If we examine the motivations of the pioneers of the First Aliya (1881–1903) and Second Aliya (1904–1914), we find that the yearning for the Land of Israel after so many years of exile and the desire to create a new generation of Jews working the land were their main considerations. For many of them, the move to Palestine was perceived as a return to their old homeland from which they had only recently been expelled; their arrival was the realization of an old dream. Chayuta Busel, one of the leading figures of the Second Aliya period, wrote in her memoirs that she “longed to express my love for the dust and stones of the Land of Israel, where our forefathers shed their blood on the altar of freedom.” She considered herself “disgraced and abased” in the Diaspora and longed to live among nature.1 Sarah Azaryahu wrote that when she moved to Palestine she joined that small group “of fervid, bold revolutionaries who were already dwelling and working” in the ancient homeland, and that by coming she was burning all the bridges that had once tied her to her native land.2 Abraham Krinizi wrote in his memoirs that when he arrived in Palestine on Hanukkah 1905, he was reborn “afresh on the shores of the homeland” nineteen years after having been born in Grodno on Hanukkah 1886.3 A literary illustration of how the Second Aliya pioneers imagined life in Palestine can be found in Agnon’s novel Only Yesterday. With his rare literary talent, Agnon—who himself was part of the Second Aliya—described how Yitzhak Kumer imagined the land and its inhabitants. “A blessed dwelling place was his image of the whole Land of Israel and its inhabitants blessed by God” Agnon wrote in the first chapter of Only Yesterday.” Its villages hidden in the shade of vineyards and olive groves, the fields enveloped in grains and the orchard trees crowned
with fruit, the valleys yielding flowers and the forest trees swaying; the whole firmament is sky blue and all the houses are filled with rejoicing.”

The stories of Chayuta Busel, Sarah Azaryahu, Abraham Krinizi, and even Yitzhak Kumer represent the experiences of many pioneers who moved to Palestine “to build it from its destruction and to rebuilt by it,” as Agnon put it. Although this was a small, unrepresentative portion of the immigrants to Palestine in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, their collective story overshadowed that of the “ordinary” eastern European immigrants who went to Palestine for other reasons. The contrast between the oleh and the immigrant, who may have arrived on the same ship, was so salient that Zionist historiography defined the term Second Aliya in two ways: One definition was chronological, i.e., encompassing all immigrants to Palestine between 1904 and 1914. The second was sociological and ideological, referring to a particular segment of newcomers who held specific national and social views. Moreover, if we compare aliya to Palestine as a unique phenomenon with the immigration of hundreds of thousands of Jews to various other countries, the contrast between the olim and the immigrants is even more noticeable. The ideological fervor of the pioneers who sought to create a new society in Palestine ex nihilo stands out against the immigrants’ more modest aspiration to improve their material living conditions. This sort of comparison not only distinguishes the Zionist enterprise and aliya to Palestine from the mass migration to countries overseas, but also portrays the pioneers as more principled than the immigrants.

The present article contrasts the pioneers of the First Aliya and the Second Aliya not with the non-ideological Jewish immigrants but with other Jews who were motivated to leave eastern Europe by the same inner force and ideological awareness as the olim to Palestine. The comparison of ideological immigration to Palestine with ideological immigration elsewhere raises the question of whether there can be aliya to some place other than Palestine/Israel. Was the aliya of Busel, Azaryahu, Krinizi, and many other pioneers unique only because they came to Palestine or can we find a parallel among Jewish “olim” who chose to realize their dreams in the Americas? Although the term aliya exists only in Hebrew and even the concept has no equivalent in other languages, the phenomenon covered by the term aliya exists in immigrant societies in general and among the Jewish immigrants who did not go to Palestine in particular. Before we try to answer this question, however, I would like to make a typological distinction between aliya and immigration; for this purpose I refer to studies by the sociologist S. N. Eisenstadt.
In 1954, when the huge wave of immigration from North Africa subsided, S. N. Eisenstadt published a paper entitled “Aliya ve-Hagira: Kavim le-Tipologya Sotsiologit” (Aliya and immigration: Outline of a sociological typology). The date of publication was by no means arbitrary. In the five years from the establishment of the State of Israel until 1953, some 670,000 people had moved to Israel, dramatically changing the face of Israeli society. The arrival of hundreds of thousands of immigrants in such a short period of time prompted Eisenstadt to compare aliya before and after independence. Eisenstadt starts off by maintaining that an oleh is someone “who relocates due to his national-ideological consciousness,” whereas an immigrant “relocates due to a drive to improve his economic status.” However, Eisenstadt recommends looking beyond economics; according to him, “the distinction between aliya and immigration should start with a comparison of the sociological factors behind the rise of the typical reasons for the movement of each of the types.”

The social crisis that pushed the olim to Israel, he said, was completely different from the crisis experienced by the immigrants. According to Eisenstadt, immigration develops in societies in which the structure and social makeup of the family are being undermined. Natural increase, followed by tough competition for jobs and an “increase in pressure from younger sons who find no opportunities to fulfill the customary social roles” will result in a genuine crisis in the society of origin. Consequently, emigration will be a means whereby a family that merely wants “to continue the old pattern of life in the new land” can improve its economic status. In other words, the social crisis that triggers emigration “does not undermine the migrants’ primary forms of identification or impel them to create new primary groups during the migration process. The migrants carry on with their previous way of life and expect their new environment to be adjusted to this way of life.”

In contrast, aliya—especially pioneering aliya—was motivated by a different social crisis, according to Eisenstadt. The pioneers did not come from the poorer classes of eastern European society and their aliya was not meant to relieve the demographic pressure on the Jewish population. Many of the pioneering olim came from Jewish families that were enjoying economic growth while remaining close to traditional society. “The tension between these two axes—the axis of traditional life and the axis of economic and political betterment in general society—is what prompted the awakening of the movement for aliya to Palestine.” Aliya, according to Eisenstadt, was propelled not by a weakening of the economic foundations but by a weakening of the basic forms of identification in Jewish society. Another difference between
Olim and immigrants is their attitude toward their society of origin. Olim reject the social values and institutional structure of the society they have left. “While the immigrant wants to rectify or change the pre-existing society solely with respect to means, the oleh seeks to build a new society with new values.”¹⁰ To a significant extent, these differences, Eisenstadt believed, shape the absorption of the olim and the immigrants in their new land. Immigrants retain ties to their country of origin, its values, and its people for a long time in their new home; for this reason, they have a distinct tendency to live among people from their country of origin. Olim, in contrast, have hardly any connection with their country of origin and its values. These assertions led Eisenstadt to conclude that those who came to Palestine before the establishment of the State of Israel could be classified as olim, whereas from the time of Israeli independence on, the mass aliya changed its main identifying marks and became immigration.¹¹ This is not the place to argue with Eisenstadt’s conclusions: I merely note that immigrants—as he defined them—came en masse to Palestine before the establishment of the State just as olim moved to the independent State of Israel afterwards.¹²

Aryeh Tartakower’s book *Ha-Adam ha-Noded* (The wandering man) came out in the same year as Eisenstadt’s paper. The book is significant in that it attempts to clarify a few basic concepts needed to understand the meaning of immigration and its impact on human societies. One of these concepts is aliya, which Tartakower defines as “immigration for the good of society, founded on a particular idea and realized on the basis of a specific plan within a specific organizational framework, as well as on the basis of preparation for a new life.”¹³ This definition leads Tartakower to the far-reaching conclusion that the concept of aliya can apply not only to Jews in Palestine, but to any nation in any country, provided that the necessary conditions exist: an idea, a plan of action, and an organization that will carry out the plan. Quite likely, Tartakower adds, the term *aliya* has not developed “yet among the other nations,” but even “if the term itself did not exist more or less clearly in previous generations,” the phenomenon may have existed.¹⁴ There is thus no reason not to try to apply the term *aliya*, as defined and explained by Tartakower, Eisenstadt, and Bacchi, to similar cases during the mass migration from eastern Europe in 1882–1914.

**RURAL SETTLEMENT IN THE UNITED STATES**

The Jewish agricultural colonies founded in the United States in the 1880s by Jews from eastern Europe fit into Tartakower’s definition.
This was ideological immigration aimed at improving the condition of the Jewish people, it was realized on the basis of a plan and an organizational framework, and its aim was to create a new life different from what the Jews had known in eastern Europe. The founders of the colonies of Sicily Island, Bethlehem-Yehudah, Hebron, Beersheba, Gilead, Carmel, New Odessa, and Palestine sought, by means of communal settlement in the United States, not only to turn the Jews into farmers, but also to establish Jewish autonomy somewhere in the United States. This was a national idea consistent with the pioneers’ socialist worldview. Moreover, their motivations for going to the United States were no different from the motivations of the olim to Palestine. The two groups came from similar backgrounds, and they advocated similar solutions for the “Jewish question” in Czarist Russia.

In the spring of 1881, a series of pogroms broke out in the southern and southwestern portions of the Pale of Settlement. The acts of murder, plunder, and destruction targeting the Jewish population were terribly disappointing to all segments of the Jewish intelligentsia—Zionists, assimilated Jews, and revolutionaries. As thousands of Jews fled to the border town of Brody and left Russia, disagreements emerged within this group. The assimilated intelligentsia were vehemently opposed to emigration. From their homes in St Petersburg and other cities outside the Pale of Settlement, they viewed migration to the west as a sign of disloyalty and betrayal of the Russian homeland that would lead to a rise in antisemitism. They believed the pogroms were temporary and would pass, never to return. The solution to the Jews’ plight, they argued, was on the one hand waging a tenacious, consistent political struggle for equal rights, while on the other hand exposing the Jews to Russian culture in order to narrow the gap between them and the surrounding society.

Opposing these arguments were maskilim who had become disillusioned with the dream of Russification and integration into Russian society. In the 1870s, this sector of Jewish society began searching for a synthesis between their profound ethnic consciousness and the societal changes that had occurred in the wake of modernization. This group, termed Transformists by the historian Gideon Shimoni, were a formative, decisive factor in the emergence of Jewish nationalism. Maskilim such as M. L. Lilienblum, J. L. Gordon, and Leon Pinsker felt a commitment to the Jews in the Russian Empire, identified with them, and sought any possible way to ease their plight.

In the debate over emigration, this group favored leaving Russia on the assumption that emigration would solve the problem of the Jews in the Czarist Empire. “We nowhere at home, and that we finally must
have a home, if not a country of our own,” Pinsker wrote in *Autoemancipation*:

If we would have a secure home, so that we may give up our endless life of wandering and rehabilitate our nation in our own eyes and in the eyes of the world, we must above all, not dream of restoring ancient Judea. We must not attach ourselves to the place where our political life was once violently interrupted and destroyed. The goal of our present endeavors must be not the "Holy Land", but a land of our own. We need nothing but a large piece of land for our poor brothers; a piece of land which shall remain our property, from which no foreign master can expel us. Thither we shall take with us the most sacred possessions which we have saved from the ship-wreck of our former fatherland, the God-idea and the Bible.  

The Transformists were divided on the main question of Pinsker’s essay: “Holy Land or Land of our own.” Some believed that in America they would be able to heal and normalize the economic structure of the Jewish people; others thought the problem could be solved only in Palestine. The founding of Bilu and Am Olam in 1882 illustrates the Transformists’ dilemma. Both movements were made up of *maskilim* who regarded leaving the Russian Empire as a way of improving the plight of the Jews. Although one regarded Palestine as the destination and the other had its sights set on America, the two organizations were very similar. Moreover, the members of both wanted to serve as a vanguard searching for safe shores for the Jewish emigrants—Bilu in Palestine and Am Olam in America.

Am Olam was founded in June 1881 following anti-Jewish riots in southern Russia in the spring of that year. The three founders of the movement, Moni Bakal, Moshe Herder, and Shneur Baile (Sidney Baily), believed that agricultural colonies in America could bring about the recovery of the Jewish people. Bakal and Baile in particular were influenced by their proximity to a school that taught children to be productive. They noticed that those graduates who could afford it pursued further studies abroad, whereas those from poor families went back to peddling and trade. The movement’s slogan, “Quit commerce and petty trade in favor of crafts, manual labor, and working the land in a natural setting,” spread throughout the Pale of Settlement, and branches of the movement were formed in various cities. Ideologically, the movement represented nationalist Jews deeply rooted in the ethical teachings of the Israelite prophets. Soon, however, long-secularized socialist students with a cosmopolitan worldview joined. This group gradually altered the social character, which had been determined mostly by the head of the local branch in one of the cities in the Pale of Settlement. Altogether the movement had several thousand active members and supporters, about a thousand of whom went to the
United States in those years. The first group set out in February 1882; three additional groups comprising hundreds of members left in May of that year.20 Reading the memoirs of Am Olam members and the group’s bylaws, we find that these were pioneers imbued with a sense of mission who wanted to effect a genuine revolution in the life of the Jewish people. “We are the youth who learn, the most sensitive portion of the nation. Our hearts were very bitter [over the pogroms],” wrote Shneur Baile:

We left our studies and sought counsel as to how to help the community get out of its state of servitude. Is Israel a servant to be scorned…? We will leave the stepmother Russia (mir zolen farlozn di shtifmater rusland) and go to America, a democratic country, where we will work the land. Perhaps we will even establish a Jewish spot there just like the Mormons’ state in Utah (un vern dort erdarbeter un meglekh bilden a yidnshtat punkti vi der mormonen shtat yuta) and even on more humanitarian foundations than theirs (un afilu oyf humanitare yesoydes velkhe habn shoyn eksistirt dort).21

The bylaws of the Bethlehem-Yehudah colony give priority to working the land; peddling and trade were considered disgraceful. “All members of the colony,” the bylaws stated, “must engage in agricultural work…. Engaging in commerce within the boundaries of Bethlehem-Yehudah is absolutely forbidden (this clause must not be changed).”22 According to the preamble, the colony

is being founded by the first group from the ‘Bnei Horin’ society in Kremenchug. It is destined to serve as a living example for the future colonies to be established by Russian Jews, to influence the Jewish people in this manner, to free it from the age-old yoke of national slavery, and to renew its spirit in advance of a new era of truth, freedom, and peace. The colony is meant to prove to all those who hate our people and to the entire world that Jews are capable of doing agricultural work.23

Bilu, founded on February 6, 1882, was smaller than Am Olam and not much more successful in practice. Its goal was to be the vanguard of a large national Jewish movement that would bring about a complete economic and national revival.24 It was organized by a group of students in Kharkov to pioneer aliyah to Palestine and—like Am Olam—to establish a communal colony. Additional Bilu groups were founded throughout Russia, and after a few months they had more than 500 members altogether. Of these, only 16 arrived in Palestine on July 6, 1882.

The members of Am Olam and Bilu had similar national motivations and a similar goal in sailing for America and Palestine. In his memoirs, Perakim me-Hayay, Am Olam member Alexander Harkavy noted that “working the land was then the dream of the Jewish maskilim in Russia. As for emigrating for this purpose, they were divided into two factions: one said their destination had to be Palestine.
(settlement of the Land of Israel), and the other decided that they had to go to America.” Both, Harkavy wrote in his memoirs:

loved their people staunchly; they were divided only on the choice of a place. The members of these parties were known by the names of their chosen lands: Palestinians and Americans. The latter party was bigger than the former. Those who left Russia to work the land needed support. The Palestinians relied on assistance from rich Jews in Russia, whereas the Americans trusted in the committee formed at the time in New York to support the exiles—the committee known as the Hebrew Emigrant Aid Society.

The story of Chaim Chissin’s switch from Am Olam to Bilu illustrates how ideologically similar the two movements were. In the debate over the preferred destination, Chissin originally favored the United States:

As for my purpose in traveling to America: Obviously I am not going for my own benefit, since I would be much better off staying in Russia and completing my education. Rather, I’m going to America to help the oppressed. In view of the present state of affairs, in view of the present government, in view of the hostility of the committee formed to solve the Jewish question, and in view of that gross hatred that the Russians have always had for the Jews and their prejudices toward them—the only option left is emigration.

Chissin saw no hope for the Jews in Russia. In America, he thought, the Jews had a better chance of obtaining fertile land and living productive lives. Palestine, he wrote in his diary,

was once a fertile land but that was long ago. Since then, as a result of the desolation in the land, the winds have incessantly brought from the desert lots of clouds of sand that have piled up in such a layer that Palestine, formerly one of the most fertile lands in the world, is now entirely bare hills and plains of sand.

In America, in contrast, there were “such fertile places that you won’t find their like here in Europe or in Asia.” After explaining convincingly—from the perspective of an 18-year-old maskil in the early 1880s—why the United States was preferable to Palestine, Chissin actually joined Bilu, which favored immigration to Palestine. It turns out that the reason for the sudden change was prosaic. In his diary he mentioned that Yechezkel Cheinow—then a 17-year-old boy—had convinced him that the land in Palestine was good and that his conclusions had been totally wrong. Apparently, however, the main factor that led him to choose Palestine over America was his girlfriend Fanny, who wanted to go to Palestine. “I was sure Fanny would come with us to America,” Chissin wrote in his diary.

But when I spoke to her about it, she surprised me by saying that she was already a member of a group that was planning to go to
Palestine. . . . Would Fanny really be separated from me, after having ravished my heart and dominated all my thoughts for so long? Yes, she has become a necessity for me. If I lose her too, I will become soulless, a cold stone! I can’t imagine how I would survive far from Fanny. How can I accept the idea that Fanny is lost to me forever? So perhaps I will have to sacrifice my first love, the strongest, longest connection to you, America!  

His love for Fanny and his unwillingness to leave her were what make Chissin susceptible to being convinced by Chelnow’s explanations of the quality of the soil of Palestine. Young love proved much more powerful than America and the Am Olam ideology combined. In essence, his beloved Fanny is what stood between his membership in Am Olam, which would have meant vanishing into historical oblivion, and his joining Bilu, which put him in the collective memory of the Zionist movement and gave him a street bearing his name in the heart of Tel Aviv, across from the Habimah Theater. The Am Olam members’ motivations in moving to the United States and boldly attempting to become Jewish farmers in Louisiana or South Dakota were no different from the motivations of the pioneers of the First Aliya. The members of Am Olam were olim—as defined by Tartakower—to the United States and not immigrants.

Looking back more than 120 years later, after Zionism achieved its goals, the colonies in Palestine flourished, and a Jewish state arose in Palestine, the settlement endeavor in the United States seems like a utopian dream that had not the faintest chance of success. But we have to keep in mind that at that time and from their perspective, a colony in the United States seemed much more realistic and feasible than one in Palestine. The abundance of empty, sparsely populated, cheap land available to settlers, a liberal government that encouraged immigration and settlement, and the expectation that the American Jewish community would support the colonies led them to conclude that their prospects in the United States were better than in Palestine. Nevertheless, against all odds and despite the harsh conditions in Palestine, Zionism succeeded whereas the agricultural colonies in the United States soon broke up. It is not the purpose of this article to explain the reasons for the success or failure; I will merely state that it was not the supposed ideological fervor of the farmers of Palestine that caused their colonies to thrive. The reasons for the success were much more prosaic. When the colonies were on the verge of collapse and a lien was about to be imposed on the land that the settlers had just purchased, Baron Rothschild came to their rescue. Without his financial support, the story of settlement in Palestine would have ended up like the rural settlement in America. After all, the settlers of Rishon Lezion, Zikhron Ya’akov, and Rosh Pinna reached the point of bankruptcy much
more quickly than the settlers in the United States, who unfortunately
did not have a financier who was willing to take on what Baron
Rothschild took on in Palestine.30

Despite this difference, however, the similarity in the reasons for
migration and in the inner forces that motivated the members of Am
Olam and Bilu was greater than the difference. In both cases these were
young people in their late teens who wanted to revolutionize the life of
the Jewish people. Most of them had been born in the early 1860s, had
grown up in the same geographical region, and had had the same
experience of Jewish adolescence in the Czarist Empire. But the main
difficulty with the primary sources, especially those relating to Am Olam
and the beginnings of Jewish rural settlement in the United States, is
that it is impossible to examine—from the Jewish farmers’ point of view—
what they experienced in the encounter with the soil. What did it feel
like to have finished the plowing for the first time? Did working the
land indeed give them a sense of satisfaction, wholeness, and happiness?
Was there some similarity in this regard too—and not only in the
motivations for migration? The case of Jewish settlement in Argentina,
in contrast, lets us explore the human aspect of the migration and
compare it with the story of the First Aliya farmers and their encounter
with the land.

JEWISH SETTLEMENT IN ARGENTINA

Jewish immigration to Argentina began in 1889, when a group of Jews
from the city of Kamenets-Podolski and its environs arrived in the port
of Buenos Aires after a long, tiring voyage. By going to Argentina,
the settlers inadvertently started a brand-new migration route for
eastern European Jewry. The story of their arrival is particularly
interesting in view of the fact that the first group that went to Argentina
had actually wanted to settle in Palestine; only by chance did they find
themselves on a ship bound for South America.

In 1887, a group of prospective emigrants from the Podolia district
formed. They were unsure whether to move to South Africa or to
Palestine. Following extensive discussions, a vote was held and the
majority decided that the group would purchase land in Palestine and
settle there. In order to promote the settlement plan, Eliezer Kaufman
was sent to Paris to meet with Baron Rothschild and ask for his help.
Kaufman’s mission failed because Rothschild refused to support the
establishment of another colony in Palestine. The late 1880s were hard
years for the Baron, who was being criticized by the settlers for his
officials’ actions and had to put down two mutinies in Rishon Lezion
and Zikhron Ya’akov. The timing of Kaufman’s arrival was unfortunate, because without Rothschild’s assistance there was no chance of putting the plan into practice.

Salvation came by chance when Kaufman met a Jew by the name of Gershon Baratz on the streets of Paris. Baratz told him that the Argentinean consul was offering land in the Pampas for sale at a low price. Kaufman took the recommendation seriously, met with the consul, and closed the deal. On August 14, 1889, some 136 families, numbering 826 people, arrived in Argentina on board the steamer Weser. There they paved the way for additional settlement groups and inadvertently became the pioneers of rural settlement in Argentina.

The story of Eliezer Kaufman’s trip is interesting because it was only Baron Rothschild’s refusal to support the settlement group from Podolia that stood between their entering the Zionist narrative as pioneers in Palestine and being ordinary immigrants for whom Argentina was just a land meant to save them from the hardship and persecution in eastern Europe. But Argentina was much more than that for them. In contrast to the Jewish immigrants who sailed to the United States and settled en masse in crowded conditions on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, Kaufman’s group did not settle in Buenos Aires and did not pursue its old way of life in the new land. Instead, they settled in the Argentinean hinterland and started working the land. Moreover, like the farmers in Palestine, the “Weser olim” had difficulty coping with local conditions. The first to pay the price—as in Palestine—were children who died of illnesses and climatic afflictions. It looked as though their settlement project in Argentina would fail even before it started. To their great good fortune, Dr. Wilhelm Loewenthal came to their rescue, hooking them up with Baron Maurice de Hirsch, who had agreed to take them under his wing.

In the 1890s, Baron Hirsch wanted to put into practice an ambitious settlement plan, unprecedented in scope. The idea was to purchase an entire region that had all the conditions needed for settlement, so that the settlers could become the undisputed owners of the land. In that region, the Jews would establish an autonomous state that would protect them from economic persecution and pogroms. Unlike Baron Rothschild, whose support for the farmers of the colonies was gradual, Baron Hirsch had a laid-out plan aimed at applying the main ideas of Pinsker’s Autoemancipation.

In 1891, Baron Hirsch founded the Jewish Colonization Association (ICA) and put a fortune of 50 million francs at its disposal. For him, Argentina was the promised land where Jews could live productive lives in a manner different from that which they had known in eastern Europe. For the Jewish settlers, too, Argentina was much more than just a destination for immigration. When we read the memoirs of the
Jewish settlers in Argentina, we find that they are just as rich and diverse as those of the farmers in Palestine who were part of the First Aliya. The initial encounter with Argentina, the first furrow, the rain, and the bond with nature occupy a central place in these memoirs. In Benzion Epstein’s book Zangn Oyfn Vint (Stalks in the wind), the author—the son of a Jewish settler in Moiseville—describes the farmer Luma Lipman’s first encounter with the soil of Argentina. “Straining to see and trembling inside,” Epstein wrote, “Luma Lipman looked out at the primeval landscape. Here in this wild district he would stick in the first hoe and start a new life. Here, with his own hands, he would chart a new course for himself—and not just for himself, but for future generations.”

The atmosphere in Epstein’s book is one of people bonding with nature and with manual labor. Once they had experienced the life of a pioneer conquering the wilds of Argentina, Epstein maintained, there was no turning back to shtetl life. A new life was blossoming in the Argentinean Pampas. This description is no different from Moshe Smilansky’s depiction of the Rishon Lezion settlers and the pristine landscape that they saw: “And in a nocturnal vigil, Reb Z. D. Livontin went with his friends to spend their first night on their land under the open sky. They didn’t sleep all night... On the morrow, when dawn broke on their first day on their plot of land, they chose a hill on which to pitch their first tents. Over the hilltop they saw a breathtaking view...desolate fields waiting two thousand years for their redeemers...”

Belles lettres is not our only source of knowledge about the bond between the Jewish farmers in Argentina and their land; it is also reflected in the memoirs of their contemporaries. In the early 1920s, a farmer named Mordechai Alpersohn published his memoirs, entitled Dreisik Yor in Argentine: Memuaren fun a Yidishn Kolonist. Alpersohn was one of the first Jewish settlers in Argentina and one of the founders of the Mauritius colony. His memoirs tell the story of rural settlement—the pioneers’ arrival in Argentina, the move onto their land, their struggle against nature and the Baron’s officials, the stabilization of the colony, signs of impending disintegration, and the abandonment of agriculture by the second generation. Alpersohn’s memoirs are important in that they enable us to focus on the experiential side of arriving in Argentina and the encounter with the land. “Broad, pure skies stretched over our heads to the far ends of the horizon,” Alpersohn wrote.

A pleasant, spectacular ray of light illuminated our vision. Full of magical images, we dreamt: a homeland...a Jewish state! To this day old Leibele’s fervent preaching to a group of immigrants when the soldiers marched past rings in my ears: The Land of Israel is destined to spread throughout the world; my brothers, the Land of Israel will
be here. A real country of Jews with our own soldiers, living by our Torah and our tradition. And even when our righteous Messiah comes, we must not go there! One way or another, our ancient ancestral land is too small to contain us all. . . . Furthermore, Uncle Yishmael will still be living there . . . and he is just as much of a wild man as he used to be . . . . But here, in this country, we will live in peace and unity with the Argentineans . . . . After all, they are of our race! Some people believe they are descended from the ten tribes . . . . Such dreams were our sustenance. The dream of a new, loyal, safe homeland gave us added strength so that we could bear all our suffering and overcome it . . . . (Italics mine) \(^{39}\)

Alpersohn’s expectations of Argentina are clear; they were also much farther-reaching than the expectations of the farmers in Palestine. As in Palestine, in Argentina the settlers sought not only to alleviate their own personal distress but to establish an array of settlements that could effect genuine change in the lives of the Jewish people. This expectation was no different from what the Hibbat Zion leadership and emissaries expected of Palestine. The similarity is especially salient when we look at how the pioneers in Argentina transmitted their story to their children. Arriving in the land and making the Pampas bloom became constitutive events and instruments of education for the second and third generations of Argentinean Jewry, especially the children of the colonies. This was a heroic story of sacrifice by brave pioneers who, with their own hands, founded agricultural colonies to be proud of. The story was no different from the Zionist narrative on which the children of Palestine were raised. Even if many of the settlers’ children moved to the big cities—something that happened in Palestine too—they still perceived arriving in Argentina and working the land as significant events. In 1949, the Sholem Aleichem School in Buenos Aires published a didactic booklet entitled *Yidn in Argentine* depicting the start of Jewish settlement in Argentina. The booklet begins with a poem by A. Moshkovitch entitled *Yidn Kolinistn* [Jewish colonists].

Yidishe kolonistn,  
A gezunt in zeyerer beyner,  
Vi zey dos broyt fardinen,  
Erlekh fardint nisht keyner.  

Zeyere horepashne hent  
In blote oysgeshmidt,  
Zenen reyner fun di vaysinke  
Mit dimentn batsirt.  

Itster lign shtolts tseblit  
Argentinier vistn—  
Oysgevaksn iz a dor  
Fun yunge kolonistn. \(^{40}\)

*Zey zenen ongekumen do*  
*Fun lender vayt tsuforn,*  
*Iz dos land argentine,*  
*Zeyer naye heym gevorn.*  

*Un getrofn shtrekes erd,*  
*Vild un pust, falozn.*  
*Nisht keyn veg un nisht keyn shliakh,*  
*Nor hoykhe vilde grozn.*  

*Jewish settlers,*  
*With healthy bones*  
*Who earn their bread honestly,*  
*Like no one else.*
Their laboring hands,
Strengthened by mud,
Are cleaner than
Diamond jewelry.

They came here
From distant lands
And Argentina
Became their new home.

They found a wild land,
Empty and neglected,
Without road or path,
just tall, wild grass.

Now the Argentinean wilderness
Is proudly blooming
And a new generation of young settlers
Is coming into being.

If we replace the word “Argentina” in the poem (and in the rest of
the booklet) with “Palestine,” we have a classic poem of the First Aliya.
The desolate land of Argentina replaces the desolate land of Palestine,
which was empty and neglected without road or path—as the Yiddish
poem says—and eventually bloomed and was home to a new generation
of Jewish farmers in Palestine. The booklet also quotes Alpersohn’s
memoirs, where he describes for the children the initial encounter with
Argentina, which was not so different from what Busel, Azaryahu, and
Krinizi experienced. “Zet kinderlach!” [See, children], Alpersohn
wrote:

Ot dort iz der gan-eden, dos sheyne grine land, vos der guter baron
hirsh hot far undz gekoyft. Erd arbeter, kolonistn veln mir vern; fraye
yidn veln mir zayn. Oys pogromen! Oys igantiev mit zayne gzeyres!
[There is Paradise, the beautiful, green land that the good Baron
Hirsch bought for us. Working the land, we will become settlers and
will be free Jews. Enough of the pogroms! Enough of Igantiev and his
decrees!].

The significance of the Shavuot holiday in the colony of Mauritius
was no different from in the rural settlements in Palestine. “When
March came, it was a happy month, the most important and most
beloved of all 12 months of the year…. The bread from the earth, the
wheat, the corn, and the flax were ripe for the scythe to come and
harvest them, and Mother Earth will now be providing us with bread to
eat and clothing to wear.” The pictures of the pioneers in the booklet
are also reminiscent of the classical pictures of the First Aliya and
Second Aliya periods: a farmer holding a pitchfork and standing with
his family next to a cart laden with hay; the farmhouses; the streets of
the colony; and pictures of contented farmers.
The similarity was not only in the sense of mission and sacrifice of the Jewish settlers in Argentina and in Palestine, but also in the conflict with Baron Hirsch’s officials. Like Baron Rothschild, Baron Hirsch advocated an iron-fist policy vis-à-vis the settlers and generally gave his officials his complete backing; he even expelled those who disobeyed his orders from the colonies. The frustration and disappointment of the farmers in Palestine and Argentina were also similar. “But our happy days did not last long,” Alpersohn wrote immediately after recounting the dream of establishing a Jewish state in the Pampas of Argentina. “A holocaust came upon us, and suddenly put paid to all our beautiful dreams.”

Storms, rain, flooding, and climatic damage, along with incessant quarrels among themselves and clashes with the native population, weakened them. In Palestine the farmers had a similar disappointment; the encounter with Palestine was not easy for them. Grumbling and frustration became integral parts of their everyday lives. The bleak situation and their daily routine made them forget why they had gone there. The support for the Uganda Scheme among the farmers in Palestine is perhaps the most telling manifestation of this feeling. Twenty-one years of settlement in Palestine and tenaciously holding on to the land had not convinced the farmers to oppose the Uganda Scheme. On the contrary, Herzl’s plan found support in Palestine from those who were the most familiar with the limitations of the land and its absorption capacity. The frustration was manifested in full force in the encounter between the farmers of the First Aliya and the pioneers of the Second Aliya. On more than one occasion, the farmers tried to discourage newcomers. Their long years in Palestine had had their effect, their naivety was gone, and they made sure to convey their disillusionment with the land to the new olim. The encounter between a teacher by the name of Yechezkel Markovsky and the farmers of Rishon Lezion following his tour of the country in 1906 is a good illustration of the extent of their frustration. “When I had become accustomed to my new situation and started observing those who had long been fortunate, those who had always been heavenly angels to me—i.e., the people of the Land of Israel—I was stunned,” Markovsky wrote to his friend Menachem Ussishkin:

Instead of blissful people, I found here people who are miserable [in their own eyes]; instead of heavenly angels I met grumblers, quarrel-mongers, complainers, people for whom it would be no exaggeration to say that the name Zion is a horror. Imagine…what impression the meeting of the Committee of United Associations in Palestine, held in Rishon Lezion, might have made on me: Of the 36 people at the meeting, I found only about five in agreement: Mr. Barzilai of Jaffa, Mr. Papiermeister of Rishon, Leibowitz and Hazanov of Gedera.
Almost all of the others are opposed to the Zionism of Palestine and bitterly hate the Zionist Organization, which they see as a weapon to be used against our loyal Zionists, for whom it was a thorn in their side. Some people here even expressed their astonishment at my leaving a land flowing with milk and honey to come to a land that devours its inhabitants; they look at me as if I were a crazy man living in a fantasy. They predict that I will change my mind after becoming settled in Palestine. There are also those who say I am a missionary sent by Ussishkin to spread his views here. And I shake my head as if to say, “Woe to me that I saw you like this, beloved brethren! Woe that you have fallen so low that you aren’t aware of your situation and you don’t sense your good fortune!“

Another indication of similarity is the struggle for Jewish labor in Argentina. Just as the farmers in Palestine preferred to employ cheap, skilled Arab peasants in their fields, the Jewish farmers in the colonies of Argentina preferred the gauchos (local natives) to other Jewish immigrants. On Sivan 18, 5674 (June 12, 1914), the journal *Hapoel Hatza’ir*, affiliated with the Palestine labor movement, devoted its front page to “the question of the Jewish workers in Argentina.”

An asterisk in the headline referred readers to a footnote reading, “This article was printed in *Ha-Tsefira*, no. 115. We have given it space in our journal because with minor changes the word *Palestine* can be substituted for *Argentina* and we would have an article on the question of workers in Palestine.” The editor continues:

The only difference is that there the Jews went a priori to solve their personal subsistence problem and did not draw lines between exile and redemption, whereas here, in our holy land, Jews come initially for redemption and sink into the three levels of exile, working toward business goals and imaginary benefits.45

Despite the editor’s tacit criticism of the farmers in the colonies of Palestine, in this article we can trace the start of the process in which Zionist historiography came to claim that Zionism was unique, ignoring similar attempts by Jews imbued with a national consciousness who settled in the heart of the Argentinean Pampas and in the American hinterland in South Dakota and Louisiana.

**IMMIGRATION, NOT ALIYA, TO PALESTINE**

The era of mass migration from eastern Europe (1881–1914) has long been the topic of extensive, in-depth historiographical discussion. Numerous research studies have addressed various aspects of it from a variety of perspectives. Nevertheless, two parallel but completely different historiographical approaches have emerged. The first deals with general Jewish migration to destination countries, especially the
United States. The second deals with immigration to Palestine as a unique, exceptional case unlike other Jewish migration at the time.

The historiography on Jewish migration overseas focused for the most part on the causes of the migration, the traits of the migrants, their absorption in their new country, and their integration in their new society. Studies of Jewish immigration to the United States, Argentina, Canada, and other countries in the Western hemisphere have emphasized the process of integration in the surrounding society, social mobility, the founding and functioning of charitable organizations and mutual aid societies, and so on. In contrast, the historiography on immigration to Palestine in 1881–1914 developed completely differently. First, the standard periodization was altered. The era of mass migration from 1881 to 1914 was divided into two periods: the First Aliya (1881–1903) and the Second Aliya (1904–1914). Second, a new conceptual system developed, according to which immigration to Palestine was unique. The waves of immigration were replaced by the First Aliya and Second Aliya, the immigrants were replaced by olim, and emigrants were replaced by yordim. Instead of the economic and political hardships that pushed people to leave their countries of origin, ideology and Zionism pulled the immigrants to Palestine. Aliya to Palestine was perceived—almost axiomatically—as an exceptional case in general migration research. The assumption of this distinction was “quality rather than quantity.” The small number of immigrants who chose Palestine over America suggested unique, exceptional migration.

But if we examine the demographic profile of the immigrants to Palestine and the United States in 1881–1914 and their reasons for going to their new country, we find a surprising similarity in both respects. A statistical analysis of the immigrant population in Palestine shows that 60 percent were men and 40 percent were women; according to the American immigration figures from Ellis Island, 55 percent of Jews who entered the United States were men and 45 percent were women. The high percentage of female immigrants—both in Palestine and the United States—indicates that the Jews were coming as families and that they intended to settle permanently in the destination country. The percentage of children entering the United States and Palestine was also similar: a quarter of the newcomers in both cases were aged 14 or under. Although an estimated 360,000 children immigrated to the United States and only about 5,600 moved to Palestine, as a proportion of the immigrant population to each destination country, the figures were the same. Only among persons aged 50 and over was there a real difference between immigrants to Palestine and to the United States. Only 6 percent of immigrants entering the United States were in this age group, as compared with 22 percent—four times as
many—of those entering Palestine. In other words, half of the newcomers to Palestine were children and older adults. Persons aged 15–50 accounted for about 50 percent of immigrants to Palestine, as opposed to 70 percent of immigrants to the United States. It should be noted that of the 35,000 immigrants to Palestine during the Second Aliya (1904–1914), about 2,000 fit the definition of a “pioneer”: young, single, and socialist. In the First Aliya (1882–1903), about 5,000 of the 25,000 immigrants were farmers. In other words, of the 60,000 Jews who moved to Palestine during the mass migration, only 7,000 can be considered olim.

Indeed, if we look at the people hiding behind the numbers, we find that the majority of Jewish newcomers to Palestine were ordinary immigrants, no different from those who went to the United States or Argentina. The primary sources depict the immigrants to Palestine in bleak terms, as the following examples show:

(1) “Every ship would spew out hundreds of people,” Smilansky wrote about the immigrants in the 1880s and 1890s.

They could be divided into various types. The smallest segment consisted of wealthy people . . . The largest segment of the newcomers were destitute. Among them were some typical immigrants who had chosen to go to Jaffa by mistake. And there were those who were passing through Jaffa on their way to New York. Those with a few coins in their pockets would go on or return to blessed Russia; those whose money had run out remained in Palestine reluctantly and became laborers. They became a burden on the [Odessa] Committee.47

(2) In early 1904, representatives of the Eretz Israel Federation wrote to the Odessa Committee:

For three months now, our Jewish brethren have been coming here in greater and greater numbers. Most of the newcomers are destitute and are coming by themselves or with their families; a minority have a small amount of money. They are all coming without any plans, on the basis of rumors plucked from the air; they trust that as soon as they arrive the committees will help them find work or become farmers in the colonies. When they come here they see that they are doing badly and accuse the country and its people.48

(3) The newspaper Ha-Yom reported in mid-November 1907:

The immigration to Palestine that took a break during the holidays is returning to its previous state—a state of panic, people coming with no money, no specialization, no preparation, no knowledge, and most importantly, no love for Zion. And the wretches wander around Jaffa like shadows, roaming and cursing the day, roaming and eventually opening one shop next to another—shops selling a few loaves of bread, a few bottles of wine, and a few pounds of onions. Is it any surprise that such immigration leaves no roots?49
Menachem Sheinkin, head of the Information Bureau in Palestine during the Second Aliya and one of the leading figures in the Yishuv, described the newcomers as "destitute, oppressed, and in rags, carrying rag peddlers’ packs—the poorest of our people, incapable of bringing blessing to the land." He added that through his job in the Information Bureau, he could "come up with this news each and every week."50

The statistics and the contemporary descriptions of the immigrant population in Palestine indicate that what made Palestine unique was not ideological aliya. Just as olim went to the United States and Argentina, immigrants came to Palestine. The attempts by Zionist historiography to depict immigration to Palestine as an isolated case do not stand the test of reality in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, it is clear that the immigrants to Palestine soon became olim and their views changed until they approximated the Zionist national ideas, whereas in other countries the opposite occurred, and the olim—Am Olam and the settlers in Argentina—became ordinary immigrants. Why did the majority in Palestine adopt the ideas and ideals of the minority, whereas in the United States and Argentina the minority was swallowed up by the majority?

CONCLUSION: FROM OLIM TO IMMIGRANTS AND FROM IMMIGRANTS TO OLIM

The story of Am Olam and Jewish settlement in Argentina is a full-fledged aliya story. These were cases of immigration for the communal welfare (for the sake of the Jewish people rather than personal gain), founded in a particular idea and realized on the basis of a particular plan (the plan devised by Am Olam and Baron Hirsch to establish a colony for the Jews in the United States or Argentina), within a particular organizational framework, through training for a new way of life (productive labor and a return to the soil). In the encounter with the soil too—the inherent satisfaction of working the land and returning to nature—we can see similarity between the Jewish farmers in the Americas—especially those in Argentina—and the farmers in Palestine. It is no coincidence that the Jewish settlers in Argentina felt closer to the Zionist movement than did any other Diaspora community. This feeling was expressed well by Alberto Gerchunoff in his celebrated book *The Jewish Gauchos of the Pampas*; in the chapter on the immigrants’ arrival, he wrote: "Awaiting the new arrivals recalled deep and lasting memories for most of the crowd. Many remembered the morning
on which they had fled the unhappy realm of the Czar. Then they recalled their arrival in this promised land, in this new Jerusalem they had heard proclaimed in the synagogues and had read about in the circulars carrying little verses in Russian, praising the soil of this country: “To Palestine, to the Argentine/We’ll go-to saw;/To live as friends and brothers; To be free!”

We see from this article that the return to the soil and to working the land was not limited to the Zionists. On the contrary, it seems that the Zionist movement tried to appropriate the idea of the creation of the new Jew who worked the land, thereby distinguishing itself from similar cases of immigration/aliya that coexisted with it in space and time. In fact, attempts similar to those of the Zionists were made in the United States and Argentina. In both cases the Jewish settlers sought to productivize the Jewish people and change not only their own personal condition but the condition of the Jews as a whole.

Although only small, unrepresentative groups of the immigrants to the United States and Argentina in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries held nationalist views, this, too, is a similarity with Palestine. After all, among the immigrants to Palestine only a small, high-caliber group fit into the category of olim. Of the 60,000 newcomers to Palestine during the mass migration (1881–1914)—what Zionist historiography calls the First Aliya and the Second Aliya—most were immigrants and not olim. If we use Eisenstadt’s typology, we find that this was an immigrant population in the full sense of the term: They continued their old lifestyles in Palestine; they came from the poorer classes of eastern European society; and it was the deterioration of their economic basis and not their fundamental values that impelled them to immigrate to Palestine, which for them was a last resort.

Thus the difference between the olim to Palestine and the small number of olim to the United States and Argentina should be sought not in the motivations for their migration or in their encounter with the destination country, but in the dynamics that developed between them and the surrounding society. Unlike the farmers and pioneers in Palestine, the members of Am Olam and the settlers in the Jewish colonies in Argentina did not engage in national cultural work in their new homes. The ideology that they brought with them died as soon as they arrived in the Americas. This small group of olim to the United States and Argentina ultimately integrated in the majority immigrant society. In Palestine, in contrast, the ideological group—which, as stated, accounted for a minority of new arrivals—embarked on large-scale public, cultural, and settlement activity. This group swept up the thousands of immigrants to Palestine and drew them to Zionism. This is what made immigration to Palestine different from immigration to the United States or Argentina. In destination countries other than
Palestine, the ideological immigrants (olim) became ordinary immigrants. Within a relatively short time, the olim to the Americas found themselves in the big cities. This happened to the Am Olam members and to the children of the settlers in Argentina. They integrated in the general immigrant society and the ideal and vision vanished without a trace. “Commerce and the pursuit of an education—those two enemies of agriculture,” Mordechai Alpersohn wrote, “fought against it and defeated it.” The lures of the city enticed the second generation, who wanted professions and higher education. But in Palestine, the opposite occurred. Unlike the olim in Argentina or the United States, the immigrants in Palestine did not feel—in terms of their consciousness—like a minority in a majority society. Throughout the years of aliyah to Palestine, the immigrants there never aspired to integrate in the Arab majority society. On the contrary, they deliberately kept themselves apart from the majority society and created separate, alternative systems. Consequently, the ideological pioneers in Palestine had a much stronger impact on the immigrants than the pioneering olim had in Argentina and the United States. Moreover, the Jewish-Arab conflict in Palestine influenced the shaping of the immigrants’ worldview and the degree to which they adopted the Zionist outlook. The Jewish immigrants and olim in the other destination countries never found themselves in a territorial dispute with the majority society. Their natural aspiration was to integrate as quickly as possible and to climb the socioeconomic ladder. In contrast, in Palestine the immigrants—sometimes against their will—found themselves in a bitter, and in later years violent, dispute with the native population. As the Jewish-Arab conflict in Palestine took on a more and more national character, it became easier for the pioneering olim there to win over the “non-ideological” group to the nationalist viewpoint. This viewpoint, originally held by a small group, was gradually passed on to the immigrants and their children during the period of their migration and especially in the years that followed.

NOTES

The article is based on lecturer delivered at University of Haifa in honor of the publication of Jonathan Sarna’s book American Judaism

7. Ibid., p. 84.
8. Ibid., p. 85.
10. Eisenstadt, “Aliya ve-Hagira,” p. 86. See also Roberto Bachi, “Ma Bein Hagira le-Aliya,” *Ahdut ha-Avoda*, Vol. 4 (1946), pp. 269–271. Bachi believes that aliya to Palestine was different from ordinary immigration because, unlike the latter, the waves of aliya to Palestine were not motivated by economic push and pull factors but resulted from social changes in the countries of origin. Another distinction that Bachi makes between aliya and immigration is that the purpose of immigration is to restore the economic and demographic equilibrium that was undermined in the country of origin. The waves of aliya to Palestine, in contrast, caused the opposite: they undermined the economic equilibrium in Palestine. Therefore, after each wave of aliya, “we must ... effect an economic revolution and adapt the economy to its new situation, because the Zionist economy is fundamentally dynamic” (ibid., p. 271).
12. In the Second Aliya, which historians consider the most ideological wave of aliya to Palestine, a full-fledged population of immigrants came whose motivations for going to Palestine and settling there fit Eisenstadt’s categories precisely. This was even more salient in the waves of aliya to Palestine in the 1920s and 1930s. See Gur Alroey, *Imigrantim: Ha-Hagira ha-Yehudit le-Erets Yisrael be-Reshit ha-Me’a ha-Esrim* (Jerusalem, 2004).
14. Tartakower cites the Puritans’ immigration to America in the seventeenth century as an example of non-Jewish “aliya.” They were motivated first and foremost by their aspiration to create a new society in America, different from the one they had known in Europe. Their immigration, Tartakower claims, was an idea, a plan of action that was carried out for the sake of the community and of society. In addition, Tartakower mentions eighteenth-century attempts by persecuted groups in Europe to found socialist colonies in America. They regarded America as a free, open land where they could create a more just and egalitarian society than the one they had left in Europe. See ibid., pp. 99–100. See also Mikhail Ivanovich Tugan-Baranovsky, *Moshavot Sotsialistiyyot* (n.p., 1945–1946), pp. 57–72.


26. Ibid., p. 35.


28. Ibid.


30. On Baron Rothschild’s reasons for supporting the colonies, first Rishon Lezion and then Zikhron Ya’akov and Rosh Pinna, see Dan Giladi, “Ha-Baron Rothschild u-Mishtar ha-Hasut shel ha-Pekidut,” in *Sefer ha-Aliya ha-Rishona*, edited by Mordechai Eliav (Jerusalem, 1981–1982), pp. 181–186. See also Ran Aaronsohn, *Rothschild and Early Jewish Colonization in Palestine* (Lanham, MD, 2000), pp. 58–65. It should be noted that in view of the failure of Jewish rural settlement in the United States, Baron Rothschild’s contribution to the success of the Zionist enterprise is salient. After all, no attempt at Jewish agricultural settlement—including in Palestine—could succeed without financial support and aid. Margalit Shilo notes that the reason for the success of Rishon Lezion and the failure of Sicily Island was that “the lives of the people of Rishon Lezion centered on founding a
national entity. In contrast, the founders of the first Russian-Jewish colony in the United States noted a national goal in the planning stage but it did not guide their steps and was not central to their lives after the colony was founded.” See Margalit Shilo, “Sisili Ailand,” p. 88. Despite this argument, which regards ideology as the main reason for the stabilization of Rishon Lezion, it is worth noting that without Rothschild’s support, Rishon Lezion would have collapsed along with the settlers’ Zionist worldview.


36. Benzion Epstein, *Shibolim ba-Ruah* (n.p., 1966), p. 11. In the foreword Aryeh Tartakower writes that “the outer framework of the novel is sufficiently familiar to those who know something about the history of Jewish settlement in Argentina and its problems. Quite familiar is the Jewish pioneer type, a man in his prime, a husband and father, who finds his life as a middleman in Russia odious and who emigrates to Argentina to build, with his ten fingers, new stations for himself and his nation, there in a wilderness untouched by human hands. He dreams of a Jewish village that he will create together with others . . . This is a good book, good for all readers, all the more so for readers in Israel, where the atmosphere in many respects resembles the atmosphere of Argentina, and especially the atmosphere of pioneering Argentina. ibid., pp. 8–10. Alberto Gerchunoff writes, “When his sons and grandsons were to cut the first furrows in their fields, it was Guedali who guided the plow. This was an important, solemn ceremony, and the old man gave it the same religious sense that simple act of plowing receives in the land section of the Talmud.” See, Gerchunoff, *The Jewish Gauchos of the Pampas* (New York, 195), p. 148.


41. Ibid., p. 5.

42. Ibid., p. 22.

44. Yechezkel Markovsky to Menachem Ussishkin, Iyar 16, Central Zionist Archive=CZA, A24, file 81/2, folder 11. Markovsky’s description is very similar to Shlomo Zemach’s account in his memoirs *Shana Rishona*. In the chapter “The Avalanche,” Zemach describes his first encounter with the farmers of Rishon Lezion and his disappointment when he realized that they were enthusiastic supporters of the Uganda Scheme and Zangwill’s Territorialist ideas. See Shlomo Zemach, *Shana Rishona* (Tel Aviv, 1965), pp. 72–82.


50. Sheinkin to Warburg, 1908?, CZA, section A24, file 52.


52. Alpersohn, 30 Shnot ha-Hityashvut ha-Yehudit, p. 127.