Introduction

If we want to win Palestine or another territory with political means or secure it through a slow “Infiltration pacifique”; if we hope to find protection by public law as staunch nationalists in a sovereign Jewish state or as cosmopolitans in an English crown colony; if we have more capitalist or more socialist ideas; if we yearn for or abhor the strict practice of ritual law; our next goal, our intermediate goal, always remains the same – in this alone is the factual and nonetheless still existent unity of our movement rooted despite all “disagreements.”¹

These lines written by Franz Oppenheimer were published in the Zionist organ *Die Welt* on June 23, 1905. The issue began with a report of the Zionist commission dispatched to British East Africa – also referred to as Uganda – to explore the possibility of settling Jews in the British colony under the auspices of Zionism. It was a time of major transition for the young movement, still in the process of forming its program, ideology and very soon settlement practice. The founder of the Zionist Organization (ZO), Theodor Herzl, had passed away the year beforehand, leaving many issues unresolved. In his text, Oppenheimer addressed these open questions while striving to keep a sense of unity within the movement. He did not proclaim his own position, which generally leaned to the second choice in each case. Instead, he focused on what he considered a consensual primary goal: proving to Jews and non-Jews alike that Jews are physically and mentally capable of colonization and nation-building.

According to Oppenheimer, Zionism’s monumental project would require the support and cooperation of vast strata of world Jewry. Jewish success in colonization and nation-building would not only serve as a secular means of strengthening Jewish pride and identity, but also improve the perception of Jewish civic aptitude among European nations. This was the essence of Oppenheimer’s conjunction of Zionism and cosmopolitanism, which attempted to traverse the seemingly unbridgeable gap between the striving for national and cultural autonomy and the wish to be a part of a broader cosmopolitan, albeit primarily European, context.² Traversing this gap required a dynamic reinterpretation of Jewish tradition on the one hand as well as intervention in national – in this case German – discourses constructing Jewish belonging or otherness.

This book explores these mechanisms in the work of Franz Oppenheimer and his primarily compatriot Zionist networks, focusing on their intervention

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¹ Franz Oppenheimer, “Das zionistische Ansiedlungswerk und der Bezalel,” *Die Welt*, June 23, 1905, 7. All translations from German are my own unless an English secondary work is cited.

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within the racial and colonial discourses in Germany. Its research spans an era from the last decade of the nineteenth century until the end of the First World War, in which Zionist dogma was gradually solidifying and Germany was still perceived as a potential partner in the colonization of Palestine. During most of this era, Germany was the headquarters of the ZO – located at first in Cologne after Herzl’s death and later in Berlin since Otto Warburg assumed the presidency of the movement in 1911. The Balfour Declaration and Germany’s defeat in the First World War put an end to the hopes and aspirations these German Zionists pinned on Germany.

Franz Oppenheimer’s Jewishness in German Historiography

The cover picture taken in 1913 at Merhavia in the Jezreel Valley depicts the workers of the first Zionist agricultural cooperative during a visit of the cooperative’s founder Franz Oppenheimer. Oppenheimer stands out in the front row wearing a striking three-piece white suit while holding a Panama hat in his hand. To his right, also with hat in his hands, stands his travel companion and political backer Shlomo Kaplansky. Standing sideways to his left, indistinguishable from the rest of the workforce, is his disciple Salomon Dyk, the cooperative’s director. Huddled around them are the cooperative’s workers, men and women wearing their best attire and sporting a wonderful array of working-class European headwear. In the back row, hovering, almost looming above the rest, stand two young men at a distance from each other wearing an Egyptian jellabiya and an Ottoman fez. The caption reads in Hebrew: “The residents of Merhavia with Professor Oppenheimer.”

At this point in time Oppenheimer was at the zenith of his Zionist career, if this term can even be used for a man who was never a full-fledged Zionist functionary. Oppenheimer’s engagement with Zionism started in 1901 and continued until the mid-1930s, although at a lesser intensity after the First World War when Merhavia ceased to exist as a cooperative. Agricultural cooperatives were Oppenheimer’s passion. During the interwar period, he helped establish two cooperatives in the Berlin countryside. His academic career, for which he is far more famous in Germany than his Zionist one, culminated in his appointment to the first German professorship for sociology in Frankfurt in 1919.

Oppenheimer biographies written in German usually focus on the influence of his utopian vision of “liberal socialism” or the “third path” between capital-
ism and communism on post-war German economics.³ In fact, Oppenheimer’s most prominent Frankfurt student, Ludwig Erhard, became the first minister of economic affairs for the Federal Republic of Germany and the republic’s second chancellor. Erhard’s extreme importance for the establishment of the German soziale Marktwirtschaft [social market economy] – in which state intervention aims at creating an equilibrium between social justice and free markets – warranted investigations into the impact of Oppenheimer’s thinking on the republic’s economic system.⁴

Generally, historians tend to downplay the role of Oppenheimer’s theories in the actual implementation by Erhard.⁵ Erhard, however, publicly recognized Oppenheimer as a guiding intellectual force not only in his economic program but also as a visionary of a peaceful, democratic and federalist European Union. In a speech held in honor of Oppenheimer’s birthday centennial Erhard said: “I recently found out how much Oppenheimer is alive in me as I said in an extemporaneous speech about Europe: what I envision is a Europe of the ‘free and equal.’ And then as I picked up his [autobiographical] book ... I read and was almost startled to see him write about ‘a society of the free and equal.’”⁶

At the end of the jubilee speech, Erhard announced that the Federal Post Office would include a stamp bearing Oppenheimer’s portrait in the series “important Germans,” adding that Oppenheimer would have certainly approved.⁷ Er-

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³ These are the German language Oppenheimer biographies in chronological order: Dieter Haselbach, Franz Oppenheimer: Soziologie, Geschichtsphilosophie und Politik des “Liberalen Sozialismus” (Opladen: Leske + Budrich, 1985); Volker Kruse, Soziologie und “Gegenwartskrise”: Die Zeitdiagnosen Franz Oppenheimers und Alfred Webers ein Beitrag zur historischen Soziologie der Weimarer Republik (Wiesbaden: Deutscher Universitäts Verlag, 1990); Werner Kruck, Franz Oppenheimer: Vordenker der Sozialen Marktwirtschaft und Selbsthilfegesellschaft (Berlin: Berlin-Verlag Spitz, 1997); Bernhard Vogt, Franz Oppenheimer: Wissenschaft und Ethik der Sozialen Marktwirtschaft (Bodenheim: Philo, 1997); Volker Caspari and Klaus Lichtblau, Franz Oppenheimer: Ökonom und Soziologe der ersten Stunde (Frankfurt a.M.: Societäts-Verlag, 2014); The most recent biography by Claudia Willms is an exception. It too attempts to bridge the gap in the depiction of Oppenheimer’s Jewishness, albeit with a different approach. However, due to its publication during the final editing phase of this dissertation it is not referenced here.


⁵ Vogt, Franz Oppenheimer, 282–293.


⁷ Erhard was very involved in this initiative, Caspari and Lichtblau, Franz Oppenheimer, 173.
hard recalled his farewell from Oppenheimer as he fled Nazi Germany, emphasizing Oppenheimer’s Germanness: “He had tears in his eyes as he said: ‘I must leave my fatherland now.’ Because he felt German. He personified in the purest and noblest sense German spirit and German culture.”

There is no doubt that Erhard was right in claiming Oppenheimer would have cherished this recognition of his Germanness, considering how he compensated for the growing antisemitism he experienced during his lifetime by emphasizing his roots in Berlin and Germany. Even after the Nazi ascendency, Oppenheimer still appeared “infatuated with blondeness” to his friend Albert Einstein who was repulsed by the glut of Deutschümelei [exaggerated Germanness] in his utopian novel Sprung über ein Jahrhundert [Leap over a century] published under a pseudonym in 1934. In his autobiography, Oppenheimer wrote: “I truly felt German, but I could never understand why my Jewish tribal consciousness could not be compatible with my German national and cultural consciousness. Therefore, I was never an assimilationist.” Oppenheimer purposely emphasized the congruity between different aspects of his identity. In his opinion, this made him neither German nor Jewish but an nonexclusive hybrid of both, as did further aspects of his mosaic identity, like being a born and raised Berliner.

However, post-Holocaust German historians had difficulties bridging Oppenheimer’s mosaic identity as an enthusiastic European, a patriotic German romantic, and an ethnically proud Zionist. Their perception was shaped by the collective trauma, responsibility and guilt for the Holocaust. Wishing to free themselves from the grasp of the racial and colonial discourses that reached a horrible low point in the Nazi era, they became entangled in a pitfall of “anticolonialism,” which “is dependent on its opponent, colonial discourse, from which it borrows binary structures and the imaginary of absolute separations ... The ideological imperatives of anticolonialism prevent it from recognizing the hybrid realities of colonialism.”

Oppenheimer’s relentless fidelity to Germanness made the mix even harder to swallow. As a form of Wiedergutmachung [atonement], German historiography strived to reclaim Oppenheimer and other German Jews into the German cultural

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9 Caspari and Lichtblau, Franz Oppenheimer, 157. Oppenheimer defended himself by claiming it was an act of “camouflage through Nordic deviousness.”
11 Russell A. Berman, Enlightenment or Empire: Colonial Discourse in German Culture (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 219.
heritage from which the Nazis expelled them. As a result, in the predominantly German scholarship on Oppenheimer, his Zionist and otherwise overt Jewish engagement is often featured as an excursion from his main activity as a social economic theoretician and agricultural reformer.\textsuperscript{12} Or worse, it is portrayed as an insignificant deviation from his staunch Germanness.\textsuperscript{13}

Yet, for the most part, German Jews did not perceive their Germanness and Jewishness in a diametrical opposition. This was true of Oppenheimer and his generation of German Zionists, and to a somewhat lesser extent even of succeeding generations of German Zionists, who pleaded for a more radical separation between the two identities. Oppenheimer contributed to understanding this symbiosis by introducing an extremely modular sociological model of ethnic and civic identity, which influenced some of the most vocal leaders of German Jewry before the outbreak of the First World War.\textsuperscript{14}

This book is not meant to be a comprehensive biography of Franz Oppenheimer. Although there are no full Oppenheimer biographies in English, several great ones have been written in German and can be easily translated into English.\textsuperscript{15} The aim of this book is to remedy the shortcoming of these biographies in grasping Oppenheimer’s German-Jewish identity. Instead of trying to fit Oppenheimer in presupposed religious and cultural categories, this book contextualizes Oppenheimer’s relationship to Jewishness (as opposed to Judaism) in the shifting dynamics of fin-de-siècle Germany. Lisa Silverman suggested “using ‘Jewishness’ as an analytical category ... since, unlike the overloaded term ‘Jewish identity,’ it might refer only to the analytical framework – that is, the relationship between the constructed ideals of the ‘Jewish’ as opposed to the ‘not-Jewish’ – rather than any fixed notions of religion, ethnicity or culture.”\textsuperscript{16}

\textsuperscript{12} Vogt uses the caption “Exkurs,” meaning digression, for the section dealing with Oppenheimer’s Zionist activity. Additionally, the whole section is visually distinguishable from the rest of the book by a vertical line; Vogt,\textit{ Franz Oppenheimer}, 162–188. Haselbach deals with Oppenheimer’s Zionist activity in only 8 out of 185 pages, Haselbach,\textit{ Franz Oppenheimer}, 133–141. Kruck did not dedicate any section to Oppenheimer’s Zionist activity. In a few pages he shortly summarized Oppenheimer’s contribution to communist and cooperative agricultural settlements; Kruck,\textit{ Franz Oppenheimer}, 319–321.


\textsuperscript{14} Steven E. Aschheim,\textit{ Brothers and Strangers: The East European Jew in German and German Jewish Consciousness, 1800–1923} (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999), 157–158.

\textsuperscript{15} See footnote 3 for a complete list of Oppenheimer biographies written in German.

Although notions of Jewish religion, ethnicity and culture will be discussed throughout this thesis, they are not viewed as predetermined categories. Rather, the emphasis is on how these categories were shaped and altered by Oppenheimer and his social and intellectual circles. Further, these categories are outweighed by an analysis of cultural and social aspects resulting from Oppenheimer’s position as a Berlin Jew from the latter half of the nineteenth century until the end of the First World War. Of exceptional interest is Oppenheimer’s Jewishness framed within German society’s racial and colonial discourses. For this reason, this book focuses on two main spheres in Oppenheimer’s life and work: his experience with antisemitism including his scientific grappling with the rising popularity of race science, as well as the practical Zionist intellectual networks he associated with and especially the journal *Altneuland*, which he coedited.

**Zionism for the Diaspora: Bridging the Gap between German and Zionist Historical Narratives**

Focusing on how Oppenheimer and his Zionist networks shaped an approach to race and colonization that could serve as an interface between Germanness and Jewishness offers not only new insights into German-Jewish identity at the beginning of the nineteenth century but also a new approach to German Zionist historiography in the imperial era. This approach encourages historians to transcend the borders between two national narratives: the narrative of Germany and its colonial history and that of the inception of Zionism.

An important step towards interlinking these narratives is to contextualize Oppenheimer and like-minded Zionists in a period when Germany’s colonial and imperial aspirations were peaking. It seems to go without saying that historical research needs to consider contemporaneous geographical, political and intellectual conditions. Yet this basic staple of the historian has been often neglected by researchers of German colonialism and of German Zionism in respect to the correlation between these two coetaneous affairs. It is not the purpose of this book to examine the causes of this neglect. Nevertheless, I would like to make some hypothetical suggestions.

First, Germany did not have a long-established colonial apparatus of the size and quality of France and England. There were certainly fewer Jews active within the German colonial service and, apart from a few prominent protagonists mentioned in this book, research into this matter is sparse. However, the lack of active service within the colonial bureaucracy alone is not indicative of the level of enthusiasm and advocacy of German colonial ambitions among German Jewry.
There were other spheres in which support for colonial undertakings could manifest themselves.

Second, due to the racialist and outright racist aspects of colonialism as well as the ultimate devastation that German colonial and imperial ambitions brought on the Jews during the Second World War and the Holocaust, it retroactively seems unfathomable that Jews could have ever been involved in any way with German colonialism.

Third, the Zionist narrative is shaped by a teleological perspective. The focus of Zionist historiography on the contributions made to building the state of Israel, together with the ideology of diaspora negation\textsuperscript{17} – preaching total separation and distancing from Europe – blurred out conceptions of Zionism in which the establishment of Jewish sovereignty did not contradict a continued Jewish life in Europe or even envisioned realizing this sovereignty in places other than Palestine. During the First World War, Oppenheimer and his Zionist contemporaries proposed the establishment of Jewish cultural sovereignty or autonomy within (Eastern) Europe, in remarkable affinity with the anti-Zionist Bundism prevalent in Eastern Europe, revealing the diversity of opinions within early German Zionism. Furthermore, the Balfour Declaration and the subsequent British endorsement of Zionism overshadowed earlier attempts by German Zionists to integrate Zionism into a broader German colonial scheme.

Fourth, further clouding the vision is the tension in Zionist historiography between the depiction of the intellectual origins of the Zionist movement within the context of European nationalism on the one hand, and the conceptualizing of Zionism as an anomaly of nationalism with independent roots in the ethnic, messianic character of Judaism on the other. The international nature of the movement makes it from the start a difficult object for comprehensive study.\textsuperscript{18}

Finally, and probably most importantly, the negative association of colonialism with violent subjugation, foreign transgression, and unjustifiable occupation made it an unlikely candidate for integration by a Zionist historiography charged with constructing the national narrative of a Jewish state in a long-running conflict with indigenous and neighboring populations.

Nevertheless, research into commonalities between Zionist approaches to colonization and European and specifically to German colonialism increased as it found proponents within Israeli academic institutions during the 1980s.

\textsuperscript{17} For an extensive discussion of the negation of the diaspora and its implications for Zionist ideology, see Amnon Raz-Korkotzkin, “Galut betokh ribonut: le-bikoret ‘shelilat ha-galut’ ba-tarbut ha-yisraelit,” Teoryah u-vikoret 4 and 5 (1993 and 1994).

\textsuperscript{18} Hagit Lavsky, Before Catastrophe: The Distinctive Path of German Zionism, 2nd ed. (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1998), 254.
and 1990s, resulting in what is known as the “historians’ dispute.”¹⁹ Ground-breaking work by historian Derek Penslar helped change the perspective on Oppenheimer and the network of practical Zionists dealt with in this book. Oppenheimer was now viewed as a Zionist technocrat transplanting methods and modes of thinking developed for German “inner colonization,” which were inter-linked with German imperialism in its Eastern European provinces, to Zionist settlement of Palestine.²⁰ Elements of “inner colonization” such as creating farmers out of city dwellers with no prior farming experience, or the use of agricultural settlements as a tool for gaining influence in areas of ethnic conflict, seemed to bear potential for Zionist colonization.

Colonization was the contemporary term often used by Zionist organizations and settlers to describe their enterprise. This was also the preferred term during the postcolonial turn within Zionist historiography. It seemed more palatable than the term “colonialism” with its condemning subtext and the resulting association of Zionism with European exploitations. Furthermore, Zionist historiography sought to circumvent association with European colonialism because such contextualizing seemed to undermine the narrative of a supposed singularity of the Zionist nation-building project.²¹ In a sense, mainstream Zionist historiography depicted both the Holocaust and the founding of the state of Israel as inter-linked historical anomalies resulting from a third anomaly: antisemitism.

The focus on colonization or settlement practice retained the teleological nation-building narrative of Zionist historiography. Additionally, in juxtaposing German and Zionist colonization, historians assumed a unilateral mimicry of the former by the latter.²² Since their scope of inquiry was primarily Palestine


and not Europe, they missed that Zionists were not only bearers of European colonial ideas into the Middle East, a bridge between West and East as it was described by the orientalist romantics of the time. They were also active participants in the colonial discourse in Germany – with some also active in (non-Zionist) German colonial enterprises – with the purpose of actively shaping it to alter the way Jews were perceived and perceived themselves.

This was perhaps another manifestation of the Zionist creed of the negation of the diaspora conjoined with a negative bias against Europe, which affected not only classical Zionist historiography but also the work of the “new historians,” who were interested in how negative colonialist mindsets as well as practices from Europe shaped Jewish-Arab relationships. They were neither concerned with Zionism as “an attempt by Jews to redefine Judaism’s place within European modernity” nor were they attentive to considerations of how Zionism could benefit continued life in the diaspora. Indeed, shortly before the First World War – and only at the end of the period under examination in this book – German Zionists adopted a dogmatic approach obligating an intention to emigrate as well as active disassociation from German culture and politics of all its members. Yet despite the ideological shift, even in the interwar period until Nazi seizure of power only a small minority of German Zionists immigrated to Palestine. The center of their life remained in Germany.

New Perspectives: Zionist Entanglement in Imperial Germany’s Racial and Colonial Discourses

In this book, Oppenheimer and his German Zionist network serve as a case study to better our understanding of how the entanglement of German Jews in Imperial Germany’s racial and colonial discourses contributed to the shaping of German-Jewish identity before the First World War. The use of the term “entanglement” is inspired by the image of an “Orientalist web” evoked by historian Steven Aschheim to depict how certain discourses encompass and shape Jewish identity in

23 Vogt, Subalterne Positionierungen, 115.
24 Between 1921 and the end of 1932, official membership of the ZO averaged 17,480 shekel payers. In years in which a Zionist congress was held it averaged 21,300. In the same years, a total of 3,306 Jews emigrated from Germany to Palestine with some returning to Germany after a short stint in the country. Emigration to Palestine made up only 8.3 percent of total Jewish emigration from Germany. Inflation and other economic motives both in Germany and Palestine played an important role in the decision to emigrate; Lavsky, Before Catastrophe, 103–105 and tables on p. 34 and p. 104.
the modern era and how through subtle means they “could be transformed, mediated, undermined or resisted.”25 Reading Oppenheimer’s autobiographical accounts, sociological treatise and Zionist positions within the racial and colonial discourses of his time helps to unravel the seeming paradoxes of German-Jewish identity molded by those who sought to escape their marginalization through integration in the society that had marginalized them. This is the guiding thread of this book, which is composed of two main parts.

The first part of this book focuses on Oppenheimer’s experience and scientific analysis of antisemitism as well as his position within the racial discourse as an expression of Jewishness. While research into Jewish engagement with anthropology and racial theories has gained popularity, Oppenheimer’s relationship to race science has not yet received worthy attention. By contrast, studies on the entanglement of Jews in the colonial discourse in Germany remain wanting. For this reason, in the second part of this book the analysis shifts from the racial discourse to a wider Zionist entanglement in German colonial discourse. This part begins by examining Oppenheimer’s Zionist views in the tension between political and practical Zionism, palestino-centricism and territorialism, German colonial ambitions and particular Jewish interests. The scope of examination is then broadened to focus on other Zionists with whom Oppenheimer cooperated to provide more context and insights for the analysis in the final chapter of Oppenheimer’s mediation between his Germanness and Jewishness, which is missing in most Oppenheimer biographies.

Because the term “discourse” is understood in so many different ways, it is necessary to take a moment and define the way it is being used here. This book understands Jewish participation in discourses of civil society as a means of acculturation. This follows from Donald Davidson’s understanding of “discursive formations as ensembles of assumptions acquired by those involved when learning a language.”26 To learn a language is to appropriate the outlooks, worldviews and beliefs behind its expressions, all of which enables successful communication. In the case at hand, this refers not only to German as a shared language

25 Aschheim focused on Jewish entanglement in the “Orientalist” and “Occidentalist” discourses with which the racial and colonial discourses were inherently connected, Steven E. Aschheim, “The Modern Jewish Experience and the Entangled Web of Orientalism,” in Internal Outsiders – Imagined Orientals? Antisemitism, Colonialism and Modern Constructions of Jewish Identity, ed. Ulrike Brunotte, Jürgen Mohn and Christina Späti (Würzburg: Ergon Verlag, 2017), 12.
between Jews and non-Jews but also to the communication within scientific communities and specific social groups.²⁷

According to Davidson, discourse should be understood not as an autonomous and predetermined set of rules regulating what can, should or should not be said, but as a broad acceptance of various assumptions about the world which, although seemingly fixed, are constantly exposed to transformative pressures. The process of transforming the intricate network of perceived truths that compose the discourse does not question its entirety – which would destroy the common language enabling communication – but rather targets specific aspects of the discourse. These areas of dissent are the focal points of this analysis because they highlight the discursive transformation that German Jews tried to effectuate.²⁸

Since the eighteenth century, Jews actively attempted to influence discourses relating to their civic emancipation. The evidence and arguments brought forth to support Jewish emancipation constantly changed as political ideas and tastes shifted. However, the method of challenging adversaries of emancipation and propagators of Jewish resentment within the confines of the everchanging, dominant discourses remained somewhat consistent. Through participation in these discourses, Jews and non-Jewish advocates of emancipation aspired to favorably influence the perception and acceptance of Jews with the intention of bringing about significant, tendentiously liberal political changes.

By the late nineteenth century, the racial and colonial discourses were gaining ground, especially when it came to scrutinizing Jewish emancipation. German Zionists were particularly involved in race science in their quest to restore Jewish national pride and positively reframe the position of Jews among European nations. In the words of John Efron:

Jewish scientists, like their German counterparts, used the language and methodology of race science to craft their own explanations for the distinctions between selves and Jews. But race science also provided them with a liberating discourse. In the wake of the perceived failures of emancipation and assimilation, anthropology became an ideological tool to

Examining Oppenheimer’s treatise on issues of race is extremely important to understand how Jews grappled with their own acculturated identity and belonging to a fin-de-siècle Germany, in which the political discourse was shifting away from the nineteenth century liberal foundations of nationalism to the völkisch and racialist mindset of the twentieth century. Oppenheimer attempted to occupy a mediating position between these two worldviews distinguishing him from other, mostly younger Zionists involved with race science.

Oppenheimer’s vocal dissent within the racial discourse is of special interest due to his role as one of the founders of academic German sociology. In this initial period, potential members of this new scientific community hailing from diverse academic backgrounds negotiated the common language and premises for this pioneer field. Oppenheimer stood out as one of the most outspoken opponents of the inclusion of race science in the nascent discipline. His training as a physician and economist – two major scientific fields in which antisemitic doctrine was claiming authority – was important for his credibility.

As stated above, achieving discursive transformation prohibits the questioning of the entire discourse and especially its fundamental conviction, such as the existence of the category of race. Accordingly, Oppenheimer did not reject the concept of race or even of a contemporary Jewish racial degeneration but rather positioned himself on the side of those claiming that social causes had a greater influence on race or races than biological ones. He embraced the rise of eugenics or Rassenhygiene, as it was called in German, claiming that positive transformations of peoples and races could be achieved within the span of just a generation. He regarded agricultural settlement cooperatives, his field of specialty, as a vehicle for Zionism to achieve the racial transformation or better yet racial restauration of the Jews to biblical glory.

It cannot be emphasized enough that Oppenheimer and his contemporaries did not perceive themselves as total outsiders when participating in the racial and colonial discourses. This generation was reared in German schools and German-speaking homes, was shaped by German literature, culture, media and Bildung, and as a result generally thought and acted within German discourses. In the context of the colonial discourse, this meant that German Jews and non-Jews shared images and ideas transmitted inconspicuously through an ever-growing

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corpus of novels, magazines, scientific essays and travel reports dealing with colonial experience and fantasies.

In the latter half of this book, I argue that one of these German colonial magazines was the Zionist paper *Altneuland*. The monthly journal was published in Berlin between 1904 and 1906 and edited by Oppenheimer, Otto Warburg and Selig Soskin. Warburg and Soskin were among the few Zionists considerably engaged in the German colonial service. The underlying thesis of the comprehensive analysis of *Altneuland* is that the magazine’s editors consciously designed it as a discursive interface between German colonialism and German Zionism, or even more accurately German Jewry. The journal published essays by Jewish and non-Jewish experts on colonization. It was an expression of the contributors’ ambition to gain acceptance in a scientific community geared towards participation in the German colonial service as well as a means of galvanizing support among German Jews for both German colonialism and Zionism. The analysis of *Altneuland* seeks to uncover the shared suppositions between German colonialism and German Zionism. Even more important than the convergences are points of dissent in which the *Altneuland* circle openly contested the paradigms of the discourse with intent to change it.

The network of Jewish colonization experts to which Oppenheimer belonged was highly fragmented and conflicted. They presented a broad array of suggestions for Zionist colonization in Palestine and its neighboring countries. They held diverging opinions on the potential benefits of colonization for the areas of settlement as well as for their perceived motherland Germany. Yet this book argues that in embracing Germany as their motherland, they shared another important objective: namely, that increasing support for Zionist colonization – starting with liberal-minded German procolonial circles – could help redefine the racial and colonial discourses in a way that would facilitate the recognition and inclusion of Jews as an ethnic minority in Germany and Europe. To them, this did not seem like a contradiction of the central Zionist precept of creating Jewish sovereignty, i.e., a Jewish fatherland, because the bulk of Zionist settlers were to hail from Eastern Europe, not Germany. For the most part they never imagined themselves as the future citizens of this new country in the first place. They planned on remaining German citizens and Zionism was geared at strengthening their position as such.

**Zionism and German Colonial Fantasies**

This book deliberately focuses not on colonization itself but on the discursive subtext enabling contemporary conversation about Jews as colonizers. To do
so it utilizes the concept of colonial fantasies from German postcolonial studies. German literature preluding colonization helped lay out colonization’s technical groundwork. Yet it also laid out the psychological groundwork through colonial fantasies shaping public opinion in the period leading up to actual colonization and in encounters with colonial realities. Colonial fantasies provided a confidence-boosting narrative for those who felt left out. The growing corpus of research on German colonial fantasies demonstrates “how a sense of exclusivity and moral superiority was constructed ... to form part of Germany’s colonial imagination and its national-colonialist ideology.”

In the era prior to Imperial Germany’s colonial undertakings, colonial fantasies offered German writers an opportunity to define and represent themselves not only in comparison with colonized populations but also with other European colonial nations. In the words of Susanne Zantop, whose scholarly works exposed the link between German identity and colonial fantasies:

Above all, by imagining colonial scenarios that allowed for an identification with the role of conqueror or colonizer, Germans could create a colonial universe of their own, and insert themselves into it. Their writings did not just produce “the rest of the world” (Mary Louise Pratt) like those of other West Europeans, but a world with a specific place for the German colonizer in it.

Research into the links between German Jews and German colonialism have until now ignored the important aspect of colonial fantasy in German colonial literature. German Jews were receptive to German colonial fantasy not only due to their Germanness but also due to their Jewishness. The yearning for recognition by other (West) European nations as equals, at the very least, was perceived as a shared historical situation and ambition. After all, by the time the Zionist movement was established, Germany had already achieved political and economic unity. Yet a national inferiority complex continued to manifest itself in German colonial discourse through a sense of anxiety and fear of missing out on the parceling out of what seemed to be the last territories still available for

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31 Zantop, Colonial Fantasies, 6–7.
32 One exception is Eva Lezzi’s groundbreaking foray into the transfer of methods from postcolonial and gender studies such as colonial fantasies to study the unique in-between position Jews occupied in the colonial discourse; see Lezzi, “Kolonialfantasien.” This book extends the investigation to a broader group of German Zionists, utilizing the concept of colonial fantasies more literally to uncover situational commonalities, coalitions and convergences between German Zionism and German colonialism.
colonization. Zionists could deploy this inferiority complex to gain sympathy with supporters of German colonialism by portraying Zionists, too, as colonial latecomers. Furthermore, they could utilize the resulting intimacy to depict Zionist colonization as an extension of German colonialism. Being a Zionist could thus be rendered as an expression of both German and Jewish patriotism, opening support for Zionist colonization to broader hitherto non-Zionist circles of German Jewry.

Another aspect lost when looking at history from the teleological perspective is that Oppenheimer and his contemporaries did not know how the story would play out. Until the Balfour Declaration and the ensuing Allied victory in the First World War, it was still unresolved which European power would facilitate Zionism the most. Also, it was not clear whether the Ottomans would ever allow large-scale Jewish settlement in Palestine, what the exact geographic extent of Palestine was, and whether Zionist settlement should be palestinocentric, that is, limited solely to Palestine. When shifting colonial interests provided a favorable opportunity elsewhere, such as in British East Africa, the Uganda plan became a matter of discussion and dissent within the Zionist movement. And this is just one example of how the Zionist movement acted within a broader European colonial framework, an important point of reference when it came to political opportunities as well as settlement methods and mindsets. Although Germany might have considerably lagged behind France and Britain in global influence, it was not unlikely that it would assume the position of Zionism’s main benefactor. On the contrary, it was exactly this lack of colonial dominions that made it the preferable candidate in the eyes of Oppenheimer and his contemporaries. They hoped to capitalize on Germany’s diplomatic and economic links to the Ottoman Empire and increasing appetite for colonial significance.

As German middle-class academics of their generation, Oppenheimer and his compatriots were extremely susceptible to the allures of participating in German colonial endeavors. For them, it opened a new realm of opportunities to prove that Jews were worthy of citizenship and to demonstrate that there was no contradiction between their German patriotism and their allegiance to their Jewish heritage. German Jews have been striving to substantiate this proposition since the Enlightenment and the establishment of modern nation-states. Around the time of Zionism’s inception, questions of national belonging had become entangled with the racial and colonial discourses. As a new national movement, Zionism sought relevancy and legitimacy through engagement in this influential contemporary discourses. Zionism was in a sense a step-child – a subaltern man-
manifestation – of European and German nationalism.³³ German Zionists’ sense of alterity was derived and shaped to a considerable extent by the tension between their self-perception of national belonging to Germany and their rejection by their supposed social equals. This tension greatly influenced the complexity and range of positions they occupied within the racial, colonial and nationalist discourses of their time.

Zionist colonial fantasies created a triangular prism through which Jews could carve for themselves an imagined place between Europeans and the peoples of the Middle East. This triangular prism could be understood as what Mary Louise Pratt has called “contact zones”:

By using the term “contact,” I aim to foreground the interactive, improvisational dimensions of colonial encounters so easily ignored or suppressed by diffusionist accounts of conquest and domination. A “contact” perspective emphasizes how subjects are constituted in and by their relations to each other. It treats the relations among colonizers and colonized, or travelers and “travelees,” not in terms of separateness or apartheid, but in terms of copresence, interaction, interlocking understandings and practices, often within radically asymmetrical relations of power.³⁴

Underlying the concept of “contact zone” is the wish for a nuanced approach to the dynamics of identity within colonial history. Stefan Vogt, who has published extensively on the entanglement of German Zionism and German nationalism, warned against an oversimplified equation of Zionism with ideologies of domination, racial superiority and national chauvinism that were widespread within the context of European and German colonialism.³⁵ His caution cannot be emphasized enough in view of the lightness with which catch phrases become utilized in this politically charged matter. This intellectual investigation into how German Zionists acted and reacted within the historical context of the age of New Imperialism should not be misunderstood as either an accusation of complicity or as a defense of the involvement of German Zionists with contemporary political trends and mindsets. Further, this study acknowledges the huge discrepancy between the positive self-perceptions even self-aggrandizement propagated through colonial fantasies and the brutality of colonial realities. However, it does not focus on colonial realities but rather on the level of discursive entanglements. Due to their in-betweenness, many first-generation German Zionists at-

tempted the impossible task of reconciling their liberal outlooks – shaped in the “long century” since the Enlightenment and French Revolution and the meandering process of civil emancipation that ensued and gradually lost favor in general society – with up and coming völkish ideas. The latter were a great influence on the following generations of German Zionists.³⁶

In their participation in colonial discourse, German Zionists joined with non-Jewish allies to promote an imaginary liberal form of imperialism that would help transform Germany from a parochial nation-state to a liberal, heterogenous colonial empire. It is important to emphasize that this attempted coalition was in no way representative of general attitudes and goals of German colonialism, which was all the more reason for its attempts at discursive interventions. Oppenheimer and other Zionist of his generation continued to act on their hopes for a liberal German Empire as it was expanding eastwards during the First World War. The empire’s demise and the founding of the Weimar Republic brought an end to Oppenheimer’s activities in spheres of potential colonial expansion. Yet even as he concentrated his efforts on academic activity in Frankfurt, he still advanced agricultural cooperative settlements within the framework of “inner colonization” as a means of democratically transforming Germany.

The Triangular Prism: Challenging the Zionist Narrative

The approach taken in analyzing the journal Altneuland is innovative since it implements methods borrowed from German postcolonial studies that have not yet been used in a German Zionist context. Due to this book’s aim of understanding Oppenheimer’s Jewishness in his contemporary context, the comprehensive media analyses in the second part of the book are limited to the journals which he coedited: Altneuland and Neue jüdische Monatshefte. It would be of great benefit to take the analytical approach initiated here and widen the scope of inquiry to other Zionist and German Jewish journals. The analysis of the latter journal, which was edited by Zionists and non-Zionists, demonstrates how discursive figures propagated in Altneuland were later used in a general German Jewish framework. This analysis is a part of the final chapter which further broadens the perspective by examining additional Zionist networks in which Oppenheimer acted such as the Austrian Poalei Zion, with whom Oppenheimer shared an ethnocentric socialist ideology, as well as members of what would later become Brit Shalom. Like Oppenheimer, Brit Shalom members desired a

Zionist colonization characterized by harmony and mutual benefit between the Jewish settlers and indigenous populations and promoted binational political constructs.

Dmitry Shumsky illuminated the important role of the multiethnic reality and national conflicts in Prague during the final period of the Habsburg empire in shaping Zionist binational conceptions. Yet, while the prominent members of Brit Shalom originated from Prague, the vast majority of supporters were based in Germany. In fact, apart from Palestine, Germany was the only country with an active Brit Shalom association. As Hagit Lavsky demonstrated, Brit Shalom’s ideology was an important expression of German Zionism’s unique moral, social and cultural self-perception. Multiethnic realities were certainly taken into consideration by Austrian and German Zionists. Yet this book supplements the theses of Shumsky and Lavsky by revealing a new path of exploration, namely that the adaptation of German colonial fantasies was a further source for the exceptional popularity of binationalism among German Zionists. The involvement of many German speaking Jews in Brit Shalom and other frameworks aspiring for a peaceful Jewish colonization considerate of indigenous populations can be regarded on the one hand as a criticism of their own inequality in Germany and on the other as a point of convergence with the German colonial fantasy of self-idealization as a benevolent conqueror. This thesis illustrates the potential of the postcolonial reading devised in this book to better our understanding of German Zionism.

Critically contemplating Zionism’s entanglement in the “Orientalist web” or the triangular prism consisting of Europeans, Jews and Arabs helps shed light on blind spots of traditional Zionist narratives. This is evident in the only monograph on Oppenheimer not written in German, which was published in Hebrew by Gezel Kressel in 1972 and spotlights his Zionist activity. As mentioned above, Zionism and Jewishness have played a liminal role in German scholarship on Oppenheimer. Non-German scholarship on Oppenheimer has been scarce, though since the “historians’ dispute,” he has received increased attention in English-

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language works on Zionism. Like other contemporary works of Zionist historiography, Kressel’s book followed a teleological narrative, culminating in the founding of the state of Israel. Zionism was not an ongoing triangular relationship but an arrow shot from Europe into the heart of the Middle East. Kressel emphasized that Oppenheimer’s main contributions to Zionism consisted in persuading Herzl to endorse prompt Zionist settlement and the infusion of universal social ideals into Zionist agricultural colonization. In Kressel’s work, Oppenheimer’s Jewish identity was not a footnote. His conception of being Jewish in terms of being a social revolutionary was the premise for his involvement with Zionism.⁴¹

Writing in a period where Zionist dogmas had become solidified and the Arab-Israeli conflict entrenched, Kressel scoffed at two important aspects of Oppenheimer’s universal approach to Zionism. The first was that Zionism should mobilize broader circles of sympathizers who did not intend to immigrate to Palestine themselves. The second was Oppenheimer’s conviction that Arabs must be included in the emerging Jewish society. Kressel downplayed Oppenheimer’s commitment to Arab integration by claiming that Oppenheimer emphasized this only in retrospective, in his memoirs. In line with the Zionist credo of negating the diaspora, Kressel viewed the Holocaust as a rebuttal of Oppenheimer’s optimism that a Zionist could strive for Jewish integration in “the homeland-illusion called Germany.”⁴²

As this book shows, Oppenheimer was not living in an illusion but had a nuanced perception of the legal and social frameworks for Jewish life in Germany. He did not consider Germany to be a full homeland for Jews the way Western countries such as the United States, England and even France might have been. Yet German Jews enjoyed far-reaching civil liberties compared to their brethren in the Russian Empire and Romania. Oppenheimer was aware of the challenges facing full Jewish equality in Germany. He experienced them firsthand throughout his life. It is not for nothing that antisemitism became an object of his scientific inquiry as a sociologist. Nevertheless, he strongly believed in the power of economic and social reform to remedy Germany’s political ills. In this sense his whole life work as a scientist and social utopian could be understood as his striving for a future for Jews in Germany.

Oppenheimer’s optimism was not immediately stifled with the Nazi rise to power. In a letter to Einstein from 1935 he wrote that he was incapable “of feeling hate against Germany and the Germans for the current consternation.”⁴³ Eventu-

⁴² Kressel, Franz Oppenheimer, 10.
⁴⁴ Cited in Caspari and Lichtblau, Franz Oppenheimer, 157–158.
ally Oppenheimer, too, became a victim of the Nazi rejection of Jewish emancipation and ultimately Jewish existence. His German citizenship was rescinded, and he was forced to emigrate together with his youngest daughter from his second marriage Renata. The exodus led them to Japan and Shanghai, after which they ultimately joined his sister Elise and her husband Georg Steindorff in Los Angeles, where Oppenheimer passed away in 1943. His sons Ludwig and Heinz as well as his first wife Martha had immigrated earlier to Palestine.

This book seeks to amend anachronistic perceptions, such as Kressel’s, of German-Jewish identities as well as Kressel’s skepticism that Oppenheimer could have strived to preempt the bloodshed before it seriously erupted during the British Mandate. Just because the teleological narrative retrospectively deems a position unfeasible does not mean that it was inconceivable in its historical context. Archival material demonstrates that Oppenheimer was committed to the idea of Jewish and Arab integration during and after the existence of Merhavia, not only in retrospective. The period of Merhavia’s existence coincides with the emergence of Zionist adherence to the principal of Jewish labor. Merhavia was one of the first Zionist agricultural enterprises and thus one of the main battlegrounds for enforcing this principal. As the theoretical mastermind behind the cooperative, Oppenheimer could not have avoided taking a position on the inclusion of Arab labor. Hence this is the focus of the section of this book dealing with Merhavia, and not Oppenheimer’s extensive involvement in its founding and operation, which can be found in teleological accounts of the contributions of German Zionism to the foundation of the state of Israel.⁴⁵

Oppenheimer was startled by the shattering of the colonial fantasies upon impact with the grueling colonial realities. Nevertheless, he never sufficiently addressed the inherent inconsistencies in the synthesis between universal and national goals that he was preaching. His hopes that Arabs would welcome and even assimilate into a new Hebrew culture echoed the German-Jewish dilemma that he and German Zionists wanted to solve through their Zionist engagement. Abandoning the teleological narrative gives voice to contemporaneous ambitions to use Zionism as a vehicle for strengthening Jewish belonging to Germany. It reveals the complexity of German Zionism’s construction of a Jewish colonial and racial identity through which it can renegotiate and communicate a Jewish aspiration for a respectable place among European nations.

⁴⁵ For the most comprehensive account, see Kressel, Franz Oppenheimer, 68–153.
Overview of Chapters and Sources

This book strives to improve our understanding of Jewishness in fin-de-siècle Germany through a study of the entanglement of Oppenheimer and his contemporaries in the racial and colonial discourses in Germany. It is divided into two parts. The first focuses on Oppenheimer’s engagement with the racial discourse and the second on a broader entanglement of Zionism with the colonial and racial discourses.

The first part is composed of chapters 1 and 2. Chapter 1 discusses Oppenheimer’s professional transition from a practicing physician to becoming a professor of economy and sociology. While the influence of Oppenheimer’s medical training on his sociology has already been discussed by his biographers and historians of sociology, his scientific examinations of racial theories and Darwinism have been largely ignored.⁴⁶ In his transition period, Oppenheimer supplemented his livelihood by working as a journalist. He published various scientific works developing his practically oriented, social-utopian settlement cooperative and other socioeconomic theories as well as many feuilleton articles, among them several dealing with racial theories and Rassenhygiene from a medical and sociological perspective. The latter have hardly received due attention until now.

Chapter 2 continues the analysis of Oppenheimer’s contestation of racial theory and antisemitism as one of the founding members of German sociology. Oppenheimer prominently challenged those endorsing the interlinking of sociology with racial theory. In contrast to other Jewish sociologists of the interwar period, his objections voiced before the First World War were heeded and debated not only by a Jewish audience but also by his scientific colleagues. Remaining within the boundaries of the discourse, Oppenheimer did not totally refute the potential of racial theories. Instead, he developed his own conceptions of a racial anthropology oriented towards social class. His arguments that race was dynamic and malleable in the medium-term aimed at imbuing the concept of race with a social utopian horizon. The importance Oppenheimer ascribed to social engineers and technocrats in steering the transformation process prepared the

⁴⁶ Haselbach expounds on contemporary reception of social Darwinist elements of Oppenheimer’s sociological theory; see Haselbach, Franz Oppenheimer, 31. Stölting also dealt with social Darwinist and organicist influence on Oppenheimer’s theory; see Erhard Stölting, “Medizinisches und soziologisches Denken bei Franz Oppenheimer,” in Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft: Franz Oppenheimer und die Grundlegung der Sozialen Marktwirtschaft, ed. Elke-Vera Kotowski, Julius H. Schoeps and Bernhard Vogt (Berlin: Philo, 1999), 57. However, neither examined Oppenheimer’s grappling with the concept of race and racial theories.
ground for his affiliation with Zionism and its endeavor to transform the Jewish people.

The primary sources utilized in the first section of this book include autobiographical material; articles and reviews published in popular and professional newspapers and journals in which Oppenheimer expounds on Darwinism, population policy, cultural pessimism, Jewish racial composition and other matters related to racial theory; minutes of the meetings of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Soziologie [German Sociological Society] (DGS); articles and essays related to Oppenheimer’s debate with the sociologist Werner Sombart and Wilhelm Schallmayer, a prominent figure in the founding of German Rassenhygiene.

The second part of this book deals with the entanglement of Oppenheimer and his Zionist networks in German colonial discourse. It begins with chapter 3, which traces the events leading up to Oppenheimer joining the Zionist movement and his debut as a keynote speaker at the Sixth Zionist Congress in 1903. As a protégé of Herzl, Oppenheimer was often portrayed as a loyal political Zionist. However the correspondence between the two reveals a deep rift on the necessity for securing a charter from the great powers and the importance of small-scale settlement and scientific explorations in preparing the ground for mass immigration. In addition, Oppenheimer’s cooperation with proponents of practical Zionism – some were Herzl’s fiercest rivals within the movement – further aggravated their relationship. The timing and intended effect of Oppenheimer’s presentation at the congress, in which Herzl proposed the settlement of British East Africa, as well as the fact that the practical Zionists with whom Oppenheimer collaborated promoted the immediate settlement of Cyprus instead of Palestine, raises the question of the relationship of Oppenheimer and vast parts of Berlin’s practical Zionist scene to territorialism as well as to potential patrons from among the great powers. This relationship is further explored in the next chapters.

The following primary sources are used in chapter 3: the correspondence between Herzl and Oppenheimer, articles from Zionist newspapers concerning the circumstances of Oppenheimer’s joining of the movement, other archival material concerning Oppenheimer’s involvement in Die juedische Orient-Kolonisations-Gesellschaft, as well as a close reading of the minutes of the Sixth Zionist Congress in which Oppenheimer debuted and was appointed to the board of the Kommission zur Erforschung Palästinas [Commission for the Exploration of Palestine] (CEP) together with Otto Warburg and Selig Soskin.

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In focusing on the period after Oppenheimer joined the Zionist movement, the scope of this investigation widens to include the network of contributors to the Zionist journal *Altneuland*, which Oppenheimer coedited in his capacity as a CEP board member between 1904 and 1906. The methodological approach to *Altneuland* in chapters 4 and 5 is novel. The underlying hypothesis is that *Altneuland* was a German colonial journal. This means that it could and should be analyzed with methods borrowed from German postcolonial studies—more specifically by unearthing underlying colonial fantasies. Although edited by Jews, much of the material included in the journal was written by non-Jewish authors or reprinted from non-Jewish publications, creating a carefully blended composition. On the one hand, the journal sought to introduce the Jewish public to the German colonial discourse; and on the other hand it sought to formulate a distinct German-Jewish (and not only Zionist) approach to this discourse. In addition, *Altneuland* aimed to reframe Zionism as a synthesis of German and Jewish patriotism to enlist the assistance and goodwill of broader circles of German Jewish society for Zionist settlement, and to establish Zionism as an important pillar of a secular Jewish identity. Finally, this book argues that *Altneuland* served as a networking platform for an alliance of liberally minded Jewish and non-Jewish colonial advocates seeking to reform German domestic policy towards Jews through colonial expansion.

After focusing on the *Altneuland* circle, the sixth and final chapter concentrates again on Oppenheimer. Using insights from the investigation of *Altneuland*, this chapter revisits important milestones in Oppenheimer’s Zionist engagement. It also deals with other Zionist networks in which he was involved. One of these networks was the Austrian Poalei Zion. Oppenheimer owed his standing in the Zionist movement to his scientific prestige and charisma, but most importantly Herzl’s support. After Herzl’s death, Oppenheimer either lacked support from a political fraction within German Zionism or was ideologically closer to the Austrian Poalei Zion who included him in their delegation to the Ninth Zionist Congress in 1909. During the congress, they helped him gain endorsement for the founding of an agricultural cooperative in Palestine based on his blueprints: Merhavia. This chapter explores ideological convergences and discrepancies between Oppenheimer and leading members of Poalei Zion such as Shlomo Kaplansky on issues that included Zionism and cosmopolitanism; socialism and nationalism; and the relationship between ethnicities in a multinational political entity and more specifically the ideal relationship between Jewish settlers and the Arab inhabitants of Palestine.

Chapter 6 also deals with Oppenheimer’s conflicts and alliances within German Zionism in the context of the rapidly growing intergenerational rift in the years leading to the First World War. The analysis of *Altneuland* in the previous...
chapters shows how first-generation German Zionists wanted to win the support of broad parts of German Jewry for Zionist settlement by reframing it as a German colonial enterprise. In contrast, second-generation German Zionists enforced more rigorous ideological convictions, including detachment from German affairs, alienating Oppenheimer and other first-generation Zionists from the movement, not to mention non-Zionists. Once the war broke out, Oppenheimer and other Zionist of his generation seized the opportunity to reclaim their authority and establish a broader alliance of German Jews called the Komitee für den Osten. The committee hoped to mediate between German military authorities and Jews in occupied territories in the East. Oppenheimer was one of the editors of the committee’s journal, *Neue Jüdische Monatshefte*. An examination of his contributions to the journal aims at finding continuities to ideas promoted in *Altneuland* linking Jewish national aspirations with German patriotism. This was most evident in the committee’s vision of creating a Jewish autonomy in Poland.

Once Palestine was conquered by the British and Germany lost the war, it became clear that the dream of interlinking Zionism with German imperial aspirations was no longer viable. At the request of Martin Buber – with whom Oppenheimer was often at odds especially, when it came to Zionism – Oppenheimer joined forces with a younger intellectual circle of Central European Zionists for a final intellectual stand against the impending establishment of British colonial rule. Many in this circle would later go on to establish Brit Shalom. This final context could form the beginning of a new investigation into the roots of the bi-national outlook, endorsed by Brit Shalom, in the German colonial fantasy of being an anticolonial colonizer.

Primary sources used in chapter 6 are Zionist newspapers in which Oppenheimer explored the tension between universal and ethnocentric approaches to nationalism as well as his socialist utopia; archival and autobiographical material on Merhavia and Oppenheimer’s visits to Palestine; essays in *Der Jude* in the wake of the German defeat in the First World War and the end of aspirations to a German hegemony in Eastern Europe and the Middle East; and Oppenheimer’s articles in *Neue Jüdische Monatshefte*. 