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State Patriotism and Jewish Nationalism in the Late Russian Empire: The Case of Vladimir Jabotinsky's Journalist Writing on The Russo–Japanese War, 1904–1905

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Abstract

In his autobiographical writings, the Russian-Jewish author and the founder of Zionist Revisionism Vladimir Jabotinsky constructed a retrospective self-image, according to which ever since becoming a Zionist early in the 20th century he exclusively clung to a Jewish national identity. This one-dimensional image was adopted by the early historiography of the Revisionist movement in Zionism. Contrary to this trend, much of the recent historiography on Jabotinsky has taken a different direction, describing him, particularly as a young man during the period of his early Zionism in Tsarist Russia, as a Russian-European cosmopolitan intellectual. Both these polarized positions are somewhat unbalanced and simplistic, whereas the figure of Jabotinsky and his worldview that emerge from reading his rich publicist writing in late Tsarist Russia present a far more complex picture of interplay between his deep ethnic-national primordial Jewish affinity, on the one hand, and an array of his different attachments to his non-Jewish surroundings including local, cultural, and civil identities, on the other. Focusing on Jabotinsky's unexplored journalist writings that address the Russo-Japanese war of 1904–1905, the article discovers a previously unknown identity pattern of the young Jabotinsky—his Russian state patriotism—and traces its relationship to his Jewish nationalism.

Keywords: Russian Zionism; Vladimir Jabotinsky; Jewish nationalism

State and Nation in the Civic Perception of Jabotinsky

In his autobiography *Story of My Life*, recently reissued in English translation and edited by Brian Horowitz and Leonid Katsis (2016), the Russian-Jewish writer and the founding father of the Jewish radical right Vladimir Jabotinsky¹ constructs a retrospective self-image for himself. According to this portrayal, ever since becoming a Zionist early in the 20th century he steadfastly clung to a Jewish national identity, altogether eschewing any gentile collective allegiances. This one-dimensional image was adopted and reinforced in the early historiography of the Revisionist movement in Zionism (Gepstein 1941; Schechtman 1956; Schechtman 1961; Katz 1993). Contrary to this trend, to a large extent thanks to Michael Stanislawski's highly important book *Zionism and the Fin-de-Siècle*, over the past decade and a half or so much of the historiography on Jabotinsky has taken a different direction. The scholars who follow this trend tend to describe him, particularly as a young man during the period of his early Zionism in Tsarist Russia, as a Russian-European cosmopolitan intellectual whose adoption of Jewish nationalism was dictated by circumstance, a fashionable esthetic choice as it were, in the spirit of the Russian avant-garde revolt against the old Russia (Stanislawski 2001, 119; Horowitz 2009, 87–89; Naor 2013; Natkovich 2015; Horowitz 2016). Both these polarized positions are somewhat unbalanced and simplistic, whereas the figure of Jabotinsky and his worldview that emerge from reading his rich publicist writing in late Tsarist

Russia present a far more complex picture. On the one hand, one cannot cast doubt on the depth of Jabotinsky's inner and almost primordial attachment to ethnic Jewish nationalism, clearly discernible in his very early writing (Jabotinsky [Altalena] 1903a). On the other hand, bereft of any conflict or clash of identities that may appear inevitable upon viewing the young Jabotinsky through the one-dimensional "statist" interpretative lens of the concept of Jewish nationalism,² the early Jabotinsky in fact clung to local, cultural, and civil identities that bore no trace of anything particularly Jewish. One of these identity patterns was a singular type of nuanced Russian patriotism that comes to the fore, inter alia, upon reading his journalism and essays of 1904–1905 that directly or indirectly address the Russo-Japanese War. This body of sources has escaped the attention of those historians and scholars of literature who have of late contributed to the reconstruction of the intellectual and public portrait of the young Jabotinsky.

It may ostensibly seem surprising to attribute patriotic emotions toward the Russian state to Jabotinsky during his Russian period, given, for example, the repeated appeals he made during the first decade of the 20th century to the Russian Jewish intelligentsia, advising it not to expend its efforts within the Russian cultural and literary arena but rather to produce literature and cultural works for the Jewish people in whatever language it chose, be this Yiddish, Hebrew, or Russian (Jabotinsky 1908; Jabotinsky 1909c). However, it is important to point out here that, according to the Jabotinskian concept of the relation between nationality and citizenship, there was no contradiction whatsoever between these two elements; namely, his call to Jewish writers to cease their effort to contribute to creating Russian *national* literature and Russian *national* culture and to focus their intellectual endeavors on producing works for the Jewish people, and his *political-civil* allegiance and attachment to the Russian Empire. For Jabotinsky studiously and clearly differentiated between the individual's ethnic-national bonds and one's civil-political attachment, seeking to link them in such a way that the one would not undermine the other. In a lengthy article he wrote in 1906 titled "Nashi zadachi" [Our Goals], which constituted a preparation of sorts for the Russian Zionists' Helsingfors Conference, he set out this process clearly and methodically:

"To be a citizen – means to recognize oneself as being part of an entire organism; this entirety is not a territory but merely a nation. Therefore, despite the common usage, one cannot be 'a citizen of one's country,' one can only be 'citizen of one's people,' and *through the people* [*cherez narod*] be a citizen of the place in which the people lives" (Jabotinsky 1906b).

This means that, on the one hand, citizenship in the (Russian) state is secondary to "citizenship" in the (Jewish) nation, since, in the spirit of Johann Gottfried Herder, the ethnic nation, in this case the Jewish *volk*, is an organic entity to which the individual is attached through a deep inner bond, while the territorial state, in which this or any other nation resides, is merely an external entity, a mechanism as it were, that liaises between organic entities, namely the ethnic nations (for Jabotinsky could not conceive of a nonethnic nation). Jabotinsky adhered to this concept, which indicates a somewhat instrumental perception of the "state," throughout his life; even as a Revisionist who envisioned a greater Israel, as we learn, for example, from his article in a Revisionist mouthpiece published in Palestine in October 1938: "The concept of the state should be an organizational rather than a territorial one. That is the democratic approach to the essence of the state" (Jabotinsky 1938). And yet, on the other hand, despite the emphasis he placed on "citizenship in the nation" vis-à-vis "citizenship in the state" within whose borders the nation resides, one should not dismiss the importance of the latter in Jabotinsky's thought; and despite the centrality he attributes to the individual's emotional ethno-national bond with the ethnic nation or people (namely the Jewish people), one should not discount the dimension of his civil and patriotic attachment and loyalty to the Russian state. This was made conditional on the Russian state allowing the Jewish people, along with the other national groupings that resided throughout the Russian Empire, to maintain its singular status through an autonomous self-government and to develop freely its culture and language and nurture its heritage. In the spirit of the organic national discourse of his time characteristic especially of the Eastern and East-Central European multiethnic space, Jabotinsky saw the ethnic nations as collective individuals—collective citizens of sorts of the

larger (imperial) state in which they resided. As long as the state respected the national right of the national collectives to self-determination (he in fact used the concept of self-determination within the empire), the collectives that comprised the state would display patriotism and loyalty toward it.

We should note that patriotism of this kind on the part of Russian Zionists was entirely compatible with their conviction that the Land of Israel was the historical homeland of the Jewish people.³ Indeed, in those early years Jabotinsky was already clearly Palestinocentric in his outlook of his Zionist activities. And yet recognition of Palestine's prime importance to Zionism as the homeland of the Jewish people in no way called into question his civil commitment to the country in which he was born and lived; just as it in no way called into question the profound patriotic commitment he felt toward Odesa, the place where he was born. Or as he wrote himself at that time, "the place where we were born is not always our homeland," (Jabotinsky [Altalena] 1903b) but "[...] you must love the place where you were born. This is a fundamental of good taste. It shapes one's personality. This is an excellent school [for you] to learn to love that which is yours, to accept all that is alien without haste, with care, while sifting [through it]" (Jabotinsky 1912). This enlightens us as to how the self-same Jabotinsky could express in the same liberal Russian daily *Odesskiye novosti* his opposition to the Uganda plan and to Russian-Jewish assimilation, and could on the next day chide Odessans who abandoned their city in favor of St. Petersburg, and within a few days pen a trenchant article addressing the destiny and future of Tsarist Russia.⁴ As we shall see, Jabotinsky wrote a number of remarkable articles of the latter type in the wake of the events of the Russo-Japanese war.

Between "Casting Iron" and "Yellow Peril": Jabotinsky's Critical Patriotism at the Beginning of the War

Jabotinsky wrote his first noteworthy article on this subject titled "Chugun" ("Casting Iron") in *Odesskiye novosti* on February 17, 1904 (Jabotinsky [Altalena] 1904a), during the very first days of the fighting, a week or so after the Japanese attack on Port Arthur, which marked the commencement of the war (Walder 1973; MacKenzie 1999; Nish 2007).⁵ Jabotinsky immediately took issue with the opinion that was rapidly gaining ground in the Russian press to the effect that the war against Japan was the opening salvo in a confrontation between two worlds, namely Europe versus Asia. The Asian world, Jabotinsky maintained, was as yet too weak to enter a contest of this kind, although he (Jabotinsky) had no doubt that one of these days—albeit not very soon—when all those lands "such as China, Tibet and Siam" had finally awakened, it would be ready to join the battle. Nevertheless, precisely because in his view this was not a matter of a clash of civilizations, Jabotinsky wondered why the Japanese had decided "stubbornly" so he thought, to go to war against the great Russian power. He had an answer to this question as follows:

I naturally do not assert that Japan could necessarily have refrained from war. [...] but I say only that Japan showed so little restraint in this case that you inadvertently ask yourself: "something is not right here. There is some evil spirit that impelled Japan, there must be some heavy external burden here that drew the Japanese, against their will or almost against their will, below the mountain and into the abyss from which they will emerge not altogether intact. What, then, is this heavy burden?" And I believe I know what this burden is, and I even know the name of the material of which it is made: "Chugun." Casting iron. Go to a plant that has been idle for many a day and ask the owner what he regrets above all else. "The machines," he will say, "what hurts the most are the machines. They cost the earth, and here they stand idle and haven't worked in weeks." Dead capital, you understand? In these wheels are buried sums of money that, had they been put to work in the world, would revitalize markets and would everywhere leave their gold dust on my son's fingers, whereas here they are left to lie without bearing fruit...we *must* exploit the metal. It *must* bear fruit. This unceasing festival of armaments has been going on for eighty years now, [as] the great powers, intent on competing with one another amid insane waste, stockpile immense and inconceivable amounts of

chugun and steel, and thereby double and quadruple battleships, underwater missiles, canons, grenades. Horrendous amounts are spent on casting iron at a time when hunger, prostitution, illiteracy still exist, there are no hospitals, no banks that offer cheap loans, no transportation routes. The Japanese have their Mikasa battleship that costs around twenty million. That is equal to five grand universities! Should the Russians deploy their grenade successfully – one explosion and five universities are gone. The peoples of the world see all this, feel the burden, grumble, but put up with it because they tell them immediately, with some logic: “we cannot be weaker than our neighbor.” [...] and the crisis begins to manifest itself [...] that the opponents of militarism foresaw a long time ago, and of which the Russian call for disarmament heroically but unavailingly warned (Jabotinsky [Altalena] 1904a).

Here a prominent element of the dimension of Russian patriotism in Jabotinsky’s conception is thus the discourse of a peace-loving Russia that ceaselessly calls for “disarmament” and the ending of the arms race, that detests war and swims against the worldwide militaristic current. Yet Jabotinsky did not serve as a mouthpiece for this official Russian discourse for long. As early as in March 1904, while reporting for his Odesan newspaper from St. Petersburg on the day-to-day life of the capital’s residents against the backdrop of the stories from the Japanese front, he notes circumspectly but unhesitatingly that in the face of war the ordinary people of the city, above all the intelligentsia, were beginning to sense the wind of change blowing from the horizon: “Perhaps now [during the war] life in Russia has reached the point at which one may sense, devoid of any rational explanation and in an altogether uncontrollable manner, that from here onward one can certainly free oneself and take a leap toward renewal” (Jabotinsky [Altalena] 1904b).

The identification, involvement and concern for the fate of Russia that Jabotinsky displayed, alongside a growing tendency toward criticism directed specifically and in particular at the nationalistic sentiment increasingly generated by the war, is clearly manifested in his journalistic writing for the St. Petersburg *Rus’*, which he began in May 1904 in parallel to his articles for *Odessliye novosti*. Thus, in his piece dated May 23, 1904, Jabotinsky addressed the issue of the “yellow peril,” namely the Asian danger, which was increasingly occupying the Russian press at the time:

The expression “the yellow peril” has only recently come into use in Russia: abroad it became a prevalent turn of phrase some time ago. And not merely “yellow” but a peril of every conceivable color [...] two great powers are joined in contest in the arena; one must learn about the arena of struggle, investigate the two contestants, the merits and blemishes of each, but this is all very difficult and complicated: and then we resort to the argument regarding the peril, be it yellow or black, and it is most useful since it allows us to consider a serious question while adopting a serious expression and with a sense of self-importance, but without any intellectual effort. [...] I once sailed on a steamship [...] along the north-eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea [...] there, as everywhere in Austria, we witnessed a desperate confusion: the Slav is about to wage war against the Italian, the Italian against the Slav, the German or the Magyar against the both, and so forth. A knot tighter than the Gordian Knot, since one cannot even cut it but only undo it gently and painstakingly, displaying mutual respect and awareness of the concrete conditions of the place. My neighbor, the Italian, apparently was very keen to sleep given the lateness of the hour, and was therefore unable to grapple with the problem at that moment [...] and he thus merely yawned and said: “Pericolo slavo!” “What, what?” [I asked]. “The Slav peril. All this—the Slav peril.” “Where, when, which?” “Oh, all these Austrian irregularities. The Slavs are quarreling terribly: Russians, Poles, Czechs, Ruthenes, Slovaks, Slovenes, Croats [...] it’s too much.” “And why do they bother you?” “Of course. After all, they are seeking world domination. They want to conquer Europe and get rid of European culture. They multiply rapidly and are getting ever stronger while at the same time they practice a cunning policy, in a cunning Asian way, a pan-Slavic policy. Look, they have recently built [in our country] a Croatian high-school. What is this? It’s clear: pan-Slavism. A conspiracy. The invasion of the barbarians. It’s no laughing matter. The Slav peril is a

tremendous issue...” Many years have gone by since that conversation, but it was etched deep in my memory and seems to have determined forever the way I look at all kinds of colorful perils. [...] all this is nonsense, no more. [Regarding the yellow peril, after all] only when it is trumpeted by [certain elements] does it sound more sensible, like an expression of genuine horror – when it’s uttered by the Western European industrialist. After all, he provides the yellow race with trousers. And the moment the yellow race learns to manufacture its trousers, and when all peace-seeking people rejoice in its success [...] that’s when this Western European will go and pawn his trousers, and they may not even accept them there. He is well aware of this and understands, but it makes no sense for us Russians to accept and internalize his understanding of “the yellow peril.” (Jabotinsky 1904c)

We find here once again a profound identification with the Russian peace discourse, as Jabotinsky reinforces the dichotomy between Asian Russia with its ample emotion and empathy with the “other,” a Russia that disdains profit and capitalism and cold rationalism; and the hypocritical and exploitative capitalist West. Yet at the same time we find here a witty and trenchant critique of the racist Russian discourse regarding the Japanese “yellow peril,” as, seeking to convince his readers, Jabotinsky invites them to feel the sting of the self same discourse through the parable of Slavophobia in Habsburg Austria. Above all else, however, it is instructive to observe how Jabotinsky, who was at the same time penning Zionist articles in both the Jewish and non-Jewish press, does not hesitate to display his unreserved identification with the national Russian collective, explicitly saying “we Russians” as he addresses the imagined Western European industrialist who warns of “the yellow peril.” One should beware of trying too hard here to separate components of a more authentic (Jewish) identity from those of a less authentic (Russian) identity.⁶ As pointed out earlier, Jabotinsky identified himself as a member of the ethnic Jewish nation, and at the same time as a member of the Russian civil homeland, which he imagined at the time becoming a viable category in the foreseeable future, especially since in Russian language and discourse one can quite easily speak of “Russianness” not only as an [ethnic] nationality (“russkii”), but also as a political or cultural affiliation (“rossiiskii”) (Stanislowski 2001, 124).

“Civil Inequality is a Disgrace to the State”: The Russo-Japanese War, the Tsarist State, and the “Jewish Question”

This tone of what may be termed as critical patriotism of sorts, that, out of concern for Russia’s character, rejects the trend toward unbridled nationalism toward “Asians” that became rampant during the war in the Russian monarchist-leaning press, found prominent and particularly sharp expression in a series of articles Jabotinsky wrote in September 1904, in which he entered into a debate with a conservative Russian economist Pyotr P. Migulin (1870–1948),⁷ who in his articles encouraged Russia to continue, despite the series of defeats it had suffered, its colonialist adventure in the Far East. Migulin asserted, *inter alia*, that “our people, with its voracious desire for land, will readily appreciate the conquest of areas [...] such as Manchuria and Mongolia,” (Jabotinsky 1904d) and that following the hoped for Russian gain of control it should put into place in the occupied areas a regime that resembled the British colonial government in India. Or in Migulin’s own words, “we should not merge with the autochthonous population of the colonies, should not allow it the same rights as those enjoyed by the metropolitan population, [...] we must prevent the natives attaining political and sometimes also civil rights (particularly with regard to freedom of movement)” (Jabotinsky 1904d). Jabotinsky responded to these aspirations of conquest in a sardonic and sarcastic tone:

And so, the matter is exceedingly simple: conquer the lands and erect a pale of settlement for their residents. That’s not new: this experiment has been conducted on the Jews, and as we know produced conclusive results [...] every schoolbook clearly states what benefit is to be gained from territories [...] populated by millions of people disgruntled at their inequality with the metropolitan population. (Jabotinsky 1904d)

And in the following article in the series he continued thus:

If the state has money, it should first of all direct it [not toward territorial conquests but rather] to a single thing, without which one cannot take even one step forward [namely] free compulsory elementary education in a well constructed school with good heating, under the instruction of a teacher who makes a respectable living. For even if you wish to fight, remember (and there is ample proof of this!) that the winner is always he who has more schoolteachers. Whatever you plan to promote—wars of conquest, building up industry, or creating a worldwide merchant navy—you have to begin with the schoolteacher. [...] And the schools in Russia require resources because the state is so enormous and we cannot leave even one corner unenlightened. That is where you should put your money first of all Prof. Migulin, and then see how much is left. And if any remains, then you may build roads and railways across the country, but not in order then to wring from the residents all their wages for external expansion but to revive and enrich those same residents. (Jabotinsky 1904e)

The painful issue of repression of the Jews in Tsarist Russia, gently alluded to above in the ironic parallel that Jabotinsky drew between the pale of settlement and Migulin's colonialist plans, is addressed more extensively and trenchantly in his later article on the Russo-Japanese topic, which appeared in the revolutionary St. Petersburg newspaper *Molva* on December 31, 1905, two months after the end of the war and against the backdrop of the first Russian revolution, which broke out in no small measure as a consequence of Russia's defeat in that war. In this article Jabotinsky responded to an anti-Semitic publication by the journalist Martynov, who berated Russia's Jews for having for the most part failed to contribute to the Russian military effort against the Japanese. Indeed, Jabotinsky concurred, with few exceptions Russian Jews had not gone out of their way to defend the Russian state, but had preferred to emigrate, to desert from the army at every opportunity, or to fall prisoner to the Japanese. In other words, a large majority of them, Jabotinsky admitted, had not been "good soldiers." This, he asserted, should not surprise one at all. In making this statement, Jabotinsky, a declared Jewish nationalist, fully concurred with the assertions of the author of the anti-Semitic article. On the contrary, it would have been highly surprising, Jabotinsky maintained, had things been otherwise; had the Jews surged en masse to the Japanese front. His dispute with Martynov, he made clear, was not about the description of the phenomenon, but about its explanation. Martynov asserted that the Jews were no war heroes because most of them are cowards. This conclusion Jabotinsky rejected out of hand; not in disgust or from a sense of insult, but wittily and disparagingly:

The assertion of Jewish cowardice sounds nowadays so strange that it cannot hurt Jewish self pride. It could, perhaps, have insulted me three years ago, but now I can quite calmly shrug my shoulders in response. Mr. Martynov knows neither what Jewish self defense means nor who the Jewish revolutionaries are. But I know this well and I cannot—pray excuse me Mr. Martynov—seriously argue about whether the Jew is courageous or cowardly when the need arises to sacrifice his life for his people and his flag [...] Mr. Martynov has observed the Jews in Manchuria. This is not the place for surveillance [of Jewish heroism]. He should have done this in Lithuania. (Jabotinsky 1905)

We may here ask what happened in Lithuania that attested, according to Jabotinsky, to Jewish heroism. Where and in which circumstances was the Jew living in the pale of settlement obliged to sacrifice himself "for his people and for his flag," in his words? Was he merely referring to the actions of the Jewish self defense organization during the pogrom of the fall of 1905, which broke out in the midst of the events of the revolution (Weinberg 1987; Levin 2011) (something that Jabotinsky had indeed mentioned)? Certainly not. The concrete example he cited in the article in fact refers to the case of a Jewish revolutionary who fearlessly raised the red flag during the revolution, and was consequently severely beaten by the police and imprisoned. It thus transpires

that in 1905 Jabotinsky regarded the red flag of the revolution to be the common flag of the Russian democratic state (in the making, so he hoped), and of the Jewish people in Russia. And this, he believed, could be divined precisely from the Jews' unwillingness to serve on the front:

This matter is linked to the Jewish people's ingrained and implacable hatred of the illegal and shameless regime that is responsible for this war and that prosecuted it. The [progressive] Russian press has conclusively proved that it was not Russia that conducted this war, nor the Russian people, but the [Tsarist] government acting contrary to Russia's interest and wishes. The Jews could not but know this. There was not a single water-provider in the pale of settlement who failed to understand that to go to war meant to defend not Russia but the regime that had just now written the black pages of Jewish history of [the pogroms at] Kishinev and Gomel. [...] The Jews were clearly confronted with the following formula: to go off to war – meant mending the chains of enslavement. This was something that a people in whose heart the last spark of national consciousness had not yet been extinguished could not and ought not have done. [...] Who said and who called to account, that the Jews did not do their duty to Russia. We must first of all establish precisely what this duty to the real Russia is: to take part in the battle of Liaoyang, or to take part in the revolutionary liberation movement? This is the only way to pose the question and the answer is clear. Indeed, the Jewish people did not wish to spill the blood of its sons in Manchuria, and even if its blood was spilled there, it was spilled unwillingly. But the Jewish people willingly spilled its blood freely in places where it did Russia more good and brought it greater honor. (Jabotinsky 1905)

The Jewish people's patriotic civil duty to Russia, which, he believed, went hand in hand with Jewish national interests, is thus, according to Jabotinsky, discharged in the arena of the Russian revolution and in the struggle against the subjugation of the Russian people and the other peoples of the Russian state by the tsars. Yet it transpires that Jabotinsky, moreover, was calling into question what he considered the distorted perception that held that the Jews, or Russian citizens of any nationality, had duties toward the state and that in return for discharging them the state would grant them rights:

Human rights and civil rights belong to the human and to the citizen because he is a human and a citizen. This is an axiom and there can be no wrangling or accounting about it [...] it is unbecoming both to Russia and to the Jewish people to regard civil rights as the object of some bargaining, as a reward for service to the homeland. This is unbecoming to Russia—to the genuine popular Russia—because civil inequality is itself a disgrace to the state. It is unbecoming to the Jewish people because a living people must live and struggle for itself and for its freedom, and not to placate someone or to gain something from him. (Jabotinsky 1905)⁸

Concluding Remarks

To sum up, against the backdrop of the Russo-Japanese war and in direct reference to it, Jabotinsky honed his concept of a two-dimensional civil-national identity, whose components complemented each other and were free of all contradiction: Russian civil patriotism on the one hand, and on the other, Jewish ethno-national identity. As the dimensions of the Russian military fiasco became ever clearer, and brighter did the fire of the first Russian revolution burn, so did Jabotinsky's Russian patriotism adopt an increasingly critical tone toward the Tsarist regime. In connection to this critical patriotism, he reaffirmed his profound civil commitment to the future of egalitarian Russia to be established, so he hoped, after the revolution, and revalidated his commitment to the particular interests of the Jewish people in Russia, which were, according to his conception, identical to the greater Russian interest of all the residents and peoples of the empire who wished to see, to Jabotinsky, a change in the character of the autocratic regime. Jabotinsky's dual commitment to "the

popular and genuine Russia” and to “the living Jewish people” rested upon a vision of an egalitarian multinational democratic state that recognizes the citizen’s individual civil rights as well as his particular collective national rights all bundled into a single package within a state of all its citizens and all its national groupings.

The combination of loyalty toward the empire and an ethno-national particular identity, which was fairly prevalent among Zionists in the multinational empires of the late long 19th century,⁹ was peculiar neither to Jabotinsky nor to Jewish nationalism. In fact, it formed a core element in the political-national worldviews of the spokespersons of most of the nondominant nationalities (to borrow the definition proposed by the Czech historian of nationalism Miroslav Hroch [1985]) in the Habsburg Monarchy, in the Ottoman Empire, and in Tsarist Russia. As demonstrated in a series of historical studies conducted in recent decades that reexamined the relation between imperial ties and national demands in the fin-de-siècle tri-imperial sphere,¹⁰ most of the national movements that operated within these empires did not conceive of realizing self determination by dismantling them, but advocated a more flexible type of territorial self rule as part of their vision of reorganization of the empires on a multinational federative basis. This was no mere lip service on their part for fear of the imperial ruler while hoping in their heart of hearts to accumulate sufficient power in order to secede from the empire, a historiographical position rather popular among those western historians who consciously or unconsciously retroactively justified the Versailles arrangements and the division of these empires into nation states.¹¹ Rather, they believed that the combination between an expansive imperial sphere and territorial national autonomy would best serve the overall economic, cultural, and political interests of their nations. Jabotinsky, of course, harbored no territorial aspirations within Tsarist Russia, but focused them on the Ottoman space. Just a few years after the Russo-Japanese War, with the revolution of the Young Turks, in a series of articles in the Russian and the Jewish-Russian press he presented a rather optimistic view of the Ottoman Empire as a *Nationalitaetenstaat* in the making, within which the Jews could attain territorial autonomy in Palestine (Jabotinsky 1909a; Jabotinsky 1909b; Jabotinsky 1910). Yet Jabotinsky had already formulated the dual model of imperial patriotism and Jewish nationalism in the Russian context, which had equipped him with the fundamental geopolitical concepts that helped him shortly thereafter to imagine the realization of territorial self-determination by the Jews of Palestine within the “Young Turkish” multinational democratic state he hoped (vainly) would emerge. At the same time, he kept on articulating his stance as a critical patriot of the Russian state, challenging its autocratic regime through the discourse of Jewish autonomist nationality claims within an imagined geopolitical space of the multinational Russian federation he believed would be reestablished in the future (Jabotinsky 1906a).

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Notes

- 1 On Jabotinsky as the founder of the Zionist Right see Avineri 1981, 159–186; Shavit 1988; Kaplan 2005, 20–30. On Jabotinsky as a Russian-Jewish writer see Nakhimovsky 1992, 62–69; Miron, 2011; Natkovich 2015.
- 2 For the criticism of the nation-statist interpretative paradigm of the history of earlier Jewish nationalism and Zionism, which tends to view the political dimension of Zionism as deterministically bound up to the goal of the nation-state, see Myers 2008; Pianko 2010; Loeffler 2010.
- 3 For more on the Russian Zionists’ anti-essentialist conceptualization of the Jewish nation as an inclusive social entity in the early 20th century see Tsurumi 2010, 537–539.

- 4 To be sure, such a twofold affinity to Palestine on the one hand, and to the present “Diasporic” homeland on the other, was hardly unique to Jabotinsky’s civil-national outlook. In particular, one can compare the case of young Jabotinsky to those later American Jewish thinkers, such as Simon Rawidowicz, Mordecai Kaplan, Horace Kallen, Israel Friedlander, and Oscar Janowsky, who developed broad models of nationhood and political sovereignty in order to balance dual commitments to American civic nationalism and Zionism. See Myers 2008; Pianko 2008; Pianko 2010; Loeffler 2010.
- 5 See Walder 1973; MacKenzie 1999; Nish 2007.
- 6 For a thorough criticism of the separation between “authentic” and “external” elements of Jews’ identities see Funkenstein 1995.
- 7 At the beginning of 20th century, Pyotr Petrovich Migulin was a professor of financial law at the University of Kharkiv, and the editor-in-chief of *Ekonomist Rossii* (“Russia’s economist”), a central economic periodical in the Russian Empire. See Kiryanov 2006, 146.
- 8 The same sense of civic patriotism coupled with the deep criticism of the Tsarist regime is evident from Jabotinsky’s position with the outbreak of the WWI, as he had recorded it in his autobiography: [F]rom the first moment [of the war, D.S.], with all my soul, I hoped and prayed for Russia’s defeat. [...] I doubt I need to swear here that it was not because I hated my homeland that I wished the destruction of her army: I thought that if Russia would be beaten on the battlefield, she would gain inner freedom. But if she were to win, the regime of slavery would win” (Horowitz and Katsis 2016, 107–108).
- 9 Compare with Shumsky 2011.
- 10 See Rudnytzky 1982, 253; Wolff 2010, 210–215; Hassassian 1983, 10; Biondich 2000, 121; Reifowitz 2003; Sked 1989; Deák 1992, 239; Deák 1997; Judson 2006, 7–8; Hagen 1997, 59, 68; Keyder 1997; Judson 2016.
- 11 See R. W. Seton-Watson 1917; Pipes 1964; Taylor 1965; R. W. Seton-Watson 1969; Hugh Seton-Watson 1977; Ash 1989. It is interesting to note that the first of these books (R.W. Seton-Watson 1917), was hastily sent to the publisher by the author before he had completed it, in the hopes that the book’s publication “will help to serve the great purpose of the War.” While this work’s scholarly value falls far short of its polemical force, there is no doubt that Seton-Watson’s deterministic approach toward the fall of the Habsburg, the Romanov, and the Ottoman Empires exerted a strong influence on generations of western historians. On this issue, see Karpát 2002, 437, n. 6.

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