Jewish Immigrant Booksellers from Germany and Central Europe in Palestine, 1933–1939

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Introduction: Black Clouds over Germany

Jewish immigrants to Palestine hailing from Central Europe, and especially from Germany, amounted to almost 20 percent of the Fifth Aliyah (Erel 1985, 11–13, 37), which surged with the Nazi rise to power in 1933 and petered out with the outbreak of World War II in 1939.[1] David Horowitz, who arrived in Palestine with the Third Aliyah and eventually became the first governor of the Bank of Israel, described the influx of these immigrants, nicknamed "*Yekkes*":

> The German Aliyah fundamentally changed the country. Advanced urbanization, bustling streets, an unprecedented metropolitan atmosphere. . . The novel lifestyle had a particular impact on Tel Aviv, as the intimate and cozy "Little Tel Aviv" suddenly ceased to exist and the Russian language gave way to German. (Horowitz 1970, 230)

The Fifth Aliyah would come to play a major role in the evolution of bookstores in Palestine for two reasons: German Jews ascribed their affinity for German *Kultur* to books and libraries, and at the same time, books and libraries became a means to adapt to and secure a livelihood in their new homeland (Miron 2006).

Yet the *Yekkes*' contribution to the book trade within Palestine has not been historically acknowledged. Curt David Wormann, who immigrated to Palestine from Berlin in 1934, and served as head of the National and University Library in Jerusalem (National Library of Israel since 2008) between 1947 and 1968, notes only briefly that Jews from Germany established new bookstores in the cities of Palestine, offering titles in Hebrew and a wide selection of world literature in English, French, and German (Wormann 1970, 81). In his novel *Shira,* Shmuel Yosef Agnon describes how a large number of books from private libraries shipped to Palestine by these immigrants found their way into a burgeoning secondhand book trade:

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1. For immigration figures, see Gurevich, D. and Jewish Agency for Palestine Department of Statistics 1947, 254–57. For Mandatory government data, see Great Britain, and British Information Services 1947.

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> . . . a store that sold foreign books, one of many that sprang up when German immigrants arrived, bringing with them books but not enough money for spacious apartments with room for bookcases, like the ones they were accustomed to in Germany. Thus, they were compelled to sell their books for next to nothing. (Agnon 1996, 583)

With poignant irony, the prominence of Jewish booksellers in Palestine was the very reversal of their persecution in Germany, beginning with a daylong nationwide boycott of Jewish businesses on April 1, 1933—two months after Adolf Hitler was appointed Chancellor of Germany—perhaps as an "experiment" to gauge the reaction of non-Jewish German citizens, as well as of the outside world. A week later, the euphemistically named Gesetz zur Wiederherstellung des Berufsbeamtentums (Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service) was enacted, its aim being to dismiss "non-Aryan" civil servants from all governmental institutions and offices, including legal courts, the bar, universities, and schools. On April 22, 1933, "non-Aryan" physicians were banned from participating in panels—a requirement for medical practice in Germany (*The Palestine Post* 1938b; Jewish Board of Deputies 1937, 7–8; Erel 1985, 60). The Jews of Germany, who made up less than one percent of the population at the time, constituted more than sixteen percent of the country's lawyers and some eleven percent of its physicians (Jewish Board of Deputies 1937, 2). Thus, in accordance with the Nazi policy of restricting the presence of Jews in public and professional life, physicians and lawyers were the first to lose their livelihoods, and hence also among the earliest to emigrate. However, deterred by the bar examination that foreign lawyers in Mandatory Palestine had to pass to practice law, many opted for other occupations, including the book trade.

Book Lenders Ousted

At a conference of owners of rivate Lending Libraries, which as just been held in Berlin, the ader of the Librarians association nounced that from now on only ure "Aryans" will be allowed to e engaged in this business. Jews, whether they are ex-Service men r not, will not be permitted to wn or to manage a private lend- ng library. This decree deprives t least four hundred Jewish fa- nilies of their livelihood in the ity of Berlin alone. The number n the rest of Germany reached nto hundreds more.

FIGURE 1. "Christmas in Naziland." *The Palestine Post*, *December* 24, 1934, 5 (exerpt)

The night of May 10, 1933 witnessed torch processions in Berlin, Munich, and Frankfurt am Main, with piles of books authored by Jews burned to ashes. Two days earlier, books from Jewish private libraries and bookstores in Berlin had been collected and brought to the Opernplatz, where Joseph Goebbels, minister of the so-called Reichsministerium für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda, RMVP (Reich Ministry for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda), personally presided over their destruction. By the end of 1934, Jewish ownership of private lending libraries was prohibited, depriving some 400 families in Berlin and hundreds more across Germany of their source of income (*The Palestine Post* 1934e; fig. 1). Subsequently, on January 31, 1937, the Reichskulturkammer, RKK (Reich Chamber of Culture) in the aforementioned ministry decreed

JEWS TO HAVE ONLY ONE BOOKSHOP IN GERMAN CITIES

BERLIN, Jan. 31. — Beginning with April 1, there will not be a single Jewish bookseller in any of the large cities in Germany an announcement issued here today by the Nazi Chamber of Literature states.

The announcement pointed out that "it is now the task of the Chamber to clear out the remnants of Jewry in the rank of German booksellers. On March 31 of the present year," it declares, "this purge will be finally carried out. Jewry will then be allowed to have only its own Jewish bookshops in all the larger cities in the country.

The Jews will get permission to have only one bookshop in a single city and in order to avoid any doubts, this shop will have to be appropriately marked outside." *(P.T.A.)*

FIGURE 2. P. T. A. "Jews to Have Only One Bookshop in German Cities." *The Palestine Post*, February 7, 1937, 8

that as of April 1, only one Jewish bookstore, clearly identified as such, would be permitted to operate in large cities (P. T. A. 1937b). In the same year, the Jewish Board of Deputies reported that "Jewish booksellers in Germany are not allowed to sell anything but Jewish books and only to Jews" (1937, 2; fig. 2).

As reported at the end of December that year (P. T. A. 1937b), some 107,000 of a total half a million Jewish citizens had left Germany since mid-1933, according to an American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee report. Some of them were able to transfer their capital assets by means of the Transfer Agreement (see Weiss 1998). Addressing the transformations undergone by German Jewish communities, including the forced closure or sale of businesses, it remarked on the blow dealt to publishing houses and bookstores in particular. In this context, the report mentioned a new regulation to be imposed on August 1, 1938, banning Jews from engaging in publishing and the book trade without a special permit from the propaganda ministry, and commented that this measure would complete a two-year process during which the number of Jewish booksellers had dwindled from some two hundred to sixty. Upon the "*Anschluss*," or "annexation" of Austria to Germany, on March 12, 1938, the restrictions imposed on Jewish-owned publishing companies and bookstores took effect there as well. The Kristallnacht pogroms, simultaneously unleashed in all German cities at two past midnight on November 10, 1938, marked the culmination of vandalism of synagogues and Jewish-owned businesses and shops, including bookstores, with tens of thousands of books going up in flames (*Davar* 1939). Two months later, the journalist Joseph Breslavsky visited from Palestine "the only Jewish bookstore in Germany," situated in the Berlin home of the World Zionist Organization (WZO) at 10 Meinekestrasse. He observed that the entrance signs of its various offices had been removed, leaving "gaping holes in the wall like pecked-out eyes" (Breslavsky 1939). Operating in a cramped space on the bottom floor, the shop was only licensed to sell books written and published by Jews; it was also required to report to a government supervisor to whom each book had been sold and at what price.

This evidently was the shop of the Jüdischer Verlag (Jewish publishing house) sponsored by the WZO and housed on its premises—a sad relic of the Jewish publishing and bookselling trade in Germany, which the Nazi regime, cognizant of the power inherent in books, had systematically harassed and sapped from early on.

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Over the years, frequenting secondhand bookstores in Israel, filled with a wide variety of titles in numerous languages, I would pause over volumes with small labels with the names of the original stores and booksellers affixed to their inside covers. These printed ephemera, having served as miniscule advertisements, captured my interest and prompted me to sift through and approach them as historiographical evidence. As it were, the labels provided a primary source of information on mostly long-since closed stores, enabling me to chart the journeys of these old books and, not least, of the booksellers themselves.

The introduction of booksellers' labels in Palestine evinced an emulation of things European (e.g., language, manners, consumer goods) prevalent among Levantine elites. However, as many independent bookstores began to be replaced by large chains and mass marketing, these unobtrusive labels would eventually become superfluous. Thus, a practice extending in Europe from 1820 to the 1970s and in Palestine from about 1910 over a period of some sixty years, was discontinued.

Remarkably, almost 50 percent of the bookstores during the years of the Fifth Aliyah were owned by *Yekkes*, in disproportionate relation to their share of the Yishuv's Jewish population. Of the 1,100 publishers, booksellers, and antiquarians exiled from Germany and Austria after 1933, 160 arrived in Palestine, according to Fischer's bio-bibliographical handbook (2011).[2] About twenty booksellers transferred their stores from Germany: at least ten from Berlin, four from Frankfurt am Main, and others from Munich, Leipzig, Kassel, Breslau, and Chemnitz. Guided by data on the labels—and later, by serendipity—I succeeded in locating veteran booksellers or their family members and descendants, representing more than forty bookstores and accounting for about a third of their total number in Palestine of the 1930s and 1940s. My conversations with them added significant information as well as often intriguing anecdotal material, while contemporary newspapers provided supporting details.

2. Many of the bio-bibliogrpahical details in this essay are based on the first edition of Fischer's handbook, now in its second edition (2020).

This essay discusses booksellers who emigrated from Germany and Central Europe, largely during the ominous period leading up to World War II. Their reconstructed life stories and the histories of their bookstores are presented with information about their physical locations and orientations in the urban space of the Yishuv's three big cities. In Jerusalem, the essay foregrounds Ludwig Mayer, who had opened the "first modern bookstore" in Palestine as early as 1908, the dramatic Albert Popper, the diligent Rubin Mass, and the polyglot Yechezkel Steimatzky. In Tel Aviv, it introduces Leo Blumstein, an erstwhile partner in the Kedem Jewish publishing house and bookstore in Berlin, and the cartographer Wilhelm Freyhan. Lastly, the essay follows Felix Nagler, co-owner of the Haifa Steimatzky branch, and partners Berl Ringart and Solomon Monheit of the same city.

Orientations

In June 1930, Albert Popper, formerly of Hamburg, opened the Divan bookstore in Zion Square on Jaffa Road in Jerusalem. About a year later, Popper added the Persian mythological image of a winged sphinx to the store's wrapping paper, and soon after to his book labels. That image doubtless alluded to Goethe's lyrical anthology, *West-östlicher Divan* (West-Eastern Divan), describing a voyage to Persia, in which the poet had never set foot (Kontje 2004, 118). Any educated German would have been familiar with Goethe's work; Popper, I propose, adapted Divan as a name bespeaking his intellectual and cultural affinity with the home he had left, and perhaps also betraying the now proverbial European, or "Eurocentric," Orientalist fantasy (Said 1978).

Another suggestive name was Kedem, a bookstore and publishing house opened in Berlin in 1921 (The Commission on European Jewish Cultural Reconstruction 1948), one of numerous new stores specializing in Hebraica and Jewish studies. The Hebrew word *ḳedem* designates the East, or the Orient, of which the Spanish-Jewish poet Judah Halevi yearningly wrote his "My heart is in the East and I am at the edge of the West" (Carmi 1985, 347). The Kedem label contained the names of the store and its owners, Blumstein and Bronstein, its address, and a pentagram, symbolizing the morning star. In fact, both the name and the icon of the Berlin store augured the end of the partnership, which came about with Leo Blumstein's sudden emigration to Palestine in 1924. Shortly afterward, he opened what was to become a leading book, art, and gift shop in Tel Aviv under his name (fig. 3), while Lipa Bronstein continued to run Kedem as a Zionist gathering point in Berlin. A catalogue published in 1926 specified that the store and publishing house dealt in books

FIGURE 3. Leo Blumstein's store label, 1924?

on Erets Yiśrael, Zionism, Hebrew literature and nonfiction (*Katalog* 1926). In 1938, having sold his book inventory and customer list to Salomon Martin Franz, Bronstein, too, left Germany to settle in Tel Aviv, where he reestablished Kedem, now adding a lending library (Fischer 2011, 4, 281). In September 1955, he collapsed and died in his store (*Davar* 1955). The coroner declared that Bronstein's death was caused by a stroke that occurred during a tax official visit. The latter testified in court that Bronstein had lost consciousness while showing him a Berlin newspaper feature on the original Kedem store, including its photo (*Davar* 1956a).

The Ewer firm was founded in Germany (spelled and pronounced 'Ever in Hebrew) as a commercial outlet of the Jüdischer Verlag. The biblical 'Ever, grandson of Shem son of Noah, represents the Hebrew people and its language (*'Ivrit*). The managers of the company's two branches, Hans Werner in Berlin and Solomon Monheit in Munich, both left Germany and settled in Haifa, where, in June 1934, Werner opened a bookstore carrying the same name, referring to its erstwhile location in Berlin (*The Palestine Post* 1934b). It may be argued that names like Ewer, Divan, and Kedem given to shops in Palestine conveyed the booksellers' nostalgia for their lives prior to immigration as much as, or rather than, embracing of "the Orient" they now encountered in reality.

Three bookstores in Jerusalem had a distinctive label feature, displaying miniature city maps. The store location and surrounding streets of Divan, Ludwig Mayer, and Esmé Hadassah Imber (whose owner had immigrated to Palestine from England) were marked on these maps for promotional purposes, yet consequently exposed how the respective booksellers situated their stores in the cityscape (figures 5 and 6 below). The Divan map put equal emphasis on Café Vienna and the Zion Cinema, both across the street, thus associating the bookstore with the world of entertainment. On the other hand, the maps of Ludwig Mayer and Esmé Hadassah Imber targeted a potentially wider clientele by marking the location of other nearby stores and offices. Reading was an integral part of café life, and Café Vienna's proximity to Divan—which sold books, newspapers, and magazines, and ran a lending library—was only natural. The café was featured in animated descriptions by local writers and intellectuals, notably the German-born philosopher and Kabbalah scholar Gershom Scholem, who wrote in a letter to his mother back in Berlin (August 28, 1930):

> Today we sat with Professor Fodor in our new café, famous for its whipped cream. . . Next to the café is a genuine German bookstore where your son is allowed to browse, as well as to borrow this or that book. And all this opposite the Zion Cinema, which you may remember. Today you wouldn't recognize it since it's been totally renovated, and on fine summer days (and when aren't they fine?) the roof can be opened. So now I have drawn you a vivid picture of the center [of town] where we spend our afternoons. (Scholem 1998, 214).

The bookstore "opposite the Zion Cinema" was evidently Divan, then newly opened (fig. 4). Scholem would have been aware of the symbolism behind the name, as suggested by his comment about it being a "genuine German" bookstore—where, owing to his friendship with the owner, Albert Popper, his former colleague at the National and University Library and a co-member of Brit Shalom,[3] the soon-to-be professor was "allowed" to browse and borrow books at will.

FIGURE 4. Albert Popper's first bookstore label, Divan bookstore, 1930s?

Both the Zion Cinema and Café Vienna are also mentioned by the German Jewish poet Else Lasker-Schüler in her book *Das Hebräerland* (The Land of Hebrews), in which she reminisces about her visit to Palestine in 1934. Café Vienna, as she puts it, is "the interesting oasis of the city of Jerusalem" (Lasker-Schüler 1937, 44). Lasker-Schüler and Scholem's reminisces are rendered as personal experience. Agnon, in turn, related to the proximity of downtown bookstores and cafés through the eyes of Dr. Manfred Herbst, the protagonist of *Shira*. Herbst, he writes, began his stroll along ha-Solel Street in front of "the window of Bamberger and Wahrmann." Moving on, "he was overcome, like any booklover entering a store full of old books, with an emotion akin to yearning, a yearning that turns into a passion all the books in the world can never satisfy." He sauntered through another bookstore and, leaving it, went to a café, and ordered "hot, not iced, coffee . . . waited for it to cool, then drank it up all at once, took out his cigarette case, and sat smoking and reading the paper he had found on the table" (Agnon 1996, 588, 598, 607).

FIGURE 5. Ludwig Mayer's bookstore label, 1930s?

3. Brit Shalom, founded by a group of Zionist intellectuals in Palestine in 1925 and active until 1933, aimed to establish a binational state with equal rights for Arabs and Jews.

For a long time, Popper advertised Divan in the Sunday literature section of the *Palestine Post*, mentioning its location "opposite the Zion Cinema." Eventually a map identical to the one appearing on the store's book label accompanied the ad. So too, Ludwig Mayer, when moving his store in 1935 to Princess Mary (today Shlomzion ha-Malkah) Street, added a map to the label indicating the new location.

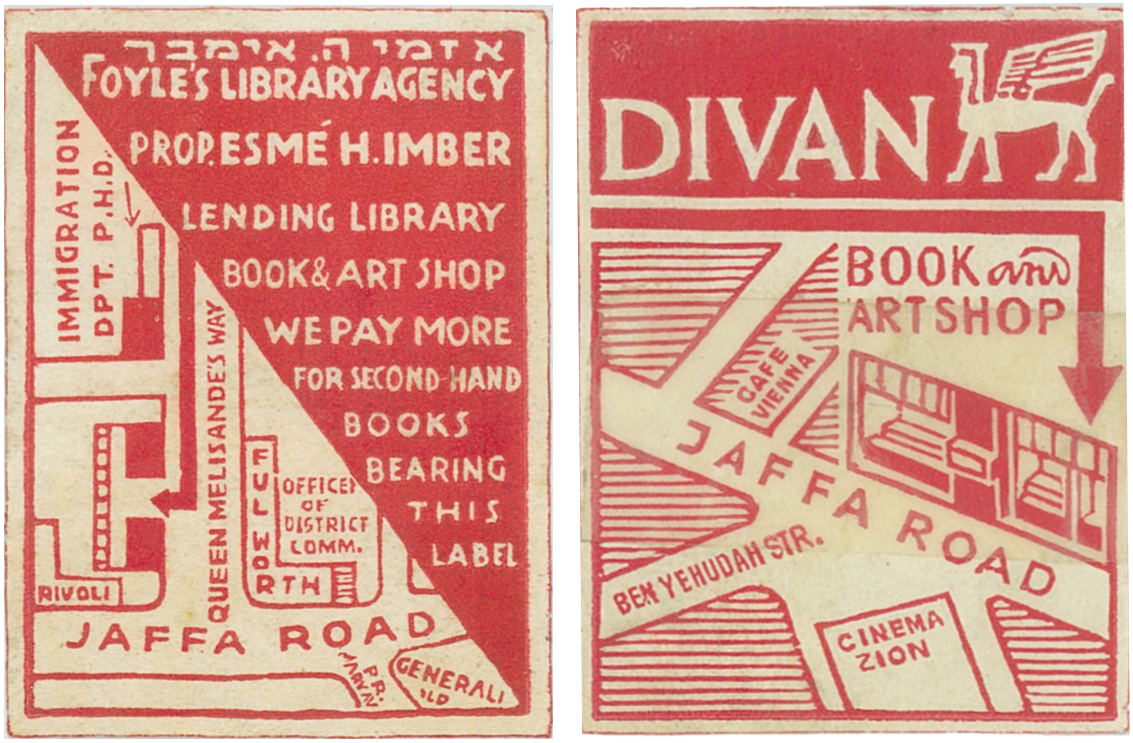

FIGURE 6. Bookstore labels featuring Miniature city maps. Left: Esmé Hadassah Imber's library agency label, 1930s?; Right: second bookstore label of Albert Popper's Divan

Erets Yiśrael in Miniature and War Maps

A miniature map of Erets Yiśrael made by Dr. Wilhelm Zeev Freyhan (1886–1966) served as graphical background for his remarkable book label, designed for the store he opened in 1939 at 37 Ben Yehuda Street in Tel Aviv. He eventually printed another blue-and-white map, like the ones delineated on the 1930s version of the Keren Kayemet (Jewish National Fund, JNF) Blue Box (Bar-Gal 2009, 79–83). In contrast to the JNF map, Freyhan's version marked not only the contemporary three large cities (Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and Haifa) but also four additional settlements, apparently to bring home the historical continuity underpinning the Zionist nation building ethos: the Old Yishuv cities (Tiberias and Safed as well as Jerusalem); the settlements of the First Aliyah (Reḥovot in the south and Metulah in the north). Like the JNF Blue Box, Freyhan's label painted an ideological picture in miniature—and both ignored the existence of Arab cities

in Palestine (fig. 7). According to my conversation with Rachel Pri-Chen (May 2010),[4] the wife of his son David, and Yeshayahu Pri-Chen, Freyhan's grandson, Zeev Freyhan trained as a geographer and cartographer prior to his immigration to Palestine. Therefore, the Erets Yiśrael map label was a multilayered signifier, pertaining to national, professional, and commercial facets.

FIGURE 7. Dr. Wilhelm Zeev Freyhan's bookstore labels, 1930s?

For his personal library, the bookseller designed an ex libris that borrowed images from E. M. Lilien's work, featuring a bearded, *payot* wearing Jew, wrapped in a *tallith* and covered with a skullcap, studying by candlelight (see fig. 8, next page). The ex libris motto, "Torah 'im derekh erets" (Torah learning while engaging in the modern world, or earning a livelihood), declared Freyhan's adherence to the ideology of the German Jewish neo-orthodox Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch. That ideology found visual expression in the smoking chimneys of a paper mill and a harp with taut strings (as opposed to Lilien's broken harp illustrated on the cover of Morris Rosenfeld's *Lieder des Ghetto* (1902).

The Breslau-born Freyhan joined the modern Orthodox branch of Judaism and participated in the 1912 Katowice Conference, where Agudath Israel was founded (Freyhan 1959). Well versed in both world and Hebrew literature, and an amateur viola player, Freyhan was a prominent member of the Orthodox Jewish community in Breslau and headed its local educational department. For a living, he managed an agency for marketing and distributing paper and cardboard products.

4. Pri-Chen is the Hebraized version of the name Freyhan.

One night in May 1938, the 52 years old Freyhan was dragged out of his bed and taken to the Buchenwald concentration camp near Weimar, where he was subjected to forced labor, hunger, humiliation, and torture. Freyhan signed the postcards he was allowed to send home fortnightly with the phrase, "Greetings to Mr. Neumann." Grasping the severity of his situation—Neumann was the director of the Breslau Ḥevrah ḳadisha (Jewish burial society)— Freyhan's wife lost no time and purchased an immigration permit to Palestine. Freyhan was released and returned home on July 29, 1938, and promptly left Germany for Palestine, stopping at the Joint office in Basel, beyond the reach of Nazi thugs, to deliver a chilling account of the setup, torture methods, and daily routine at Buchenwald (Testimony of Wilhelm Freihahn 1938).

FIGURE 8. Dr. Wilhelm Zeev Freyhan's ex libris, 1930s?

Freyhan settled in Tel Aviv and soon managed to bring his wife, their daughter Hannah, and two sons, Moshe and Zvi.[5] He initially eked out an existence peddling sticky fly paper rolls, much in demand among new immigrants adapting to the hot climate. In early 1939, he started a publishing company-cum-bookstore, that according to its letterhead, also sold stationery and toys. It was in this framework that Freyhan began to publish maps. "The World," probably the first in this line, was a hand-colored sun print. Its legend included Freyhan's bookstore address. Subsequent printed maps, published in the early 1940s, were based on the contemporary geopolitics: "[Russia], Southern Iran and Eastern Iraq," and "The War Front: Russia–Africa–The Near East." They marked out in color the territorial control of Britain, Russia, and Germany. The war maps of Freyhan and other booksellers visualized an uncertain, menacing reality. Following the parachuted German invasion of Crete and General Rommel's zigzag advance across the Western Desert of Egypt in 1942, the Yishuv was gripped by fear of imminent war in Palestine. Bookseller Felix Daniel Pinczower, who specialized in military literature, described this period of looming threat:

5. Another daughter emigrated to England. Joseph, the third son, joined the last training course at Kibbutz Enschede in the Netherlands, was arrested there by the Gestapo, survived Bergen-Belsen, and, after the war, reached Palestine a physical and mental wreck. Zvi fell in the 1948 war.

> It was the time when Rommel stood at the gates of Alexandria, British subjects were evacuated from Cairo, and the first special trains with refugees arrived in Jerusalem. It was the time when, in the wake of the occupation of Crete, the possibility of German paratrooper units landing also in Palestine was considered, and signs at train stations and bus stops were removed so as not to enable the airborne troops to orient themselves. But it was also the time when the first news of the Nazis' mass deportations of German Jews to extermination camps trickled through. (Pinczower 1974, 1)

In 1940, Freyhan moved his bookstore to 60 Ben Yehuda Street, renting the premises together with a stamp dealer. His store labels are found in imported international literature books of various types: nonfiction, technical literature, handbooks in English, and German *Exilliteratur* (German literature written and/or published in exile by authors who fled the Nazis). After Freyhan's death in 1965, his son Joseph managed the store until its final closure twenty years later.

Yekke Tel Aviv

Ben Yehuda Strasse

Tel Aviv was the preferred destination for immigrants from Germany during the Fifth Aliyah. According to population records published in 1935, of a total of 22,000 immigrants from Germany, some 8,000 settled in Tel Aviv, 5,500 in Haifa, 1,800 in Jerusalem, 2,400 on kibbutzim, and 2,800 on moshavim (Brachmann 1935, 15). A number of immigrants from Germany and Austria bought or rented apartments in newly constructed buildings along Tel Aviv's Eliezer Ben Yehuda Street—Ben Yehuda Strasse in *Yekke* lingo—and adjacent streets. Booksellers followed suit, including Kurt Landsberger, who before immigrating to Palestine in 1934 had worked in the book department of the Schocken department store in Chemnitz. In Tel Aviv, he first sold books and phonograph records from a makeshift stand, but soon opened his own store at 9 Ben Yehuda Street (fig. 9). Landsberger died in 1948, and his widow continued running the bookstore together with Itamar Parnas, a veteran employee who became a partner the following year and eventually took over, when she returned to live in Germany. After Parnas passed away in 1974, his wife Esther managed the store for many years. Its customers, she reminisced, were originally immigrants from Germany and Central Europe who, as a matter of course, preferred to read in German

FIGURE 9. Kurt Landsberger's bookstore label , 1934?

(personal communication, May 23, 2010). However, after the outbreak of World War II, when German became the language of the enemy, and due also to a dwindling stock of previously imported German literature, the Landsberger store would mainly offer books in English and, to a lesser extent, in Hebrew. As immigrants' economic conditions improved in the wake of the 1952 Reparations Agreement between Israel and the Federal Republic of Germany and individual compensation payments, the Landsberger bookstore extended its scope to offer Hebrew (40 percent), foreign languages (German, American, and English literature; 40 percent), and antiquarian books (20 percent). In 2004, when run by Esther Parnas's grandson, the bookstore moved to 116 Ben Yehuda Street, but closed down five years later, apparently due to fierce competition from the online global book market.

Another store, Merkaz ha-sefarim (Books Center), was located at 22 Ben Yehuda Street. Its first owner is named in an announcement published by the law firm of Kosovsky–Shachor, stating that the client Hermann Sachs had sold his store and its contents (*Davar* 1942). The new owner was Aron Sztejnberg (Aaron Steinberg, 1891—1975). Born in Bielsk in western Prussia, Sztejnberg moved to Berlin in 1922, where he apprenticed at the Jalkut (Yalkut) bookstore. In 1933, he took over the management when its owner, Rubin Mass, emigrated to Palestine. Sztejnberg purchased Jalkut in March 1934. A month later, having partnered with Wolf Salles, he changed its name to Steinberg & Salles. The bookstore closed in May 1939, and in December of that year, after the outbreak of World War II, Sztejnberg fled Germany with his family on a train bound for Trieste, continuing by ship to Palestine. Initially engaged in odd jobs for the Jalkut B. Cohen bookstores in Tel Aviv and Petaḥ Tiḳvah, he purchased the Book Center in 1942 and continued running it until the late 1950s (Fischer 2011, 324).

The Logos bookstore, located three buildings further north, at 28 Ben Yehuda Street, opened in 1940, offering secondhand fiction, nonfiction, science and rare books. The owner, Walter Zadek, previously of Berlin, immigrated to Palestine in 1934. A few months earlier, an item in the *Palestine Post* announced that the *Davar* newspaper was about to showcase a photographic supplement, a first-of-its-kind local publication to be edited by Walter Zadek. It noted that Zadek, a journalist at the *Berliner Tageblatt*, had immigrated to Palestine after being briefly interned in the Spandau Prison (The Palestine Post 1934b). The advertised publication did not materialize, however, and Zadek, consequently dismissed, started to employ his camera for journalistic purposes. The first exhibit of his photographs was shown at the Maskit gift store in Tel Aviv, traveling on to the Divan bookstore in Jerusalem, and from there to the Nagler bookstore in Haifa. Zadek's photographs would earn critical acclaim for documenting the Arab Revolt in a detached manner; depicting Palestine under the scorching summer sun, its red soil and silvery green olive trees; and juxtaposing a somnolent atmosphere with uniformed and armed forces, barbed wire, tanks, and deserted streets. As one reviewer wrote, the photographs were melancholically candid, and even though Zadek eschewed drama and sensation, the ostensibly tranquil images were fraught

with tension and danger (*The Palestine Post* 1936c). Before opening the Logos bookstore in 1940, Zadek ran a photographic studio-cum-bookstore named Babylon in Magen David Square (62 Allenby Street) in Tel Aviv, and together with photographer Helmer Lerski (also formerly of Berlin), he established the Palestine Professional Photographers Association in 1939. Logos continued operating until 1973 (Doron 1989, 4).

A cluster of bookstores and lending libraries operated on Ben Yehuda Street at the corner of Mendele Mokher Sefarim Street: Avdik, Freyhan, Mendele, and Schragenheim (nos. 56, 60, 62, and 64, respectively). Avdik offered, as its large book label specified, in German: "novels, miscellaneous booklets, as well as illustrated journals."

The owner of the Mendele bookstore, Erwin Lichtenstein, born in Danzig in 1901, had practiced law from 1930 until 1933, when Jews were banned from the bar. From 1932, he served on the municipal board of the Jewish community. He was also engaged in the sale of the synagogue and the Jewish cemetery, enabling organized emigration to Palestine and transfer of the community's Judaica collections, books, documents, and archive to the United States and Palestine (Grass et al. 1980, 9–10). Barely escaping Germany after World War II was already underway, Lichtenstein arrived in Tel Aviv in September 1939. Shortly afterward he opened the bookstore and lending library on Ben Yehuda Street, naming it Mendele after the adjacent street (fig. 10) since a bookstore called Lichtenstein already existed close by on Sheinkin Street. Mendele's customers, he reminisced years later, were mainly *Yekkes* who, while endeavoring to speak Hebrew, continued to read in German. Commenting on their preferences, he observed that academics had shown a weakness for detective stories, whereas women favored romance (Lichtenstein 1985, 117, 143).

FIGURE 10. Two bookstore labels for Erwin Lichtenstein's Mendele bookstore, 1939–

The Schragenheim library loaned new books in English, German, French, and Hebrew. Borrowing books was a popular pastime, as described by Miriam Ben Arroya (née Bloch; Personal communication, December 4, 2012). Born in Upper Schleswig, Ben Arroya came to Tel Aviv as a young girl of ten after her family managed to acquire a vaunted emigration certificate. Ben Arroya's family continued to speak German at home and would pay visits to the nearby libraries on Ben Yehuda Street. Her mother would visit the Shragenheim bookstore; Miriam herself visited the nearby Briger Library on Mendele Street, which had an assortment of children's books in her mother tongue.

Allenby, the Bookstore Street

Allenby Street, descending to the Tel Aviv beach, was at the heart of urban life in the city center. The Great Synagogue was a focal point—amid movie theaters, cafés, restaurants, and shops, including an impressive number of bookstores. Out of Allenby Street's 132 buildings, 24 percent accommodated bookstores or bookstalls, according to my account. Of them, five consecutive stores were located close to Ben Yehuda Street, and an additional string of ten bookstores were positioned at the nearby corners of Allenby, Hess and Ge'ulah streets.

Joseph (Jos) Melzer, who newly immigrated from Germany in 1933, started a publishing company and bookstore in Tel Aviv, naming it Cosmopolite (*Do'ar ha-yom* 1933b). The Galicia-born Melzer (1907), who grew up in Germany, trained as an apprentice at the Ewer bookstore in Berlin, and subsequently at the Wahrmann bookstore in Frankfurt am Main**.** He began working as an agent for Berlin publishers (Schocken and others) in Eastern Europe but ended up in Palestine after a tortuous journey that took him through Vienna, Budapest, Sofia, Athens, Istanbul, and Beirut. The name of his Tel Aviv store befitted Melzer's view of himself as a citizen of the world. He soon closed it, however, and became a partner of Herbert Stein, owner of the Ḥerut (Liberty) bookstore at 5 Sheinkin Street (Fischer 2011, 310–11). Ḥerut included a lending library offering international literature as well as technical and scientific books in Hebrew, German, English, French, and Hungarian. Yet the partners soon went their separate ways, and in 1936, Melzer opened the he-ʻAtid (The Future) bookstore in Jerusalem in partnership with Fritz Rosenthal (who would later Hebraize his name to Schalom Ben-Chorin). That partnership, too, would be short-lived. The reopening of the Cosmopolitan bookstore, situated at the corner of Allenby and Hess streets, may have been in conjunction with that split. After the end of World War II, Melzer and his family moved to Austria. Returning in May 1948 to what was now the State of Israel, he opened an antiquarian bookshop in Haifa, but less than a decade later, in 1957, finally left the country, going back to Germany to live in Cologne.

In 1939, Ernst Loewy set up a bookstore, or rather a bookstall, at 78 Allenby Street. According to its label, he also sold antiquarian books and operated a lending library. Three years earlier,

FIGURE 11. Erenst Loewy's bookstall label, 1939?

Loewy's parents had sent Ernst, then only fifteen, to Palestine. After spending two years as a juvenile immigrant at Kibbutz Kiryat 'Anavim near Jerusalem, he moved to Tel Aviv and found employment as an apprentice with the newly-opened Kedem bookstore. His parents, who left Germany immediately after Kristallnacht, arrived in Tel Aviv in November 1938 with a single piece of hand luggage and 20 German Marks. His mother worked as a housecleaner and father as an egg peddler initially, but Ernst eventually managed to arrange temporary employment for his father as a cataloguer of books loaned by the Kedem library. Based on this initial experience with the book trade, father and son jointly operated said bookstall (fig. 11). However, apparently having never really acclimatized in Israel, the parents returned to Germany and their erstwhile city of residence, Frankfurt am Main, in 1957, to be joined two years later by Ernst and his family (Fischer 2011, 200–202, 376).

In 1933, a company named Pales (short for Palestine), operating from the "Blue Building" at 119 Allenby Street, was founded by Dr. Paul Arnsberg (1899–1978). Earlier that year, Arnsberg had applied for leave of absence from his clerkship at the regional court of Frankfurt am Main. The official reply dated April 18, 1933—ten days after Jewish lawyers were banned from the legal courts and the bar—informed Arnsberg that the handling of his request would be deferred until the regulations concerning Jewish lawyers had been consolidated; until then, he was prohibited from entering the court. Arnsberg drew his conclusions and promptly left Germany (Claims Resolution Tribunal 2004.). He settled in Tel Aviv and married Rosl, a native of Berlin, the following winter (*The Palestine Post* 1934a). Acquiring import and distribution agencies, Pales soon became the largest importer of books and newspapers in Palestine. According to a congratulatory press announcement signed by its employees on the occasion of Pales's fifth anniversary (*Davar* 1938b), the staff was dispersed between the main office in Tel Aviv and its branches on Mizraḥi Street in the old commercial center of Haifa and Ben Yehuda Street in Jerusalem.The newspaper department employed the largest number, followed in turn by the book, advertising, and subscription departments.

Following the decision to broaden Pales' retail scope, new branches proliferated both within as well as outside the country. In the summer of 1941, Arnsberg inaugurated an agency at the prestigious al-Tawileh Market in Beirut, and booksellers and newspaper agencies in Lebanon and Syria were referred to its manager, Joseph Taragan (*The Palestine Post* 1941b). In the fall of 1943,

FIGURE 12. Dr. Paul Arnsberg's Pales bookstore label (Mograbi branch, Tel Aviv, 1944

two new agencies opened, one in the coastal city of Netanyah and another in Amman, Transjordan (*The Palestine Post* 1943); the following year, two agencies were added in Tel Aviv on Allenby Street, at no. 64, with Hebrew, Russian, and English sections (*ha-Mashkif* 1944), and opposite the Mograbi Cinema (*The Palestine Post* 1944; fig. 12). Besides two strategically located agencies, one at the large British army base near the Palestinian village of Sarafand al-Amar (currently, Tserifin military base), and the other at the Lydda Airport (now Ben-Gurion International Airport), several branches also appeared in provincial towns and moshavim (Pales company letterhead). At the end of 1949, the Pales company informed the reading public the opening of new branches in the cities of Petaḥ Tiḳvah, ʻAfulah, and Beer Sheba (*The Palestine Post* 1949).

Over the years, the expansion of agencies into provincial towns and train and bus stations bookstalls, as well as the increasing scope of activity in the Allenby Street branches, would prove burdensome and eventually impossible to sustain. In the summer of 1956, Arnsberg applied to the District Court of Tel Aviv requesting the dissolution of Pales. Following financial losses in the years 1953–1954, he declared, the company had ceased distributing Hebrew newspapers and was focusing instead on imported magazines and books. In 1955, the losses had increased due to an unfavorable exchange rate, price control, and market oversaturation during a period of austerity in Israel. In addition, Pales's sizable staff of fifty went on strike, demanding that their severance funds be safeguarded, completely paralyzing the company (*Davar* 1956b). In a hearing before Justice Natan Ben Zakai, District Court, the receiver claimed that there was cause to hold Arnsberg personally responsible for the losses as he had "borrowed" money from the company coffers, illegally charged it for personal expenses, and made business transactions in the United States as a cover for money laundering. In his defense, Arnsberg cited the measures he had taken to avoid losses, including the closure of its retail branches (*ha-Tsofeh* 1957). A liquidation order was issued in September 1956 (*Ḥerut* 1956). The Pales distribution rights for French-language newspapers were bought by the Alshech bookstore, and Yechezkel Steimatzky acquired the rest of the agencies (Personal communication, Hanan Gerasi, Alshech's owner, April 16, 2018). Arnsberg proposed a compromise in which the court proceedings would be stopped, in return for which he would waive his claims against the company and transfer shares and cash in his possession, amounting to 8,000 Israeli Lirot, to the receiver. The court sanctioned this settlement (*Ḥerut* 1958).

Arnsberg published articles on topical economic subjects: "Copper Production in Israel" (Arnsberg 1957a), "German Reparation Proceedings" (Arnsberg 1957b), etc. One of these articles, "Individual German Reparations—Facts and Problems," explained the considerations behind the return of immigrants to Germany (Arnsberg 1958). Once the court proceedings ended, he himself returned to Frankfurt am Main, where he was elected a member of the board of the Jewish community, engaged in research, and authored a comprehensive history of the Jews of Frankfurt since the French Revolution (Arnsberg 1983). He died in 1978 at the age of seventy-nine and was buried in Israel. In 2010, a square was named after Arnsberg in the Frankfurt neighborhood Ostend, where he grew up. The commemorative plaque notes he was a lawyer and journalist but omits mention of his extended career in the book and newspaper trade in Isreal since the Yishuv period.

In the spring of 1939, Felix Daniel Pinczower started a bookstore specializing in sports. After running it from his home for several years, he opened a small shop at 82 Allenby Street, but two years later returned to selling from home. Pinczower's enthusiasm for sports dated back to his early years in Germany, as a middle-distance runner and member of the Jewish youth movement Bar Kochba (inaugurated 1910). In 1935, he traveled with his wife Hilde to Palestine as a sports reporter for the *Israelitsches Familienblatt* (Israelite family paper) to cover the Second Makabiyah games. He was also commissioned to write sports entries for the fourth, extended issue of the *Philo-Lexikon* (Loewenberg et el.1937), listed among the contributors alongside his uncle, Rabbi Jacob Freimann, president of the grand rabbinical court of Berlin's Jewish community. Pinczower, too, was an observant Jew, proficient in Hebrew since youth.

Arrested on Kristallnacht and taken to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, Pinczower was only released after Hilde procured the obligatory certificate enabling their emigration to Palestine. The release document, signed by the camp commander, affirmed that "the Jew Felix Pinczower," born in Berlin, had been apprehended on November 10, 1938, and released on December 16 of that year (personal communication, Shoshana Langerman, Felix Pinczower's daughter, October 2012). Felix, Hilde, and their infant daughter duly departed from Berlin on March 1, 1939, arriving in Palestine two weeks later. Following the outbreak of World War II, Pinczower began to specialize in the Near and Middle East, military literature and *Exilliteratur*. Among his customers were both the British army and Haganah personnel (Fischer 2011, 239–40). He also reissued about fifty booklets, handbooks, poetry, and prose previously published in Jerusalem by a one-man-operation in *Exilliteratur*, Dr. Peter Joseph Freund during World War II (Pinczower 1974).

The Tel Aviv Metropolitan Area

An item published in the newsletter of the association of immigrants from Germany and Austria presented data on Petaḥ Tiḳvah on the Sharon Plain, where 2,500 immigrants from the former country, mainly merchants and professionals, had been absorbed between 1933 and 1939. The majority came from rural areas in the southern and western parts of Germany, were "of religious inclination" and spoke a "Germanized holy language" [i.e., Yiddish]. They found Petaḥ Tiḳvah as a suitably "conservative agricultural town" (Meltsen 1939). Among the new settlers there were Bendit Kahan and his family. Born in White Russia in 1877, Kahan migrated to Germany with his parents as a boy, living first in Frankfurt am Main and moving to Berlin in 1914. In 1920, he established the Jalkut publishing house and bookstore in partnership with his brother David, publishing pocket editions of Torah literature and Jewish texts. With the help of his father, for the vast sum of one million gold rubles, Bendit acquired the "publishing house of the Rahm widow and brothers" in Vilna (*ha-Tsofeh* 1953) and the A. J. Stybel publishing house in Warsaw (*Davar* 1927). In November 1926, Jalkut was acquired by Rubin Mass, and Kahan established a new publishing house named Jalkut B. Kahan, with one office in Berlin and another in Jerusalem. He printed, inter alia, six sections of the Mishnah (Jerusalem 1926) and "selected gems" of Solomon Ibn Gabirol's poetry (Berlin 1927). In 1933, when Kahan and his family left Germany, he transferred the publishing house to Petaḥ Tiḳvah.

Another bookseller active in the Sharon region was Walter Zvi Fabian, who as a young man had worked in his parent's Berlin menswear store. He immigrated to Palestine in 1934, bringing along a large quantity of books, and settled on the moshava Raʻananah, where he ran a mobile bookstore and subscription library catering mainly to inhabitants of Petaḥ Tiḳvah and the moshavot of Ramat ha-shavim, Ramatayim, and Kefar Sava. Industrious and frugal, Fabian first distributed the books by bike, carrying them in his rucksack, but as the number of subscribers grew, he transported them by donkey cart. In 1937, he began working from home but soon opened a bookstore that became a meeting-place for local *Yekkes*. To accommodate their thirst for literature, he made sure to refresh the library with a weekly supply of books from the lending library of Ludwig Mayer in Jerusalem (Personal communication, Shoshana Fabian, the present owner of the store).

Jerusalem, Holy and Secular

Ludwig Mayer: Back and Forth Migration

The first bookstore outside the walls of the Old City in Jerusalem was set up in 1908 by Ludwig Mayer, who immigrated to Palestine from Germany during the Second Aliyah (1904–1914). In a series of reminiscences entitled "Jerusalem before World War I" (Mayer 1968), he explained that as a representative of the Jewish sports club Bar Kochba, he had participated in the Sixth

Zionist Congress held in 1903. He subsequently apprenticed in bookstores in Berlin, Leipzig, Munich, Kiel, and Strasbourg before broaching the idea of opening his own store in Palestine. He consulted in David Wolffsohn, WZO's second president, but to his astonishment, Wolffsohn was unwilling to express his opinion on the matter, arguing that the decision was Mayer's to make. Dr. Arthur Ruppin, director of the organization's Palestine office, did offer advice, although he too was rather skeptical. Mayer then turned to the Zionist functionary Davis Trietsch, who encouraged him and introduced him to Dr. Heinrich Wiesel, an immigrant from Vienna with similar plans. On October 1, 1908, Mayer signed a partnership agreement with Wiesel before the German vice consul in Jaffa. The partners named the store in German (see Internationale Buch-und Kunst-handlung 1910), meaning International General Bookstore, and signed contracts for the distribution of textbooks and writing materials to local schools: the *Hilfsverein* (aid organization) of German Jews, Alliance Française, Evelina de Rothschild, and the Jewish Orphanage. They also cultivated contacts with consulates, mainly of Germany and France, foreign institutions, and with the Templars in the German Colony in Jerusalem. They addressed an announcement to the general public under the heading, "For out of Zion shall go forth the law" (Isa. 2:3), declaring the intent to distribute books "in all European and Oriental languages," as well as Hebrew literature and Jewish studies, and asserting that only since the Ottoman annulment of book censorship had it become possible to open a store for books and art, "contributing to spiritual life" (Wiesel 1908). The store opened on December 8, 1908, in the building of Hotel Fast on Jaffa Road, opposite the municipal garden (Mordechai 1938). A few months later, a newspaper article enthused: "Europe! In Jerusalem . . . a piece of Europe in the store's beautiful display windows. . . For a moment, indeed, we imagined standing in the heart of Berlin or Paris, Rome, or London" (*ha-Tsevi* 1909a). The store was an outlet for arts and crafts produced by students of the "Hebrew Bezalel institution . . . carpets, pictures, toys," and after the arrival of titles in Hebrew, Arabic, and Turkish, it would become "a repository of books and art spanning East and West." The anticipated sale of books in Arabic followed in the wake of the Ottoman decree making this an obligatory language of study in schools.

The labels of the International General Bookstore were in German (fig. 13). A French version was added when, in April 1910, it opened a branch in Jaffa, managed by Wiesel. The new store was heralded as "a significant step forward on the path of progress in our country, proving that the demand for literature and art is taking root" (*ha-Tsevi* 1909b). Advertisements announced that both the Jerusalem store, "by the Russian post office," and the Jaffa branch, "on Butrus Street," carried

FIGURE 13. Ludwig Mayer's bookstore label for his International General Bookstore, Jeruslaem, 1909

"books in Hebrew, French, German, English, Russian, Arabic, and Turkish," as well as "newspapers, terrestrial globes, maps, pictures, musical notes, writing materials and paper," and art supplies for Bezalel students. The partnership was to be short-lived, however. In January 1911, after negotiations before the German consul in Jerusalem and Dr. Ruppin (see the Mayer–German Consul 1911, and Mayer–Ruppin 1911 correspondence), Mayer purchased Wiesel's share and notified customers that both stores would remain in his hands (*ha-Tsevi* 1911).

In the spring of 1913, a newspaper notice announced: "Yemenite helper required in the [Jerusalem] store of Mr. Ludwig Mayer . . ." (*ha-'Or* 1913). The unwitting ethnic bias brings to mind a lecture held by Dr. Ruppin in Vienna five years earlier before the Jewish Colonization Association on February 27, 1908, recounting his impressions from a study visit to Palestine in the spring and summer of 1907, notably of Yemenite Jews. In the colonization effort framework, Yemenite Jews were seen as a valuable asset: hard workers who made do with little and successfully competed with cheap Arab labor (Ruppin 1936, 4).

Evidently the management of two branches proved burdensome, and in March 1914, it was announced that, "Mr. Ludwig Mayer has transferred his bookstore in Jaffa to Messrs. Sachs and Eliachar" (*ha-Ḥerut* 1914a), owners of a next-door travel bureau. Shortly thereafter, upon a sudden call-up order from Germany occasioned by the outbreak of World War I, the following announcement was published: "Due to the journey of Mr. Mayer, the General Store will be closed. Newspapers, magazines, maps, books in German, dictionaries, etc., are on sale in Mr. Theodor Fast's travel bureau for the Hamburg-American line" (*ha-Ḥerut* 1914b). Mayer left the country together with his family, and after an arduous journey lasting more than three weeks they arrived in Berlin. Fast, a German Templar, kept up the sale of books in German until the British occupation of Palestine in 1917, when, as a "hostile subject," he was exiled to Egypt.

Remaining in Germany long after the end of the war in 1918, Mayer notified the public in Palestine: "I have meanwhile, until my return . . . opened a delivery store in Berlin for books and artifacts . . . especially books relating to Erets Yiśrael and the Orient and their literatures, as well as antiquities" (*Do'ar ha-yom* 1921). He requested the trust of his clients and invited orders to be sent to 8 Winterfeldtstrasse, Berlin—the address appearing on the store's book labels. A year later, Mayer moved to 46 Lutherstrasse; now besides the new Berlin address, the label included the official name of his company in Jerusalem. He indeed cultivated his contacts with clients in Palestine, but after spending six months in Jerusalem in 1924, concluded that conditions were not yet ripe to (re)open his bookstore there. Revisiting the country five years later, he offered his services in supplying books, especially scientific literature, to the "Erets Yiśrael public" (*Do'ar ha-yom* 1929b).

The Nazi imposition of a boycott on Jewish shops on April 1, 1933 put an end to Mayer's hesitations and prompted him to close the Berlin store and leave Germany. He arrived in Jerusalem together with his family the following month (personal communication, Herman Mayer, Ludwig Mayer's son. March 15, 1999). By the end of the year, he inaugurated a new bookstore on Storrs Avenue—a quarter of a century after opening his first (*The Palestine Post* 1933d). Two years later, he announced its move to larger premises on Princess Mary Street (*The Palestine Post* 1935a). Three years on, he started a lending library at 33 Rambam Street in the upscale neighborhood of Reḥavyah, home to a number of *Yekkes*, offering books in English, German, and Hebrew (*The Palestine Post* 1938c). He also supported several small lending libraries in outlying areas (e.g., Fabian, above) by upgrading their stock of books. The Mayer bookstore became a hub for local academics and students, and when the new Hebrew University campus on Givat Ram was inaugurated in 1959, Mayer, together with the owners of the he-'Atid bookstore, set up a bookstore in the administration building, where it operated until 1971 (*Ma'ariv* 1972). His store on Shlomzion ha-Malkah Street, sold in 1994 to Marcel Marcus, formerly a rabbi in Bern, Switzerland, operates to this day under its original name.

Albert Popper: Ingenuity and Vicissitudes

Information about the early career of the exceptionally dynamic bookseller Albert Popper, and about the bookstore he opened in Jerusalem, is ironically found in a legal document decreeing its closure. In his summary of the bankruptcy proceedings in the District Court of Jerusalem, notary and official receiver Henry Kanterowitz records that Albert Popper, a German citizen aged forty-two, had arrived in Palestine in 1926. An experienced bookseller, he found employment two years later at the National and University Library in Jerusalem. In 1929, he was appointed manager of the Jerusalem branch of the Blumstein bookstore; when it closed 18 months later, he opened his own bookstore, named Divan, in the same location (Summary of Statement of affairs 1938). A glimpse into Popper's first two years in Palestine was serendipitously found in a secondhand book in the Jaffa flea market (Be'er 1992, 284). Popper most likely spent these two years in Kibbutz Beit Alfa, before moving to Jerusalem around 1927, where he turned to bookselling.

The opening of Blumstein's Jerusalem branch was advertised at length in German and Hebrew:

> The L. Blumstein bookstore in Tel Aviv reopens its Jerusalem branch on the second of May, on Jaffa Road, below Hotel Warschavsky-Tel Aviv, opposite the Zion Cinema. The management of the new store is entrusted to the bookseller A. Popper. The emphasis will be on German literature. . . At the request of many of our erudite readers, we will set up a special department for old and antiquarian books. (24 posters of bookshops and stationery 1929)

A year later, Popper informed clients in a circular printed in Hebrew, English, and German that he had purchased the Jerusalem Blumstein branch, which would reopen in June under the name of Divan and offer books and artifacts (Circular 1930).

Popper also actively published of fine works that earned high praise for their design both locally and internationally. His success was due to a discerning selection of titles and recruitment of the most proficient typesetters and printers. Notable publications included a multilingual lotto game set and booklet, *Plants of the Holy Land in colour-prints*, edited by botanist Josue Avisohar (Jerusalem, 1933). Sixty plants were depicted in exquisite color drawings by the local artist Charuvi (Shemu'el Ḥaruvi, 1897–1965) and printed at the Jerusalemite Grafica studio of the renowned painter Abel Pann. The plants were named in five languages: Hebrew, Latin, English, French, and German. The flora guide was to become a classic, issued in multiple later editions. Though Popper had identified its commercial potential, Divan would not be involved in subsequent editions, which were issued by other publishers. Another significant project was an extensive album of photo etchings by J. Benor-Kalter, *The Old City of Jerusalem* (1931), issued both in German and English. An additional photographic album, titled *Jerusalem Types*, produced jointly with the Barak studio for Artistic Photography on Ben Yehuda Street in Jerusalem, depicted Jewish, Muslim, and Christian inhabitants of the city in a rather romantic vein. In 1933, Popper published Menahem Naor's Hebrew workbook for German and English speakers (*A practical textbook of the Hebrew language: for teaching and self-instruction*). The English version was reviewed and commended for disseminating knowledge of vernacular Hebrew at the appropriate time (Dahl 1934). The German version was reprinted two years later and served as the basis for editions geared to speakers of French and Arabic (*The Palestine Post* 1935b). Although Popper's report to the receiver in the eventual Divan bankruptcy proceedings cited the losses incurred by publishing the Hebrew workbook as one of the main reasons for his financial decline, this is doubtful given the great demand for such primers in Palestine and Germany at the time. Indeed, in 1930s Berlin a person immersed in the study of Hebrew on the train or in a café was not an uncommon sight—and as many as forty different Hebrew-German, German-Hebrew, and Hebrew-Arab dictionaries were on the market (Pritzkowitz 1935). Yet although Popper initiated what was to become a veritable bestseller, others were to enjoy the fruits of his labor. Three hundred unsold copies of the first-edition Hebrew workbook would be distributed between 1937 and 1938 by the Rubin Mass Publishing House, which also acquired copyright from the author, Menachem Naor, for the English and German versions. Rubin Mass also issued a second edition of the English version in 1942, and six additional editions by 1953 (Personal communication, Oren Mass, Rubin Mass' grandson, March 14, 2011.). Another noteworthy Divan undertaking was the annual publication of two bibliographies edited by the renowned scholar of Islamic art and archaeology, Leo Aryeh Mayer, with the contribution of some twenty prominent Islamic scholars from Arab countries, Turkey, Iran, and Europe (Mayer 1938–1939), and lauded with

regard to both their content and print quality.[6] Divan also arranged displays of prominent local artists in its gallery adjacent to the bookstore (*The Palestine Bulletin* 1932; *Davar* 1932), among them Reuven Rubin (*Do'ar ha-yom* 1932), Ludwig Blum, and Leopold Krakauer. In October 1933, it featured the photographer Helmar Lerski in a solo show, "Portraits of Palestine Types" (Jews and Arabs). According to an enthused reviewer, it was the most interesting exhibition, in any medium, that Jerusalem had seen (*The Palestine Post* 1933b).

Popper was a colorful character, both in his ways and in appearance: a vegan and practitioner of yoga (not as common back then), and famous for his wild mane of curls (Personal communication, Prof. Itamar Aviad, April 5, 2011). He regularly updated acquaintances and clients on his undertakings via letters to the editor and in the social sections of the *Palestine Post* and *Davar*, proudly announcing, for example, that Divan had opened "a children's corner." His dealings were not beyond reproach, however. An item in *Davar*—mouthpiece of the socialist Mapai Party—accusingly reported that "

> the owner of the Divan bookstore, *ḥaver* [comrade] Popper, boycotts the Hebrew worker. The carpentry work in his store was given to a Christian German contractor. . . He did not employ Hebrew workers, even though, it should be said, this bookstore subsists chiefly on orders from the national institutions. (*Davar* 1933)

The unsigned complainant referred to Divan's renovation and expansion, as becomes clear from a contrastingly celebratory announcement two days later: "The foremost books on sale and for loan are to be found at Divan, now, to the customers' delight, in the expanded store" (*The Palestine Post* 1933a).

In the summer of 1936, during the bloody events unleashed by the Arab Revolt, a letter sent to the editors of *Davar* and the *Palestine Post* alleged that at Divan, "Jews disseminate an anti-Jewish Arabic newspaper, *Palestine & Transjordan*" (*Davar* 1936b). It cited a British official as saying that he "does not respect the Jews as not only do they have communists and intellectuals, but veteran merchants who do not refrain from selling a newspaper that speaks against their people." Without delay, Popper responded that this was the only newspaper in which people who did not command the Arabic language could read about the other side of the conflict. "Lacking knowledge of the claims and thinking of the Arabs is one of the reasons for the severed relations between two peoples destined to live in the same country," he contended (*Davar* 1936a).

6. "This new bibliography deserves a warm welcome . . . it is beautifully printed." (A.S.T. 1937).

Popper also provoked criticism in June 1937 when he dismissed two store clerks and hired two others. In response, the Histadrut Labor Federation threatened to declare a strike, and Popper was obliged to agree to a litigation process and pay severance. Following publication about the affair in *Davar*, under the heading Employer/Employee Relations (*Davar* 1937a), Popper explained, in yet another letter to the editor, that his intention had been to hire a clerk with a diploma in bookkeeping in accordance with new methods, who would be paid a higher wage than the dismissed clerk. The Histadrut, however, insisted that it was untrue, and took pains to specify the amounts paid, showing that the new employees actually earned less than the ones who had been fired (*Davar* 1937b).

In February 1938, Albert Popper declared bankruptcy (*Davar* 1938a). The receiver published tenders for the sale of the bookstore and lending library as an active business. He punctiliously notified prospective buyers that out of 2,430 books for loan, 1,480 were in German, 725 in English, and 225 in French.

Divan was a bustling store, popular with the *Yekke* immigrant community as well with the British Mandate government and army personnel and was the sole distributor of books to the American Colony. In 1937, the erstwhile British military governor of Jerusalem Ronald Storrs presented a dedicated copy of his book*, Orientations*, published that year, to his friends in the Colony; according to the bookseller's label, it was purchased at Divan**.** That copy is still in the American Colony library in Jerusalem. Norman Bentwich, the first attorney general of the Mandate government, likewise dedicated a copy of his book, *Jerusalem*, to the Colony that was bought at Divan when it was published in 1934. Both Storrs and Bentwich—the former accused by the Yishuv of being pro-Arab, and the latter (who was Jewish) claimed by the Arabs to be pro-Zionist—were regular Divan customers

What then led to its bankruptcy? Documents and evidence relating to the bankruptcy proceedings were initially preserved at the General Consulate of Germany in Jerusalem, as Popper was a German subject.[7] With the outbreak of World War II, the consulate closed and the British Mandate government seized the documents, which were eventually transferred to the Israel State Archives. They include an English-language statement by Popper to the effect that after eight years of activity, Divan closed, only to be replaced by the bookstore Igarta at the same address. According to docuement in the German Consulate papers collection, the management appointed him as manager of the store, to preserve the style and customer service of its predecessor and, as Popper hoped, to please clients who already knew him. The lease of Igarta, Ltd. was renewed annually and signed by Tilla Popper, Popper's wife, as an executive board member. The Igarta's

7. So were some of the creditors, among them the publisher Julius Hofmann of Stuttgart, who signed letters to the consulate with the Nazi salute "*Heil Hitler*."

bookseller label included the image of a mop-haired figure assumedly depicting Popper himself and thus hinting at his deep involvement in the store (fig. 14). Igarta survived until the end of 1948, at which point it was sold to another bookseller. Soon a news item announced—in Popper's characteristically suave formulation—that having joined the ABC bookstore at 81 Allenby Street in Tel Aviv, he welcomed friends and customers to avail themselves of his services at the new location (*The Palestine Post* 1948a).

FIGURE 14. The Igarta bookstore label, Jeruslaem, 1938?

Other *Yekke* Booksellers in Jerusalem

Like Ludwig Mayer before him, Rubin Mass transferred his eponymous bookstore and publishing house from Berlin to Jerusalem in 1933. Early reference to the store is found in a 1927 address book of Jewish booksellers worldwide, published and edited by Mass (*Adressbuch für den jüdischen Buchhandel* 1927, 9). Born in Vištytis, Lithuania (1894), Mass began a three-year apprenticeship in the Berlin bookstore of Louis Lamm at the age of nineteen. By 1920, he was appointed manager of the Jalkut bookstore, newly opened in Berlin by the brothers Bendit and David Kahan. Seven years later, ownership of the store was transferred to Mass, initially as Jalkut–Rubin Mass and eventually named Rubin Mass. The 128-page catalogue of Jalkut Books (Mass 1929) presented more than 2,000 titles of modern Hebrew literature, with an introduction by the literary scholar Dr. Simon Bernfeld. It drew great interest, with orders placed by

prestigious institutional clients like the British Museum and the New York Public Library. In a prefatory note, the publisher promoted a forthcoming catalogue of Talmudic and Rabbinic literature, and a subsequent one of Judaica. Mass was an ardent Zionist, as indicated by the dating of the 1929 catalogue: "Berlin, in advance of the Sixteenth Zionist Congress." According to its labels, the store was located first on Kantstrasse and later Pestalozzistrasse, both in the upscale Berlin neighborhood Charlottenburg (fig. 15).

FIGURE 15. The Berlin bookstore label of Rubin Mass, late 1920?

On the night of May 10, 1933, Mass and his wife witnessed the horrific book-burning spectacle at the Opernplatz, raucously conducted by Joseph Goebbels, Reich Minister for Propaganda, with active participation of the *Deutsche Studentenschaft* (German Student Union). Mass nonetheless kept publishing, even in Hebrew. His booklet on the subject of "Hebrew Women as Printers, Setters, Publishers, and Patrons of Writers," authored by the scholar and bibliophile Abraham Meir Habermann was published in Hebrew that year. This was apparently the swan song of the Berlin publishing company. That summer, the Gestapo beat and arrested Simcha Mass, Rubin's brother and co-owner of a haberdashery shop, as well as his business partner, and that led Rubin Mass to leave Germany. In October of that year, Mass and his family arrived in Palestine. They rented a house in the affluent Jerusalem neighborhood of Ṭalbiyeh, spacious enough to accommodate their possessions, a private library shipped from Berlin in sixteen crates, and the reborn Mass bookstore and publishing house (Mass 1974, 349–69). In early 1934, he introduced and promoted himself in a notice in *Davar*: "Rubin Mass Jerusalem, bookseller and publisher. Following twenty successful years in the book trade in Berlin, I have moved to Erets-Yiśrael and settled in Jerusalem and am continuing my professional career" (*Davar* 1934c). The same newspaper issue advertised the publication of a Passover Haggadah for children "with moving pictures." A few months later, Mass published the second edition of a Hebrew poetry anthology, edited by Chaim Brody and Meir Wiener, and a compilation of Theodor Herzl's Zionist letters in German (*Davar* 1934b; *Davar* 1934a). He would continue his manifold activity over several decades. By his seventieth birthday and the thirtieth anniversary of the Mass company in Jerusalem, he had published more than 700 titles in various areas: illustrated children's books, education, belles-lettres, nonfiction, Jewish studies, and science (*Davar* 1964).

One of the two sons of Rubin and Ḥannah Mass, Dani, enlisted with the Palmach elite fighting force and was promoted to deputy commander of the Gush 'Etsyon unit. In the early phase of Israel's War of Independence, he led 35 fighters from Har-Ṭuv to the besieged Gush 'Etsyon

region not far from Jerusalem. They were revealed by armed Arab locals and the entire unit fell in the ensuing battle. Rubin Mass would subsequently memorialize his son in a published series of some eighty books on popular science.

In an opinion piece written after the Six-Day War, Mass reacted to the peace plan proposed by William Rogers, the U.S. Secretary of State during the Nixon presidency, and espoused a bi-national state, with Arab residents offered Israeli citizenship with "full civil rights and duties" (Mass 1974, 395–96). According to his grandson Oren Mass, he was "excited about the peace accord with Egypt signed in 1979" (personal communication, Oren Mass, August 2011). Rubin Mass kept working to the end of his life assisted by his grandson, who still runs the Rubin Mass Publishing House, producing ten to thirty books per year, mainly in Jewish studies.

FIGURE 16. Nathan Bamberger and Samuel Wahrmann's bookstore label, Jerusalem, early 1930s

Another bookstore that opened in Jerusalem in the early 1930s was that of Bamberger & Wahrmann (fig. 16). Nathan Bamberger and Samuel Wahrmann were new immigrants, both formerly of Frankfurt am Main, where they had worked as apprentices in the renowned Felix Ignatz Kauffmann bookstore, founded in 1832 (Herlitz and Kirschner 1930, 5, 1188). Bamberger had then been a partner in the Bamberger & Feist bookstore, which was closed down during World War I, then returned to the Kauffmann store, remaining there until October 1933, when he emigrated to Palestine (Junk 1997, 119–25). Samuel Wahrmann and his wife, Regina, were born in the Lvov region of Galicia. Wahrmann's uncle, Moses Aaron Wahrmann, had acquired in 1920 the Rothenberg bookstore in Frankfurt, specializing in antiquarian books, Jewish studies, Hebraica, Zionist writings, and Jewish ritual objects. Two years later, Samuel joined his uncle and after his death in 1923, took on the management of the store, eventually acquiring it from the heirs.

While still in Germany, Wahrmann undertook the publication of the complete work and selected translations of Hayyim Nahman Bialik in four volumes, on the occasion of the poet's fiftieth birthday. Wahrmann and his family arrived in Jerusalem at the end of 1933. On Bialik's recommendation, he opened an antiquarian bookstore in partnership with Bamberger, initially named Tachkemoni. They promptly advertised their move from Germany to Jerusalem and the opening of a "publishing company and bookstore in all areas of Jewish studies, in Hebrew as well as in other languages" (*Palestine & Middle East Economic Magazine* 1933). Since both partners were proficient in Hebrew from a young age, Bamberger dealt with Judaica and Wahrmann with Hebraica (personal communication, Naomi Wahrmann, Shmuel Wahrmann's daughter, March 2, 2011). The forty-some catalogues they published covering these areas as well as Orientalia are

still in high demand among scholars and collectors alike. Catalogue no. 1 (*Hebraica, Ancient Hebrew Books*, 1924) listed almost 700 titles, with prices given in U.S. dollars. It also announced, in Hebrew, Arabic, English, and German, that the company's printing department accepted books, pamphlets, and any other printing jobs. Wahrmann would travel abroad to purchase complete libraries as the occasion arose. Catalogue no. 10 (*Judaica*, 1936) poignantly presented more than sixteen hundred titles of books from the Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums in Berlin. Catalogue no. 30 (1944), and subsequent numbers that appeared during World War II, were cheaper stencil prints.

Upon Bamberger's death in 1948, Wahrmann purchased his share in the partnership from the heirs (*The Palestine Post* 1948a). The ensuing catalogues appeared at large intervals as Wahrmann struggled to continue on his own, and the business was hampered by the War of Independence and by the austerity measures that followed in its wake. Upon his death in 1961, the store was run by Wahrmann's cousin, Oskar Wahrmann, who continued operating it until 1963, when its collection of rare titles was purchased by the University of California at Los Angeles (Gafni 2011).

Bookstores for Cash-Strapped Yeshiva Students

According to Shlomo Pappenheim, the Bamberger & Wahrmann bookstore was an impressive establishment with an excellent inventory of unblemished books in tight bindings. However, their price was a great disadvantage, a pleasure that "only professors" could afford. Yeshiva students with limited resources were looking for *wolwel* (cheap books in Lithuanian Yiddish), which they could find only in such secondhand stores as that of Gabriel Pappenheim, Shlomo's father, where books were stained, worn, or even missing pages (personal communication, Shlomo Pappenheim, February 4, 2012).

Gabriel Pappenheim was born into an ultra-Orthodox family in Vienna. His family moved to Munich in the late 1920s. After marrying, with several children to support, he worked as manager of a distribution agency for pointer scales of the Italian Florence Express company. Around the time of the Kristallnacht, Gabriel was interned in the Dachau concentration camp, and Shlomo and his three sisters were sent to England with the Kindertransport. Gabriel and his wife left Germany upon his release and immigrated to Palestine, settling in Jerusalem. Within a short time, he opened an antiquarian bookstore on Beit Israel Street in one of the city's Haredi neighborhoods, selling Rabbinic and Haskalah literature. The Pappenheim children arrived from England soon after the outbreak of World War II. The family continued to speak German at home and a mixture of Yiddish and Hebrew in the store. After his father's death in 1946, Shlomo took over, but a decade later closed the store to immerse himself in the social affairs of the Haredi Community.

In 1940, the M. Schreiber bookstore opened at the corner of Berman and Mea Shearim streets—one of the few pre-state bookstores still in operation. The owner, Moshe Schreiber, was born in Berdichev, Ukraine, spent his childhood in Romania, and studied at yeshivas, first in Hungary and then in Frankfurt am Main. In 1933, he started working as a kashrut supervisor on passenger ships of the Lloyd Triestino company on the Trieste–Haifa line (personal communication, Yoel Finkelstein, Schreiber's son-in-law and present manager of the store, February 2012). Its advertising pamphlet in Hebrew, richly illustrated with photographs of ships and various sites in Palestine, emphasized that Jewish passengers could order strictly kosher dishes. As luck would have it, Schreiber was assigned the task of personally supervising the kashrut of food served to Rabbi Avraham Mordekhai Alter, the rabbi of the Hasidic Gur sect, on what was to be the Marco Polo liner's final voyage to Haifa. The ship, carrying 56 passengers, mainly refugees from Germany, docked in Haifa on May 2, 1940 (*Davar* 1940). Settling in Jerusalem and engaged in the book trade, Schreiber initially visited the homes of customers peddling his merchandise in two suitcases. The store in Mea Shearim would sell new and antiquarian books: sacred texts, works of Jewish thought, and children's books, mostly historical fiction, as well as ritual objects and Bezalel artifacts. Schreiber, a familiar and respected figure among the Vizhnitz Hasidim, combined his commercial activity with charity. His transformation from a seafarer to erudite bookseller was, according to his son-in-law, the result of "learning Gemara and [hence] all things."

Young Readers: The Realm of Imagination

Viktor Avigdor Unna, born in 1904 in Mannheim, was the son of the city's chief rabbi, Yitzhak Unna. He himself was an ordained rabbi of the Orthodox synagogue in Berlin, but upon immigrating to Palestine in 1933 worked as a salesman in the Petaḥ Tiḳvah branch of the ha-Kol la-no'ar (All Youth Needs) bookstore. According to his papers at the Central Archive for the History of the Jewish People, he moved to Jerusalem in 1934, became manager of the store's branch in the Sansur Building on Ben Yehuda Street the following year, and upon acquiring ownership in 1939, transferred it to the nearby 15 King George Street. Unna, who regarded his engagement with children's literature as a vocation, explained in a note headed "Children Read Books" that, the "realm of imagination" is more developed in children than in adults. He called for the establishment of a comprehensive library for youngsters as the responsibility of the government and the municipal education department, or conceivably also as a private initiative of booksellers. Unna continued running his store until 1969, when he turned to Torah study, research, and writing. In an article on "sellers and buyers of books," written "following thirty-five years of observation," he concluded that the bookseller's profit is "partly the salary for his work and partly for his knowledge." Such a bookstore should provide school and science books, nonfiction, literature, poetry, and children's books. Unna considered it his social duty to sell secondhand textbooks as a service to impecunious families.

Clinging to the Mother Tongue

In March 1936, Joseph Melzer and Fritz Rosenthal (Schalom Ben-Chorin) inaugurated the he-'Atid bookstore at the Nordia Hotel on 33 Jaffa Road in Jerusalem (*The Palestine Post* 1936a; fig. 17). Rosenthal, a poet, writer, and philosopher, had worked in the Munich branch of the Ewer bookstore. He used to say that two rivers flowed into his heart: the Isar in his hometown Munich and the Jordan River, to which he felt attached as a Revisionist Zionist. This duality found expression in Rosenthal's pithy observation, made in his eighties: "*Aus einem Land kann man auswandern, aus der Muttersprache nicht*" (you can emigrate from a country, but not from your mother tongue).[8]

By the summer of 1937, a newspaper notice headlined "10,000 Secondhand Books" informed readers that, "Salingré & Co., owners of the secondhand bookstalls on King George and Ben Yehuda street corner, have merged with he-'Atid, and Fritz Rosenthal has left the business" (*The Palestine Post* 1937a). Ulrich Salingré, who had been a member of the Berlin newspaper *Vossische Zeitung* (Voss's Newspaper) editorial board from a young age, wooed clients into he-'Atid bookstore with evening readings, exhibitions, and lectures—notably by Arnold Zweig, who spoke before an audience of several hundred in the immigrants' house on Abyssinia (currently Ethiopia) Street on the question, "Why Do You Read Novels?" (*The Palestine Post* 1938a). A number of drawings by Else Lasker-Schüler, including the original illustrations for *Das Hebräerland*, went on display in January 1940 in the store's new premises at 2 ha-Solel Street (*The Palestine Post* 1940a). A few months later, Lasker-Schüler was invited to read excerpts from her book. Zweig and Rosenthal both continued to appear at the events organized by he-'Atid. As World War II was raging, Zweig lectured in 1940 on the Allied powers' ultimate objective, saying that "the main aim of this war must not only be the complete military defeat of Nazi Germany, but the equally complete destruction of the whole structure of Nazism in Germany as well." (*The Palestine Post* 1940b). During this time, Rosenthal also presented selections from his poetry and short stories (*The Palestine Post* 1941a). In February 1945, a month after Else Lasker-Schüler's death, he-'Atid inaugurated a memorial exhibition featuring bibliophilic editions of her books, aquarelles, and postcard messages with her singular imagery (*The Palestine Post* 1945). Additionally, Salingré used to distribute tickets to the Zion Cinema across the street, granting free entrance to films with the purchase of a

FIGURE 17. Joseph Melzer and Fritz Rosenthal's bookstore label, Jerusalem, mid-1930s?

8. Cited by Avital Ben-Chorin (April 5, 2012) in an essay written by her husband on "language as motherland," awarded first prize in a competition held by the International Association of German Speakers.

textbook at he-ʻAtid (poster of series 29, file 27). Salingré's activities included volunteering with the city civil defense unit and responsibility for public shelters. Following his untimely death in 1948, his wife Ingra Edinger and the veteran Salingré partner, Friedl Moss, managed the bookstore until well into the 1980s.

Herrmann Zvi Meyer (Herman M. Ts. Me'ir)[9] was a Berlin lawyer. In 1924, he co-founded with Abraham Horodisch the Soncino-Gesellschaft der Freunde des Jüdischen Buches (Soncino Society of the Friends of the Jewish Book) and served as founder and secretary of the association, and editor of the *Soncino Blätter* magazine. His writings evince a deep knowledge of incunabula, traditional and modern printings, and bibliographic literature, ranging from the journal *Ḳiryat Sefer* published by the Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem to catalogues of Jewish bookstores across Europe. Meyer immigrated to Palestine in 1935 with his wife and daughter and the couple's parents. Not keen on sitting for the obligatory examination in Ottoman and British law, he instead made use of his bibliophilic expertise and rented a small store at the corner of Hillel and King George streets, selling books from his private library brought from Berlin (personal communication, Aya Sapir, Meyer's daughter, March 8, 2011). Called Universiṭas, it also offered Holy Land antiquarian travel books, maps, and prints. In May 1936, Universiṭas moved to spacious premises in the imposing art deco building of the Italian insurance company Assicurazioni Generali at 7 Princess Mary Street. The store guestbook featured professional photographs showing books on the interior shelves and in the display window, as well as a reading recess with armchairs for customer comfort. Over the years, Universiṭas organized exhibitions and published carefully designed albums with reproductions of ancient maps, prints, and photographs. A notable example is *Jerusalem: The Saga of the Holy City* (1954), an oversized folio-format, numbered edition reserved for customers, with an introduction by the distinguished local archaeologist Benjamin Mazar. Each preordered copy of the album costed the then large sum of 100 Israeli lirot and was individually bound. Meyer remained the emblematic owner of the Universiṭas bookstore until the end of his life. The store was sold to Emmanuel Brown in 1971 but eventually closed.

Yitzhak Friedrich Wilhelm Marx, an insurance supervisor in Munich, was arrested in his home by the Gestapo during Kristallnacht and taken to the Dachau concentration camp. Fortunately, his two young sons were spared the sight, having been sent to relatives in England that June (personal communication, Marx's son Prof. Emanuel Marx, January 2012). Marx was released after two months, but with the outbreak of World War II was apprehended again and put in "preventive custody" in Stadelheim Prison. His wife, Rivka, contrived to acquire a *Kapitalisten-Zertifikat* (capitalist certificate) against a sum of money deposited in Palestine in their name—partly in the estate of Jonas Marx, Yitzhak's great-uncle, erstwhile head of the Shaʻare tsedeḳ hospital in

9. The initial M. stands for the first name that Meyer added eventually (Maccabi) to celebrate the Jewish leader Judas Maccabeus.

Jerusalem. By the end of 1939, Yitzhak and Rivka left Germany, boarded the Galilah passenger ship in Trieste, and debarked in Haifa. In January 1940, their sons boarded a ship in Southampton and after a hazardous voyage lasting a fortnight, they arrived safely in Haifa.

In 1942, Marx partnered with Yaacov (Jackie) Renka and Gerda Braun, owners of an alley bookstall at the corner of Jaffa Road. The Munich-born Renka was a fervent antifascist. After immigrating to Palestine at twenty-one, he went to Spain to join the International Brigades in 1937. The following year, he returned to Jerusalem and supported himself as a waiter and tiler before starting to peddle books from two suitcases and an improvised stall set up in the cafeteria of the Hebrew University Mount Scopus (Fischer 2011, 254). Marx eventually acquired Gerda Braun's share and subsequently bought out Renka. In advanced age, he found it too taxing to sell books from a stall exposed to the elements and purchased the Hildesheimer bookstore-library at the corner of King George and Hillel streets and renamed it under his own name. Nonetheless, he missed the fresh air and flow of customers stopping by his old stall, and soon closed the store. By 1949, Renka had opened a bookstore in his apartment on Arlosoroff Street in the Reḥavyah neighborhood. After returning to Munich in 1957, he ran a bookstore from his home there (Fischer 2011, 254). The same year, he presented at the Frankfurt International Book Fair, "for the first time since the rise of Hitler," one hundred Hebrew new books published by various Israeli publishers (*Sentinel* 1957). Whereas the Israeli press was apparently unaware of Renka's initiative or ignored it (conceivably because he had returned to Germany), the Chicago-based *Sentinel* referred to Renka as "a Jerusalem bookseller," and reported what was no doubt a demonstrative (re)introduction of Hebrew books in Germany.

Before leaving Israel, Renka sold his apartment and all the books in it to the Jerusalem bookseller Herbert Stein (personal communication over several years). Stein had grown up in Frankfurt, where he worked at his parents' bakery. In early 1939, after being detained by the Gestapo and spending a month in the Buchenwald concentration camp, he emigrated to Palestine. An odd jobber in Jerusalem, he sold newspapers at the corner of Schatz and King George streets, near the old Knesset building. Once he had become more financially stable, Stein moved to the nearby Keren ha-Yesod Street, opening what would become a popular secondhand and antiquarian bookstore.

Haifa, "Mother of the Stranger"

"Red Haifa" Buys at Ringart's

In 1934, a bookstore opened in the under construction, new business center on Jaffa Road in Downtown Haifa (fig. 18, next page). The owner, Berl Ringart (Reinhart in Russian), was born in Berdichev, Ukraine. His parents, Shmuel and Hannah, were Hebrew-speaking Zionists, and his

sister, Rachel, was among the founders of Kibbutz Beit Alfa. Shirking military service in the Red Army, Ringart arrived in Berlin in 1923. He found employment with the Jüdischer Verlag, where he met his future wife, Else, and the couple emigrated to Palestine in 1925. Initially Ringart worked in the Steimatzky bookstore in Haifa (see below), but later he established his own store together with Solomon (Shloyme) Monheit, whom he had acquainted at the Thirteenth Zionist Congress in Carlsbad (1923). Monheit had managed and subsequently owned the Ewer bookstore in Munich. As the friendly relations between Ringart and Monheit evolved, they considered becoming partners in Haifa.

FIGURE 18. Berl Ringart's bookstore label, Haifa, 1934

Monheit visited the city in 1932 for the first time. Returning there the following year, he rented premises for the Ringart bookstore. Having sold the Ewer branch in Munich, he emigrated to Palestine with his wife and daughter in the spring of 1934, transferring his capital assets by means of the *ha'avarah* Agreement (Transfer Agreement) in the form of books ordered by Ringart—hence the store carried Ringart's name alone.[10] The inauguration of their store was accompanied by an exhibit of etchings by artist Hermann Struck (*The Palestine Post* 1934d). Within the next several months**,** two new store branches would open, one managed by Solomon's wife Tina Monheit at Haifa's Carmel Center. The other branch at the Hadar ha-Carmel neighborhood was managed by Lise Moeller, whose father, a German Christian theologian, had encouraged her to live in Palestine and contribute to the development of the Jewish settlement there. Arriving in Haifa in 1935 after an unsuccessful attempt to join Kibbutz Ein ha-Horesh, she found employment with Ringart, working at the ha-Carmel branch until its closure in 1961. The main Ringart branch soon became an important cultural venue, organizing lectures, reading soirees, and temporary exhibitions, with an emphasis on Jewish German artists, notably Max Liebermann, Hermann Struck, and Meyer sister photographers Charlotte (Lotte) and Margaret (Gerda) (*The Palestine Post* 1936b). The display space in bustling Downtown Haifa, the British governor patronage, and advertising in the *Palestine Post* all combined to lend a cosmopolitan air to these events. Ringart was also the favored bookstore of "Red Haifa," as the largely left-leaning city was nicknamed, and by kibbutzim in the Jezreel Valley and the Galilee, based on book the labels found in their libraries. This was largely due to Ringart's identification with Mapai, while Monheit wavered between Mapai and the further leftist Mapam. Yet the Ringart bookstore success also reflected its

10. Personal communication, Ofra Peled, the Ringarts' daughter, November 17, 2010; Yoel Ringart, their grandson, November 21, 2010; and Ruth Rosenberg, the Monheits' daughter, November 2010–April 2011.

owners' East-European backgrounds and identification with Jewish and German culture. When Monheit died in 1953, his daughter Ruth quit her academic studies to work in the store. Starting in 1961, by then with eighteen employees, the store was gradually closed in order to afford severance payments. The main branch on Jaffa Road remained open until 1971. Ringart died two years later.

Herzl Street

More than twenty bookstores and three bookstalls operated on Herzl Street and adjacent streets. Among them were those of Nagler and Ringart, opened in 1933 and 1935, respectively. The bookseller Hans Werner also chose this location. Born in Posen (Poznan), Prussia, he had moved to Hamburg in 1912 and from there to Berlin (Fischer 2011, 342), where he became the manager and subsequently the proprietor of the Ewer bookstore.[11] In the summer of 1934, an advertisement in the *Palestine Post* (1934c) announced that Werner, formerly of Berlin, had just opened the Ewer bookstore at 47 Herzl Street, selling books, newspapers, postcards, stationery, and operating a lending library. Thus Ringart, Monheit, and Werner, who all shared similar working experience at either the Jüdischer Verlag or the Ewer bookstores in Germany, established careers as booksellers in Haifa. In 1935, Werner announced, now in German with a brief summary in English, that his store is moving to 67 Herzl Street and would henceforth add an antiquarian department in addition to offering books, children's literature, textbooks, stationery, and a lending library (*The Palestine Post* 1935c). He frequently published notices in the newsletter of the Irgun 'Ole Merkaz Eropah (Association of Israelis of Central European Origin), *Mitteilungsblatt der Vereinigung der Juden aus Mitteleuropa* (MB), soliciting secondhand books in German, English, French, and Hebrew. According to his announcements in English-language newspapers, the resourceful Werner also ran employment and partnership agencies and dealt in secondhand furniture. Contending with the economic slump during World War II, he moved to smaller premises on 36 Herzl Street and stopped selling books, but kept the lending library, as well as operating advertising and business agencies. Once the war ended, he served as an agent for the Julius Politzer (JUPOL) company, that organized shipments of food and knitting yarn to relatives and needy friends, primarily in Germany, Austria, and Hungary.

In the summer of 1939, another bookstore opened on Herzl Street. Like Werner, the owner Joseph Benjamin Dzialoszynski was born in Posen (Poznan) and had studied at a yeshiva in Frankfurt am Main but was also broadly educated and assembled a large library. In 1912, a newly married Dzialoszynski moved to Leipzig, where he earned a living as a cosmetics salesman. In 1938, he purchased the veteran M. W. Kaufmann bookstore from Oskar Porges, its owner since 1926 (personal communication, Avraham Dzialoszynski, Benjamin Dzialoszynski's son, Janu-

11. Biographical note published on the occasion of Werner's seventieth birthday (Berendsohn 1965).

ary 11, 2012).[12] The purchase price was low owing to the precarious position of Jewish booksellers in Germany at the time, and indeed it would be burned to the ground at the November Kristallnacht.[13] Dzialoszynski and his family consequently left Germany and arrived in Haifa in April 1939. Only three months later, he inaugurated his store, which besides books, carried Bar Mitzvah gifts and ritual objects. Due to limited means, he first shared the store space with a tobacconist at 41 Herzl Street and then co-rented premises at no. 71 with two tailor brothers, but a few months later moved again, this time to no. 65 (the address on his book labels). The store catered to a largely religious clientele, and business was brisk. Upon Dzialoszynski's death in 1960, his son-in-law took over, and the store remained open until 1986.

A familiar spot along Herzl Street was the stall of Erich Heimann, a *Yekke* known for his genial manner who sold inexpensive Penguin paperbacks alongside local and foreign newspapers. Born in Berlin, Heimann was a legal reporter for a leftist newspaper until the rise of Nazism and his immigration to Palestine. Eulogizing Heimann upon his premature death in 1942, Arnold Zweig observed that he had been widely respected for his integrity by the judiciary and police in Germany—with the latter even securing his release from arrest at the hands of the Gestapo in 1933 (*The Palestine Post* 1942).

Coexistence on Paper: Bookstores for a Mixed Population

Several booksellers in Haifa, all originating from Berlin, printed their labels in the three official languages: Hebrew, English, and Arabic. Their stores were all located in Downtown Haifa, which had a large proportion of Arab inhabitants, and that was certainly commercially motivated. However, it also reflected a certain ambience, since as a city that had never conferred historical-political rights on or prioritized any particular community, Haifa indeed was known in Arabic as *Umm al-Gharib*, "mother of the stranger" (Nathansohn and Shiblak 2011, 186). Thus, although relations between the Arab and Jewish communities in Haifa were largely based on a practical-quotidian rather than social level, the city's habitual openness to "others" contributed to less fraught encounters between the communities than elsewhere in Palestine, even during the Arab Revolt (*The Palestine Post* 1937b).

Hans Heiliger (born 1901) was another prominent bookseller in Haifa. The owner of an artbooks store in Berlin, he closed it down as the Nazis tightened their rule. Although not being a Zionist, he immigrated to Palestine in 1934 (personal communication, Doron Heiliger, Hans's son, December 7, 2010). As duly mentioned on his book labels, including in Arabic (fig. 19, next page), he started to sell scientific literature from his apartment in the Bat Galim neighborhood of Downtown Haifa in 1935 after briefly staying at Kibbutz Ein Gev on the Sea of Galilee. The first

12. On M. W. Kaufmann, and the Dzialoszynski acquisition, see Lorz 1997, 120–23.
13. He would eventually receive compensation from Germany for the destruction of the store.

to specialize in the field of scientific literature in Palestine, Heiliger soon expanded it to include medical publications, doubtless motivated by proximity to the British hospital. He determinedly cultivated an Arab clientele in Haifa as well as in neighboring Arab countries, visiting Beirut, Damascus, Bagdad, and Cairo several times a year to promote new publications and personally handle subscriptions and orders. As a *Yekke* who did not know Arabic and had a rudimentary grasp of Hebrew, it is unclear how he communicated in these Arab capitals, but according to his son Doron, he would joke that in any case, "most doctors speak German."

FIGURE 19. Hans Heiliger's bookstore label, Haifa, 1935?

That was no mere jest, as indeed—and conveniently for Heiliger—many of the physicians impelled to leave Nazi Germany had settled in Haifa, and he could locate them, for instance, through a municipal directory for German-speaking immigrants (Auerbach 1934). Although the practical information in that guide almost entirely excluded bookstores, the directory listed about a hundred physicians working for *Ḳupat Ḥolim* or privately and stated their area of specialization.

Foreseeing that the Hadassah hospital on Mount Scopus in Jerusalem (inaugurated 1938) would become the country's leading medical institution, Heiliger opened a branch at 3 Strauss Street near ha-Nevi'im Street, where several hospitals were located. After Heiliger moved to Jerusalem with his family to develop his main store there, he partnered with others. The new label he printed, now Heiliger & Co., included Arabic wording (albeit slightly misspelled). It was used for both the Haifa and Jerusalem branches, and in the additional branch opened in Tel Aviv in 1954, near the Hadassah hospital location. Before returning to Germany with his wife in 1967, Heiliger sold his share in the company to his partners, the Radzkovsky family. The Heiliger company subsequently changed owners several times before being integrated in 1990 into the Probook agency in Tel Aviv. It remains in operation to this day, specializing in medical literature and other academic disciplines.

The Steimatzky Empire in Jerusalem, Haifa, Tel Aviv, Arab Capitals, and Beyond

A Polyglot Entrepreneur

In 1925, Jerusalem and Haifa both became university cities. The festive inauguration of the Hebrew University on Mount Scopus in Jerusalem took place on April 1st of that year in the presence of several thousand local and foreign dignitaries, among them Lord Balfour and Lord Allenby. Among the thousands of guests was Yechezkel Steimatzky. Born in Kovno, Latvia (*Davar* 1983), Steimatzky moved to Berlin in 1920, where he studied law and economics and worked at the renowned Ullstein publishing house (the largest in Germany before its confiscation by the Nazis in 1934). While visiting Palestine as a tourist, he decided to remain in the country and started bookstores in Jerusalem and in Haifa, evidently realizing the potential market provided by the newly established academic institutions. In 1928, he ventured to open a branch in Beirut (*Do'ar ha-yom* 1930). Soon lending libraries were added to all Steimatzky branches: in Jerusalem (Jaffa Road, "next to the Zion Cinema"), in Haifa (Jaffa Road, "next to the post office"), and in Beirut (Boulevard France, "next to the [Thomas] Cook [travel] agency" (*Do'ar ha-yom* 1929c).

In October 1929, Steimatzky announced a vacancy for a "well-paid" position of manager of his Jerusalem store, requiring knowledge of bookkeeping, English, and German with preference for a "native of Germany" (*The Palestine Bulletin* 1929). Steimatzky presumably foresaw the Fifth Aliyah and was preparing to cater to the cultural needs of the new immigrants. Accordingly, in the spring of 1933, he inaugurated a spacious gallery adjacent to his Jerusalem store. That gallery featured a major show of oil paintings and watercolors by the local artist Tsiyonah Tag'ar (Siona Tagger, 1900–1988); it became a prominent exhibition venue in Jerusalem, along with the Bezalel and Divan galleries (Manobla 1933).

Attentive to the needs of different types of customers and identifying an interest in Arabic, Steimatzky published a wordbook of spoken Arabic for the local Jewish population, an Arabic-English dictionary for the British Mandate administration and military, and an Arabic-German dictionary for immigrants from Central Europe (personal communication, Eri Steimatzky, December 2010). He also produced guidebooks for tourists, maps of the cities of Palestine, and conversation manuals "for a shilling" in languages used in the country at the time: Hebrew, Arabic, Greek, and Turkish. A notice published by Steimatzky in the *Eretz-Israel Guide* (Jerusalem, 1935), announced its lending library services and detailed the merchandise on sale in its branches: newspapers, new and secondhand books, original pictures and reproductions, maps, postcards, children's literature, games, and pocket diaries.

Steimatzky's ambition only grew with time. In the 1940s, his company's letterhead promoted it as a "Middle Eastern Sales Chain" with the head office located in Jerusalem and branches in Haifa, Tel Aviv, Beirut, Cairo, Bagdad, Nicosia, Tehran, Istanbul, Khartoum, and Bombay. Steimatzky himself was proficient in 13 languages, including Arabic. The branches abroad were successful owing to a perspicacious selection of books offered for sale, and Steimatzky was wont to visit them and cultivate affable relations with their clientele. Steimatzky's book labels were printed in English, Hebrew, and one version also in Arabic with the Islamic name for Jerusalem, Al-Quds.

Steimatzky and Nagler

In a December 1932 press release wishing his customers a happy new year, Steimatzky advertised the Jerusalem and Beirut branches as the "Steimatzky bookstores," while designating the Haifa branch as "Steimatzky & Partners" (*The Palestine Post* 1932). The unnamed partner was Felix Nagler (born 1902), a native of Berlin, who had immigrated to Palestine as a Zionist pioneer in 1922, following in the footsteps of his elder brother, Heinz. Settling in the moshava Binyaminah, Felix toiled draining the Kabara marshes purchased by Zionist benefactor Baron Edmond James de Rothschild. Felix's parents, Ignatz and Klara-Rosa, were proprietors of the lucrative, big Café Nagler establishment in the Berlin neighborhood of Kreuzberg. Although not Zionists, they left Berlin in 1924 together with their young daughter, Sofia, to join their sons in Palestine, bringing not only their furniture but also a luxurious black Daimler automobile. The Nagler family settled in Haifa, where they purchased a plot of land adjacent to the Carmelheim neighborhood on the Carmel ridge, settled by the German Templar Colony, and the site of an obelisk commemorating the visit of Kaiser Wilhelm II to Palestine in the fall of 1898 (Zahn 1991, 91–96). The Naglers' house, designed by the renowned Jewish German architect and planner of the Haifa Technion Alexander Baerwald, was an enlarged copy of their erstwhile hunting lodge in the Black Forest. The Daimler remained in port storage for two years, until a motorway to Mount Carmel was constructed and Ignatz could drive it up to his new home. He died in 1929 at the age of 58 and was eulogized as "one of the wealthy German Jews who invested large sums in various enterprises in Erets-Yiśrael, and who built a villa for himself on [Mount] Carmel" (*Do'ar ha-yom* 1929a). Felix Nagler's inheritance enabled him to become a partner in the Haifa branch of Steimatzky. The partnership agreement, drawn up in German, was dated December 15, 1931; an appendix was added on June 20, 1931, and Nagler was appointed manager of the store (personal communication, Naomi Kaplansky, Felix Nagler's niece and daughter of Sofia, December 2010). However, the partners went separate ways in 1933, and Nagler opened his own bookstore on Jaffa Road, opposite the new business center, with a branch at the corner of Herzl and Arlosoroff streets in the Hadar ha-Carmel neighborhood, managed by his cousin, Max Nagler (*Do'ar ha-yom* 1933a). Nevertheless, when advertising his store, Nagler highlighted his previous experience at Steimatzky & Co. Indeed, inspired by Steimatzky and competing with him, he sold a variety of local and foreign newspapers, books, postcards, and maps, as well as running a lending library offering books in six languages, and organizing art exhibits in a gallery

adjacent to his main store branch (*The Palestine Post* 1933c). In 1944, he moved the main branch to 43 Jaffa Road, but eighteen months later, in the wake of his divorce and the tragic death of his daughter, he retired and withdrew from public life.

In 1964, Villa Nagler was sold to its next-door neighbor, the Pinhas Rutenberg Society. Several years later, a large, previously unnoticed safe, was discovered in the basement of the building. When opened by controlled explosion, it revealed the business contract between Felix Nagler and Yechezkel Steimatzky, as well as a pair of hunting rifles brought by Ignatz Nagler from the Black Forest, but probably never used to hunt game on Mount Carmel.

When hostilities between Jews and Arabs in Palestine escalated into war in 1948, Steimatzky lost his agencies in Arab countries and was left with the stores in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and Haifa. After his death in 1983, the company was developed as a family concern, with his son Eri serving as chief executive. The main branch in Jerusalem at 37 Jaffa Road remained active until 2008, when it was vacated owing to a downtown renovation project. That same year, the 150-store Steimatzky chain across Israel was sold to the Markstone Fund.

Epilogue

The Jewish Agency's Institute for Economic Research survived the Jewish retail trade in the years 1935–1940 and examined the development of various trades based on the number of stores in Tel Aviv (Cydorovich 1941). Intriguingly, the survey showed that during these four year, the number of stores selling books and newspapers in Tel Aviv increased from 13 to 49—a growth of almost 400 percent, whereas the total number of stores increased by no more than 40 percent.

Owners of the numerous bookstores opening in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Haifa, and other regions of the country were to a large extent Fifth Aliyah immigrants from Germany and Central Europe, who arrived between 1933 and 1939 to rebuild their life in their new home. Discreetly advertised by means of book labels, booksellers also promoted their stores with catalogues, frequent press releases and newspaper announcements, and sundry circulars. At times, they felt they needed to establish proactive contact with clients to boost sales. In a trilingual poster (Hebrew, English, and German) from the 1930s, for example, the Association of Hebrew Publishers and Booksellers in Erets Yiśrael took customers to task for importing books; it instead urged them to support local booksellers.

In accordance with financial means and individual aspirations, the scope of the bookstores ranged from humble streetcorner stalls to agencies and veritable chains extending across and even far beyond the country. Concurrently running bookstores and publishing houses was another option,

providing owners a respite from the pangs of acclimation and cultural alienation often experienced by immigrants, not least the *Yekkes* (some were unable to integrate successfully into their new surroundings). At the same time, bookstores offered publications in a variety of languages and areas of specialization, and hosted art exhibitions, lectures, and literary evenings—albeit not seldom catering mainly to a German-speaking audiences—contributed vitally to the cultural scene in pre-state Israel.

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