests of the British military administration in Palestine and Whitehall. Rather, it was a direct product of the rationale behind the Government's Zionist policy, which the Zionists themselves had done so much to establish. As much as this study has served to demonstrate the important role of the Zionists in driving British politicians and officials to adopt a Zionist policy, it has also shown how much their influence and the nature of that policy was sharply limited by British interests. The image of Weizmann and other Zionists pulling the strings and directing British officials to serve Zionist political aims could not be further from the truth. By the end of the war, the Zionists had done a great deal to further the aims of the British Government but had received very little in return. There was no guarantee whatsoever that the Zionists would then turn this around. The real victory came not with the Balfour Declaration but with the drafting and acceptance of the British mandate for Palestine, which not only incorporated the Declaration but whose articles went much further by "giving concrete meaning and direction to what was no more than a letter of intent."³ But even then, the British/Zionist relationship was, as it had been from the outset, precariously dependent upon how Zionism was seen to fit in with what the British Government perceived to be its own national interests. To be sure, the growth and development of the Yishuv under the British mandate allowed it to create the prerequisites for the establishment of a Jewish state.⁴ But, this was never the intention or purpose of the War Cabinet's decision to issue the Balfour Declaration in 1917. Stuck in the mire of war, and planning ahead to secure the future of the British Empire, Balfour, Lloyd George, Sykes and their colleagues could never have imagined that the show of

³ Sahar Huneidi, *A Broken Trust: Herbert Samuel, Zionism and the Palestinians 1920-1925* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2001) p. 231, Kollatt, *op. cit.*, pp. 40-41.

⁴ Segev, *op. cit.*, Huneidi, *op. cit.*, Wasserstein, *The British in Palestine*, Ch. 7.

Jewish restoration which they had created for their Jewish audience would turn into a reality, just as the Empire was coming to an end.

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