Lady Judith Montefiore, wife of noted Victorian philanthropist Sir Moses Montefiore and well-known humanitarian in her own right, travelled with her husband to Palestine several times during the mid-nineteenth century. Only two of Montefiore’s unpublished diaries documenting her travels and experiences in Palestine survive: those from her first and second trips through the Levant. Montefiore’s travel journals differ significantly from the accounts of British Christians engaging in Holy Land tourism, which often document the evangelizing efforts of Christian missionaries pursuing the conversion of Jews living in Palestine. Montefiore, an Anglo-Jewish woman, structures her first travel journal, according to Judith Page, “as a Jewish mythical narrative of exile and return” (106). While her first journal emulates the idealism of the Jewish Exodus from Egypt, Montefiore’s record of her second trip to Palestine takes on a decidedly less romantic tone. *Notes from a Private Journal of a Visit to Egypt and Palestine, by Way of Italy and the Mediterranean* (1844) enumerates more practically Moses and Judith’s plans to found Jewish agricultural settlements outside the walls of the Old City of Jerusalem and elsewhere in the biblical land of Israel.

Because of its focus on settlement, Montefiore’s diary from her 1838 visit to Palestine complicates the nineteenth-century British colonialist paradigm. As might be expected of an upper-class English woman, Montefiore views from an Orientalist perspective her Arab travelling companions and Muslim visitors, who range from local women to regional governors. While she respects Ottoman officials who encourage Jewish settlements, Montefiore casts
aspersion on local Muslims, whom she depicts as frustrating the couple’s territorial designs. But Montefiore’s Jewishness destabilizes the Orientalist binary. Although she portrays indigenous Jews as exotic, she identifies with oppressed Jewish communities, whether in European ghettos or under Ottoman control in Palestine. Edward Said acknowledges the similarities between anti-Semitism and Western Orientalism, that “strange, secret sharer of Western anti-Semitism,” observing that the resemblance between anti-Semitism and the “Islamic branch, orientalism . . . is a historical, cultural, and political truth” (92). However, Bryan Cheyette sees the history of anti-Semitism as “marginalised or excluded within post-colonial theory” (106). And as Ivan Davidson Kalmar and Derek J. Penslar point out, critiques of the concept of Orientalism overwhelmingly treat the Jewish component as ancillary to the primary focus on Arab-Islamic peoples and their culture.

Looking at Montefiore’s travel narrative, I elucidate Kalmar and Penslar’s claim that “central to all debate on orientalism and the Jews is that, historically, Jews have been seen in the Western world variably and often concurrently as occidental and oriental” (xiii). As a Western Ashkenazi Jew traveling to Palestine with the intent of establishing Jewish settlements in the land for oppressed Jewish peoples, and in so doing, reaffirming her belief in Jewish claims to the land, Montefiore’s journal attests to the complicating role of the Jew in Orientalist discourse. Although the oppression of European Jews serves as the catalyst for the Montefiores’ plan to build Jewish agricultural settlements in Palestine, her consciousness of Jews as historical targets of European imperialism only inconsistently informs her treatment of Palestine’s Muslim inhabitants. For Montefiore, the Levantine landscape recalls the biblical scenes of her imagination, but she also sees possibilities for a constructive plan for contemporary renewal as integral to Jewish continuity in the land of Israel. Despite retaining the Orientalist binary with
respect to Arab inhabitants, Montefiore deconstructs the typical orientalist representation of Jews by deemphasizing Arab claims to the land and forging connections between Jews of Europe and Palestine to highlight a shared Jewish inheritance in the land.

Said’s focus on the Arab-Islamic world provides a useful methodology by which I examine Montefiore’s interactions with Palestine’s Muslim communities. However, more recent scholarship suggests a reconceptualization of Orientalism both to account for discourse focused on other Oriental peoples and to assess the role of marginal figures in the production of Orientalist discourse. Montefiore’s journal undermines what Reina Lewis describes as the “homogenizing tendencies of twentieth-century critiques of Orientalism” (7), largely resulting from Montefiore’s interstitial position as an Anglo-Jewish woman in Victorian Palestine.

In their introduction to the volume Orientalism and the Jews, Kalmar and Penslar argue that Europe developed Orientalist ideas of the Muslim world in conjunction with Western perceptions of the Jewish people (xiii). Rather than positioning Jews as producers of Orientalist discourse, Kalmar and Penslar insist that “in the nineteenth century the Jews were much more the targets than the perpetrators of orientalism” (xvi). They observe similar impulses in “both the Western quest to control foreign lands and the move to exclude Jews from Western society” (xxiii), effectively linking imperialist and anti-Semitic ideologies. Gil Z. Hochberg views the language of “the so-called Jewish question . . . in terms borrowed directly from the orientalist discourse, the same discourse through which Europe justified its colonial domination over the Orient” (8). Racially inferior and religiously distinct, Jews functioned as a colonized population within the borders of Christian Europe.

Scholars interested in studying the oppression of various subordinate groups within a postcolonial framework challenge Said’s homogenous critique of Orientalist discourse, which
assumes that subordinate groups do not also discriminate against members of their own group on account of socio-economic or racial status. Aziza Khazzoom points out that “the focus of post-colonial scholarship has been on the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized, not on the relationship between different groups of stigmatized others” (485) and many recent critical interpretations navigate these complicated matrices. For example, Lewis explores Victorian women writers’ part in Orientalist cultural production. Lewis argues that “women’s varied involvement in the cultures of imperialism repositions Orientalism as a diverse field of activity and representation,” exposing Orientalism as “a flexible and heterogeneous discourse that function[s] through contradiction rather than despite it, in which women’s cultural activities [are] coded as one among a number of competing discourses” (9). Montefiore, the first Anglo-Jewish woman to document her extensive travels, considerably influenced mid-Victorian ideas about Palestine, especially for England’s Jewish community.

While Lewis points to women writers as producers of imperialist images, Laurel Plapp, Yaron Peleg, and John M. Efron call attention to Jewish constructions of Orientalist discourse. Plapp’s critique of Said’s notion of a monolithic Orientalism is bolstered by her view of “diversified ‘orientalisms’” at work in colonialist writings. Plapp argues that “European-Jewish writing is multifaceted and self-contradictory, including not only the construction of the Other for purposes of domination, but also approaches to the Other that are tolerant and self-critical,” a necessary revision of Kalmar and Penslar’s argument that the Jew functioned primarily as the object of European Orientalism (3-4). Both Plapp and Efron invoke the term “Jewish orientalisms” in their analyses of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Jewish writing to account for the ways it directed Orientalist discourse at Mizrahi Jews and Arab Muslims. Peleg traces the increasing integration of essential Western Orientalist images, including “the desert environment
as a romanticized wilderness, the Bedouin as a noble savage, and the East as a locus of exotic eroticism,” into fin de siècle Zionist writings (16).

These critical perspectives present nineteenth-century Jewish Orientalism as distinct from Occidental Christian Orientalist discourse. Efron and Plapp remind us of two important points: first, Efron explains that “given the place Jews occupied in European society, especially vis-à-vis Christianity, Jewish orientalists approached orientalism with a different set of assumptions and prejudices than Gentile orientalists” (80-1); and second, Plapp claims “recognizing that representations of the Orient may be motivated by other interests besides the celebration of successful imperialist ventures makes it possible to explore the greater diversity and multiplicity of European texts on the Orient” (6). Although Plapp and Peleg focus on twentieth-century Zionist writings, and German-Jewish orientalists in Efron’s case, I draw on their respective conceptualizations of the complexities of Jewish Orientalism to locate its beginnings in Montefiore’s earlier text. I foreground the tension in Montefiore’s text by investigating the relationship between Jews, Orientalist rhetoric, and Palestine. Montefiore’s Orientalist discourse directed at Arab Muslims explicitly draws from anti-Semitic language; moreover, she forges connections between work on behalf of Jewish emancipation in Europe and the couple’s Jewish territorial activity in Victorian Palestine.

Born Judith Barent-Cohen in late eighteenth-century London, Montefiore was the daughter of a wealthy Ashkenazi merchant. Levi Barent-Cohen and his wife Lydia, who emigrated from Holland in 1773, distinguished their family not only amongst London’s merchant class, but also its Jewish community. Their three daughters, Hannah, Judith, and Jessie, each married into London’s leading Jewish families. Abigail Green underscores the Montefiores’ elite status amongst London’s Anglo-Jewish circles, pointing to their advantageous contact with
Nathan Mayer Rothschild, the successful financier and Judith’s brother-in-law, and “family ties to both sides of the Mocatta-Goldsmid business nexus.” According to Sonia Lipman, Judith’s marriage to Moses, who received a baronetcy in 1846, introduced the “First Lady of Anglo Jewry” into English aristocratic society (296). By their 1838 trip, Moses had served as Sheriff of London and had been knighted by Queen Victoria, acclaim which, along with their wealth, afforded the couple extensive privileges during their travels.

Throughout Notes from a Journal, Montefiore contrasts Arab Muslims with both her own privileged position as an Englishwoman and the more “civilized” local Jewish population, revealing the first of many tensions apparent in her writing. Montefiore emphasizes human need for a universal culture, and she attempts to hasten such globalization by learning foreign languages. “Delightful intercourse with different nations,” she claims, is “favourable to the best interests of the world” (55). When traveling east through Europe, Montefiore observes, with perceptible dismay, the “various intonations and forms of expression which fall upon the ear of the stranger” (15). Montefiore often regrets foreignness, either her own or that of the other, and looks to “the times when one religion, one language, and one heart shall exist among the nations on the world!” (15). Colonialist rhetoric, betrayed at the outset of Montefiore’s journal when she communicates her desire for the dismantling of all religious, cultural, and linguistic distinction among nations, eventually complicates her beliefs about the importance of organizing Palestine’s already extant and distinctive Jewish communities.

Under the tutelage of their impromptu travel companion Dr. Louis Loewe, a German-Jewish orientalist and theologian, Montefiore studied Turkish and Arabic in order to communicate with locals during their journey. The couple met Loewe by chance in Rome on his return to Europe from Palestine, where he had been attacked and robbed by Bedouins, and
induced their friend to accompany them on their travels. According to her journal, Montefiore proves an enthusiastic pupil, and she expresses pride at her ability to speak “two or three words” of Arabic to an Egyptian gentleman, who, she claims, “seemed as astonished as my instructor was pleased” (202). Montefiore displays pleasure at her husband’s approbation, and delights in surprising their Egyptian guides upon “addressing them in Arabic” (206). However, Montefiore frequently depicts foreign languages as tonally harsh, even violent, against which she contrasts “the pleasant sounds of [her] own language” (182). Although Montefiore speaks in Arabic to more genteel Arabs, she is unable to distinguish “the vociferations and unintelligible jargon” of Alexandria’s Arab peasantry (206). Here, Montefiore is either unable or unwilling to extend her beliefs about a world without borders to groups of subaltern Arabs.

Montefiore weaves her treatment of languages into her larger mythic imaginings of romantic Arabia. Upon arriving in Beirut, she marks “several groups of Arabs seated on the ground,” whose “picturesque costume,” along with “date trees, and minarets, [and] the strange sound of the language,” remind her of the “Thousand and One Nights” (212). As Peleg notes, the publication of *Thousand and One Nights*, or *Tales of the Arabian Nights*, in mid-eighteenth century France popularized such images of the Orient in Europe (14). Peleg argues that “despite their attempts to describe the Muslim world faithfully, most European travelers to the lands of the Ottoman Empire were deeply affected by their prior perception of those regions as exotic locations of mystery and passion” (15). Indeed, Montefiore’s account of her time in the Near East conforms to the fraught romanticization of the Orient described by Peleg; Arabs are not only picturesque, harmonious, native, but also untamed, violent, foreign. *Notes from a Journal* demonstrates tension in Montefiore’s illustrations of Arab Muslim figures as natural, and therefore fixed, parts of the landscape and her conception of Arab and Near Eastern peoples as
inherently nomadic. Montefiore’s Orientalism formulates Arabs as the natural subjects of legend, unstable figures with an untenable past relationship to the land of Israel.

Moreover, Montefiore constructs a specifically Islamic other that encompasses her Arab travelling companions, Ottoman officials, and locals. She frequently draws on popular stereotypes, especially that of “Eastern severity.” For example, one night Montefiore is alarmed by a noise, and assumes the host is, “with Turkish despotism, admonishing either his wives or children” (225). However, a series of visits from Muslims occupying various positions in the Islamic world attenuate, to a certain extent, her preconceptions. Lewis argues that “women’s differential, gendered access to the positionalities of imperial discourse produced a gaze on the Orient and the Orientalized ‘other’ that registered difference less pejoratively and less absolutely than was implied by Said’s original formulation” (4). Lewis’s claim is certainly borne out by Montefiore’s interactions with non-Jewish locals, and her journal displays important nuances in her perceptions of Oriental peoples.

Montefiore understands gender distinction firmly within the Victorian framework of separate spheres. Upon receiving the wives of the governor of Tiberias, Montefiore immediately registers not only their lavish Oriental dress and Eastern manners, but also the multiplicity of women married to the governor. The Muslim women refuse to sit near either Moses or Loewe, and Montefiore declines their invitation to join them at a public bath, likely in accordance with their respective cultural customs, but the women all admire one another’s dress and appearance. But more importantly, Montefiore discovers their mutual interest in education and valuation of domestic harmony, two values stressed in Judith’s own Anglo-Jewish background. The women inform her that “the governor was about to marry another lady who could read, and would therefore be able to teach them,” an idea that, Montefiore remarks, “appeared to afford them no
small satisfaction” (252). Their pleasure at the prospect of learning to read and the addition of a fourth wife to share in their domesticity confirms for Montefiore “that a plurality of wives was agreeable to Turkish ladies,” a belief she had not previously shared (252-53). Despite their need for Loewe’s translations, the women find common ground in their mutual valuation of domestic interests; consequently, Montefiore is less critical of Islamic practices and women’s status in Islam than colonial administrators like Sir William Muir, for instance.

The Muslim governor of Safed visits the couple, and Judith happily reports that Abd-el-Khalim endorses their plan to establish Jewish agricultural settlements within his jurisdiction. Orientalizing the other is reciprocal, judging from Montefiore’s record of this particular instance. Khalim likens Montefiore herself to perhaps the most well-known Oriental heroine of the Bible. “As Queen Esther had delivered her people from destruction,” the governor declares, “so the Hebrews of the present day, suffering in this land under such accumulated distresses, [will] be freed by [your] efforts” (234). When recalling a visit from a local Muslim man, Montefiore thankfully notes that Mustafa Makhmood alleviated some of the many sufferings endured by Safed’s Jewish community, including a devastating earthquake and brutal attacks by the Druze. Makhmood, despite his limited means, demands no restitution, which Montefiore interprets as an especially English act of good will, and she reflects that “[his] benevolent heart has the best of all rewards in its own feelings” (235). These examples demonstrate how Montefiore’s Orientalist discourse works within what Lewis terms “a grid of differences” that foregrounds gender as well as “differentiations of class, religion and nation” (4).

I credit Montefiore for her attempts to empathize with different Arab and Islamic figures, an important moment in Jewish/Muslim relations, especially given her class and nationality. And from these examples, I concur with Lewis’s theory that women’s Orientalist writings deal less
pejoratively with the Orient than the works of Anglo-Christian imperialist men. But the nuance to Montefiore’s portrayal of Oriental peoples often serves to advance and reify her own Anglo-centric world view. Montefiore relates to Muslim women insofar as they share values with especial importance to British Victorians, and throughout Notes from a Journal, she speaks of Ottoman officials as unforgivably corrupt unless they strike her as somewhat English in feeling. Moreover, Montefiore praises those Muslims who support or assist the couple’s interest in the land, especially as their agricultural interest in Palestine transforms over the course of her journal into a uniquely Jewish sacred and ancestral relationship with the land of Israel.

Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Jew appeared as a principal figure in English Orientalist discourse. Images of the Jew-as-Oriental pervaded nineteenth-century British cultural imagination through works by popular authors, such as Maria Edgeworth’s Harrington (1817), Walter Scott’s Ivanhoe (1820), Charles Dickens’s Oliver Twist (1837) and Our Mutual Friend (1865), and perhaps most notably, George Eliot’s proto-Zionist tale of Jewish return to the Orient, Daniel Deronda (1876). These texts draw on what Sander Gilman identifies as “the centuries-old trope of the Jew from Western literature, where the character of the Jew has often expressed essential, permanent Difference” (201). Additionally, the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British periodical press categorized Jews according to Homi Bhabha’s dictum, “almost the same, but not quite” (122). Often, periodicals and pamphlets openly supported political efforts that systematically excluded Jews from occupying positions of power within British governance, like the repeal of the Jewish Naturalization Act (1753) and opposition to nineteenth-century Jewish relief acts. Victorian print culture helped to fix the idea of the Jewish people as culturally, linguistically, and racially incapable of integrating into normative British society.
One rainy morning in Belgium, Montefiore reads Edward Bulwer-Lytton’s *Leila: or, the Siege of Granada* (1838). Bulwer-Lytton’s historical romance culminates in the conversion of the titular Jewish heroine to Catholicism and the murder of Leila by her double-dealing and fanatical father. Montefiore criticizes Bulwer-Lytton for relying on anti-Semitic stereotypes, and complains of authors who “utter sentiments existing only in their own imaginations, and by ascribing them to others, to disseminate a baneful prejudice against multitudes, who feel indignant at finding themselves the subjects of unjust suspicion” (10). Montefiore recognizes the power of popular literature to inspire anti-Semitism in readers.

Montefiore’s encounter with the anti-Semitic and conversionist tropes of Bulwer-Lytton while visiting oppressed Jewish communities in Europe undoubtedly affects her perception of them. Michael Ragussis claims that “Bulwer, through the figure of the female convert, represents the erasure of minority cultures in the development of the racially and religiously homogenous modern nation-state” (141). Conversionist literature reinforces the idea of Jews as colonial subjects, and conversion societies in England essentially functioned as part of the imperialist project. Christian missionaries bent on converting the Jews spread throughout Europe and into the Near East. Page identifies “the Montefiores’ work [as], in a sense, a Jewish response to the influx of Christian missionaries into Palestine, particularly the well-documented activities of conversionist groups who sought out impoverished Jews with promises of material aid and Christian redemption” (121). The Montefiores’ territorial designs in Palestine assured a future for Jews in their native land. By linking contemporary Jewish persecution in Europe to the oppression of Jews as colonial subjects of Ottoman rule in Palestine, Montefiore establishes herself and her husband as the would-be liberators of the Jewish people. Occupying the liminal space between Occidental and Oriental, the Montefiores are uniquely suited to bridge the gap
between the Jews as colonial subjects in Europe and the Jewish communities and Ottoman administrators in the Near East.

Montefiore prefaces her territorial mission with details of Jewish oppression in Europe. Throughout her portrayals of the socio-political conditions of European Jews, Montefiore emphasizes the need for Jewish sovereignty in their own land. Montefiore reflects that “there is something so endearing and sweet in one’s native land, especially where equal rights prevail, and prejudice does not disseminate her baneful influence” (67). She refers to England in this instance, but what she describes could refer to the future Palestine she hopes to construct with Moses. Montefiore repeatedly stresses the universal human need to thrive mentally, emotionally, and physically in a free environment, and she remarks that European man stifles the abilities of Jews given to them by God. The Montefiores hope freedom will come to Jews in France and Italy, and with that in mind, they turn their sights to building Jewish settlements in Palestine in order to ameliorate the conditions for oppressed Jews worldwide. But although her recognition of Jews as other in European society contrasts with her Orientalizing of indigenous Jews, her focus on the plight of worldwide Jewry shows how, despite the oriental features Montefiore finds in the Mizrahi Jews, she still considers all Jews part of an indivisible community.

Montefiore’s Orientalist perception of the Levant’s Muslim population reflects firmly established European beliefs about the Jewish people. For centuries European Jews were seen as, among other descriptors, an essentially nomadic, tribalist, people who practiced a peculiar Eastern religion. Said notes that eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Orientalist discourse similarly conceptualized Jews and Arab Muslims as “romantic, nomadic, oriental peoples” (102). Indeed, the Jews have been identified, as Kalmar and Penslar point out, “both by themselves and by the Western world, with the ancient Israelites who established themselves, and the
monotheistic tradition, in [an] ‘oriental’ location” (xiii). They clarify that Europeans have associated the Jews with the Orient because of Jewish identification with biblical lands (xiii).

Montefiore recognizes Jews as an Oriental people as one way to legitimate her territorial interest in Palestine. In some ways Montefiore imitates colonialist language, but she also reiterates the complaints of the oppressed. As in the case of some of her Muslim visitors, Montefiore identifies with certain Jews insofar as they reflect English learning and sensibilities. While attending synagogue services in Nice, she recalls “a person wearing the Turkish Costume” receiving honors (68). A European friend informs the couple that the man is “from Barbary, and an exceedingly learned and clever man, his writings excelling, in his opinion, those of Shakspeare [sic] and Voltaire” (68). Like the Barbary scholar, a local Hakham impresses Montefiore with his occidental comportment and intelligence, and these men are featured in her journal as relevant to her narrative. Montefiore speaks approvingly of the Hakham, meaning either a rabbi or a learned Torah scholar, although her usage here is unclear. The man feels concern for the oppression faced by France’s Jewish community, and in the same breath, Montefiore observes that “he appears a gentlemanly, well-instructed person, and they speak of his son as an accomplished teacher of Latin and Italian” (69-70). Montefiore expresses sympathy for all oppressed Jews, regardless of intelligence and socioeconomic status, but especially stresses the concerns of Western-educated Jews, as such oppression strikes her as particularly pernicious.

Montefiore reads Jews and Arabs as similarly Other in part due to their linguistic difference. Upon arriving at a religious service held in Safed, Montefiore greets several Jewish women attired in an oriental fashion, wearing “turbans, ornamented with silver and gold; necklaces and bracelets, [and] long thick white veils” (215). Like the Muslim wives of the Ottoman
governor, the Jewish woman address Montefiore in an unintelligible language—Arabic—and she must rely on Loewe’s intermediacy in order to communicate with them. But language proves a minor barrier in communication, as the dress of the poorer Jewish women imparts to Montefiore “the poverty of which they complained” (215), the relief of which comprises part of her aim while in Palestine. Montefiore details Jewish poverty in order to validate her mission in the region. The Jewish poor, as natural inhabitants of an Oriental land, need the liberation promised by their Anglo-Jewish benefactors.

Efron highlights the differences motivating Christian and Jewish orientalists of the nineteenth century. Said indicts Occidental Jews in the imperialist endeavors of Western Christendom, but as Efron points out, Jews “could not be the intellectual vanguard of powers that denied them their rights as human beings” (93). According to Efron, “[Jews] own pariah status within Europe was a constant reminder that no matter how strong their own identification with [their countries of origin], they could not approach the Near East with the same Europeanist mind-set as Christian scholars” (93). Rather than infiltrating an alien land and displacing its native inhabitants, Montefiore seeks to revitalize Jewish presence in their ancestral homeland. The oriental attributes of Palestine’s Jews legitimates, for Montefiore, their claim to the land.

Groups of Mizrahi Jews dance and sing in synagogues and the streets of Jerusalem, a spectacle Montefiore nowhere witnessed in Western Europe. She feels enchanted by her Old World Jewish experience, but at the same time, she sees Jewish Palestine in terms of decay. Much of Montefiore’s record of her time in Jerusalem outlines her plan to cultivate a fruitful future in a land teeming with potential.

The Jewish people of Palestine, according to Montefiore’s journal, see the wealthy Anglo-Jewish couple as their redeemers and invite their foreign support. Oppression of Jews in
Palestine by Ottoman authority included heavy taxation for residing in the land and the consequent widespread poverty observed by Montefiore, and denial of admittance to Jewish holy sites, oppression constituted on both national and religious grounds. The suffering of the Jews in Palestine under Ottoman control bolsters Montefiore’s identification with the regions Oriental Jews. Montefiore visits with European friends while in Egypt, and their reports are grim: “Their description of the sufferings of the people, especially of those of our own nation, was calculated to excite the most painful feelings. Some, they stated, were almost starving, and Mr. F had himself witnessed instances of the cruel tyranny exercised against them by the Turks” (197).

Montefiore’s plans to build Jewish settlements under the control of herself and Moses are spurred on by reports of Jewish suffering at the hands of a Muslim authority. Importantly, Montefiore refers to Jews as a nation, and includes herself in that category. But in order to help consolidate the concept of a Jewish nation, Montefiore others Palestine’s Muslim inhabitants. Throughout her journal, she describes Islamic others as tyrannical, fanatic, and wholly foreign. Her Orientalizing of Palestine’s Muslims casts them as outsiders, while her Orientalizing of Palestine’s Jews marks that community as native. This particular tension aids Montefiore in her consolidation of Jewish national identity.

As Montefiore enumerates the particulars of the settlement project, she begins to develop a concept of a new, consolidated Jewish nation. Much of the imagery in Montefiore’s journal draws on a Jewish past in the land. For example, the Montefiores, along with “many of [their] brethren following on foot, all eager to obtain admission to a sight of the venerated spot where repose the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,” travel to Hebron for a glimpse inside the Cave of Machpelah (303). Indeed, the influential couple devotes significant time to securing indigenous Jews’ admission to Judaism’s most revered sites and monuments. However, their
settlement plans focus on a Jewish future in the land, uniting groups of Jews from different backgrounds, both ethnic and religious, scattered throughout Palestine. While in Jerusalem, Moses organizes a meeting with heads of each congregation. Judith records,

The afternoon and evening were occupied in seeing the principal persons belonging to the Portuguese, the German, and Russian congregations, in arranging their lists, receiving letters, and holding consultations as to the practicability of cultivating the lands. Many approved of the plan, and seemed to have a clear idea of the vast benefits which would attend its success. (253)

During her travels, Montefiore makes clear distinctions between categories of Jews based on European national lines, as is common in Victorian-Jewish writings. “German” usually refers to the Ashkenazim, and “Portuguese,” to the Sephardim. But the planning of settlements serves to render insignificant distinctions between Ashkenazi, Sephardi, and Mizrahi.

The development of settlements in Palestine progresses in conjunction with the forming of a new concept of the Jewish nation as land-based. “We once more turn our eyes to the land of our fathers,” Montefiore writes at the beginning of her travel narrative, “to the place of their sojourn, and to the inheritance of the promises” (1), a sentiment that carries throughout and intensifies at the close. Rather than focusing on the Jewish past as in her first diary, Montefiore’s *Notes from a Journal* combines images of a Jewish past, present, and future, balancing an idealized return to the land with a more practical plan for constructing Jewish settlements. Montefiore’s religious Zionism incorporates the development of a distinct Jewish peoplehood that prefigures the organized Zionist movement of the late nineteenth-century.
Works Cited


Christian Zionism refers to ideology held by Christians (mostly Evangelists) that supports the notion of a state for the Jewish people in the geographical area referred to in the Gospel as the land of Israel. It is important to note that such a view emerged before the modern establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 (Ariel 2001 Bar-Yosef 2003; Merkley 1998). The premise of such a view is that the return of the Jewish people to their ancestral land is an essential stage before the second return of Christ and the beginning of the Messianic age. While Elon wants to promote his idea Judith, Lady Montefiore (née Barent Cohen; 20 February 1784 â€“ 24 September 1862) was a British linguist, musician, travel writer, and philanthropist. She was the wife of Sir Moses Montefiore. She authored the first Jewish cook book written in English. Judith Barent Cohen, fourth daughter of Levy Barent Cohen and his wife, Lydia Diamantschleifer, was born in London on 20 February 1784. The father, of Angel Court, Throgmorton Street, was a wealthy Ashkenazi or German Jew. Montefiore, Judith Cohen, Lady, d. 1862. Publication date. 1885. Topics. Middle East -- Description and travel, Europe -- Description and travel. Publisher. London. Printed by Wertheimer, Lea. Copyright-evidence. Evidence reported by judyjordan for item notesfromprivate00montrich on June 6, 2007: no visible notice of copyright; stated date is 1885. Copyright-evidence-date. 20070606185111. Montefiore, Judith. Private Journal of a Visit to Egypt and Palestine (written in 1827â€“1828 and printed for private circulation in 1836). The second section relating to Egypt and Palestine (pp. 128â€“234) have been reproduced by Yad Yitzhak Ben Zvi, Jerusalem: 1975. Idem. Notes from a Journal of a visit to Palestine by way of Italy and the Mediterranean. London: 1844. Second edition London: 1885. It was translated into Hebrew under the title Yehudit ( London, undated; probably 1879â€“1880). The Jewish Manual: or, Practical Information in Jewish and Modern Cookery, with a Collection of Valuable Rec