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*Between Loyalty to the Empire and  
National Self-Consciousness:  
Joseph Trumpeldor among Jewish Russian POWs  
in Japan (1905)*

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*Abstract:*

*The article is dedicated to the not so well researched Far East episode in the life of Joseph Trumpeldor, including the year he spent in Japanese captivity (1905). A defender of the fortress Port-Arthur during the Russo-Japanese War 1904-1905, a member of the Jewish pioneer movement in Palestine, a British officer against the Ottoman Empire during the First World War, an activist in the time of the Russian revolution, and a defender of the Galilean settlement of Tel Hai where he found his tragic death in 1920, Trumpeldor has become widely recognized as one of the contemporary national symbols of the State of Israel. In the author's opinion, it was the Japanese period when Trumpeldor underwent a significant change in attitude that determined his life and activity thereafter. It seems that his national self-consciousness as a Jew, which was awakened and sharpened during the Japanese captivity, forced him to change his civilian position from a Russian patriot to an active participant of the Jewish national movement.*

キーワード : Russo-Japanese War, Jewish soldiers in the Russian army, Japanese captivity, Zionist movement, Yiddish culture, Jewish tombs in Japan

## Introduction

Joseph Trumpeldor's (1880-1920) symbolic significance in contemporary Israel is very hard to underestimate. One can find a street or other urban object named after him as well as other signs of honor almost in each Israeli city or village. He was, in essence, the first modern hero of the Jewish national movement, the prototype of the "new Jew," who settles in his Homeland, defends it, and dies for it. That was how the Jewish writer, historian, political activist of the Zionist Revisionist movement Joseph Schechtman characterized Trumpeldor.\*<sup>1</sup> His special place among contemporary national symbols of the State of Israel is widely recognized.\*<sup>2</sup> Indeed, in only fifteen years, from the beginning of the defense of the fortress of Port Arthur in 1904 during the Russo-Japanese War, via the Jewish pioneer movement in Palestine, the First World War as a British officer against the Ottoman Empire, the Russian revolution, until his tragic death in the Galilean settlement of Tel Hai in 1920, Trumpeldor appeared in such a large number of roles that they would have sufficed for several heroic destinies. This abundant material served as the basis for numerous biographical writings around Trumpeldor's personality in Hebrew, English, German, Russian, etc.\*<sup>3</sup>

It seems that the not so well researched Far East episode in his life, including the year he spent in Japanese captivity (1905), played a certain role in the creation of the quasi-mythological "new Jewish ethos," and therefore deserves special attention.\*<sup>4</sup> To all appearances, it was precisely the Russo-Japanese War, in which Russia unexpectedly suffered a serious defeat, that gave birth to Trumpeldor the hero, Trumpeldor the intellectual, and what is most important for the present discussion, Trumpeldor the Zionist.

## To Be a Jewish Soldier in the Russian Army during the Russo-Japanese War

Trumpeldor was just one of about 30,000 Jewish soldiers who took part in the Russo-Japanese War, of whom at least 2,950 were reported killed or missing in action.\*<sup>5</sup> He was drafted into the Russian army in November 1902, at the age of 22. In the fall of 1903, before the beginning of the Russo-Japanese War, he volunteered to serve in Russian Manchuria. When hostilities broke out, Trumpeldor expressed his desire to join the so-called "hunters' detachment," which carried out the most dangerous raids. On August 20, 1904, he was seriously wounded in Port Arthur. Although he spent over three months in hospital and lost his left arm, he insisted on continuing his military service. He was promoted to the rank of junior corporal and given command of a platoon.

The attitude of the Jews' comrades-in-arms to them was ambivalent. On the one hand, there was no lack of the common manifestations of anti-Semitism on the part of the soldiers and officers.\*<sup>6</sup> The promotion of Jews in the Russian army was a very rare occurrence. As a rule, the only Jews receiving an officer's rank were those who served in the medical corps. On the other hand, the commanders took every opportunity to try to prove to the Jewish soldiers that they "honored before the Fatherland the services of its heroes."\*<sup>7</sup> This required no special effort, since it was not uncommon for Jewish soldiers to show heroism at the front. Thus, the Russian press reported the story of the gunner, Lazar Likhtmakher, who, like Trumpeldor, had his left hand torn off by a gun shell.\*<sup>8</sup> In the summer of 1905 the army newspaper *Razvedchik* (*The Scout*) reported that as a reward for heroism, the rank of junior corporal had been conferred on Private Joseph Trumpeldor. Russian and some foreign newspapers reprinted the story of Trumpeldor's heroism. The English-language publication of the Jewish community of Shanghai, *Israel's Messenger* described Trumpeldor's letter to his commander: "I have been left with one arm, but that one is

the right arm. Therefore, wishing to share in the fighting with my comrades as heretofore, I beg to request your Honour to plead for me that I may be furnished with a sword and a revolver.”<sup>\*9</sup> This letter became widely known and, one might say, laid the foundation for the heroic descriptions of the Far East episode in Trumpeldor’s life.

A couple of years ago the author of these lines discovered in the Rare Books Collection at the National Library of Israel in Jerusalem a petition in the Russian language, addressed “to Nicholas II, His Imperial Majesty, Sovereign, Emperor, and All-Russian Autocrat, from lower ranking Jews, former defenders of the fortress of Port Arthur.” The petition was written in the fall of 1905 by Trumpeldor while he was already interned in the Takaishi Japanese prisoner of war camp not far from Osaka. Every Jewish POW was invited to Trumpeldor’s barrack to sign the proposed text.

Here is the petition translated into English and slightly abridged :

Your Imperial Majesty! [···] Joyfully, together with our comrades, we defended Port Arthur. We spilled our blood on its bastions without complaint, and our never-to-be-forgotten brethren died on them without complaint. We knew that our duty before our adored Monarch and our dear Fatherland demand from us these lives and this blood. And if it had been necessary for all of us to lay down our lives defending Arthur, we would have done so without hesitation. In addition, we knew that five million Jews were looking upon us from Russia, that they were experiencing in their souls all the hardships together with us, and that they were encouraging us with all their might and hoping that we would fulfill our duty honorably. We knew that they do not enjoy civil rights in Russia. We ourselves have experienced the whole burden of being without rights. We could only reside in a very restricted area, and if sometimes necessity compelled us to leave the Pale of Settlement, round-ups were organized, and we were sent back to our old place under guard and in disgrace. We had practically no possibility of sending our children to educational institutions, because the admission of Jews was extremely restricted. Access to land was closed to us almost everywhere, and those of us who wanted to work in agriculture could not do so. We could not engage in those things that were dear to us, we were contemptuously driven from one place to another, the light of learning was denied to us, we were despised and hated, and we were treated as if we carried the plague. [···] By their deaths our comrades bequeathed to us the obligation to entreat Your Imperial Majesty to grant rights to the Jews of Russia. Our aching wounds give us the courage to join the entreaties of our never-to-be-forgotten comrades. Knowing Your Imperial Majesty’s great graciousness, we have long sought an opportunity to entreat you personally to grant to all Russian Jews the same rights enjoyed by the other peoples living in Russia. [···]

The overall tone of the petition shows a significant change that took place in the hero’s attitude to the country in which he was born and raised. If, a year earlier in his letter to his commander, Trumpeldor expressed his eagerness to fight for the Fatherland as a loyal subject, then now the most prominent feature was the degradation to which Russian Jewry was subjected. Separating these two letters was the year Trumpeldor spent in Japanese captivity. In our opinion, during that time he underwent a significant change in attitude that determined the course his life and activity thereafter. Firsthand testimony preserved mostly in Israeli archives<sup>\*10</sup> is available clearly revealing Trumpeldor’s metamorphosis as it is described further.

### **A Jewish Community in Captivity**

The Russians surrendered Port Arthur to Japan on January 2, 1905. The group of prisoners that included Joseph Trumpeldor was sent to the nearby city of Dalny or Dairen (today known as Dalian, China) and from there conveyed on steamships to the central Japanese island of Honshu. In Japan the Russian prisoners were divided up and placed in specially created camps (called, "shelters") located near twenty-nine population centers (Fukuoka, Kyoto, Kumamoto, Matsuyama, Osaka, Yokohama, and others). The lower ranks were housed in tents or barracks-type structures; the officers were given separate quarters; and the high command was even lodged on the grounds of Buddhist temples. According to some information, there were 1,739 Jews among the 73,301 captive Russian soldiers.\*<sup>11</sup>

Trumpeldor, along with 184 other Jewish soldiers, was placed in a camp called "Hamadera," about twenty kilometers from the city of Osaka. There were groups of Jewish prisoners in other camps as well, for example, Himeji, Narasino.\*<sup>12</sup> In "Takaishi" camp, not far from "Hamadera," there were 181 Jews. Eventually both groups were united in "Takaishi," where Trumpeldor was registered as number 14277. The camp was divided into sections, and the sections were divided into so-called "courtyards." Each "courtyard" included a number of barracks and was intended for POWs of the same religion or nationality. The Jewish "courtyard," containing three barracks, was located near "courtyards" housing Tatar, German, Polish, Latvian, Estonian, and Russian POWs. The living conditions were quite tolerable, since the prisoners were pretty much left to themselves and enjoyed relative freedom within the confines of the camp. In accord with the Hague Convention of 1899 on the humanitarian treatment of prisoners of war, the Japanese administration allowed correspondence (although under censorship), gave the POWs an allowance, arranged medical care (Trumpeldor was provided with an artificial arm), and in general responded positively to any initiative for occupying the prisoners during their spare time.\*<sup>13</sup>

Born in the Caucasus town of Piatigorsk outside the Russian Jewish Pale of Settlement, because of his father a former soldier who received a permit to live elsewhere (in contrast to the majority of Jewish citizens of Russia who were restricted in their basic civil rights),\*<sup>14</sup> Joseph Trumpeldor was raised in an assimilated Russified family and had spent all his previous life in mostly un-Jewish surroundings. Now he found himself for the first time in the thick of a heterogeneous Jewish group, hailing from Poland, Lithuania, Bessarabia, Volhynia, Podolia, Siberia, and other regions of the Russian Empire. Of course, he became interested in the diverse cultural traits and political tendencies displayed by his fellow-Jews. It was only natural for him to swell into a resolute feeling of resentment over the degradation to which his coreligionists were subjected in Russia. Having seen a great deal of action during the military operations, having risked his life no less than others, and having been wounded and maimed, he now set himself a concrete goal, to promote with all his might the awakening of the Russian Jews' pride in their own national identity.

Almost from the first moment he arrived in Takaishi, on February 1, 1905, Trumpeldor had created the Society of Jewish Prisoners of War, on the basis of democratic elections. Since every ten POWs had their own table, Trumpeldor had each one send a representative, and they elected him chairman of the Society.\*<sup>15</sup>

The activists of the Society occupied themselves with preparing for the approaching Passover holiday, which fell on April 19 in 1905. Trumpeldor also was deeply involved at this time in an

event of a much different sort, the death of one of the Jewish soldiers, Chaim Hofshtein. This man had died of his wounds in the camp hospital on March 5. The very next day Trumpeldor and three other Jewish POWs took the initiative of asking the Japanese camp administration on behalf of all the Jewish POWs to enable the deceased soldier to be buried according to Jewish tradition. This included permitting three Jews to read Psalms near the body of the deceased during the night before the burial, to have a shroud sewn, and to conduct the burial itself in the presence of ten Jews, who would constitute the traditional quorum (*minyan* in Hebrew).<sup>\*16</sup> It seems that the camp administration decided to satisfy this request without raising any obstacles. Since the soldier was buried in the common cemetery (today the Russian military part of the township of Izumiotsu's cemetery), Trumpeldor submitted another request two days later, "to construct, in accord with our religion, a fence around the grave of our coreligionist..."<sup>\*17</sup> The author tracked down Hofshtein's grave in the township of Izumiotsu's cemetery, near Osaka.<sup>\*18</sup> The grave is clearly separate from the rest of the tombstones (see Fig. 1). As Mayor of Izumiotsu, Mr. Haruhiko Ito, recalled from his childhood in presence of the author and Prof. Yakov Zinberg during a special meeting at the Izumiotsu City Hall on August 7, 2013, the grave was still fenced some 50 years ago.<sup>\*19</sup>

Trumpeldor was hardly familiar with Jewish ceremonies and rituals, while a religious activity



Fig.1:

Prof. Ber Kotlerman recites Psalms near Chaim Hofshtein's grave (August 2013, Izumiotsu). The grave is clearly separate from the rest of the tombstones.

is never mentioned in his letters before the captivity. In spite of that, at the beginning of his activity for the welfare of the Jewish POWs he was careful to enlist the support of his coreligionists, among whom were many religious soldiers. The preparations for the Passover holiday became an important consolidating factor. On February 5, at a general meeting of the Society, it was decided to carry out the ritual side of the holiday insofar as possible according to all the rules and regulations provided by the tradition. On February 6 Trumpeldor sent a letter to New York, addressed to the "Chief Rabbi of American Jews," with a request to send the Jewish POWs *matzoth* (an unleavened bread eaten during the week-long Passover according to the Jewish tradition), prayer shawls, and prayer books for Passover.<sup>\*20</sup> The same day he sent a letter to Chaim Zimmerman, a Russian Jewish industrialist from Vladivostok, asking him to send to the camp the two Torah scrolls, five prayer shawls, two *shofars* (a musical instrument made from a ram's horn, or from the horn of a sheep or goat, that makes a trumpet-like sound and is traditionally blown on Rosh ha-Shanah, the Jewish New Year, and Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement), prayer books, and 300 rubles of communal money that the Jewish soldiers who regularly held their religious services had left with Zimmerman when Port Arthur was surrendered.<sup>\*21</sup>

We should note that not only did the Japanese administration refrain from interfering with the preparations for the important Jewish holiday celebrating the liberation from Egyptian slavery; it even took the initiative to organize a "Jewish chapel."<sup>\*22</sup> Despite the readiness of the Jewish

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communities of Shanghai, Kobe, and Nagasaki to supply the POWs with Passover matzoth, these did not reach the Takaishi camp in time. Shortly before the holiday Trumpeldor once more submitted a request to the Japanese authorities, this time asking them to distribute flour for the preparation of matzoth instead of bread. From a letter written by Trumpeldor's camp friend, Isaac Serebro, we learn that "we celebrated Passover according to all the rules of the religion, with matzoth and food we prepared ourselves, since matzoth from Kobe arrived only on the 8<sup>th</sup> [that is, the last] day of Passover."<sup>\*23</sup> The atmosphere prevailing at the Passover Seder (the festive ritual meal) in another POW camp is conveyed in an interesting description published in the *Shanghai Israel's Messenger* :

Passover was for us, indeed, a "time of rejoicing." [...] We celebrated with a Seder of royal proportions in the synagogue, which was packed with Japanese. During the whole ceremony they sat with greatest awe and reverence. And we related the story of the Exodus and the Passover with fervor, ending up with a ringing Chad Gadjah and Echad Elohenu, "Our God is One."

Several of the Japanese, of their own free will, offered to wait on us at table. We declined, of course, and waited upon each other.

[...] we do not feel as if we were exiled. But we cannot rejoice : for we know that thousands of our brothers are laboring as slaves and spilling their blood on the battlefields for no cause of their own.

May God have mercy! May the war soon end! <sup>\*24</sup>

Besides Passover, Trumpeldor initiated preparations for the celebration of the happy holiday of Purim. The Culture Committee of the Society of Jewish POWs organized a choir and a theatrical "troupe" under the direction of a soldier who had been a professional actor in a Yiddish theater in Kiev. This amateur "troupe" prepared a traditional *Purimspiel*, based upon the "Sale of Joseph" story, and performed it at least twice in Yiddish. The biblical episode about Joseph's brothers selling him into Egyptian slavery was always one of the most popular themes for Purim performances. Naturally, in the conditions of the POW camp the message seemed especially relevant. Being concerned about those soldiers who did not know Yiddish, Trumpeldor composed a libretto in Russian for the play. Unfortunately, no text of this composition has yet been discovered.

Cultural and religious programs were not the only undertakings engaged in by the Takaishi Society of Jewish POWs. Among other things, it organized a mutual aid fund for buying linens for needy soldiers and for supporting artisans who launched their trades right there in the POW barracks. It also established a solid library from books owned by the POWs. The "School for Russian POWs" became one of the Society's most important undertakings. It opened on March 14, 1905, and attracted large numbers of non-Jewish POWs. Takaishi was not the only camp where a school was organized. Schools were set up in other "shelters" as well.<sup>\*25</sup> The Takaishi administration allocated the center of one of the barracks for the classes, but it turned out to be too small to contain all those who wanted to participate, and "branches" of the school were opened in other barracks. Classes took place all day long, given by volunteers who had an education, under Trumpeldor's general supervision. Since there were no textbooks, Trumpeldor personally composed a manual on Russian grammar.<sup>\*26</sup> He also sent a request to the head of the Russian

ecclesiastical mission in Japan, Bishop Nikolai (Kasatkin), to supply primers and other elementary books for those pupils who were illiterate. In a letter to Trumpeldor, one of Russian soldiers reported that books had actually arrived in the camp.\*<sup>27</sup>

### **Confrontation between the “Orthodox” and the “Zionists”**

Disillusionment set in rather quickly. The signs of an imminent conflict appeared even before Passover. On April 14 Trumpeldor issued a pamphlet in Russian, called, *Evreiskii listok (Jewish Page)*, in which he passionately announced a “holiday of deliverance from the Exile.” This announcement, among other things, was addressed to certain foes : “Listen, those of you who do not want [to celebrate] the holiday, be quiet!”\*<sup>28</sup> No matter to whom these words were addressed, they indicate that antagonistic circles had already begun to form among the Jewish POWs, pitting religiously “Orthodox” soldiers against their “Zionist-oriented” fellows. In time their disagreements turned into open confrontation.

The cultural and political diversity of his coreligionists, it seems, did not quite fit into Trumpeldor’s conception of the revival of Jewish national self-consciousness and pride. The only effective ideological basis for the revival, it seemed to him, was not a return to roots, but rather Zionism. He had joined this movement while still in back in the Caucasus, in Piatigorsk, where he participated in a circle of Zionist youths. By the beginning of the summer of 1905 the Society of Jewish POWs could no longer contain or give expression to Trumpeldor’s aspirations, so he set about creating a Zionist organization, with the name, “*Bnei Tzion mi-Shvuyim be-Yapan*” (“Sons of Zion among the Prisoners in Japan” in Hebrew). In practice, the *Bnei Tzion* circle replaced the POWs’ Society. The circle’s Charter, composed by Trumpeldor, was ratified on June 11, 1905, so that day can be considered the official date of the founding of the first Zionist organization in Japan. The purpose of the circle was formulated thus : “Understanding the term Zionism to mean the creation of a Jewish national center in Palestine, in connection with the overall renaissance of the Jews, the circle has the purpose of complying as much as possible with the general strivings of Zionism.” Trumpeldor immediately informed the leader of the World Zionist Organization, Menachem Ussishkin, whose office at that time was in Ekaterinoslav (now Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine), about the work of the circle. After describing the circle’s achievements – the study of Russian, Yiddish, and Hebrew, the reading every Saturday of works in Russian and Yiddish, and the formation of a choir – Trumpeldor could not refrain from complaining that “many in the community sympathize with the circle, but there are also foes. However, their efforts remain ineffective. Persons wanting to join the circle appear almost every day.”\*<sup>29</sup> The membership of the circle really did increase quickly; in the course of a month and a half it grew from just over ten to 122.\*<sup>30</sup> Trumpeldor divided the members into groups of ten and carried on a discussion with one group each day. A fundraiser was declared with the donations to go to the Jewish National Fund, for a school in Jaffa, a library in Jerusalem, and the planting of a forest in memory of the founder of the Zionist movement, Theodore Herzl, who had died just a year before.

A number of steps he took at the time testify to Trumpeldor’s growing ambitions. He tried to start an exchange of letters with Jewish POWs in other “shelters,” calling on them to join the Zionist movement, to make direct contact with Jews living in Japan, and also to leave the confines of the camp in order to become acquainted with “Japanese Jews.” The camp administration rejected the last proposal; the lower ranking soldiers, unlike the officers, were not allowed beyond the limits of the camp. At the same time, he worked tirelessly trying to gather information about

Jewish soldiers who had been killed or were missing in action. He compiled a detailed list of hundreds of names under the title, "Materials for a History of the Participation of Lower Ranking Jews in the Defense of the Fort of Port Arthur."<sup>\*31</sup> Trumpeldor's ultimate intention was to use Jewish heroism in the Russo-Japanese War as a major argument in his struggle for Jewish rights in Russia.

A weekly newspaper in Russian and Yiddish was launched in the framework of the Zionist circle. This was the Zionist-oriented *Der Yudesher Lebn* (*Evreiskaia zhizn'* in Russian, or *Jewish Life* in English), the first ever Jewish newspaper in Japan.<sup>\*32</sup> The newspaper was written by hand and then duplicated on a rotary mimeograph machine supplied by the Japanese, to produce 200-250 copies. Incidentally, the same machine was used to produce the camp's general newspaper in Russian, *Drug* (*Friend*), in the publication of which Trumpeldor also participated actively. Although he knew Yiddish, as we know from the fact that his father's letters to him were mainly in that language, Trumpeldor was probably the person responsible for the Russian-language part of *Der Yudesher Lebn*, while his friend Isaak Serebro was responsible for the Yiddish-language part. The two sections of the paper did not duplicate each other, but were intended for the paper's bilingual readers. The contents of the articles published are a topic for a different discussion, but we should note that they did not necessarily deal directly with life in the camp.

The conflict between the "Zionists" and the "Orthodox" intensified. In mid-October, 1905, Trumpeldor issued a special polemical supplement to *Der Yudesher Lebn*, devoted to the question of how to use the several hundred rubles mentioned above that were left for safekeeping with the businessman Chaim Zimmerman.<sup>\*33</sup> This money had come from donations to the army synagogue in Port Arthur, donations made by Jewish merchants, contractors, suppliers, and others who had business with the army and used the synagogue.<sup>\*34</sup> The Zionists proposed using the money to create a Jewish artisans school in the Pale of Settlement named in honor of the fallen Jewish soldiers. The "Orthodox" rejected this proposal and demanded the erection of a memorial to the fallen in Port Arthur itself. As a compromise, it was decided to send the money to the fallen soldiers' widows and children.

It seems that the Zionist circle's activity reached its peak at the beginning of November 1905, when Trumpeldor and his closest friends decided to prepare themselves to the emigration to Palestine after their release. In the realms of this decision a letter was sent to the Odessa Society for the Support of Jewish Farmers and Artisans in Syria and Palestine, with a request to inform them about the possibilities of resettling in Palestine.<sup>\*35</sup>

### **The Petition to Tsar Nicolas II as Culmination**

The Treaty of Portsmouth was signed on September 5, 1905. It formally ended the war between Russia and Japan and provided for the return home of the POWs. In August, while the peace talks were still proceeding, a rumor spread among the Jewish POWs that the Russian government intended to grant them the right to reside anywhere in Russia and the right to purchase land. On September 15, in response to this rumor, Trumpeldor raised for discussion the question of a petition to Tsar Nicholas II requesting the cancellation of all the limitations on the civil rights of all the Jews in the Empire. This approach, though, served only to deepen the split among the Jewish POWs. Some came out firmly against the petition, concerned that it might hinder their personal requests for land grants after their repatriation.<sup>\*36</sup> A vote was taken, and it was decided that a petition with individual signatures would be submitted, rather than a document in the name



of all the Jewish POWs. In the end, 130 prisoners signed, mainly, it seems, members of the Zionist circle.

The distribution of the petition in the camp coincided with Trumpeldor's latest ambitious idea, to convene a "seym" (that is, a "congress") of all the prisoners of war. His friends managed to talk him out of this futile step, but the "one-armed teacher's" vigorous activity drew the attention of the anti-Semites in the Russian part of the POW camp and gave them a pretext for the organization of an anti-Jewish pogrom. In November anti-Semitic POWs tried to attack the Jewish POWs, but in the end they failed.<sup>\*37</sup> Trumpeldor's last letter from captivity was written about this time. In it he complained to his father about the drunkenness and fighting in the camp, sometimes even ending in murder. This letter clarifies the direct connection between the anti-Semitic outburst and the petition to the tsar. Trumpeldor wrote, "It is difficult to cook porridge with such a mass of dark and rude people. Because of... the petition... a slaughter almost took place again, so everyone decided not to undertake anything."<sup>\*38</sup>

Trumpeldor, as an invalid, was released from the camp a month earlier than the other prisoners. On December 23, 1905, the hospital ship "Mongolia" brought him to Vladivostok, and from there he was transported to the location of his regiment in Harbin. On March 24, 1906, Trumpeldor was presented in St Petersburg to Tsar Nicholas II together with other lower rank Russian soldiers wounded in the Russo-Japanese War. However, he did not take advantage of the occasion to present his petition to the tsar. It seems that at that time the questions of loyalty to the Empire and Jewish national self-consciousness, which were awakened and sharpened during the Japanese captivity as matters of great urgency for him, forced him to change his civilian position. Although he was already on the way to become one of the very few officers of the Jewish faith in the Russian army (on February 14, 1908, he retired from the army with the rank of "praporshchik" in the reserves, a junior commissioned officer rank in the military of the Russian Empire equivalent to ensign), he decided definitely to build his future life in Palestine, where he immigrated in 1912.

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## Endnotes

- \* 1 See Iosif Shekhtman, "Predislovie," in: David Belotserkovskii, *Zhizn' Iosifa Trumpeldora* (Berlin: Lutze & Vogt G.m.b.H., 1924), pp. 6-7.
- \* 2 See, for example, Tamar Mayer, "National Symbols in Jewish Israel," in: Michael E. Geister, ed., *National Symbols, Fractured Identities: Contesting the National Narrative* (Middlebury, Vt.: Middlebury College Press, 2005), pp. 3-34. Also Yael Zerubavel, *Recovered Roots: Collective Memory and the Making of Israeli National Tradition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995).
- \* 3 Shulamit Laskov, *Trumpeldor: Sipur hayav* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1995); Pesah Lipovetzky, *Joseph Trumpeldor: Life and Works* (Jerusalem: Youth and Hechalutz Department, World Zionist Organization, 1953); Joseph Trumpeldor, *Tagebücher und Briefe. Autorisierte Übertragung aus dem Russischen von Mirjam Wilensky* (Berlin: Jüdischer Verlag, 1925); Belotserkovskii, *Zhizn' Iosifa Trumpeldora*, etc.
- \* 4 The only academic articles dedicated entirely to the topic are: Meron Medzini, "Alilotav shel shavui yehudi rusi: Trumpeldor be-Yapan," in: Rotem Kovner (ed.), *Hama'arakha hanishkachat: milhemet Rusia – Yapan vemorashta* (Tel Aviv: Ma'arakhot, 2005), pp. 415-423; and Ber Boris Kotlerman, "Iosif Trumpel'dor v yaponskom plenu (1905)," in: idem (ed.), *Mizrekh: Jewish Studies in The Far East [I]* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2009), pp. 171-188.
- \* 5 See Yehuda Slutski, "Yehudim betsva Rusia hatsarit," in: Yehuda Slutski, Mordekhai Kaplan (eds.), *Hayalim yehudim bitsvaot Eyropa* (Tel-Aviv: Ma'arakhot, 1967), pp. 115-116.
- \* 6 To this topic is dedicated almost entirely the book: M. L. Usov, *Evrei v armii* (St Peterburg: Razum, 1911). See also 'Ezra Yehzekel-Shaked, *Hayehudim, haopium vehakimono: sipuram shel hayehudim bearatsot hamizrachh harahok* (Jerusalem: Reuven Mas, 1995), p. 33.

- \* 7 We find such a definition in the army newspaper *Razvedchik* on June 28, 1905, which reported that the rank of junior corporal had been conferred on Private Joseph Trumpeldor.
- \* 8 Usov, *Evrei v armii*, pp. 58-59.
- \* 9 "An Episode of Port Arthur," *Israel's Messenger*, July 14, 1905, p. 114.
- \* 10 First of all, the archives of the Pinchas Lavon Institute for Labour Movement in Tel Aviv (hereinafter: PLI), the Central Zionist Archives in Jerusalem (hereinafter: CZA), and the archives of the kibbutz Tel-Yossef (named after Joseph Trumpeldor).  
In addition, in the summer of 2013 the author together with Prof. Yakov Zinberg of Kokushikan University in Tokyo conducted researches on the topic under discussion at the Japanese Diplomatic Archives (Ministry of Foreign Affairs), National Archives of Japan, the archives of the National Institute for Defense Studies, and the municipal archives of the city of Izumiotsu, but meanwhile the Japanese archives just deepened the overall picture of the Russian Jewish POWs' life which is beyond the scope of the present article.
- \* 11 Usov, *Evrei v armii*, p. 63.
- \* 12 CZA, fond A 42, file 3/1. From the very beginning the newspaper *Israel's Messenger* published lists with the names of Jewish POWs.
- \* 13 A picture found in the archives of the National Institute for Defense Studies shows Russian POWs playing lawn tennis.
- \* 14 About the Pale of Settlement see Benjamin Nathans, *Beyond the Pale: The Jewish Encounter with Late Imperial Russia* (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002).
- \* 15 CZA, fond A 42, file 3/2.
- \* 16 PLI, fond IV-104, list 63, page 1351.
- \* 17 Ibid, page 1336.
- \* 18 Many names on the gravestones were misspelled, including this of Hofshstein (Gofshstein in Russian), misspelled as Galshupein.
- \* 19 The author uses this opportunity and cordially thanks Mr. Haruhiko Ito, Mayor of Izumiotsu, as well as Prof. Yakov Zinberg of Kokushikan University in Tokyo for organizing the meeting.
- \* 20 PLI, fond IV-104, list 63, page 1359.
- \* 21 Ibid, page 1355.
- \* 22 CZA, fond A 42, file 3/2.
- \* 23 CZA, fond A 42, file 3/3.
- \* 24 See Zalman Reichler, "Life of Jewish Prisoners of War in Japan," *Israel's Messenger*, September 8, 1905, p. 294.
- \* 25 CZA, fond A 42, file 3/1.
- \* 26 PLI, fond IV-104, list 63, pages 1389-92.
- \* 27 CZA, fond A 42, file 3/1.
- \* 28 PLI, fond IV-104, list 63, page 1387.
- \* 29 The Charter was bounded to the newspaper *Der Yudesher Lebn* in the Rare Books Collection at the National Library of Israel in Jerusalem.
- \* 30 See Laskov, *Trumpeldor*, 28-29.
- \* 31 CZA, fond A 42, file 3/4.
- \* 32 Two issues of this unique publication have been preserved in the Rare Books Collection at the National Library of Israel in Jerusalem.
- \* 33 CZA, fond A 42, file 3/3.
- \* 34 About soldiers' synagogues in the Russian army see Yohanan Petrovsky-Shtern, *Jews in the Russian Army, 1827-1917: Drafted into Modernity* (Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009), passim.
- \* 35 PLI, fond IV-104, list 63, page 1346.
- \* 36 According to the editorial in Russian, *Der Yudesher Lebn*, 14 (September 15, 1905), p. 1.
- \* 37 According to the Russian journalist Grigorii Novikov's memoirs: [http://www.gu.amurobl.ru/wps/wcm/connect/Web+Content/AMUR/Main\\_site\\_area/siteArea\\_amurObl/EnciklopediaPerson/NovikovDavrskii?presentationTemplate=print\\_staticPage\\_pt](http://www.gu.amurobl.ru/wps/wcm/connect/Web+Content/AMUR/Main_site_area/siteArea_amurObl/EnciklopediaPerson/NovikovDavrskii?presentationTemplate=print_staticPage_pt) (Accessed on November 17, 2013).
- \* 38 PLI, fond IV-104, list 63, page 1350.

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