

*Understudied Patterns of Jewish Migration between  
the Habsburg Central Europe and the United States*

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**Abstract**

*In this article, the author investigates the discussion on migration from Habsburg Central Europe to the United States, highlighting the movement of artists and musicians in popular entertainment as an understudied migration pattern. During the fin de siècle, migration and mobility for social, economic, political and/or professional reasons determined the patterns of everyday life; in turn, a new quality of mobility determined Habsburg Central Europe. Drawing on the example of the migration movement between the Habsburg Empire and the United States, the paper examines the place of Jewish migrant experiences in the broader context of masses of people on the move. To this end, the article compares experiences of migration such as migration of single men, women but also children and presents findings from oral history interviews of Jewish migrants, newspaper articles and correspondence.*

**Introduction**

**The (Jewish) Mass Migration Movement at the Turn of the Twentieth Century**

**Performing Artists on the Move**

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**Introduction**

In August 1898, the *Neue Wiener Journal*, a Viennese daily, reported on the premier of a play titled “Ein Wiener Quartett in Amerika” (A Viennese Quartet

in America) at Jantsch's Wiener Volkstheater (Jantsch's Viennese Popular Theater) in the Prater, Vienna's popular entertainment area.<sup>1</sup> The play addressed the migration of Austrian performing musicians to the United States. Designed as a "burlesque show with vocals," the play narrated five different scenarios about migrant artists, including the emergence of the idea of going on tour during a performance in a Viennese *Wirtshaus* (tavern). The members of the ensemble get hired as a ship's orchestra, encounter troubles and difficulties upon arrival in the United States, and subsequently find work. In the play, the migration leads the *Wiener Quartett* to New York, the most prominent arrival point for migrants, and then to Chicago, which hosted the second largest community of Jewish immigrants in the United States.<sup>2</sup> In doing so, the play aptly portrays a new pattern of migration that took place in the shadow of Jewish mass migration—traveling performers in popular entertainment.<sup>3</sup>

At the end of the nineteenth century, the popular entertainment industry became closely intertwined with migration in many ways. Within the general mass movement of people, an increasing number of artists, singers, musicians, and comedians traveled between different cities and even continents to stage their shows. Vaudeville stars used not only the new traffic infrastructure that emerged within the Habsburg Empire but also the connections that had been established between Europe and the United States. They became more mobile because they could earn money this way. Building an international career increased their popularity and, accordingly, the income they could ask for. In addition, the vaudeville scene was closely associated with migration because becoming an artist or working in a *variété* (vaudeville) offered migrants their first opportunity to earn money. The expanding scene of popular entertainment provided many new job

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<sup>1</sup> "Theater und Kunst," *Neues Wiener Journal*, August 21, 1898, 7-8.

<sup>2</sup> Tobias Brinkmann, *Von der Gemeinde zur "Community": Jüdische Einwanderer in Chicago 1840-1900* (Osnabrück: Universitätsverlag Rasch, 2002), 19. Much more research is focused on the making of New York's Jewish community, see, for example, Irving Howe, *World of Our Fathers: The Journey of Eastern European Jews to America and the Life They Found and Made* (New York: Harcourt-Brace-Jovanovich, 1976).

<sup>3</sup> Record of the Theater Censorship on Ein Quartett in Amerika, 1897, Box 35, File 6460, Niederösterreichische Regierung Präsidium (hereafter: NÖ Reg. Präs.), Theaterzensur (hereafter: TZ), Niederösterreichisches Landesarchiv (hereafter: NÖLA).

perspectives at that time. Another fact that contributed to the growth of popular entertainment was the living conditions of migrants—which were often characterized by poverty. These conditions stimulated a psychological need for popular theater: “It was a meeting place, an arbiter of fashion, a common passion.”<sup>4</sup> In the theater, the migrants could forget their misery, dream and laugh. But the places of popular entertainment were also spaces to linger, to escape, at least for a short time, from everyday life in small overcrowded tenements (usually no entrance fee had to be paid).

Although being mobile opened up new possibilities it also encouraged reservations and criticism of popular entertainment culture. For example, the migration patterns of performers and human traffickers overlapped because the travel habits were similar. Also, the sites of entertainment—varieties, vaudeilles and music halls—were modern spaces that hosted many travelers from abroad. Critiques of politics and society were amply featured in these shows, thus drawing the ire of political elites, who accused the sites of serving as spaces for clandestine prostitution because it was an easy way to get rid of them. Accordingly, migrating performers, especially women, were frequently accused—correctly or erroneously—of working as sex workers—both by choice and forced.

In this article, I investigate the migration pattern of artists in order to provide new perspectives on (Jewish) migration by introducing experiences of ordinary Jews<sup>5</sup> on the move between Habsburg Central Europe and the United States against the broader background of a new “quality of mobility” (Moritz Csáky) in the late nineteenth century.<sup>6</sup> Through close examinations of interviews, court records,

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<sup>4</sup> Nahma Sandrow, *Vagabond Stars: A World History of Yiddish Theater* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1996), 77.

<sup>5</sup> Recently, the concept of Jewish history as an integral rather than an exclusive narrative in “general history” has received more attention in research. Klaus Hödl, “‘Jewish History’ as Part of ‘General History’: A Comment,” *Medaon—Magazin für jüdisches Leben in Forschung und Bildung* 12, no. 22 (2018): 1-4.

<sup>6</sup> Moritz Csáky, “Hybride Kommunikationsräume und Mehrfachidentitäten: Zentraleuropa um 1900,” in *Migration und Innovation um 1900: Perspektiven auf das Wien der Jahrhundertwende*, ed. Elisabeth Röhrlich (Vienna-Cologne-Weimar: Böhlau, 2016), 65-97. The historian Lloyd Gartner stated that “migration is not part of Jewish history, it is Jewish history itself.” Lloyd P.

and newspapers that allow for insights into the migration patterns of artists, I contend that the mobility of performers is of particular interest in facilitating a more in-depth discussion about the interactions of Jewish and non-Jewish migrants. First, I will illustrate the migration pattern of traveling artists, which remains underrepresented in previous research, and place them within the mass migration at the turn of the twentieth century. Second, I will investigate the individual experiences of traveling performers and the reflection of this migration pattern in popular culture. I will investigate the perspectives that mobility opened to performers and juxtapose them with accusations stemming from their traveling lifestyles.<sup>7</sup> Finally, I will discuss the challenges faced by female artists.

### The (Jewish) Mass Migration Movement at the Turn of the Twentieth Century

The migration of Jewish performing musicians between Habsburg Central Europe and the United States constituted a specific pattern of migration within the movement usually called “Jewish mass migration”<sup>8</sup> that remains understudied.<sup>9</sup> Jews, who were among the most prominent performers in popular entertainment, constituted a significant portion of the migrating

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Gartner, “The Great Jewish Mass Migration—Its East European Background,” *Tel Aviver Jahrbuch für Deutsche Geschichte* 27 (1998): 107-133; 107.

<sup>7</sup> On popular culture as a space for Jewish and non-Jewish relations, see Mary Gluck, *The Invisible Jewish Budapest: Metropolitan Culture at the Fin de Siècle* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2016); Klaus Hödl, *Zwischen Wienerlied und Der kleine Kohn: Juden in der Wiener populären Kultur um 1900* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2017).

Research on the topic commonly but problematically employs the term “Jewish mass migration” to refer to the movement of Eastern European Jews, including people emigrating both from the eastern parts of the Habsburg Empire and the Russian Pale of Settlement, which of course overlapped, as this article demonstrates in the case of Galicia. Moreover, the depiction of this phenomenon as “Jewish” mass migration is itself misleading since the term suggests a homogeneous movement of a religiously defined group of people. Of course, there was no such thing as a homogeneous “Eastern European Jewry” and not only Jewish people migrated. Tobias Brinkmann, “Points of Passage: Reexamining Jewish Migration from Eastern Europe after 1880,” in *Points of Passage: Jewish Transmigrants from Eastern Europe in Scandinavia, Germany, and Britain 1880-1914*, ed. Tobias Brinkmann (New York-Oxford: Berghahn, 2013), 1-26; 3. In this article, I exclusively examine case studies of migrants from the Habsburg territories.

<sup>9</sup> Susanne Korbelt, “Jews, Mobility, and Sex: Popular Entertainment between Budapest, Vienna, and New York around 1900,” *Austrian History Yearbook* 51 (2020): 220-242; 223-224.

performers in that industry. Migrating Jewish performers' experiences are representative of a variety of migration experiences among those usually defined as "Eastern European Jews" at the time. Researchers have tended to condense the variety of their experiences within the broad phenomenon known as "Jewish mass migration." Framing it in this way implies that only Jews were on the move, and thus, the mass migration phenomenon was a distinct Jewish phenomenon. Jews, however, as Tobias Brinkmann impressively illustrated, migrated within the context of a larger movement of people.<sup>10</sup>

European migration was not an exclusively Jewish movement—particularly not the migration between Habsburg Central Europe and the United States. Hasia Diner argued that many more Jews left "Eastern Europe," by which she was referring specifically to the Russian Pale of Settlement.<sup>11</sup> Yet, a glance at the population figures from the Habsburg Empire reveals a rather more complex composition of people on the move:<sup>12</sup> Among the three million people who left the Empire between 1889 and 1914 280,000 were Jews,<sup>13</sup> approximately 240,000

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<sup>10</sup> On the problematic dichotomy between Jewish people on the move and non-migrant non-Jews in general see Klaus Hödl, *Vom Shtetl an die Lower East Side: Galizische Juden in New York* (Vienna-Cologne-Weimar: Böhlau, 1991), 76-97.

<sup>11</sup> Hasia R. Diner, *The Jews of to the United States, 1645 to 2000* (Berkeley-Los Angeles-London: University of California Press, 2004), 96.

<sup>12</sup> Significant works on migration between Europe and the United States have paid little attention to the Habsburg Empire. Moreover, while the movement of Jews from the Russian Pale of settlement has enjoyed a comparatively high interest in research, fewer studies on emigration specifically from the Habsburg Empire have been conducted. The historiography on migration has long depended on and built on studies from the first decades of the twentieth century. A rediscovery of this topic from the 1980s onward by historians from the United States has created new trends in research: Anson Rabinbach and Marsha Rozenblit, for example, focused on Jewish migrants from Galicia in Vienna. Concerning migration from Europe see, Leslie Page Moch, *Moving Europeans: Migration in Western Europe since 1650*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003); on migration from the Habsburg Empire see Leopold Caro, *Auswanderung und Auswanderungspolitik in Österreich* (Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1909); Hans Weichmann, *Die Auswanderung aus Österreich und Rußland über die Deutschen Häfen* (Berlin: Frensdorf, 1913); Anson Rabinbach, "The Migration of Galician Jews to Vienna, 1857-1880," *Austrian History Yearbook* 11 (1975): 44-54; Marsha Rozenblit, "A Note on Galician Jewish Migration to Vienna," *Austrian History Yearbook* 19 (1983): 143-152.

<sup>13</sup> Annemarie Steidl, Wladimir Fischer-Nebmaier and James W. Oberly, *From a Multiethnic Empire to a Nation of Nations: Austro-Hungarian Migrants in the US, 1870-1940* (Innsbruck-

of whom were from the eastern provinces, Galicia and Bukovina.<sup>14</sup> These easternmost provinces of the Habsburg Empire were home to one third of the empire's total population but accounted for only one twelfth of its income and production.<sup>15</sup> Jews made up a relatively small part of the overall phenomenon. Thus, what tends to be framed as Jewish mass migration was a movement that engendered a lot of encounters between Jews and non-Jews, as well as between migrants and non-migrants.

The migration of Jews from Eastern Europe has been characterized as a movement with several stages, a characteristic that also holds true for performing artists on the move. People first migrated to larger, industrialized cities, where they acquired new knowledge before continuing their migration or, in some cases, re-emigrating to the cities or villages they had come from; in other words, they transmigrated.<sup>16</sup> Migrants leaving the empire for the United States also moved in this way, with migration to larger cities first, followed by migration abroad. Migration between Europe and the United States, however, was not unidirectional. Almost one third of the Monarchy's migrants returned;<sup>17</sup> some newspapers at the time polemically claimed that almost three-quarters of migrants had re-migrated to the Habsburg Empire.<sup>18</sup>

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Vienna-Bozen: Studienverlag, 2017), 140; Annemarie Steidl, " 'There are no cats in America...': Zur Teilnahme von Juden und Jüdinnen an transatlantischen Wanderungen aus den österreichischen Ländern der Habsburgermonarchie," *Aschkenas* 17, no. 1 (2007): 13-33; 20. For detailed numbers of transatlantic migration between the Habsburg Monarchy and the United States, see Heinz Faßmann, "Auswanderung aus der österreichisch-ungarischen Monarchie 1869-1910," in *Auswanderung aus Österreich: Von der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts bis zur Gegenwart*, eds. Traude Horvath and Gerda Neyer (Vienna-Cologne-Weimar: Böhlau, 1996), 33-56; 35.

<sup>14</sup> Klaus Hödl, *Als Bettler in die Leopoldstadt: Galizische Juden auf dem Weg nach Wien*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Vienna-Cologne-Weimar: Böhlau, 1994), 12.

<sup>15</sup> Steidl, Fischer-Nebmaier and Oberly, *From a Multiethnic Empire to a Nation of Nations*, 142.

<sup>16</sup> Brinkmann, "Points of Passage," 1; Hödl, *Als Bettler in die Leopoldstadt*, 115.

<sup>17</sup> Steidl, Fischer-Nebmaier and Oberly, *From a Multiethnic Empire to a Nation of Nations*, 50-75.

<sup>18</sup> Albert Ballin, "Die Einigung im Auswanderungsstreite," *Neue Freie Presse*, January 16, 1914, 2; on re-migration see Annemarie Steidl, "Ein ewiges Hin und Her: Kontinentale, transatlantische und regionale Migrationsrouten in der Spätphase der Habsburgermonarchie," *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaften* 19, no. 1 (2008): 15-42; 29-35.

Galicia was the region where many Jewish emigrants began their journey. Widespread impoverishment and exploitation of the new train system connecting the eastern regions of the empire were the most important factors promoting mass migration. When the Habsburg authorities approved the first steam train to Galicia in 1836, they most likely did not anticipate its impact on the demographics of the empire's eastern regions. Massive demographic growth, accompanied by increasing train traffic, permanently changed living and working conditions,<sup>19</sup> as traders began to increasingly travel between villages and cities in the following decades. This, in turn, led to tough competition at the regional points of sale, thereby permanently altering the economic situation. Local traders were often no longer able to sell their goods.<sup>20</sup> Hence, they either had to offer their products in other markets or find a new way to earn a living. Many did not see a future in the increasingly impoverished provinces of Galicia and Bukovina. Therefore, people whose livelihoods depended on trading goods first started traveling to nearby markets, and then traveled ever greater distances; many ended up in the imperial cities of Vienna and Budapest.<sup>21</sup>

This mass movement of people permanently changed the demographics and, accordingly, the economic development and experiences of daily life in large cities. Between 1880 and 1910, Vienna's population increased from 700,000 people to two million people, including 175,000 Jews.<sup>22</sup> The same rapid population increase

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<sup>19</sup> The permission to establish a steam railway to Galicia was granted in 1836. The railway system was completed in 1861. Klemens Kaps, *Ungleiche Entwicklung in Zentraleuropa: Galizien zwischen überregionaler Verflechtung und imperialer Politik (1772-1914)* (Vienna-Cologne-Weimar: Böhlau, 2015), 328-334; Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *Geschichte der Eisenbahnreise: Zur Industrialisierung von Raum und Zeit im 19. Jahrhundert*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 2000).

<sup>20</sup> Andlauer Teresa, *Die jüdische Bevölkerung im Modernisierungsprozess Galiziens 1867-1914* (Frankfurt am Main-New York: Peter Lang, 2001), 54; Andrea Komlosy, *Grenze und ungleiche regionale Entwicklung: Binnenmarkt und Migration in der Habsburgermonarchie* (Vienna: Promedia, 2003), 25.

<sup>21</sup> Hödl, *Als Bettler in die Leopoldstadt*, 13-22; Hödl, *Vom Shtetl an die Lower East Side*, 21-30.

<sup>22</sup> Oxaal Ivar, "Die Juden im Wien des jungen Hitler: Historische und soziologische Aspekte," in *Eine zerstörte Kultur: Jüdisches Leben und Antisemitismus in Wien seit dem 19. Jahrhundert*, eds. Gerhard Botz, Ivar Oxaal, Michael Pollak and Nina Scholz, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Vienna: Czernin, 2002), 46-64; 52; John Michael, "Vielfalt und Heterogenität: Zur Migration nach Wien um 1900," in *Migration und Innovation um 1900: Perspektiven auf das Wien der Jahrhundertwende*, ed. Elisabeth

occurred in the second imperial city, Budapest: by 1910, a population of approximately 370,000 in 1880 had grown to a million people, more than 30 percent of whom were Jewish.<sup>23</sup> Transatlantic emigration to the United States caused New York's population to quadruple from 1.5 million inhabitants in 1890 to 5.6 million in 1910, 1.2 millions of whom were Jews, who comprised 25 percent of the city's population.<sup>24</sup>

This mobility shaped the cities' populations and the urban experience of their inhabitants. During the fin de siècle, migration and mobility for social, economic, political, or professional reasons determined everyday life. Mobility in society in general was about to change, gaining a new impact, as argued by the cultural historian Moritz Csáky.<sup>25</sup> The cities grew into increasingly pluri-cultural metropolises.<sup>26</sup> In their daily routines in the markets, in schools, or at work

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Röhrlich (Vienna-Cologne-Weimar: Böhlau, 2016), 23-64; 27; Statistische Abteilung des Wiener Magistrats, *Statistisches Jahrbuch der Stadt Wien für das Jahr 1890* (Vienna: Magistrat, 1892), 34; Id., *Statistisches Jahrbuch der Stadt Wien für das Jahr 1900* (Vienna: Magistrat, 1902), 32; Id., *Statistisches Jahrbuch der Stadt Wien für das Jahr 1910* (Vienna: Magistrat, 1912), 45.

<sup>23</sup> Ungarisches statistisches Zentralamt, *Ungarisches statistisches Jahrbuch: neue Folge 18, im Auftrage des kön. Ung. Handelsministers* (Budapest: Athenaeum, 1910), 13; József Körösy, *Budapest Székesfőváros Halandósága az 1901-1905 években és annak okai* [Mortality and its Causes in Budapest in the Years 1901-1905] (Budapest: Kilián Frigyes Útoda Puttkammer & Mühlbrecht, 1902), 2. L'Office Central Royal Hongrois de Statistique, *Annuaire Statistique Hongrois* (Budapest: Athenaeum, 1932), 8. The population of Budapest did exceed one million before 1930. By then, according to the census, 1,004,000 people (including 204,000 Jews) lived there. Kinga Frojimoviics, Géza Kormoróczy, Viktória Pusztai and Andrea Strbik, *Jewish Budapest: Monuments, Rites, History* (Budapest-New York: Central European University Press, 1999), 263. Although almost one quarter of the population of Budapest around 1900 was bilingual or even trilingual and the population grew by an average of forty percent annually, no studies have to date dealt with the Hungarian capital's pluri-cultural character or the influence of immigration on its society. As remarked by John, "Vielfalt und Heterogenität," 26.

<sup>24</sup> The Cities Census Committee, ed., *Population of the City of New York 1890-1930* (New York: City of New York, 1932), 270; Hasia Diner, "Yiddish New York," in *New York's Yiddish Theater: From Bowery to Broadway*, ed. Edna Nahshon (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), 50-63; 52-54; Moses Rischin, *The Promised City: New York's Jews 1870-1914*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Cambridge-London: Harvard University Press, 1977), ix.

<sup>25</sup> Csáky, "Hybride Kommunikationsräume und Mehrfachidentitäten," 65-68.

<sup>26</sup> The concept "pluri-cultural" was coined by postcolonial critics to take the concept of "multiculturalism" a step further, emphasizing the intermingling of various cultures over their juxtaposed existence. Homi K Bhabha., *The Location of Culture*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Routledge, 2004), 1-6; Anil Bhatti, "Plurikulturalität," in *Habsburg Neu Denken: Vielfalt und Ambivalenz in*



people could not help but share a pluri-cultural experience and interact with people who shared a different ethnic and/or cultural background. Popular entertainment was one sphere within this urban experience that especially reflected both this pluri-culturality and mobility.<sup>27</sup> Because of these, the field of popular entertainment offered a unique space for encounters between Jews and non-Jews, as well as between performers and the audience. Many people involved in the scene were Jewish, and the plays and songs negotiated Jewish and non-Jewish relations, Antisemitism, and pluri-cultural urban experiences.

### Performing Artists on the Move

*Volkssänger* (folk singers) and other participants in the vaudeville entertainment were part of this societal movement, and many came from both Habsburg Central Europe and the Russian Empire.<sup>28</sup> Popular entertainment artists traveled frequently, were hired abroad, and (trans)migrated from one city to another. Usually, travel agents arranged and organized their mobility and provided contracts at establishments in the countries to which they traveled.

While Galicia was one of the regions from which most of the migrants from the Habsburg Empire left, the province itself also operated as a transit point in the migration movement of Jews from the Pale of Settlement and Lemberg/Lviv is considered to be the city from which the first Jewish traveling artists departed.<sup>29</sup>

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*Zentraleuropa—30 Kulturwissenschaftliche Stichworte*, eds. Johannes Feichtinger and Heidemarie Uhl (Vienna-Cologne-Weimar: Böhlau, 2016), 171-180.

<sup>27</sup> Susanne Korbel, *Auf die Tour! Jüdinnen und Juden in Singspielhalle, Kabarett und Varieté, Zwischen Habsburgermonarchie und Amerika* (Wien: Böhlau, 2021).

<sup>28</sup> On Jewish migrants from the Russian Empire who became stars of New York's vaudevilles see Edna Nahshon, "Overture," in *New York's Yiddish Theater: From Bowery to Broadway*, ed. Edna Nahshon (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), 35.

<sup>29</sup> Tobias Brinkmann, " 'Travelling with Ballin': The Impact of American Immigration Policies on Jewish Transmigration within Central Europe, 1880-1914," *International Review of Social History* 53, no. 3 (2008): 459-481. Currently a lot of new research on migration through Habsburg territories is emerging. E.g. Drawing from Brinkmann's concept of points of passage, Oleksii Chebotarov examines Galicia as "point of passage" in the emigration of Jews from the Pale of Settlement in a PhD thesis, Oleksii Chebotarov, "Jews from the East, Global Migration and the Habsburg Galicia in the early 1880s" (PhD diss., University of St. Gallen, 2021).

The growth of the Galician city of Brody, a town on the border with Russia, and the expanding trade routes to Western Europe, were shaped by migrants seeking refuge from pogroms in the Russian Empire in the years following the assassination of the Russian emperor Alexander II, in 1881.<sup>30</sup> By then, Brody had emerged as the third-largest city in Galicia, nevertheless, Jewish migrants from the Russian Empire tended to migrate to the lands of the Hungarian crown since after 1867 they were granted the right of free settlement there.<sup>31</sup>

The Brodersänger (Broder singers) were one of the first folk singer ensembles that traveled both within Galicia and further afield to other cities in the Habsburg Empire. As the name of the group indicates, this ensemble originated in the city of Brody. The same applied to the founding member of the ensemble, Berl Broders, nee Berl Margulies (1817-1880), whose nom de plume showed where his journey had begun.<sup>32</sup> One of Broder's popular songs addressed the reason for his own mobility and the emerging mobility of others: "Ikh nebekh peklmakher" (Yiddish, "I am an unfortunate smuggler").<sup>33</sup> Berl Broder became famous within the small community in Brody by word of mouth. "As the rich commercial town became impoverished due to an economic crisis, Berl left, and his wandering years began: Together with his company of singers he marched through all the cities of Galicia, where people loved hearing them."<sup>34</sup> Along the path of the "first traveling

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<sup>30</sup> Börries Kuzmany, *Brody: Eine Galizische Grenzstadt im langen 19. Jahrhundert* (Vienna-Cologne-Weimar: Böhlau, 2011), 240-246.

<sup>31</sup> Studies on Jewish emigration to the Hungarian crown lands are still lacking, as remarked by Julia Richers, *Jüdisches Budapest: Kulturelle Topographien einer Stadtgemeinde im 19. Jahrhundert* (Vienna-Cologne-Weimar: Böhlau, 2009), 144-146.

<sup>32</sup> Nathan Michael Gelber, "Berl Broder: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der jüdischen Volksänger," *Mitteilungen für jüdische Volkskunde* 16, no. 3 (1913): 1-18; 1.

<sup>33</sup> Kuzmany, *Brody*, 92.

<sup>34</sup> Gelber, "Berl Broder," 4. Nahma Sandrow's description of the formation of Berl Broder differs from the contemporary view by Nathan Michael Gelber. Sandrow stated that Berl Broder "[...] began his career as a boy working in a shop making boar bristle brushes. While his hands kept moving, he entertained the other boys with a flow of songs and quips. When he got a job as a buyer for an export firm, he traveled farther and farther from home. He stayed at inns, where he developed a reputation for the songs and monologues he improvised in good fellowship over glasses of wine. In a few years, the name Berl Broder became as generic as 'Tex' for a singer of cowboy songs." Sandrow, *Vagabond Stars*, 37.

vaudeville group,” the Lemberger Gimpl (Lemberg vaudeville), one of the first music hall establishments, was founded.<sup>35</sup>

The travels of small groups like the Brodersänger were the beginning of a steady expansion of popular entertainment culture. The increasing mobility in popular entertainment influenced the available venues, in that an increasing number of *varietés* and music halls were established to accommodate the larger number of artists who traveled to the cities.<sup>36</sup> Accordingly, these establishments also arranged their programs with traveling artists and groups.<sup>37</sup> Managers, agents, and other associates created more infrastructure for the mobile popular entertainment scene. Newspapers emerged that operated on an international basis, as well as agencies that supported the traveling stars.<sup>38</sup> Artists and vaudeville managers built international relationships and exchanged and evaluated forms of social insurance, planned simplifications of the transatlantic travel routes as well as agreements for the foundation of associations.<sup>39</sup> In particular, over the summer months groups went on tours. They visited cities abroad to perform their songs and plays. It was even common for European ensembles or single performers to go

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<sup>35</sup> Delphine Bechtel, “Le théâtre yiddish Gimpel de Lemberg: une Odyssée oubliée,” *Yod* 16 (2011): 83-93.

<sup>36</sup> From 1890 to 1900, the number of registered *varietés* and various *établissements* in the Habsburg Empire’s capitals doubled, while the music halls in New York increased four times in number.

<sup>37</sup> Korbel, *Auf die Tour*, 51-4.

<sup>38</sup> The *Internationale Artisten Revue*, established in November 1891, was the most famous in the Habsburg Empire. In the German Empire, the newspaper with the widest distribution was *Der Artist*, established in 1882. *The New York Clipper*, established in 1853, was the English-language equivalent published in the United States. On *Der Artist*, see Margaret Myers, “Searching for Data about Ladies’ Orchestras, 1870-1950,” in *Music and Gender*, eds. Pirkko Moisala and Beverly Diamond (Urbana-Chicago: University of Illinois, 2000), 189-213; 208.

<sup>39</sup> The association Der Lustige Ritter (the Funny Knight) was founded in Vienna. Popular actors and artists in Budapest first joined the Viennese association but later founded their own, which they named Budapest Artisten Club. In America, circuits fulfilled the function of these associations. Korbel, *Auf die Tour*, 133-37. On the role of entrepreneurs and their associations in organizing mobile popular entertainment, see also Antje Dietz, “Americanization of Show Business? Shifting Territories of Theatrical Entertainment in North America at the Turn of the 20th Century,” *Processes of Spatialization in the Americas*, eds. Gabriele Pisarz-Ramirez and Hannes Warnecke-Berger (Bern-New York: Peter Land, 2018), 193-215.

on tour in the United States and vice versa. Most likely, such tours lasted several months or up to a year.<sup>40</sup>

David Tulin, a Jewish artist from Odessa who migrated to the United States via the crossroads of the Habsburg Empire, remembered his experience of entering the United States as a traveling performer at the turn of the twentieth century as follows:

In those days, for people of music and art, it was very easy to go to the United States, to enter in the United States. It wasn't any difficulties. We just came off and the only thing that we met an American manager. He left some money, you know, deposit for us. The only difficulty. And then we played there in Seattle, Washington, and then we went to Los Angeles. No, wait, Portland, Oregon. We played there, and then we went to Los Angeles [*sic.*].<sup>41</sup>

Because such sources are rare, the artists' traveling activities remain difficult to trace: to calculate the overall number of Jewish performers and how many times they entered the US and for which purposes, one must check the passenger lists of every ship that arrived on Ellis Island.<sup>42</sup> There are neither known sources that present the collected information of a whole group of traveling performers nor any collected documentation of groups of migrants who traveled together. Performers who traveled between the United States and Habsburg Central Europe did not leave much of a paper trail. However, the artists built a strong network, of which two newspapers are representative. These publications laid the groundwork for the study of the artists' migration patterns: the *New York Clipper* and the *Internationale Artisten Revue* (International Artist Revue). Through these newspapers, one can become acquainted with the members of popular entertainment. The other way to follow their traces between the continents is provided by their conflicts with the authorities, in which case they received a police

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<sup>40</sup> Sandrow, *Vagabond Stars*, 80.

<sup>41</sup> David Tulin interviewed by Margo Nash, January 4, 1984, Oral History Collection (hereafter: OHC), file NPS-139, Ellis Island Archive (hereafter: EIA), New York.

<sup>42</sup> Annemarie Steidl did this for the year 1910.

record. Finally, another chance to gain insight into the experiences of migrant musicians and artists lies in the artifacts they produced, primarily the plays in which stories about traveling were told.

The play titled *Ein Wiener Quartett in Amerika* introduced at the beginning of this article provides one such example of a reflection of the migration movement between the Habsburg Empire and the United States. Whereas the newly emerging infrastructure ensured a safe journeys for artists and musicians, this popular play depicts a vaudeville ensemble from the Habsburg Empire that is lured to the United States, “the land of opportunity,” under false pretenses.<sup>43</sup> In doing so, it is quite representative of the migration pattern that gained increasing importance in the last decades of the twentieth century—the mobility of performing musicians and popular entertainment—and represents both the expectations and risks entailed in migrating between the Habsburg Empire and the United States.

One risk in particular that traveling artists were exposed to is revealed in the play. The ensemble’s trip begins quite chaotically at the harbor of Trieste/Trst/Triest, the main trading port of the Habsburg Empire. The four performers board the steamship to New York with empty hands, having nothing on them but a “Devisenschein” (foreign exchange certificate). The agent who hired them left a deposit in US dollars at the consulate for them to pick up on arrival. During the voyage, other passengers eavesdrop on the ensemble and become aware of this deal. The eavesdroppers decide to seize the money before the ensemble can claim it. While the musicians enter the US via Ellis Island, the crooks steal the musicians’ instruments and passports to steal their identity and take possession of their payment at the consulate. These circumstances lead to a challenging arrival for the musicians, who have a hard time adjusting to their new environment in New York. They immediately set off for the consulate to report the theft, but the crooks arrive there first. Consequently, the consulate staff does not believe the real musicians’ story and sees them as fraudsters; it takes them quite some time to demonstrate

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<sup>43</sup> Record of the Theater Censorship on *Ein Quartett in Amerika*, 1897, Box 35, File 6460, NÖ Reg. Präs., TZ, NÖLA, St. Pölten.

that they are the real group by finally getting their instruments back and performing *Wienerlieder* (Viennese tunes).<sup>44</sup>

In portraying the potential experiences of performers who traveled from Vienna to New York, the play aptly reveals one of the risks to which migrants were permanently exposed: betrayal. Within the framework of the movement of masses of people, the popular entertainment scene developed a special network to prevent its members from being cheated. Despite the establishment of international artist organizations, newspapers and a broad network, crossing the Atlantic still entailed several risks. Theft and betrayal were routinely documented. In January 1894, an artist who had just arrived back in Europe after having traveled through the United States wrote a letter to the editor of the *Internationale Artisten Revue* recounting his experience:

I was engaged for a thirty-week tour in America and Canada by Imre Fox in Vienna in May 1893. From 2 November 1893 to 1 May 1894, I was engaged at Koster & Biale in New York [one of the great music halls, SK]. On the morning of 2 November, we drove to a small venue where the first performance took place; from then on, we traveled nearly every day. On the evening of Sunday, 7 November, we performed in Wilmington. After this performance, Imre Fox told us he would travel to New York on business and he would return to the association in Bethlehem by Monday. On 9 November, we traveled with his brother-in-law, Mr. Clark, to Bethlehem. We prepared everything for the evening show, and the audience was just arriving at the theater, but Imre Fox had not yet arrived. We waited for all trains arriving from New York, but none of them brought Imre. Finally, we had to cancel the performance and return the money to the audience. [...] Since we had no director, we drove back to New York that same evening; I went to Mrs. Fox, who told me in tears that her husband had disappeared; she had searched for him in all the hospitals and even called the police but had not found any trace of him so

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<sup>44</sup> Record of the Theater Censorship on *Ein Quartett in Amerika*, 1897, Box 35, File 6460, NÖ Reg. Präs., TZ, NÖLA, St. Pölten.

far. She firmly believed that her husband had been murdered. Only by 10 November did she know for sure that her husband had run away to Europe and left her without any funds.<sup>45</sup>

With this letter, the author wanted to warn his colleagues about the agent who had betrayed him and the ensembles he had worked with to protect other artists from betrayal. The artist was also requesting help and tried to find support among the readers of the newspapers so that the fraudster could be arrested, and the artist could finally receive payment for his work. The *Internationale Artisten Revue* provided help during the search for Imre Fox and frequently did so in similar cases.

### **Performers' Traveling Activities and the Allegations of Human Trafficking**

One such warning among co-performers concerned another risk they had to face routinely and was published in the *Internationale Artisten Revue* in late 1891:

Warning. We, the signing performers, warn all our colleagues, mainly the women among them, [not] to accept an engagement in the establishment Imperial (also known as Hotel Concordia): the owner Ivan Robeff is according to the k. u. k. *Consulatsprotocoll* (report of the consulate) accused of trafficking in women; he sold one of his artists to a brothel in order to get his fee as agent sooner. Luckily the consulate interfered early enough to free the actress. Since the agent has lost all his artists now he will most likely try to hire new artists by the help of another person in Budapest or Vienna; thus, we highly recommend to all artists and agents to read these lines.<sup>46</sup>

In addition to the frequent danger of being betrayed on one's routes of migration or mobility, two further aspects of speaking about people on the move are

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<sup>45</sup> Charles Haydn, "Leserbrief," *Internationale Artisten Revue*, January 10, 1894, 9, quoted in Korbelt, "Jews, Mobility, and Sex," 30. The two cities mentioned, Bethlehem and Wilmington, had both a large German-speaking population.

<sup>46</sup> Emil Rosé, "Warnung," *Internationale Artisten Revue*, December 8, 1891, 32.

paradigmatically distilled in the example of the migration of artists in popular entertainment: (1) debates on the use of masses of people on the move as covers for traveling agents in human trafficking and (2) the discussion and handling of immigration, as well as the expulsion and deportation, of female migrant performers accused of working as sex workers.

Critics of popular culture subscribed the first argument not least because artists' traveling pattern displayed similarities to human traffickers' movements. Within the mass migration taking place at the turn of the twentieth century, fraudsters increasingly engaged in organized human trafficking. The fear of "white slavers" who abducted "innocent" girls abroad triggered widespread panic in the fin-de-siècle Habsburg Empire. Especially in Galicia and Bukovina, as well as along the routes of migration between the eastern provinces, the Habsburg capitals and the United States, knowledge of the threat of trafficking in women and hearsay about it spread. Human traffickers contacted women either in their hometowns or while they traveled (alone), pursuing them or even forcing them to follow them to brothels. Women traveling alone thus led to a "panic" concerning seduction by human traffickers.<sup>47</sup> It was narrated as the trade in "white slavery"<sup>48</sup>—a framing with a harsh antisemitic undertone. Nancy Wingfield claimed that some of the traffickers who hijacked women into brothels were Jews. "The apparent prevalence of Eastern European Jews among traffickers attracted the attention both of antisemites, who condemned their participation in the trade as another indication of flawed Jewish character, and Jewish reform groups, whose campaigns against trafficking were a direct response to this Jewish participation."<sup>49</sup>

Mobility in popular entertainment was often (mistakenly) associated with "white slavery" and the mobility of sex workers who were kidnapped and taken overseas

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<sup>47</sup> On *Damenkapellen*, see Myers, "Searching for Data about Ladies' Orchestras, 1870-1950," 189-213; Derek B. Scott, *Sounds of the Metropolis: The 19th-Century Popular Music Revolution in London, New York, Paris and Vienna* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 21-24.

<sup>48</sup> Vries, "'White Slaves' in a Colonial Nation," 39-60.

<sup>49</sup> Nancy M. Wingfield, *The World of Prostitution in Late Imperial Austria* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 207.



by human traffickers.<sup>50</sup> This was discussed in a particularly strong way within the Habsburg Empire.<sup>51</sup> After the late 1890s, there was regular contact between the Habsburg Empire and immigration offices in the United States regarding the expulsion of “alleged” female artists, their return transportation, whether they had committed a crime or were victims, and how to reunite them with their families. The Austrian government reacted to the increasing number of victims of human traffickers with an agreement signed in 1904, effective as of July 18, 1905. Accordingly, a special agency was established, the Zentralstelle zur Überwachung des Mädchenhandels (Central Office for Monitoring Trafficking in Girls), which fought “white slavery” and provided help for the victims of human trafficking and their families.<sup>52</sup> Such discussions on how to protect female migrants and the pattern of migration in popular entertainment illustrate that the mass migration between the Habsburg Empire and the United States was neither exclusively nor predominantly male. Although Jewish mass migration used to be portrayed as involving mainly young men, to the extent of leaving whole villages in Eastern Europe with almost no male Jewish inhabitants,<sup>53</sup> recent research has altered this narrative, demonstrating that 40% of Yiddish-speaking migrants from the Habsburg Empire to the US were, in fact, female.<sup>54</sup>

Since the pattern of traveling performers in popular entertainment included a considerable amount of traveling activity by women, the industry followed the discussion surrounding institutionalization and the voluntary nature of travel, as

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<sup>50</sup> On the problematic term “white slavery,” see Petra de Vries, “‘White Slaves’ in a Colonial Nation: The Dutch Campaign Against the Traffic in Women in the Early Twentieth Century,” *Social and Legal Studies* 14, no. 1 (2005): 39-60; 40-44. On the panic about human trafficking see Keely Stauter-Halsted, *The Devil’s Chain: Prostitution and Social Control in Partitioned Poland* (Ithaca-London: Cornell University Press, 2015), 117-34; Wingfield, *The World of Prostitution in Late Imperial Austria*, 10-12.

<sup>51</sup> Franz Janisch, “Der Mädchenhandel und seine international gesetzliche Bekämpfung,” *Archiv für Rechts- und Wirtschaftsphilosophie* 7, no. 2 (1914): 303-314; 303-305.

<sup>52</sup> Wingfield, *Prostitution in Late Imperial Austria*, 171. On the new regulations regarding human trafficking in the various parts of the Habsburg Monarchy, see Ministerpräsident on monitoring human trafficking, 16.-19.9.1907, White Slavery and Prostitution, Box 2122, File 32921, Ministerium des Inneren (hereafter: MdI), Allgemeines Verwaltungsarchiv (hereafter: AVA), OeSTA, Vienna.

<sup>53</sup> Hödl, *Als Bettler in die Leopoldstadt*, 48.

<sup>54</sup> Steidl, Fischer-Nebmaier and Oberly, *From a Multiethnic Empire to a Nation of Nations*, 141. On this, Steidl, Firscher-Nebmaier and Oberly provide a case study for the year 1910.

well as insurance, with great interest. The discussions surrounding female traveling performers revealed the overlapping of different risks faced by migrants and the discourses on these risks. The female artists and musicians in popular entertainment usually traveled together with either their ensembles or—mostly male—agents. This formed a picture—traveling male agents, their companions and mostly young women—that appeared similar to that of women who became victims of “white slavers.” This image stood in a longer tradition of female voyagers in popular entertainment that coincided with the stereotype of popular entertainment as a cover for clandestine prostitution, and female artists as secretly earning their living as sex workers: *Damenkapellen* (ladies’ orchestras),<sup>55</sup> groups of exclusively female musicians, performed all over Europe and were frequently confronted with this subject. There is evidence that in some cases the *Damenkapellen* led women into prostitution.<sup>56</sup> Nevertheless, the (proclaimed) overlap between traveling performers and clandestine prostitution spread widely and confronted female performers in the vaudeville scene in subsequent decades. The boom of the international artistic business and the new infrastructure available for traveling stars during the fin de siècle made this claim grow even further.<sup>57</sup>

Two biographies of female performers and one popular play may help include the often-missed perspective of the victims in the broad debate on human trafficking against the background of the migration movement. On August 20, 1912, eight-year-old Sora Rothstein arrived at Ellis Island. Betty Schwarz, the fiancé of a cousin of Sora’s from Bukovina, had escorted Sora at her mother’s request to bring her safely to the United States. Sora’s mother had already immigrated in 1907 and settled in Mount Clemens, Michigan, where she worked in the entertainment business during the summer months, while during the winter months, for the previous five years, she had been working in New Jersey. The Jewish family used to run—as Sora remembered—a large farm in Bolechow, a Galician town on the

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<sup>55</sup> Halsted-Stauter, *The Devil’s Chain*, 117-34.

<sup>56</sup> On a Damenkapelle which caused a stir in the Austrian Ministry see Damenkapelle des Moses Liebermann aus Czernowitz, May 23, 1896, Sicherheit, Ministerium des Äußeren (hereafter: MdA), AR F52-44,23663, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv (hereafter: HHStA), OeSTA, Vienna.

<sup>57</sup> On the objections raised against women traveling alone, see Wingfield, *The World of Prostitution in Late Imperial Austria*, 193-202.

railroad line connecting Lviv/Lemberg with Stryj and Skole on the Hungarian border. Sora traveled with her escort through Galicia to the border of Germany and then to Bremen, from where they left for the United States. She did not remember much from her trip, as she was only eight years old. However, she did recall that she became seasick as soon as they boarded the steamship and that her cousin's fiancé scared her during the whole trip, telling her that she would be thrown overboard if she told anyone of her vomiting; children who immigrated to the US were especially at risk of being rejected at the ports of call instead of receiving permission to enter the US. Sora also did not know much about the country they were heading for, except that it was the “golden America,” where “the gold is on the sidewalk.”<sup>58</sup> When they finally reached the harbor of New York, she left the ship as Sadie, the name her cousin's fiancé suggested for her new life in the United States the moment her mother picked her up from the immigration office.<sup>59</sup>

As Sora left the very center of immigration into the United States as Sadie Rothstein, Lizzie Miller, born Julie Sipos in Hungary, started her journey in exactly the opposite direction, heading back towards Austria because she had been accused of working as a sex worker under the name Lizzie Miller in the city of Chicago. The Bureau of Immigration informed the Austrian Ministry of the Interior that they had deported Julie Sipos on the Concord line to Fiume/Rieka/Saint Veit am Flaum, the Hungarian port of the empire at the time.<sup>60</sup>

The biographies of Sadie Rothstein and Julie Sipos illustrate various aspects concerning traveling artists. Sadie Rothstein was an actress born in Galicia who decided to stay in the United States and asked her family, who still lived in the Empire, to send her young daughter to join her. Meanwhile, Julie Sipos' forced re-

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<sup>58</sup> Quote from the interview with Sadie Rothstein Saltzman [interview conducted in English]. Sadie Rothstein Saltzman interviewed by Kathy Connelly, July 28, 1983, OHC, file NPS-139, EIA, New York.

<sup>59</sup> Sadie Rothstein Saltzman interviewed by Kathy Connelly, July 28, 1983, OHC, file NPS-139, EIA, New York.

<sup>60</sup> Office for Immigration, Washington, 2 to the Austrian Ministry of the Interior, September 21, 1907, White Slavery and Prostitution, Box 2122, File 53510/138, MdI, AVA, OeSTA, Vienna.

emigration to the Habsburg empire highlights the treatment of female migrants who were accused of being sex workers. Whereas in the first case, two women, a girl and a young adult, travel via the much better organized migration routes to the United States through Germany, the woman being deported back to the empire was sent on the direct sea route to the Hungarian half of the monarchy.<sup>61</sup>

The bulk of the life stories that shared the risks and sufferings of immigration to the United States are lost to posterity. However, some plays popular among audiences of the time that dealt with the daily experience of migration have been preserved. One paradigmatic example is a play by Boris Thomashefsky, who had migrated from Eastern Europe to the United States.<sup>62</sup> The play, entitled “Der Beit Hmdrsh ointer der erd oder da Idishe Shtroßen Zengerin” (The house of learning in hell or the Yiddish street singer), was written by Thomashefsky himself, who was then a famous playwright and actor of Yiddish theaters in New York. It deals with female migrants in popular entertainment and the risks they were exposed to on transatlantic trips.<sup>63</sup> Thomashefsky, who was particularly known for “yiddishizing” plots, adapted Viktor Hugo’s *Notre-Dame de Paris* (The Hunchback of Notre-Dame) against the background of the life of an impoverished female artist in the Bowery. Thomashefsky thereby broached the issues of prostitution, panhandlers and “street arabs” (waifs) in this New York neighborhood, which was primarily inhabited by immigrants.<sup>64</sup>

“Der Beit Hmdrsh ointer der erd oder da Idishe Shtroßen Zengerin” is about a Jewish immigrant girl who has lost her parents in the turbulent daily life of the

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<sup>61</sup> On the organization of migration for migrants from the Habsburg empire to the United States which was much better to via the German territories see Brinkmann, “Points of Passage,” 3.

<sup>62</sup> Zalmen Zylbercweig, “Tomashefsky, Boris,” in *Leksikon of the Yidishn teater*, vol. 2 (Warsaw: Farlag Elisheva, 1934), 804-840.

<sup>63</sup> Boris Thomashefsky, *Beit Hmdrsh ointer der erd oder da Idishe Shtroßen Zengerin*, 1903, Theater Collection (hereafter: TC), Dorot Jewish Division (hereafter: DJD), P Ms. Yid. 20, New York Public Library (hereafter: NYPL).

<sup>64</sup> The play was sent to the Hebrew Actor’s Union to be staged at the People’s Theater in New York in 1903. The play premiered there on January 4, 1903 and was staged again in 1907. On the *People’s Theater* see Bernhard Gorin, *Di Geshikhte fun Yidshen Teater* [The History of the Yiddish Theater], 2<sup>nd</sup> vol. (New York: Forverts, 1918), 178-180; Judith Thissen, “Reconsidering the Decline of the New York Yiddish Theatre in the Early 1900s,” *Theatre Survey* 44, no. 2 (2003): 173-197; 175-180.

Lower East Side. A rabbi has taken parental custody of her, but, when she grows up, she has to take care of herself. She ends up living the life of a street musician, having to earn money on the side as a sex worker to make a living. The play then vividly portrays the horrors of life in the streets, which, at that time, many immigrants faced on a daily basis: The protagonist is exposed to violence; she has to search every day for scraps to eat, and she has to be available for potential customers, who want her for either entertainment or to buy sex. The people as continually requesting sex from her are notably not the immigrants themselves, but the “noble men” of New York City.

With this performance, which openly addressed the problems and adversities faced by immigrants on a daily basis, Thomashefsky hinted at two important points: the close connection between migration, popular entertainment, and New York society, which constantly sought out immigrants and consumed the popular entertainment offered by them in the Bowery on the Lower East Side, the part of Manhattan where Broadway begins. It is no coincidence that this famous entertainment boulevard begins in a neighborhood mainly inhabited by immigrants.

### **Conclusions**

In this paper, I have discussed how the case of migration within the popular entertainment scene illustrates the complexity of the Jewish mass migration movement, moreover, reflecting the discussion on migration in general and gender aspects in particular. The migration of performing musicians between Habsburg Central Europe and the US formed a specific pattern within the mass migration movement that has received little attention from researchers. Nevertheless, this particular migration pattern allows for an analysis of discussions on transatlantic migration as a whole. It challenges longstanding assumptions, such as that mass migration in the last decades of the nineteenth century was an exclusively Jewish movement or only a one-way trip from Europe to the US. Moreover, examining understudied migration patterns, such as those of traveling performers, reveals voices that lamented the assertions made about migrants.

While several aspects promoted rapid growth in popular entertainment and spurred the traveling activities of artists, discussions about the movement of traveling artists triggered society to cast a judgmental eye on them. The risks inherent in migration and traveling drew assertions that became more visible in the debates on performers, women in particular. Overlapping images of migration patterns encouraged such assertions. The movement of female artists within mobile vaudeville groups coincided with the mobility of agents in human trafficking and thus routinely provoked claims that the popular entertainment scene functioned as a cover for prostitution. Hence, the scope of research on this topic should be expanded to include alternative perspectives. For example, exploring the artifacts produced by performers, such as the plays staged in music halls and vaudeville theaters, would help us gain knowledge on these aspects of mass migration and stop perpetuating the state-authority-based perspective on migrants, which is inherent to the debates dominated by the administration.

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