

Libraries in Late Ottoman Palestine between the Orient and the Occident

Dov Schidorsky

The development of libraries in nineteenth-century Palestine was part of the cultural interface between the Orient and the Occident. Motivated primarily by religious considerations and by the aspiration to explore Palestine, the Christian minority developed libraries and library services in monasteries, churches and missions, in their educational and research institutions, and in consulates. The Jewish minority, motivated mainly by the ideology of modern Jewish nationalism, laid the foundations for a Jewish national library and developed public, school, and workers' libraries in all its settlements. In comparison with the Christian and Jewish communities, the contribution of the Muslim majority to library development in Palestine was insignificant. As a consequence of the cultural interface, research literature on Palestine was brought into the country, library collections became secularized, and German librarianship had a decisive long-term effect on library development in the country.

Ottoman rule over Palestine lasted for four hundred years, from the late Middle Ages until the second decade of the twentieth century. Over this period, the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries stand out as a time of particularly sweeping and far-reaching change. At the end of the eighteenth century, the Ottoman Empire extended from Morocco to Persia and from Mecca to Moldavia, and from the Balkans it penetrated deep into central Europe. The Muslim sultan governed this enormous territory and all its peoples from his seat of power in Constantinople, and the area was divided for this purpose into twenty-five to thirty provinces. Each province was further divided into several administrative districts.

Palestine was one of these administrative districts of the empire.¹ In the early nineteenth century it was a godforsaken piece of land. It was a derelict region, with a primitive economy and a culturally backward population which subsisted on a dismally low standard of living. Its population was sparse and impoverished, and the few towns were undeveloped and badly maintained, as were the small number of neglected tracks and roads which connected them. The main reason for these

conditions was Palestine's insignificant contributions to the revenues and to the military resources of the Ottoman Empire.

During the nineteenth century, however, and especially during the 1880s, the land underwent extensive change. The relatively tolerant Egyptian conquest of the country from 1831 through 1839, the Crimean War from 1853 through 1856, the decline of the Empire's military strength, its territorial pullback, and the growing influence of the European penetration into Palestine were the main reasons for these far-reaching changes. All of these factors put the "Eastern Question" squarely on the world map, and Palestine became a central focus of international interest.

Palestine's basic significance to the Ottoman Empire resulted from the importance of its holy places to Islam, to Christianity, and to Judaism. These sites attracted pilgrims from many Muslim lands on their way to and from Mecca and Medina. The duty to help and protect these pilgrims was a religious obligation and a political necessity for the Muslim sultan. Christians and Jews came to the Holy Land in increasing numbers in the nineteenth century, and the holy sites thus became a factor of growing significance in the Sultan's relations with the Western powers.² The importance of Palestine to the Ottoman Empire also increased because of the Ottomans' territorial losses in the Balkans and in the Caucasus during the nineteenth century. Palestine bordered on independent Egypt, and its strategic and political importance grew as a result. It also benefited from the political and social reforms which imposed administrative centralization and modernization on the country while extending equal rights to the non-Muslim minorities. Palestine was opened to extensive and diversified political, cultural, and economic activity on the part of the European powers, an activity that continued and intensified toward the end of Ottoman rule. For the first time since the Crusades, Palestine became a vital point of convergence between East and West. Tradition and progress, neglect and modernization: all lived together in one land. Table 1 shows the population growth in Palestine in the nineteenth century.³

As the populations of the different communities increased, so, concomitantly, did the conflicts: between the Sunni Muslims, the Shiites, and the Druse, on the one hand, and between the Muslims, the Christians, and the Jews on the other. The Christian community was torn apart by internecine struggles within its different sects, mainly generated by the competing missionary activities of the European powers. These same activities, however, did make a significant contribution to the development of educational and cultural activity and to nationalism among the educated classes.

TABLE 1
ESTIMATES OF THE POPULATION OF PALESTINE, 1800-1914³

Year	All religions	Moslems including Druse	Christians	Jews	Samaritans
1800	275,000	246,350	21,800	6,700	150
1890	532,060	431,600	57,400	42,900	150
1914	689,300	525,150	70,000	94,000	150

Source: Roberto Bachi, *The Population of Israel* (Jerusalem, 1974); 31-3, 367-370.

The central premise of this paper is that the establishment and development of libraries in nineteenth-century Palestine was part of the cultural interface between the Orient and the Occident. Most of the libraries that were established in Palestine in that century were created in response to contemporary society's needs, which dictated the nature, the location, and the subsequent development of the various collections. Since these collections principally served the needs of the various religious communities resident in Palestine—the Muslims, the Christians, and the Jews, and their sects—they will be discussed in this order.

The overwhelming majority of the population in Palestine was Muslim. Its society was basically a traditional one, conservative and unenlightened, manifesting hostility toward political, social, and cultural change and even attempting to check the process of westernization and modernization in different areas of life. As far as Muslim society was concerned, its culture had no need for change.

The infiltration of Western influence, with the increased numbers of European citizens in the country, the establishment of new schools whose curricula were based on Western models, the availability of translations of Western authors, and the appearance of Arab newspapers and periodicals reflecting European influence, all caused the Arabs to identify with external Western traits, while the real values of the West were not internalized. The impact of the Western elements on the traditional cultural system contributed to the neglect of their own heritage without receiving any true compensation for its value.⁴ Therefore, in comparison with other communities, the Muslims' contribution to the development of Palestine was the least significant.

Because of the tenacity of their beliefs and popular tradition, the local Muslim leadership aspired to strengthen religious values among their population. In spite of the introduction in 1809 of the Ottoman Education Law for the Palestinian population, only a very small minority of the students for whom the law was intended actually attended the few

schools that were established during the nineteenth century. By the last decade of Ottoman rule, only ninety-five schools with approximately eight thousand students existed. Even by 1931, during the period of the British Mandate, 89 percent of the Muslim population was illiterate. It was only in the late 1910s that the process of Westernization began to pose a real challenge to the Arab population; this period also saw the initial growth of Arab nationalism.⁵

We have no information regarding the provision of public library services for the Muslim population. However, there is no doubt that the mosques and Muslim courthouses contained small collections of religious literature which included manuscripts and books. These did not, however, develop into organized and institutionalized libraries. In contrast, there were large private collections of great value in the city homes of distinguished families. Some of these collections were opened to the public at large. Among the best known of these was that of Ragib al-Khalidi in Jerusalem, which included more than five thousand Arabic manuscripts and another five thousand or so volumes in Arabic, Persian, Turkish, French, and English; some had their origin in the Mamluk period. The collection was opened to the public as *Maktubat al-Halidija* at the beginning of the twentieth century. Another Jerusalem-based library which originated in the eighteenth century was the Khalili library which included some seven thousand volumes in Arabic.⁶

As far as the Christian minority was concerned, including the Christian Arabs, the situation was entirely different. Various Christian communities lived in Palestine, including the Greek Orthodox, the Roman Catholics, the Gregorian Armenians, the Armenian Catholics, the Copts, the Ethiopians, the Syrian Orthodox, the Protestants, and other small sects.⁷ The overwhelming majority of the Christian population, however, was either Greek Orthodox or Roman Catholic, and this population more than tripled in the nineteenth century. The immigration to and settlements of European Christians in Palestine were small in number, but their impact on the country's development was far-reaching. The Christian European presence and activities in Palestine were major factors in "opening the gates" of the country and in the enormous changes that subsequently came about.

By the end of Ottoman rule, the European Christian population amounted to some five thousand, of whom about three thousand were of German origin.⁸ The European powers took advantage of every opportunity to extend their influence in Palestine through missionaries, commercial representatives, scholars (in many cases orientalist or linguists), military attaches, and consuls. Accompanying teams established religious, educational, medical, and welfare institutions. Throughout Palestine the Christian communities maintained libraries in (1) monasteries,

churches and missions; (2) educational and research institutions, and (3) consulates.

Although chronologically the libraries in the Palestinian monasteries and churches preceded all the others, those predating the mid-nineteenth century should be regarded more as collections than as organized libraries for public use. A single Christian sect may have had possession of a number of treasured manuscripts, but these were scattered among various locations in different church collections. The rediscovery of the Holy Land led to the discovery of many manuscripts which were duly studied and recorded in the research literature. Several of the Christian sects preferred to combine the collections in their central religious institutions. A prime example of such endeavor was that initiated by the Greek Orthodox patriarch Nikodemus, who succeeded in bringing about a centralization of the manuscripts from the Mar Saba Monastery in the Judean desert and from the treasury of the Holy Sepulchre in the patriarchal library, thereby facilitating their control, protection, and conservation from physical damage and in some cases their salvage from total destruction by the monks who had used them as combustible material. But the person who in fact carried out the work and actually created the so-called Jerusalem Library was the Byzantine scholar Athanasios Papadopoulos Kerameus, who was invited to become secretary to the Patriarch Nikodemus in 1883. Because of his work in Jerusalem, he drew the attention of the Russian Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society which contributed the money for publication of a catalogue of the hitherto unpublished material. The result was his *Hierosolimitike Bibliotheke* (St. Petersburg, 1891–1899), a four-volume catalogue of Greek codices found in the library of the patriarchate of Jerusalem as well as in other libraries in Palestine. This substantial reference work describes 2,350 Greek manuscripts in its 2,556 pages.⁹ Most of the texts of these manuscripts deal with theology and liturgy. Of particular importance is the twelfth-century illuminated manuscript of the Book of Job.

Another library of considerable scope was that maintained by the Armenian patriarchate at the St. James Convent in Jerusalem. It included over 20,000 books and more than 3,800 manuscripts in Armenian, Syrian, Coptic, Ethiopian, Arab, and Turkish. Most of the Armenian language manuscripts were written during the Cilician period. The collection included an old version of the Gospel, supposedly copied in 887 A.D. The archeologist M. E. Stone stated that “there is some evidence that an Armenian scriptorium was established in Jerusalem by the middle of the fifth century, that is to say within decades of the invention of the Armenian alphabet.”¹⁰ The library was well known to the travelers to the Holy Land as early as the mid-eighteenth century. In the following extract, the Prussian consul H. Petermann recounts his experiences

there and his efforts to obtain manuscripts for the Royal Library in Berlin:

Leider war die Bibliothek des Klosters, welche uebrigens keine alten Handschriften enthalten soll, wegen des noch nicht vollendeten Baues der Patriarchenwohnung in grosser Unordnung, und deshalb fuer mich nicht sichtbar. Die Buecher waren zerstreut bei einzelnen Wardapets und Bischoefen, und ich ronnte nur wenige Codices bei einem gefaelligen, jungen Lehrer des Klosters, Namens Tigran Hairapet, aus Smyrna, sehen, welche dieser zufaellig auf seiner Stube hatte . . . Unter diesen interessirten mich besonders zwei Handschriften, deren eine die Geschichte des Cyriacus (Kirakos) und die Chronik von Wardau dem Grossen, aus dem 13ten, und die Geschichte Tamerlan's von Thomas aus dem 15ten Jahrhundert, die andere die Geschichtswerke des Agathangelus, Faustus Byzanthinus, Moses Chorenensis, Eliseus, und des syrischen Patriarchen Michael enthaelt. Durch die Geffaeligkeit des gennanten Lehrers erhielt ich eine Abschrift des letzten Werkes fuer die koenigliche Bibliothek. Hier sah ich auch zum ersten Mal das in Amsterdam 1669 gedruckte Geschichtswerk von Arrakhel, welches, da die ganze Auflage nach dem Orient geschafft wurde, in Europa gar nicht zu haben ist.¹¹

Titus Tobler left us interesting testimony in his writings to the Christian libraries in Palestine. He pointed out that the most important library in the mid-nineteenth century was that of the Franciscans in the St. Savior Monastery in Jerusalem. It consisted of two thousand books and some fourteenth-century manuscripts. Included were Bibles, theological texts, and texts of Roman authors such as Plutarch, Gaius, Plinius Secundus, Titus Livius, Hippocrates, and Galenos. Tobler emphasized that the tourist would be disappointed with the library's collection, because there was almost no literature on the Holy Land.¹²

The library of the St. George Cathedral and college of the Anglican community was founded in the 1890s. A large area was allocated for a library in the college, which eventually housed several thousands of volumes in the fields of theology, geography, and history of Palestine.¹³ Other collections of significance in Jerusalem were located at the Dormition Abbey (Benedictine), the Ratisbone Monastery (Catholic), St. Paul Hospice (Catholic), St. Anne Church and Monastery (Melkite), the Soeurs de Zion Convent (Catholic), St. Mark Monastery (Syrian), and Deir al Sultan (Ethiopian).

By the end of the period of Ottoman rule in Palestine, the Christian communities had established Biblical and archeological research and

teaching institutions. Libraries were created, which from a nucleus of several hundred books developed into scholarly collections consisting of tens of thousands of books and periodicals. The main foci of these collections were in the fields of Bible studies and the archeology of Palestine and the Near East. Libraries were established in the following institutions: the *École biblique et archéologique française*,¹⁴ the American School of Oriental Research,¹⁵ the *Deutsch-Evangelisches Institut fuer Altertumswissenschaft des Heiligen Landes*,¹⁶ and the *Orientalisches Institut der Goerres Gesellschaft*.¹⁷

Other educational institutions of the Christian community in Jerusalem maintained libraries. The policy of the German Protestant mission to encourage and foster the founding of educational and welfare institutions in the city was a major factor in the establishment of libraries in orphanages and elementary schools. For example, the German Protestant priest Ludwig Schneller built the Syrian orphanage for orphans who had escaped the massacres of Christians in Syria. This institution with its library and reading hall became the pride of the German residents of Palestine.¹⁸

Many consulates were active in mid-nineteenth century Jerusalem, among them the consulates of Britain (established in 1839), Prussia (1842), France (1843), the United States (1844), Austria (1849), and, in Jaffa, the consulate of Russia (1820). According to the "capitulations" agreement, the consuls were granted special rights to protect the interests of their nationals and to dispense justice to them. Hence the strong relations with the religious institutions of their own countries and the complex network of political, religious, economic, and humanitarian considerations which integrated all these elements.

The purpose of the consular libraries was to meet their staffs' informational needs in their dealings with their national institutions in Palestine and with the pilgrims, missionaries, and explorers who had arrived in the country for longer or shorter periods of time. These libraries focused on the historical, archeological, and geographical literature of Palestine and on theology, patristic literature, and liturgy.

Two consular libraries, the Prussian and the British, won particular renown, not only in Palestine itself but also in Europe. Prussia was the only country to actually have settlements in Palestine; the German language was the most widely spoken among the Christian population, and by the end of the Ottoman period most of the Christian residents were German citizens. The Germans developed considerable teaching and research activities in Palestine supported by the Reich.¹⁹ This support was one of the most conspicuous expressions of the German power structure in the Near East in general and in Palestine in particular under the slogan "Drang

nach Osten." It began on the level of religion and science, and then went on to political and economic support. The German consuls did their very best to strengthen German influence in Palestine. Some were famous orientalist, renowned for their research on the Near East and the Orient, who regarded their mission in Palestine not only as a chance to represent their country but also to fulfill their research aspirations.

It was the orientalist Ernst Gustav Schultz, the first Prussian consul in Jerusalem, who initiated a correspondence with King Friedrich Wilhelm IV with regard of the establishment of a research library for the use of German travelers and explorers in Jerusalem.²⁰ The lack of a systematic collection of the research literature of Palestine was mentioned as the main factor for its establishment.²¹ It came into being by ministerial decree on 10 March 1847 and was operated as a lending library. The collection was planned in advance. The orientalist Roediger from Halle University was asked to prepare a list of selected books which was to serve as a basis for the collection. The catalogue of the library, which in the official correspondence was referred to as the "Royal Library in Jerusalem," listed 260 works in about 300 volumes, most of which were published in the nineteenth century.²² Of the others, nineteen were published in the eighteenth century and two in the seventeenth century. The earliest work found in the library was Johannes van Cootwijk's *Itinerarium hierosolymitanum*, published in 1619, whereas the latest was published in 1893. The main subject of the collection (23 percent) was the history of the Orient. This was followed by geography and travel literature (15 percent), the Old Testament and its commentaries (14 percent), theology and ecclesiastical history (12 percent), Oriental linguistics (11 percent), and archeology (9 percent). The entire series of the *Corpus scriptorum historiae byzantinae* was systematically acquired. In 1874 Titus Tobler, the explorer of Jerusalem, offered his private collection to the Prussian government. This included one thousand volumes on the subjects of the topography and history of Palestine. Tobler offered his collection on the condition that it be incorporated as part of the consular research library in Jerusalem. This apparently never came to pass; the official reason was that no suitable premises were found.

For the first time European research literature was systematically imported into Palestine. On the other hand, books published in Palestine and manuscripts found in local collections were transferred to libraries in Europe and specifically to the Royal Library in Berlin by request of Heinrich Pertz, historian and director of the Library.²³

The consulate library was the first of the teaching and research institutions to be established by the Prussian government in Jerusalem. Most probably it was the first research library in Palestine. It was transferred

to the care of the Deutsch-Evangelisches Institut fuer Altertumswissenschaft des Heiligen Landes in Jerusalem at the beginning of the twentieth century, and so it came under the directorship of Gustaf Dalman.

During the same period the British consul James Finn founded the Jerusalem Literary Society for the purpose of bringing together people interested in scientific and literary research in all subjects related to the Holy Land. The society founded a library for the use of students, scholars, and travelers coming from European countries.²⁴ Consul Finn's initiative to merge the library with that of the Prussian consulate was unsuccessful.

Thousands of believers and pilgrims came to Palestine to see the holy sites and pray in them. Many of the European countries were represented by communities living in Palestine: Russia had the Christian Orthodox community, France had the Catholics, and so on. These local communities established church missions and educational and welfare institutions. The collections in the libraries of these institutions focused mainly on the geographical, topographical, cartographical, and archeological aspects of the country, the theology of the Old and New Testaments, and on the study of fauna, flora, climate, and diseases endemic to the country.

The development of libraries by the Christian community can be explained first by the interest in Palestine motivated primarily by religious considerations, such as the return to Christianity and the significance of the country as a holy land, a Christian homeland; second, by the aspiration to explore Palestine and the sites mentioned in the Old Testament, an aspiration that became an expression of European involvement in Palestine. The rediscovery of Palestine developed into a large-scale operation, involving societies and organizations aided by the political establishment.²⁵ These were the early beginnings of research on contemporary Palestine, research and exploration that for the first time was supported by library collections.

Jews comprised two percent (6,700) of the total population of Palestine in 1800. By 1880 their numbers had risen to five percent (25,000), by 1890, eight percent (42,900), and by 1914, the end of the Ottoman period, they constituted fourteen percent (94,000) of Palestine's total population. Half of the Jewish population lived in Jerusalem, and the rest lived mainly in Safed, Tiberias, and Hebron. Most of the Jews were either immigrants or the children of immigrants.

A deep religious feeling for the Holy Land in general and Jerusalem in particular was a decisive factor in the immigration of Jews from the Diaspora. They retained important links to their land of birth, however, because of their continued dependence on economic assistance from the Diaspora. These bonds between the Jewish community living in Palestine and the European countries and their representatives inside Palestine

became a very powerful acculturational factor which led to change and modernization. The massive penetration of European influence gave rise to a cultural model that promised a common platform to immigrants of widely different origins. In Palestine, and especially in Jerusalem, Jews who had been exposed in Europe to significant social and industrial changes and modernization, met their co-religionists who were still living in a clearly backward society.

It was only at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century that the Jewish community in Palestine began to play a crucial role in the Europeanization of the country, although the more traditional elements were not part of this trend. The ideological and economic impact which created a "new" Jewish society out of the Zionist waves of immigration from 1882 on was largely responsible for this role. The image of the Jew living off the land and the influence of the romantic, populist, and revolutionary trends combined with the desire to secure a homeland for the Jewish people and with aspirations for a religious and national renaissance. What gave these waves of immigration their vitality and power was the status of Palestine in the historical consciousness of the nation within the context of the European concept of national rebirth and liberation. The origins of the Jewish libraries in Palestine are to be sought in their Western predecessors. The Jewish tradition of study and learning and the centrality of books in Jewish society explain the existence of rabbinical libraries in synagogues, traditional religious schools, and yeshivas throughout the ages in the Occident as well as the Orient. The appreciation of the values represented by study and books was a fundamental aspect of traditional Jewish life upon which the historical continuity and collective identity of the people were based.²⁶ The high level of literacy among Jews led to the development of many private book collections and libraries. The oldest known Jewish libraries, dating back to the early Middle Ages, were those affiliated with or housed in religious institutions, such as the synagogue, *talmud torah*, *bet midrash*, and *yeshivah*.²⁷ These libraries were to be found wherever there was a Jewish community. They were similar to modern public libraries in that their collections, consisting mostly of rabbinical literature, were the public property of the entire congregation; books were bought with public funds and the libraries were freely accessible to all members of the community.

A pattern similar to that of the Jewish religious libraries in Europe evolved in Palestine and was maintained for many generations. However, secular literature began to infiltrate into the Jewish libraries in the mid-nineteenth century, reflecting the internal changes in Palestine and the exposure of its Jewish population to Western influences. For example,

secular literature was included in the collection of the Rothschild hospital in Jerusalem as early as 1854 and in the agricultural school of the Alliance Israélite Universelle near Jaffa in 1870.

The years 1883 to 1919 bore witness to the constant establishment of new Jewish libraries in the ancient cities of Jerusalem, Safed, and Jaffa as well as in all the new settlements founded by the first (1882–1903) and second (1904–1914) waves of modern immigration to Palestine.²⁸ Apart from the religious libraries, therefore, four different types of public libraries developed toward the end of Ottoman rule in Palestine: (1) Those public libraries which aspired to gather and preserve the spiritual heritage of the Jewish people in order to create a national collection, or at least a comprehensive collection of Jewish studies, thereby responding to the needs of students, teachers, and scholars. These libraries became the predecessors of the Jewish National and University Library.²⁹ (2) Public libraries which were intended to meet the needs of those new immigrants who came to Palestine during the first waves of immigration in order to establish agricultural settlements. Their needs stemmed from problems of absorption in a new land, but also from the lack of agricultural knowledge and understanding of how agricultural settlements should be created.³⁰ (3) Libraries that catered mainly to the educational and training needs of teachers and students. These libraries began as libraries of educational institutions, and then some developed into general public libraries.³¹ (4) Workers' libraries, which were intended to serve as an educational tool in the spirit of socialist ideology and national renaissance.³²

The Jewish public library in Palestine as a social institution was the corollary of the following dynamic factors and influences which created their own trend of development: the tradition of study and the centrality of the book in Jewish society, essentially the study of religious texts which had always determined the way of life of traditional Jewish society; the trend of Jewish enlightenment that was rooted in the European Enlightenment, which aspired to modernize and westernize Jewish life through the dissemination of contemporary concepts within its own society; the ideology of modern Jewish nationalism, which was based on Western educational values and the cultural and spiritual ideal of agricultural settlement as a way of life and as a source of productivity; the development of a Hebrew educational system; the revival of Hebrew as a spoken language; the socialist ideology of the labor movement; and, last but not least, the establishment of libraries served to counter the widespread missionary activity of the Christian community. This backdrop contributes to our understanding of the different ways the libraries of the various communities living in Palestine developed. However, there were

some characteristics common to both the Christian and the Jewish communities' libraries.

By the mid-nineteenth century the Christian and Jewish religious institutions had lost their monopoly over the maintenance of libraries. Secular institutions of both religious communities now established libraries which also included, in addition to religious texts, secular literature from outside Palestine. Printing presses were set up in Palestine by the Armenian Franciscans, the Greek Orthodox, and the Jews, and their output was sent to Europe.³³

We noted at the outset that nineteenth-century Palestine was a meeting point for East and West. One of the consequences of this cultural interface was the two-way flow of books, periodicals, and manuscripts between Europe and Palestine. Another effect of this meeting of extremes in Palestine was the German impact on the development of libraries and librarianship which made its first mark in 1847 with the establishment of the Prussian consulate research library modeled on its origin in Germany. The German impact was to last for a hundred years. It did not function in a vacuum, however, though as stated earlier, of all Western countries it was Germany which made the most significant contribution to the process of modernization in Palestine in the nineteenth century. Since the country was open and receptive to various influences, different agents played an active role in the cultural shaping of the Christian and Jewish communities. It should be remembered that while Ottoman and local Muslim culture had virtually no impact on these two communities and in no way represented models to be imitated, German culture with its modern ramifications was enthusiastically represented and disseminated by organized cultural agents, such as the German religious, educational, welfare, and research institutions, and also the villages, which were established in Palestine by German nationals. The German impact was particularly reflected in the programs and proposals of Heinrich Loewe of the Berlin University Library. Since there were no professional librarians in Palestine at that time, the Abarbanel Library in Jerusalem (which later evolved into the Jewish National Library) turned to Loewe for professional guidance. Loewe proposed the establishment of a centralized library system for the country, a system which he felt would lead to a multipurpose Jewish national library.³⁴ With regard to the public library, Loewe emphasized the educational and scholarly nature of such a library, in effect meaning the German type of the "Einheitsbibliothek" or the "Bildungsbibliothek" paradigmatic of the German reform movement—the "Buecherhallenbewegung." Not all of Loewe's proposals were realized, although their Germanizing impact on the country's library system was of long duration.

The interface between the Orient and the Occident in the country also promoted the development of Jewish workers' libraries. The origins of these libraries, scattered in settlements throughout the country, were the libraries of the Jewish and other labor organizations, particularly in Eastern Europe, the model for which was brought to Palestine by Jewish labor leaders and institutionalized in the last years of Ottoman rule. The socialist organizations and their affiliated political parties adapted these libraries in the context of their social and political policies to the conditions of the country. Their collections included mainly labor literature, socialist texts, literature about Palestine, and books in the field of agriculture.

In conclusion, libraries and library services developed in Palestine as a result of the intensive cultural encounter between East and West in the waning years of the Ottoman regime. This encounter led to the research literature being brought into Palestine, the export of the local publishing output and of manuscripts to European libraries, and the secularization of library collections. German librarianship had a decisive impact with long-term effects on the development of libraries in Palestine. These effects can be seen particularly in the introduction of the German type of the research library and in the shaping of the concept of a Jewish national library. Therefore, while the libraries of the Christian communities contributed to the process of the rediscovery and exploration of Palestine, the Jewish libraries contributed to the realization of the goals of modern Jewish nationalism.

Notes

1. For a detailed treatise on the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, see R. J. Shaw and E. K. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, vol. 2: *Reform, Revolution and Republic: the Rise of Modern Turkey, 1808–1975* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977). For background information on Palestine in the nineteenth century, see M. Ma'oz, ed., *Studies on Palestine during the Ottoman Period* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1975), and D. Kushner, ed., *Palestine in the Ottoman Period* (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben Zvi, 1986).

2. The writings of travelers, explorers, and pilgrims who visited the country in the nineteenth century are evaluated and their contribution to the study of Palestine is assessed in Y. Ben-Arieh, *The Rediscovery of the Holy Land in the Nineteenth Century* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1979); see also N. Shur, *Twenty Centuries of Christian Pilgrimage to the Holy Land* (Tel Aviv: Dvir, 1992).

3. The estimates in Table 1 were prepared on the basis of accounts of visitors from the West, with information supplied by the Ottoman authorities. For Muslims and Christians growth was larger in the urban rather than in the rural sector. At the close of the Ottoman period, the population in Palestine was predominantly rural (61 percent) with a Muslim majority (76 percent).

4. See S. Shamir, "The Impact of Western Ideas on Traditional Society in Ottoman Palestine" in M. Ma'oz, ed., *Studies on Palestine during the Ottoman Period* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1975), 507–14.

5. See Y. Ben-Arieh and Y. Bartal, eds., *Ha-Historyah shel Erez-Yisra'el: Shilhe Ha-Tekufah Ha-Otmanit 1799–1917* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1990), 181–3; see also Y. Shim'oni, *Arvei Erez-Yisra'el* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1947), 391–2, 397–8.

6. See Jerusalem Tutorial Classes, *Jerusalem Public Lending and Reference Libraries* (Jerusalem: Goldberg's Press, 1947), 2–4; J. Pohl, "Fuehrer durch die Bibliotheken Palaestinas," *Zentralblatt für Bibliothekswesen* 55 (1938): 50–64. J. A. Dagher, *Répertoire des Bibliothèques du Proche et du Moyen-Orient* (Paris: Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'Education, la Science et la Culture, 1951), includes some references on Arab libraries in Palestine. See also Y. Ben-Hananyah, "Ha-Sifriyot Ha-Arviyot Ba-Arez," *Yad La-Koreh* 1, 3–4 (July-August 1946): 68–71.

7. The Christian communities in Palestine are briefly surveyed in S. P. Colby, *Christianity in the Holy Land Past and Present* (Tel Aviv: Am Hassefer, 1969).

8. See A. Carmel, "Pe'ilut Ha-Ma'azamot Be-Erez-Yisra'el" in Y. Kolat, ed., *Toledot Ha-Yishuv Ha-Yehudi Be-Erez-Yisra'el Me-Az Ha-Aliyah Ha-Rishonah* (Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 1990), 143–213; A. Carmel, "A Note on the Christian Contribution to Palestine's Development in the Ottoman Period," in D. Kushner, ed., *Palestine in the Ottoman Period* (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben Zvi, 1922–1924), 302–08.

9. A supplement to the catalogue of Papadopoulos-Kerameus was published by M. Koikylides in 1899. The Greek patriarchate's library also included Ethiopian, Arabic, Syrian, and Georgian manuscripts which were described in the professional literature in the beginning of the twentieth century; see, for example, E. Littmann, "Die aethiopischen Hss. im griechischen Kloster zu Jerusalem," *Zeitschrift fuer Assyriologie* 15 (1900): 134–61; G. Graf, "Katalogchristlich-arabischer Hss. in Jerusalem," *Oriens Christianus* 4 (1914): 88–120; R. P. Blake, "Catalogue des Manuscrits Géorgiens de la Bibliothèque Patriarcale Grèque à Jerusalem," *Revue de L'Orient Chrétien* 3–4 (1922–1924):345–413. For a bibliography of descriptions of the Ethiopian, Arabic, Georgian, and Syrian manuscripts of the Greek patriarchate's library, see J. Pohl, "Fuehrer duch die Bibliotheken Palaestinas," *Zentralblatt fuer Bibliothekswesen* 55 (1938): 55–6, and P. Thomsen, *Die Palaestina-Literatur 1895–1945*, vols. 1–7 (Leipzig-Berlin: J. C. Hinrich—Akademie Verlag, 1911–1972). On Papadopoulos-Kerameus and the research activities of the library, see T. Stavrou, "The Russian Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society, 1882–1914" (Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 1961), 190–5; see also D. Hopwood, *The Russian Presence in Syria and Palestine. 1843–1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), 101. For earlier descriptions of the library of the Greek monastery, see W. Jowett, *Christian Researches in Syria and the Holy Land* (London: L. B. Seely, 1825), 214–5; R. Curzon, *Visits to the Monasteries of the Levant* (London: Arthur Barker, 1955), 171–2 (first published in 1844); and C. Biggs, *Six Months in Jerusalem* (Oxford: Moubray and Co., 1896), 247–51.

10. M. E. Stone, "The Manuscript Library of the Armenian Patriarchate in Jerusalem," *Israel Exploration Journal* 19 (1969): 26–7.

11. H. Petermann, *Reisen im Orient* (Leipzig: Von Veit & Comp., 1860), 1: 222–3. Petermann (1801–1876), a well-known scholar in Semitic languages and explorer of the Orient, became Prussian consul in Jerusalem in 1868. In 1929 the library of the Armenian patriarchate became the Calouste Glubenkian Library.

12. Titus Tobler (1806–1877), the Swiss physician who was considered to be the Nestor of explorers and researchers of Jerusalem in the nineteenth century, visited Palestine in the years 1835, 1845, 1846, 1857, and 1865. See Tobler, *Denkblaetter aus Jerusalem*, 2. Ausg. (Constanz: Scheitlin, 1856), 456–7. By the end of the Ottoman period, this library had grown to encompass a considerable collec-

tion relating to Palestine. See also the biography of Tobler by H. J. Heim, *Dr. Titus Tobler der Palaestinafahrer: Ein Appenzellisches Lebensbild* (Zuerich: F. Schulthess, 1879).

13. The collection of the (British) Palestine Exploration Fund in Jerusalem became part of the library of St. George Cathedral and College in the beginning of the twentieth century. See *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement* (1893): 2; and also *Jerusalem and the East Mission* 31 (January 1907): 224, and *Jerusalem and the East Mission* 41 (July 1909): 120.

14. The École biblique et archéologique française was located in the Dominican convent Saint Etienne. Its library, founded in 1890, maintained approximately 25,000 volumes in the fields of Bible studies, archeology, history, and geography of the Near East. See J. A. Dagher, *Répertoire des Bibliothèques du Proche et du Moyen-Orient* (Paris: Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'Éducation, la Science et la culture, 1951), 73.

15. The American School of Oriental Research and its library were established in Jerusalem in 1900. The library's collection included mainly archeological literature.

16. The institute was established by the Protestant churches of Germany in 1902. Gustaf Hermann Dalman (1855–1941), the German theologian, directed the institute and its library from 1902 to 1917. See H. Rohde, *Deutschland in Vorderasien* (Berlin: E. S. Mittler und Sohn, 1916), 134–6.

17. The institute of the German Catholic Goerres Society was founded in 1909. Its main purpose was to enable young German Catholic theologians to become acquainted with the Holy Land and to study in Jerusalem. On the Goerres Institut in Jerusalem, see V. Cramer, *Ein Jahrhundert Deutscher Katholischer Palaestinamission, 1855–1895* (Koeln: J. P. Bachem, 1956), 44.

18. Ludwig Johann Schneller (1820–1896) was born in Germany. In 1850 he settled down in Jerusalem as a missionary to direct an orphanage in the Old City. Later he built the complex of the German-funded buildings around the Syrisches Waisenhaus located in the New City of Jerusalem; see K. Goetz, "Das Deutschtum in Palaestina," *Mitteilungen der Akademie zur Wissenschaftlichen Erforschung und zur Pflege des Deutschtums* (1931): 130, 321–30.

19. On the Prussian policies and presence in Palestine, see E. Roth, *Preussens Gloria im Heiligen Land—Die Deutschen und Jerusalem* (Muenchen: G. D. W. Callway, 1973), and Abdel-Raouf Sinno, *Deutsche Interessen in Syrien und Palaestina. 1841–1898* (Berlin: Baalbek Verlag, 1982).

20. Ernst Gustav Schultz specialized in Oriental philology and biblical archeology, and at the age of twenty-seven he became lecturer at the University of Koenigsberg. He was appointed vice-consul in Jerusalem in 1842. His correspondence with regard to the founding of a library is maintained at the Israel State Archives 67/433.

21. In a note of 12 October 1846 from the minister of religious affairs to his king, it was stated that "Jerusalem ist bis jetzt von literarischen Hilfsmitteln deren der europaeische Gelehrte bei dem von ihm anzustellenden Untersuchungen bedarf fast ganz entbloet." Letter of Eichorn von Canitz and Duesberg to King Friedrich Wilhelm IV, 12 October 1846, Israel State Archives 67/433.

22. See "Katalog der Deutschen Konsulats-Bibliothek in Jerusalem alphabetisch nach dem Autornahmen geordnet," Israel State Archives 67/433.

23. See letter of H. Pertz to E. G. Schultz, 9 December 1846, Israel State Archives 67/433. Schultz was well-informed about libraries and books in Palestine: "[Ich] habe gefunden, das Christen wie Juden und Muhammedaner

viele werthvolle Buecher und Handschriften besitzen, von denen Manches, wie ich hoffe, kaufflich sein, anderes und noch mehreres der Benutzung durch Europaeische Gelehrte zugaenglich zu machen sein werde wenn die Moeglichkeit der Gegenseitigkeit in der Mittheilung dabei erleichternd zu Hilfe kommt." Schultz to King Friedrich Wilhelm IV, 8 February 1846, Israel State Archives 67/433.

24. William Henry Bartlett (1809–1854), the painter of Palestine, visited the country in 1834, 1842, 1845, and 1853, described the British consular library, and stated its objectives as follows: "In a small range of buildings near the church are the offices of the English consulate, and the library belonging to the Literary Society of Jerusalem, an institution at present in its infancy, but which is probably destined to render no small aid to the cause of scientific inquiry in Palestine, besides tending to diffuse among the society of the city a taste for intellectual enjoyments, and topics for social converse, and furnishing the traveler with the welcome resource of a library of reference and amusement . . . A library of nearly a thousand volumes has been collected, chiefly from English contributors. . . . His Majesty the King of Prussia has bestowed upon the association the unconditional use of the library to be established in the Evangelical Hospice." W. H. Bartlett, *Jerusalem Revisited* (London: Arthur Hall, Virtue & Co., 1855), 29–30. Finn's initiative to merge the library of the society with the library of the Prussian consulate was turned down on the grounds that, though the English library had a great many books, they were of inferior quality; see J. Finn, *Stirring Times* (London: C. Kegan Paul, 1878), 89–98; E. A. Finn, *Reminiscences of Mrs. Finn, Member of the Royal Asiatic Society* (London: Marshall Morgan and Scott, 1929), 93; see also A. L. Tibawi, *British Interests in Palestine. 1800–1901* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), 124–7.

25. See Y. Ben-Arieh, *The Rediscovery of the Holy Land in the Nineteenth Century* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1979), 11–7.

26. See S. Assaf, *Books and the People of the Book* (Safed: Museum of Printing Arts, 1964), v–xiii.

27. The *talmud torah* is a traditional religious school, the *bet midrash* is a school for rabbinic studies, and a *Yeshivah* is the traditional Jewish academy for the study of rabbinical literature.

28. A detailed treatment and documentation of the development of Jewish public libraries can be found in D. Schidorsky, "The Emergence of Jewish Public Libraries in Nineteenth Century Palestine," *Libri* 32, 1 (1982): 1–40.

29. The Montefiore Library, established in 1874, the Library for the People of Israel, established in 1884, and the Abarbanel Library, established in 1892, should be regarded as the forerunners of the Jewish National Library. See D. Schidorsky, *Sifriyah Ve-Sefer Be-Erez-Yisra'el Be-Shilhe Hatekufah Ha-Otmanit* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1990).

30. The public libraries established in Rishon Le-Zion in 1883 and in Jaffa in 1884 belong to this category.

31. A good example is the Sapir Library, established in Petaḥ Tiqvaḥ in 1892.

32. The first workers' libraries were established in Rehovit in 1891 and in Petaḥ Tiqvaḥ in 1904. See D. Schidorsky, "The Origins of Jewish Workers' Libraries in Palestine 1880–1920," *Libraries & Culture* 23 (Winter 1988): 39–60.

33. For example, on the Franciscan printing press see M. T. Petrozzi, "The Franciscan Printing Press," *Christian News from Israel* 22, 2(6) (1971): 64–9.

34. Heinrich Loewe (1868–1951), one of the first German Zionists, instituted the earliest Zionist societies there and edited Zionist periodicals. At the time he

left Germany to take up the directorship of the Sha'ar Zion Library in Tel Aviv in 1933, he had been librarian at the Berlin University Library for thirty-four years. He was a prolific writer on Zionist issues, but his main articles were concerned with the establishment of a Jewish national and public library system in Palestine. See his *Eine Juedische Nationalbibliothek* (Berlin: Juedischer Verlag, 1905) and his *Juedisches Bibliothekswesen im Lande Israel* (Jerusalem: National u. Universitaets-Bibliothek 1922). On Loewe's activity in the field of librarianship in Palestine, see D. Schidorsky, "Jewish Nationalism and the Concept of a Jewish National Library," in D. Schidorsky, ed., *Library Archives and Information Studies* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1989), 60–6, 72–4. For a bio-bibliography of Loewe, see "Heinrich Loewe," *Neue Deutsche Biographie* (Muenchen: Dunckert & Humblot, 1987), 15: 75–6.