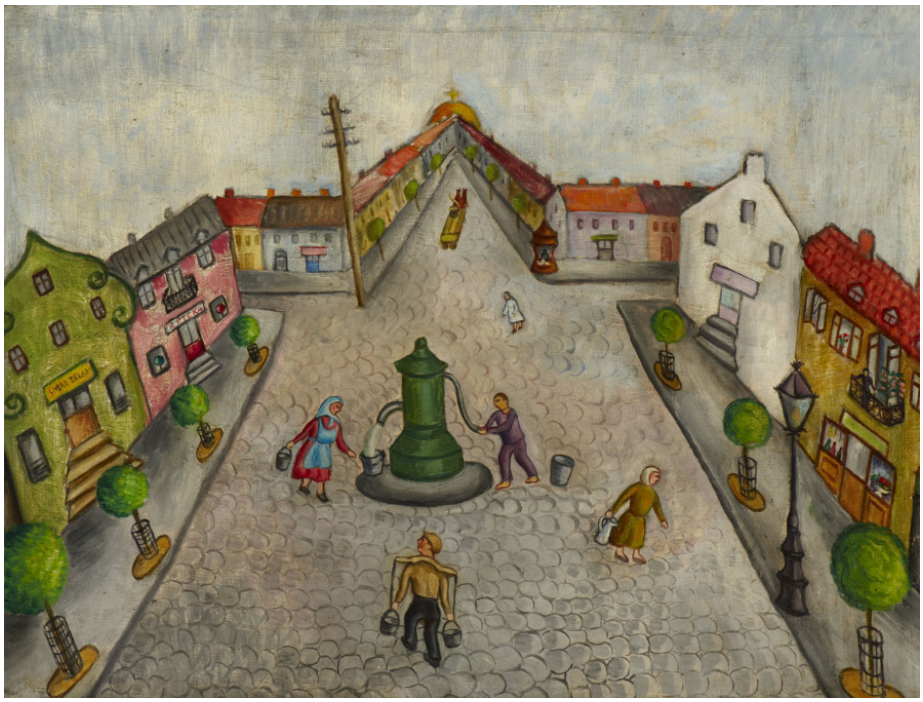
Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History
Journal of the Fondazione CDEC
QUESTIONI DI STORIA EBRAICA CONTEMPORANEA. RIVISTA DELLA FONDAZIONE CDEC



Jewish Minorities between Nation-Building and Emigration in late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Century East Central Europe

edited by *Francesco Di Palma* and *Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe*

Issue 20, December 2021

QUEST. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History
Journal of the Fondazione CDEC

CDEC Fondazione Centro di Documentazione Ebraica Contemporanea

QUEST. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History
Journal of the Fondazione CDEC
ISSN: 2037-741X
via Eupili 8, 20145 Milano Italy
Reg. Trib. Milano n. 403 del 18/09/2009
P. IVA: 12559570150
tel. 003902316338 – fax 00390233602728
www.quest-cdecjournal.it
mail@quest-cdejournal.it

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Jewish Minorities between Nation-Building and Emigration in late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Century East Central Europe

Introduction

by *Francesco Di Palma* and *Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe*

The term "Jewish mass migration" with reference to migration flows of Eastern European Jews to Western Europe or North America has been often employed in research. This resulted in the mixing up of processes relating to migrants from both Eastern European territories (mostly from the Russian Pale of Settlement and the Kingdom of Poland)[1] as well as from parts of the Habsburg Empire (mostly Galicia

1 The Kingdom of Poland belonged to the Russian Empire but enjoyed different political regulations and a different political situation than the rest of the empire. Especially until 1905 many more Jews emigrated from this colony of the Russian Empire and Lithuania, than the rest of the Empire. On this topic and in general on Jewish minorities in this region see among others: Lloyd P. Gartner, "The Great Jewish Migration. Its East European Background," *Tel Aviver Jahrbuch für deutsche Geschichte*, 27 (1998): 107-133; Dov Levin, *The Litvaks: A Short History of the Jews in Lithuania* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2000); Shlomo Lambroza, "Jewish Responses to Pogroms in Late Imperial Russia," in *Living with Antisemitism: Modern Jewish Responses*, ed. Jehuda Reinharz (Hanover: Brandeis University Press, 1987), 253-274; John Klier, *Russia Gathers her Jews: The Origins of the "Jewish Question" in Russia, 1772-1825* (Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 1986); John Klier, *Imperial Russia's Jewish question, 1855-1881* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Michael Stanislawski, *Tsar Nicholas I and the Jews: The Transformation of Jewish Society in Russia 1825-1855* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1983); Alexei Miller, *The Romanov Empire and Nationalism*, (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2008); Simon Dubnow, *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland: From the Earliest Times until the Present Day*, vol. 2 (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1918); Louis Greenberg, *The Jews in Russia*, vol. 2 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1951); Eugene Avrutin, *Jews and the Imperial State: Identification Politics in Tsarist Russia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010); Antony Polonsky, *The Jews in Poland and Russia* (Oxford: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2010-2012), 114. Theodore R. Weeks, *From Assimilation to Antisemitism: The "Jewish Question" in Poland 1850–1914* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2006).

and Bukovina)[2] and the German Reich.[3] Although often and for obvious reasons overlapping, the labeling of such a phenomenon as "Jewish" is not accurate. First of all, there has never been a homogeneous "Eastern European Jewry"—as the essays of this special issue show. Secondly, it was not only Jews who left their regions of origin, but also hundreds of thousands of other non-Jewish Eastern Europeans. Frequently, they used the same trains and ships. Thirdly, Jews' migrations often followed recurrent patterns: from the Russian Empire to the Kingdom of Poland or the German Empire, from the Kingdom of Poland to the German Empire or directly to North America, and from the German and the Habsburg Empires to the New World.[4]

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[2] Jews' migratory flows from the Russian Pale of Settlement have long attracted a considerable interest in research, whereas the Habsburg Empire has been rather neglected. Yet, over the last years there has been a revival of scientific work on the topic, focusing i.a. on trans-cultural issues. Among others: Leslie Page Moch, *Moving Europeans: Migration in Western Europe since 1650*, 2nd ed. (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2003); Marsha Rozenblit, "A Note on Galician Jewish Migration to Vienna," *Austrian History Yearbook* 19 (1983): 143-52; Israel Bartal and Antony Polonsky, "The Jews of Galicia under the Habsburgs," *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry* 12 (1999): 3-24; Stanislaw Grodziski, "The Jewish Question in Galicia: The Reforms of Maria Theresa and Joseph II, 1772-1790," *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry* 12 (1999): 61-72; Israel Bartal, *The Jews of Eastern Europe, 1772-1881* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006); Rachel Manekin, "The Galician Roots of Polish Jewish Historiography," in *Conflicting Histories and Coexistence: New Perspectives on the Jewish-Polish Encounter*, ed. Daniel Baltman (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2014), 319-331; Rachel Manekin, *The Jews of Galicia and the Austrian Constitution: The beginning of Modern Jewish Politics* (Jerusalem: Shazar Center, 2015); Robert A. Kann, The *Multinational Empire: Nationalism and National Reform in the Habsburg Monarchy 1848-1918*, vol. 1 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964); John-Paul Himka, "Dimensions of a Triangle: Polish-Ukrainian-Jewish Relations in Austrian Galicia," *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry* 12 (1999): 25-48; Robert S.Wistrich, *Laboratory for World Destruction: Germans and Jews in Central Europe* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007).

[3] Among others: Werner Bergmann and Rainer Erb, *Die Nachseite der Judenemanzipation. Der Widerstand gegen die Integration der Juden in Deutschland 1780–1860* (Berlin: Metropol, 1989); Arnold Paucker, *Deutsche Juden im Kampf um Recht und Freiheit. Studien zu Abwehr, Selbstbehauptung und Widerstand der deutschen Juden seit dem Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Teetz: Hentrich und Hentrich, 2003); Werner Mosse and Arnold Paucker, eds., *Juden im wilhelminischen Deutschland 1890-1914: Ein Sammelband* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1976); Albert A. Bruer, *Geschichte der Juden in Preußen (1750-1820)* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 1991); Michael Brenner, Wicki Caron and Uri Kaufmann, eds., *Jewish Emancipation Reconsidered: The French and the German Models* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003); Ulrich Wyrwa, *Juden in der Toskana und in Preußen im Vergleich. Aufklärung und Emanzipation in Florenz, Livorno, Berlin und Königsberg* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003).

[4] Oh this see, among others, 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: Berghahn, 2013).

Leaving East-Central Europe was not only a physical but also a mental process. In their memory, Jews and other migrants continually constructed and deformed the past, especially with regard to present needs and future expectations. In these processes, political interventions and strategies on memory played an important role. Memory politics is the organization of collective memory by political institutions or agents, in our case rabbis or other spiritual leaders such as hachams and others. It is structured hierarchically and institutionally, and it aims to update selected memories through representations, rituals and stagings, each of which turns the present into a platform for transformation of the past and the future.[5]

Yet, Jews in Central and Eastern Europe reacted very differently to top-down guidelines, often by ignoring them completely. Migrants took their *Heimat* or *ojczyzna* to the New World and lived it there. Nostalgic memories mixed with individual unpleasant recalling of pogroms, distress and poverty.[6] Nevertheless, efforts to offset Antisemitism[7] and the widespread feeling of cultural detachment from mainstream society did not necessarily result in the physical departure of the

[5] Burckhard Dücker, "Ritual," in *Gedächtnis und Erinnerung. Ein interdisziplinäres Lexikon*, eds. Nicolas Pethes and Jens Ruchatz (Reinbek: Rowoht, 2001), 502-503; Helmut König, "Das Politische des Gedächtnisses," in *Gedächtnis und Erinnerung. Ein interdisziplinäres Handbuch*, eds. Christian Gudehus, Ariane Eichenberga, and Harald Welzer (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2010), 115-125; Astrid Erll, *Kollektives Gedächtnis und Erinnerungskulturen. Eine Einführung* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2005); Aleida Assmann, *Der lange Schatten der Vergangenheit. Erinnerungskultur und Geschichtspolitik* (Bonn: C.H. Beck, 2007).

[6] Recent theoretical reflections on cultures of remembrance have assumed that they require flexible spaces that can lead to social action, draw mental maps and establish their own boundaries. Following on from this, the concept of "trans-cultural memory" might be the most suitable to describe efforts to shape realities against the background of experienced hostility (Antisemitism), detachment from one's own traditions and eagerness to mold new ways of being, as it offers the advantage of accurately capturing the complexity of the phenomenon discussed here. It is based on theoretical considerations on trans-culturality and connected history and examines memories as a process of movement across temporal and spatial boundaries. On this, see Astrid Erll, "Travelling Memory," *Parallax* 17 (2011): 4-18; 11; Gabriele Rosenthal and Arthur Bogner, eds., *Ethnicity, Belonging and Biography: Ethnographical and Biographical Perspectives* (Münster: LIT, 2009); Alon Confino, "Collective Memory and Cultural History: Problems of Method," *American Historical Review* 102 (1997): 1386-1403.

[7] On this topic there is, as is well known, a flood of publications. For the sake of brevity we will merely point out the following crucial work: Ulrich Wyrwa et al., eds., *Einspruch und Abwehr: Die Reaktion des europäischen Judentums auf die Entstehung des Antisemitismus (1879-1914)* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus 2010).

persons involved. On the contrary, many sought refuge in literature, the arts in general, or even in the intellectual shaping of national paradigms within their regions of origin. Experiences of "spiritual" or "linguistic exile" took place regardless of migration.

Against this background, this special issue aims at outlining forms of reaction to Nation-Building processes among Jewish minorities in East-Central Europe, particularly in the context of Antisemitism and emigration—either to other countries or within the country of origin. For this purpose the volume presents selected case studies dealing with both patterns of Jewish emigration from the German, Russian and the Habsburg Empire, and adjustment to dominant national narratives. Specific forms of Jewish Nationalism (Zionism) are not examined here and shall receive only marginal attention.

During the second half of the long nineteenth century, nationalism, liberalism and secularization became entrenched in a whole generation of Jewish citizens across Europe. Clearly, the Congress of Vienna led mostly—despite the formal recognition of equal rights and freedom for all citizens in Western and Central Europe—to an intensification of the repression of minorities, including Jews, who were systematically excluded from the cultural and political formation of the "nation," or excluded from high positions in the state administration or in the army. This applied of course particularly to the Russian Empire, the Polish lands, as well as the rural areas of the Habsburg Monarchy or the Prussian easternmost border regions. Although emancipation progressed after the revolts of 1848, the rise of nationalism often made Jews enemies of the state. Furthermore, failed or belated emancipation, especially in the Russian Empire, encouraged emigration.

In the late nineteenth century, violent pogroms in the Russian Empire forced tens of thousands of Jews to move to Central and Western Europe. Many of them took a further step and continued their migration to North America. Failed or—as in the case of Tsarist Russia—non-existent assimilation policies, and the lack of understanding of cultural and religious diversity was often the reason why hundreds

of thousands of Polish, Russian, as well as German/German speaking Jews had no choice but leaving their home regions and head to the New World.[8]

An interesting laboratory of Jewish emigration was the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Many of the cities of this pre-modern multi-ethnic empire were inhabited by Jews, Poles, Ukrainians (in Galicia), Lithuanians (in the Vilnius region) or Germans (in its western parts). After the partition of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the late eighteenth century, Jews from that region came to live in the German, Russian or the Habsburg Empire. They were exposed to different policies of emancipation, discrimination and acculturation. While Jews in Lemberg and Warsaw acculturated to Polish "civilization," their fellow believers in Posen became Germans. Unlike in Warsaw and Lemberg, the number of Jews living in Posen declined steadily between 1848 and 1918. Many of them moved to Berlin and other German cities, others decided to go to the New World.[9]

Reasons for migration among East European Jewry were varied. The commonest was financial hardship. In addition to the Jewish population Poles, Ukrainians, Russians, and Germans also left Eastern Europe because they hoped for better social opportunities in other parts of Europe or in North America. Jews, however, emigrated also because of Antisemitism and violence. The pogroms in the Pale of Settlement and other parts of the Russian Empire were a clear indicator of Antisemitism and anti-Jewish prejudice. Thousands of Jews lost their lives and others decided to leave before it was too late. After the pogroms of 1881-1882, about 100,000 Litvaks escaped to the Kingdom of Poland. Some of them moved further to the German Empire and from there to North America.

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[8] On Antisemitism in the USA, see among others: Carey McWilliams, *A Mask for Privilege: Anti-semitism in America* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1999); on Antisemitism and modernity, see among others: Marcel Stoetzler, ed., *Antisemitism and the Constitution of Sociology* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2014); Leonard Dinnerstein, *Antisemitism in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).

[9] Jerzy Topolski and Lech Trzeciakowski, eds., *Dzieje Poznania 1793-1918* (Poznań: PWN, 1994); Antony Polonsky, *The Jews in Poland and Russia, 1881-1914* (Oxford: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2010).

Many emigrants remained in contact with their families. They supported their families financially and sent them letters—which constitute a very good source to study emigration as a cultural process. Moving from a village or a shtetl to a place such as Berlin, Paris or New York changed their lives. Usually they left a religious and rural environment, and landed in a secular and modern society. Most frequently, the migrants were young, mobile and enterprising persons who had relatively little to lose, had escaped from violence and persecution, and were ready to take risks.

Many of those who left the Polish, Ukrainian, Lithuanian, Belorussian lands were Jewish, but by far not all. Between around 1820 and 1880, about 60,000 Jews left the Russian Pale of Settlement and headed to the USA. Between 1881 and 1890, some 265,000 more went to North America, mostly from the Kingdom of Poland as well as the "Polish lands" that belonged to the Russian Empire and the Habsburg Monarchy. Some 236,000 Jews left the Austrian partition in the period between 1881 and 1910, headed primarily to the USA. In the same period a relatively small number of Jews emigrated from the Prussian partition, mostly from Posen/Poznań province. By 1914 more than 2 million Jews had arrived in the USA, which accounted for nearly 6% of the total European emigration to that country. They constituted about 14-15% of the total Jewish population on the old continent at that time.[10]

[10] On the conditions under which Jews lived in Tsarist Russia, the Habsburg Empire, Prussia as well as after their emigration to the New World, there is a virtually unmeasurable wealth of valuable literature. See among others: Theodore R. Weeks, "Poles, Jews, and Russians, 1863-1914: The Death of the Ideal of Assimilation in the Kingdom of Poland," *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry* 12 (1999): 242-256; Salo W. Baron, *The Russian Jews under Tsars and Soviets* (New York: Macmillan 1976); Stephen Birmingham, *"The Rest of Us": The Rise of America's Eastern European Jews* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1984); Robert N. Rosen, *The Jewish Confederates* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2000); Louis Greenberg, *The Jews in Russia*, vol. 2 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1951); Eugene Avrutin, *Jews and the Imperial State: Identification Politics in Tsarist Russia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010); Pamela Nadell, "From Shtetl to Border: East European Jewish Emigrants and the Agents System, 1868-1914," in *Studies in the American Jewish Experience*, eds. Jacob R. Marcus andAbraham J. Peck, vol. 2 (Lanham; New York: University Press of America, 1985); Nancy L. Green, *Jewish Workers in the Modern Diaspora* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); Klaus Hödl, *Vom Shtetl an die Lower East Side. Galizische Juden in New York* (Vienna: Böhlau, 1991); Gerald Sorin, *A Time for Building: The Third Migration 1880-1920* (Baltimor: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992); Hasia Diner, *A Time for Gathering: The Second Migration 1820-1880* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992); Jacob Kabakoff, "The View from the Old World: East European Jewish Perspective" in *The Americanization of the Jews*, eds. Robert M. Seltzer and Norman J. Cohen (New York: New York University Press, 1995), 41-59; Tobias Brinkmann, *Migration*

Emigrants from East-Central Europe had very different experiences and multiple reasons that pressed them to leave their homes. Whereas in many cases such a reason was the increase of Antisemitism or the danger of being physically harmed, others decided to leave because they did not feel they belonged anymore to the nation they were living in or hoped to continue their lives in a less hostile environment and more liberal societies. The emigration processes were also not monolithic—diverse groups of actors were involved in them. Besides the emigrants, the local officials, the shipping companies, smugglers played an important role in that respect. Yet, as mentioned above, many did not leave, and rather tried to keep afloat among potential conflicts, material difficulties and cultural detachment by developing suitable national identities in their regions of origin.

In this light, the articles of this special issue intend to deliver a nuanced view on this topic by presenting selected studies of Jewish minorities, focusing on both their political and cultural understanding as well as their shaping of national belonging. The editors, Francesco Di Palma (University of Vienna) and Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe (Freie Universität Berlin), invited five experts in the field of Jewish studies, Antisemitism, and emigration to contribute with essays on relevant aspects of the subject.

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und Transnationalität (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2012); Id., *Von der Gemeinde zur "Community": Jüdische Einwanderer in Chicago 1840-1900* (Osnabrück: Univ.-Verl. Rasch, 2002); Ulla Kriebernegg, *"Nach Amerika nämlich!" Jüdische Migrationen in die Amerikas im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2012); Claus-Dieter Khron, ed., *Jüdische Emigration zwischen Assimilation und Verfolgung, Akkulturation und jüdischer Identität* (Munich: edition text + kritik, 2001); Arthur Hertzberg, *Shalom, Amerika! Die Geschichte der Juden in der Neuen Welt* (Frankfurt am Main.: Jüdischer Verlag im Suhrkamp Verlag, 1992); Naomi W. Cohen, *Encounter with Emancipation: The German Jews in the United States 1830-1914* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1984); Naomi W. Cohen, *Jews in Christian America: The Pursuit of Religious Equality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); Mark Wischnitzer, *To Dwell in Safety: The Story of Jewish Migration since 1800* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1948); Frederic C. Jaher, *The Jews and the Nation: Revolution, Emancipation, State formation and the liberal Paradigm in America and France* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002); Avraham Barkai, *Branching Out: German-Jewish Immigration to the United States 1820-1914* (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1994); Pierre Birnbaum and Ira Katzelson, eds., *Paths of Emancipation: Jews, States and Citizenship* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

These included the following issues:

- What role—if any—did religion play? Did religious dignitaries mediate between the private (individual and familial) and the public (political) sphere?
- To what extent did Jewish minorities engage in the establishment, consolidation and/or modification/transformation of the national state/national environment they lived in?
- How did emigration and/or the Antisemitism they experienced change their lives?
- How did Jewish minorities appraise and process the experience of emigration and/or Antisemitism in visual arts and/or literature?
- How, if at all, did emigration and/or Antisemitism (re-)shape their cultural and linguistic paradigms?

The first two chapters are dedicated to the Russian Empire. In her article "Unexpected Allies: Russian Officials' Support of Jewish Emigration at the Time of Its Legal Ban, 1881-1914" Anastasiia Strakhova concentrates on Russian officials' agency during the period of Jew's emigration from the Tsarist Empire. Although the government officially banned emigration between 1881 and 1914 two million Jews left the Russian empire and settled in the United States, Argentina, and Palestine. Analyzing official documents and police reports from the the imperial provinces of Podolia, Volhynia, and Novorossiia, Strakhova explains the strategies the empire resorted to in order to force Jews to leave. She is able to prove that the Russian government supported Jewish emigration in implicit or explicit ways and was willing to tolerate Jewish resettlement to the extent that it could regulate the process.

Things were different in the case of Karaites. Dovilė Troskovaitė, in her chapter "Jews, Russians, Karaites: the birth of Karaite nationalism in the Russian Empire in the beginning of the 20th century," examines the rise and consolidation of Karaism in Tsarist Russia from the first half of the nineteenth century through the beginning of the twentieth. She argues that the creation of a specific national culture was on the one hand a consequence of the authorities' hostile policy towards Jews, which eventually favored Karaites' departure from their historical community; on the other

hand, and despite the late spread of Haskalah within Karaites as compared to the surrounding larger Rabbanite community, Troskovaitė claims that the former did share Maskilic ideals, partly because in most cases Karaites already displayed distinctive signs of acculturation and secularization—all predisposing elements for the formation of a new feeling of national belonging.

Dana Mihăilescu deals with emigration from Romania, by concentrating on the very telling examples of two men. Both were Jewish American writers who described their life stories. The first is the semi-obscure author and journalist M. E. Ravage, and the other a much more celebrated leftist writer, Michael Gold. Both authors were of Romanian parentage but they represented two different generations of authorship. M. E. Ravage emigrated from Romania to the U.S. in 1900, at the age of 16, whereas Michael Gold was born in the U.S. in 1893. By comparing these writers representing different generations of immigrants, Mihăilescu investigates the shift in perspective on the relation between Jewish ethnicity and Romanian as well as American nationalism.

The following two chapters are dedicated to the Habsburg Empire. Susanne Korbel discusses the emigration of artists and musicians from the Empire to the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. As Korbel shows, during the fin de siècle, migration and mobility for social, economic, political and/or professional reasons determined the patterns of everyday life for many. Examining Jewish artists and musicians, she explains the peculiarities of this specific form of migration. While concentrating on specific men, women but also children, and using findings from interviews of Jewish migrants in newspaper articles and their correspondence, Korbel presents specific forms of experience of Jewish artists and musicians from the Habsburg Empire in the United States.

Maya Shabbat deals with the German expression *Heimweh* (longing for the homeland) and shows how it triggered a whole set of emotions related to the creation of a national sense of belonging in the region Lemberg/Lwów. Focusing on the particular environment of the city, where after 1867 the considerable Jewish minority was visibly divided over whether to tend towards a pro-German or a pro-Polish cultural affiliation, the chapter describes the traumatic experience of such a clash,

which eventually resulted in an imagined experience of "spiritual" and/or "linguistic exile" within the Jewish community.

Francesco Di Palma discusses in the last chapter of this issue the "strange case" of the Jewish community of the German-Polish city of Posen/Poznań. Until the end of the nineteenth century Jews accounted here for between 15 and 20 percent of the overall population, a much greater number than in any other German region. "Ostjuden" formed a considerable share of the minority, an almost unique feature within the German *Reich*. Such a setting forced the new authorities (Posen was incorporated into Prussia in the late eighteenth century) to introduce targeted integrationist strategies. Di Palma's article shows how Jews in the area got caught in a clash of nationalisms, as they sought to keep afloat amid rapid changes, and to strike a balance between two conflicting cultures, the one of the new German rulers, eager to "germanize" them, and the traditional Polish culture. One of the main results of these strategies was mass migration. For fear of losing financial independence as well as their cultural and religious autonomy, at least 20,000 Jews left the region for good at/by the end of the nineteenth century.

Of course, the chapters collected here cannot fully encompass the complexity of the phenomenon under discussion—national sense of belonging vis-à-vis emigration—as a cultural and political-ideological turning point in the history of East-Central European Jewry. We do hope that our issue will give new insights and serve as a platform for future research on the topic, which will have to focus on entanglements and transfers of ideas (both on the sub-central and on the international level) between emigrated and non-emigrated Jews, the role of agency (e.g. by influential spiritual leaders, political actors and media in general), as well as on specifities related to gender.

Francesco Di Palma is Associate Professor at the University of Vienna. A former Teaching Fellow at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and at the Free University of Berlin, he has published widely on European socialism and communism, fascism and antifascism, and cultural and Jewish history. Selected publications: *Trouble for Moscow? Der Eurokommunismus und die Beziehungen der Sozialistischen Einheitspartei Deutschlands*

(SED) mit den kommunistischen Parteien Frankreichs (PCF) und Italiens (PCI) 1968-1990 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2022); "Israel als westliche Bastion im Nahen Osten? Überlegungen zur Orient-Okzident-Debatte bei den israelischen 'New Historians'," eds. Barbara Haider-Wilson and Maximilian Graf, *Orient und Okzident Begegnungen und Wahrnehmungen aus fünf Jahrhunderten* (Vienna: Neue Welt Verlag, 2016), 751-769; "Jews and the SPD. The Influence of Jewish Intelligence on German Exile Social-Democracy (1933-1945)," *Zeitgeschichte* 1 (2014): 4-19.

Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe is a research associate at the Freie Universität Berlin. He studied at the Viadrina European University and holds a PhD in history from the University of Hamburg. He published books, volumes, special issues and numerous articles about the Holocaust in East Central Europe, transnational fascism in Western and Eastern Europe, the history of multiethnic cities, and various aspects of European and global history. He was a fellow of the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation, the Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Fritz Thyssen Stiftung, the Zentrum für Holocaust-Studien, the Yad Vashem International Institute for Holocaust Research, the Polish Institute of Advanced Studies, and the Honorary Research Fellow of the Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung at the Polish Center for Holocaust Research.

Keywords: Jews, Nationalism, Emigration, Memory, East Central Europe

How to quote this article:
Francesco Di Palma and Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe, "Introduction," in "Jewish Minorities between Nation-Building and Emigration in late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Century East Central Europe," eds. Francesco Di Palma and Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe, *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History. Journal of the Fondazione CDEC* 20 (December 2021), DOI: 10.48248/issn.2037-741X/13057

Unexpected Allies: Imperial Russian Support of Jewish Emigration at the Time of Its Legal Ban, 1881-1914

by *Anastasiia Strakhova*

Abstract

This article analyses the Russian government's involvement in Jewish emigration from the late Tsarist Empire by exploring bureaucratic archival records. Despite the official emigration ban, between 1881 and 1914 about two million Jews managed to cross the Russian border and leave primarily for the United States, Argentina, and Palestine. The understudied yet official documents and police reports from imperial provinces such as Podolia, Volhynia, and New Russia reveal the practical aspects of the Jewish exodus. Some Jewish emigrants left illegally on their own, some used the help of illegal emigration agents, while others were able to leave with the assistance of charitable emigration organizations. In most of these scenarios, this article argues, the Russian government supported Jewish emigration in implicit or explicit ways: it was willing to tolerate Jewish resettlement to the extent that it could regulate the process.

Introduction

Was the Tsarist Regime a Foe of Jewish Emigration? The Historiographical Debate

The Brody Incident: The Russian Empire Starts Sending Its Jews Away

The Jewish Colonization Association as Russia's Helper in Emigration Matters

Tolerable Only if Controllable: The Government's Attitudes Towards Other Agents

Conclusions

Introduction

In April 1882, Kyiv police detained a student, Vladimir Rokhlin, an Austrian citizen, Emil Korkus, and a commoner, Shaia Fridman. All three were members of Am Olam, the Russian-Jewish emigration society that supported the establishment of Jewish agricultural colonies in the United States. The arrested had discussed such plans at secret gatherings in Rokhlin's apartment on Kyiv's main street, Khreshchatitskaia.[1] Their secret activities continued until the police received a letter of denunciation accusing the group of underground publishing activities. During the search of the apartment, the police found a large number of the society's statutes and an appeal to different Jewish circles to unite efforts in support of emigration.[2] The officers, however, did not find any political motives in the publications and charged the three Am Olam members only with breaching the Publishing Law.[3]

This story reveals the Russian Empire's permissive attitude towards Jewish emigration, unlike that of other ethnic groups. During the era of mass migration in late imperial Russia, countless emigrants and travelers, whether Jews, Germans, Poles, or Lithuanians, managed to find a way to cross the border. From the death of Alexander II in 1881 until the outbreak of World War I, more than two million people, the majority of them Jews, left Russia forever even though the official law forbade emigration.[4] Regardless of illegal emigration being a criminal offense in the Russian Empire, tens of thousands did find a way to leave. Sometimes they did it on their own, occasionally with the help of charitable emigration associations, but most often with the assistance of dishonest agents. The latter made money out of migrants' ignorance, as most of them had never left their hometowns before emigrating. Despite the official ban on illegal emigration, local bureaucrats often preferred to close their eyes to the dozens of migrants filtering across the Russian border every day. Frequently, when the Ministry of Interior requested reports

[1] Now Khreshchatyk.

[2] Tsentralnyi Derzhavnyi Istorychnyi Arhiv u Kyivi [Central State Historical Archive in Kiev, from now on TsDIAK], fond 442, opys 832, spr. 125, ark. 1-1v.

[3] Ibid., ark. 1v-2.

[4] For the relevant statistics see Simon Kuznets, "Immigration of the Russian Jews to the US: Background and Structure," *Perspectives in American History* 9 (1975), 49.

from local authorities about the current situation concerning emigration, the latter denied it was a mass movement and reported the departure of only several dozen Jews, Ukrainians, and Germans.[5]

The government was well aware of mass Jewish emigration, as is made evident by the correspondence between state officials, numerous letters to the police, and press publications. Why, then, did the government and the local governors allowed their migration when it broke official policy? How much did the government's attitudes differ towards the migration of different ethnic groups? What measures, if any, did the authorities take to suppress the illegal activities of emigration agents?

The present article seeks to answer these questions and argues that although the Tsarist regime viewed most Russian subjects' emigration as undesirable, it had a different attitude towards Jewish resettlement and tolerated it as long as it could control the process. To support this argument, I will discuss the scholarship on the topic, establish the Russian government's position on Jewish emigration, and analyze its favorable attitude towards the Jewish Colonization Association and its disapproval of other emigration agents.

Was the Tsarist Regime a Foe of Jewish Emigration? The Historiographical Debate

There is no consensus among historians on the Russian government's attitude toward Jewish emigration. Affected by the events, contemporary witnesses, such as Simon Dubnow and Louis Greenberg, saw in the state's repressive measures a willingness to push Jews across the border.[6] Historians of the twentieth century often quote one of the main ideologists of Alexander III's politics, Konstantin

[5] See, for example, Derzhavnyi Arhiv Odeskoi Oblasti [The State Archives of Odessa Region, further DAOO], fond 2, opys 4.1, spr. 8958, ark. 1-1v, 5-5v.

[6] For example, Simon Dubnow, *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland: From the Earliest Times until the Present Day*, V. II (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1918), 414-415; Louis Greenberg, *The Jews in Russia*, vol. 2 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1951), 55-75.

Pobedonostsev (1827-1907), who allegedly described the future of Russian Jewry as follows: "one-third would die out, one-third would emigrate, and one-third would assimilate to the local population without a trace."[7]

Whether or not Pobedonostsev made this statement is a debated topic among scholars of Russian and Jewish history. The Russian government did not follow this proclamation in its official policy and the implementation of other restrictions, particularly the creation of the infamous Pale of Settlement, made the assimilation of large numbers of Jews into the local population an unlikely possibility. Furthermore, although most Jews from the Pale were destitute and experienced physical violence in some regions, the Russian authorities never inflicted bodily harm on Jews intentionally. Finally, although imperial bureaucrats took certain measures to encourage Jewish emigration, and this article will discuss some of them, the state failed to issue clear emigration laws under which Jews could freely cross the border and leave Russia forever.[8]

On a few occasions, Russian officials did express the view that Jewish emigration from Russia was desirable. One of them was Count Nikolay Ignatyev (1832-1908), a Pan-Slavic statesman who served as the Minister of Interior in 1881-1882, when mass Jewish emigration began. In January 1882, in an interview with the Russophone Jewish journal *Razsvet*, Ignatyev declared that "the Western frontier is open for Jews," although later he denied saying this.[9] Dubnow cites another Russian bureaucrat, the Kyiv public prosecutor, Vasiliy Strelnikov, who in May 1881 commented on overpopulation in the Pale of Settlement: "If the Eastern frontier [to the interior Russian governorates] is closed to the Jews, the Western frontier is open to them; why don't they take advantage of it?".[10]

Such statements, however, are not illustrative of general Russian policies concerning Jewish resettlement. Historian Eugene Avrutin, for example, follows

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[7] Irwin Michael Aronson, "The Attitudes of Russian Officials in the 1880s Toward Jewish Assimilation and Emigration," *Slavic Review* 34, no. 1 (1975): 1-18; 1.

[8] For further criticism of the myth around Pobedonostsev's statement, see Aronson, "The Attitudes of Russian Officials," 2-13.

[9] Ibid., 5-6.

[10] Dubnow, *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland*, 264-265.

Hans Rogger's work[11] and concludes that while some of the government's actions reflect the desirability of Jewish emigration, imperial Russia failed to develop emigration laws that would have made Jewish departure smoother. As early as 1835, leaving the empire without a special permit was considered a criminal offense. Therefore, despite sometimes positive attitudes toward Jewish emigration and even occasional public statements of encouragement from government officials, emigration was legally forbidden, and there was no exception for any group of Russian subjects.[12]

Despite all the restrictions on traveling, however, the police could not closely patrol the vast western Russian borderlands, and thus illegal border crossing was commonplace. The formal permission to extend the Jewish Colonization Association's activities to Russia in 1892, Avrutin argues, was a significant step the government made to clarify and codify its emigration laws (which will be closely examined later in this article). But even after such new options became available for legal departure, the procedure required to obtain permission for emigration was so slow and complicated that most Jewish emigrants still found the illegal border crossing a better option.[13] Even though the JCA managed to make the legal departure of many Jews from the Russian Empire possible, around 75 percent of Jewish emigration remained clandestine.[14]

The imperial Russian emigration policy was also connected with the corresponding policies in neighboring countries. As John Klier argues, Austrian and German authorities disliked the idea of hundreds of impoverished Russian Jews inhabiting their territories even temporarily. For the Tsarist Empire, a deterioration in the relations with its neighbors could be detrimental. Klier also

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[11] Hans Rogger, *Jewish Policies and Right-Wing Politics in Imperial Russia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 176-187.

[12] Eugene Avrutin, *Jews and the Imperial State: Identification Politics in Tsarist Russia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010), 136.

[13] Ibid., 136-138; Theodore Norman, *An Outstretched Arm: A History of the Jewish Colonization Association* (London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1985), 20.

[14] Nikolai Tudorianu, *Ocherki rossiiskoi trudovoi emigratsii perioda imperializma: v Germaniiu, Skandinavskie strany i SShA* [Russian Labor Migration during the Imperial Period: To Germany, Scandinavia, and the USA] (Kishinev: Shtiintsa, 1986), 134.

warns against separating Jewish migration from that of other ethnic groups and examines emigration from Russia as a whole. At times, the government found it complicated to punish or, conversely, encourage a certain group's departure because different ethnic groups cooperated in the process of organizing the departure. For example, Jewish agents used to help both their coreligionists and Polish peasants, whose migration was undesirable for the state since Russian farming needed their labor.[15]

Another important question that the researchers raise is why the empire did not legalize emigration even when large numbers of Jews, Poles, and Germans crossed the border illegally and had to use the services of foreign steamship companies and emigration agents with doubtful reputations. Eric Lohr, for instance, asks why the advocacy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Finance, and the Ministry of Trade and Industry in favor of the legalization of emigration yielded no results. These governmental offices argued that making emigration legal would be beneficial for the state treasury, and the money that emigrants paid to criminals or foreign subjects to help them arrange their departure would instead go to the state. Still, their arguments had little impact on imperial jurisdiction.[16]

Despite some antisemitic officials in its ranks, the Ministry of Interior strongly opposed such an initiative for several reasons: the state needed workers, the army required soldiers, and most importantly, legalizing emigration would also encourage the departure of ethnic Russians.[17] In 1892, a lawyer, Mikhail Mysh, noted in the *Guide to the Russian Laws about the Jews* that Jewish emigration was harmful to the Russian Empire because the most skillful, healthy, and energetic Jews departed and left the sick and poor behind, who could potentially become a

[15] John Klier, "Kontrabanda liudey: pravitel'stvo Rossii i emigratsiia iz Tsarstva Pol'skogo v 1881-1892 gg." [Human Contraband: The Russian Government and Emigration from the Kingdom of Poland, 1881-1892], in *Evreiskaya emigratsiya iz Rossii, 1881-2005* [Jewish Emigration from Russia, 1881-2005], ed. Oleg Budnitskiy (Moscow: Rosspen, 2008), 20-31.

[16] Eric Lohr, "Population Policy and Emigration Policy in Imperial Russia," in *Migration, Homeland, and Belonging in Eurasia*, eds. Cynthia J. Buckley, Blair A. Ruble, and Erin Trouth Hofmann (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), 168-173.

[17] Ibid., 173-174.

burden for the state.[18] Making emigration legal contained potential dangers and, consequently, the government forbade even advertising steamship tickets' sale, as it encouraged resettlement, a prohibition which was nevertheless ubiquitously violated with no severe consequences.[19] It seemed more convenient to the empire to continue to tolerate illegal border crossings, losing finances that the "unfaithful" subjects could potentially pay to the state treasury, and to support the initiatives of some enthusiasts and emigration societies only occasionally.

The new historiographical approach to migration avoids bare statistics in favor of presenting the daily life and decision-making process of people who decided to emigrate. Thus, Gur Alroey narrates migration through the experiences of individual residents of the Pale of Settlement, whose stories he found in Israeli archives and the Ellis Island database.[20] This article will also address the fates of the Pale's ordinary residents, whose complicated relationship with the emigration bureaucracy left a paper trace in the archives.

Among these scholarly analyses, Irwin Michael Aronson argues that even if lower-level Russian bureaucrats sometimes articulated radical views usually attributed to Pobedonostsev and Ignatyev, they never tried to implement them in practice. Not being able to study the Soviet archives during the Cold War, Aronson used published sources, namely reports, memoirs, biographies, and scholarly works by contemporary historians. Based on different governorates' commissions and statements of their representatives, Aronson concluded that although some of the officials strongly opposed Jewish emancipation, very few of them saw Jewish emigration as a solution to "the Jewish question."[21] In Aronson's view, while the government's oppressive measures drove Jews out of Russia, these policies' true

[18] Mikhail Mysh, *Rukovodstvo k Russkim Zakonam o Evreyakh* [The Guide to the Russian Laws about the Jews] (St. Petersburg: Tipografiya A.Benke, 1914), 338-339.

[19] Pamela Nadell, "From Shtetl to Border: East European Jewish Emigrants and the Agents System, 1868-1914," in *Studies in the American Jewish Experience* II, eds. Jacob R. Marcus and Abraham J. Peck (Lanham; New York: University Press of America, 1985), 52.

[20] Gur Alroey, "Bureaucracy, Agents, and Swindlers: The Hardships of Jewish emigration from the Pale of Settlement in the Early 20th century," *Studies in Contemporary Jewry* 19 (2003): 214-231.

[21] Aronson, "The Attitudes of Russian Officials," 13.

goal was to ameliorate their situation and assimilate the Jewish population, and it was only in some exceptional cases that officials tolerated (but did not promote) Jewish emigration.[22] In short, the authorities' attitudes were ambivalent.

My research, which draws on official state documents now available in Russian and Ukrainian archives, reveals a different tendency. Despite the ban on emigration in the Russian legislative system, local authorities facilitated Jewish emigration and often did that under the supervision of high-ranking officials from St. Petersburg. On the basis of materials from the Russian State Historical Archive in St. Petersburg (RGIA) and two Ukrainian archives, the Central State Historical Archive in Kyiv (TsDIAK) and the State Archives of the Odessa Region (DAOO), I analyze how Russian bureaucrats assisted Jews in crossing the border. Their support ranged from issuing free exit permits and canceling fines, which could hinder the migrants' departure, to turning a blind eye to denunciations about Jews leaving Russia illegally. Both modes of assistance had similar outcomes for Jewish migrants, who eventually found themselves on the other side of the border with very little chance to return.

Several scholars mentioned above argue that the official restrictive emigration policy differed significantly from actual practice, and illegal emigration thrived. This article shows how local bureaucrats managed to make border crossing quasi-legal for Jews when the empire could not legalize emigration because it could potentially deprive Russia of its workforce. This conclusion can be drawn on the basis of documents from several western imperial provinces (Podolia, Volhynia, and New Russia), which in turn indicate how widespread the phenomenon was.

The Brody Incident: The Russian Empire Starts Sending Its Jews Away

The Russian authorities were aware of Jewish mass migration and knew about it from the start. In August 1881, the Governor-General of Kyiv, Podolia, and Volhynia, Alexander Drenteln, learned from the local governor in the Volhynia

[22] Ibid., 13-14.

governorate that the famous Jewish bankers, Rothschild and Montefiore, had bought a large piece of American land to settle 1,000 Russian-Jewish families and that they had sent their representative to the Austrian border town of Brody, to promote the resettlement of Russian Jews. The Volhynia governor claimed that the idea appealed mostly to the homeless, who readily accepted the invitation and had been preparing to travel across the ocean. The governor wondered whether such emigration was actually desirable, considering Jewish overpopulation in the Pale of Settlement, and whether the government should facilitate the process by issuing travel passports in the shortest possible time, or take measures against the departure instead.[23] The official response is missing, but a side note indicates a favorable attitude towards Jewish emigration: "Do not change the established order. There are no reasons to keep Jews."[24]

A month later, the Volhynia governor confirmed that the Jews had secretly continued to cross the border and were concentrating in Brody. Their number had already reached 2,000, with many conscripts and active and retired soldiers among them. The Austrian government was worried about the situation and decided to send a military guard to the border if the migration flow continued.[25] The side note was cool-headed: "Leave this to the Austrian government."[26] A similar reaction followed the report on an appeal to the Jewish population published in Brody and titled "To Our Brothers." A Russian bureaucrat commented about this fundraising plea to support Russian-Jewish resettlement to Palestine, "Do not take it seriously."[27]

Meanwhile, the Austrian authorities took measures against border crossing even in the case of those Russian Jews who had valid travel passports and wanted to travel internationally for business or personal matters. In June 1882, an Austrian official insisted on returning 13,000 poor Russian Jews who had come to Brody and did not have the means to continue the trip. Russia, however, did not want to

[23] TsDIAK, fond 2, opys 534, spr. 267, ark. 2-3.
[24] Ibid., ark. 2.
[25] Ibid., ark. 10-10v.
[26] Ibid., ark. 10.
[27] Ibid., ark. 18.

accept its subjects back. Tired of waiting for a Russian response, Austrian gendarmes started forcibly returning groups of Jewish men, women, children, and newborn babies through unguarded parts of the border. Sometimes they even engaged in open confrontations with Russian border patrols.[28]

Eventually, the Russian government agreed to admit the Jewish migrants back if they could prove that they were Russian subjects, which was practically impossible since most Jews had left Russia illegally without any documents.[29] To carry out this task, the Ministry of Interior sent to Brody a Russian official, Captain de Bille. He had to establish which Jews were from Russia and give them entry passes, enabling their return to the empire.[30] The results of his mission, unfortunately, did not leave any trace in the archives.

These instances reveal the Russian authorities' intention to keep the Jewish population out of the Tsarist empire. The bureaucrats disregarded even the departure of Jews of conscription age that could potentially serve in the army. Under pressure from Austrian officials, the Russian government sent Captain de Bille to Brody and instructed him to facilitate the poor migrants' return, but it intentionally made his mission nearly impossible. Although we do not know how many Jews de Bille managed to return to the empire, we can assume that their number was minuscule. The Jews were crossing the border secretly without any documents and therefore could not prove their status as Russian subjects. The Tsarist authorities knew this very well and, therefore, de Bille's mission must be taken to signify the empire's efforts to satisfy the demands of the Austrian government but not a will to make Jewish emigrants return to Russia.

The Jewish Colonization Association as Russia's Helper in Emigration Matters

The most telling example of the Russian state's readiness to accept Jewish emigration was its national and local authorities' cooperation with Baron Maurice

[28] Ibid., fond 442, opys 535, spr. 206, ark. 18.
[29] Ibid., ark. 20.
[30] Ibid., ark. 35-36.

de Hirsch. In 1891, he established the Jewish Colonization Association (JCA) in London, with the goal to alleviate the dire economic situation of Jews and facilitate their resettlement from Europe to the Americas (both North and South). The association also directed its efforts towards making Jews productive and self-sufficient members of society, by connecting them to the land and transforming them into agricultural laborers on American soil.[31]

The next year, Hirsch petitioned the Russian government to allow the JCA to extend its activities to Russia. When the Minister of Interior, Ivan Durnovo, reported to Alexander III about the possibility of using the Baron's assistance to reduce the number of Jews in the empire, his reply was as follows: "THIS IS ALL GOOD, BUT KEEP AN EYE ON THEM".[32] The Russian Council of Ministers also discussed JCA's support of Jewish emigration to America and concluded that all measures directed to reduce the Jewish population in Russia deserved attention and sympathy.[33]

The Governor-General of Kyiv, Podolia, and Volhynia, Count Alexei Ignatyev,[34] also wholeheartedly supported the JCA's efforts to assist Jewish emigration. In his letter to the Minister of Interior from December 16, 1891, Ignatyev named the overpopulation of Jews in the Pale of Settlement as the Jewish question's main issue.[35] Hence, he found all measures to reduce the Jewish population in Russia desirable, including Baron de Hirsch's project to resettle 3.25 million Russian Jews. However, since the JCA was a Jewish organization, the governor recommended keeping it under tight control.[36]

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[31] Norman, *An Outstretched Arm*, 1-2.

[32] Emphasis in the original.

[33] *Rossiyskiy gosudarstvenniy istoricheskiy arkhiv* [Russian State Historical Archive, further RGIA], fond 1284, opys 224, delo 619, l. 8.

[34] The younger brother of the previously mentioned Nikolay Ignatyev.

[35] "The Jewish question" in the Russian Empire can be briefly described as a discussion among Russian officials about the appropriate place of Jews and their treatment in society. The major issue was how to make Jews less "harmful" in social, economic, and political terms. For further reading see John Klier, *Russia Gathers her Jews: The Origins of the "Jewish Question" in Russia, 1772-1825* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1986); Id., *Imperial Russia's Jewish Question, 1855-1881* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

[36] TsDIAK, fond 442, opys 620, spr. 323, ark. 28-28v.

Moreover, Ignatyev worried that the choice of emigration candidates lay entirely with the JCA. He was sure that the association was picking the most energetic, skillful, and well-off Jews, those fit for manual labor. The governor feared that the "best" Jews were leaving and the "worst" remained in Russia and continued to be a heavy burden for the state. Ignatyev was also concerned that Russia's political rivals would compare the future Russian-Jewish affluent diasporas with the impoverished Jewish communities left in the Pale and use this image against Russia in the international arena. As a solution, the governor proposed to oblige the JCA to send away at least some percentage of the poor Jews even if the Russian government had to subsidize their travel using the kosher meat tax.[37] Indeed, a booklet titled *The Price List for the Russian Railways*, published in 1893, described discounts for JCA's emigrants in the price of train tickets and baggage delivery until the border.[38]

On May 8, 1892, Tsar Alexander III approved guidelines that regulated the JCA's activities in the empire. Throughout the Pale, the JCA could establish offices where Jewish emigrants could receive free exit permits to leave Russia forever. The lucky recipients of these permits also got an exemption from military and other civil duties. The government could close the JCA if: it did not develop its activities sufficiently in the next two years; neighboring countries refused to accept Jews; Jewish emigrants returned to Russia before becoming citizens of other countries.[39] Although the government did not officially approve the Jews' departure, its eagerness to facilitate the JCA's work and punish it for not being effective enough indicates the authorities' willingness to promote Jewish emigration. Tsarist bureaucrats even took care of the emigrants' safety and assigned an essential role in Jewish resettlement to the local police. Policemen had to ensure that the emigrants' trip to the border was safe, and that Jews were protected from popular unrest. At the same time, they had to make sure that the Jews left the country within one month after receiving exit permits.[40]

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[37] Ibid., ark. 29-30.

[38] RGIA, fond 1284, opis 224, delo 528, l. 102.

[39] Ibid., delo 619, ll. 1-2.

[40] Ibid., l. 4.

The government took measures to ensure that Jewish emigrants did not leave behind anything that could make them return to Russia. Therefore, it obliged the JCA to make accurate lists of Jewish emigrants' family members and prevent them from leaving behind children, elderly, or disabled people, who might become a burden for the state. The JCA also had to gather full information about the emigrants' personal property and real estate to guarantee that the migrants did not have any debts, potentially affecting the state's finances. The imperial government instructed the JCA to carry out this inspection in a speedy manner so "it would not become an obstacle to the timely departure of Jewish emigrants and especially those of draftable age."[41] To encourage Jewish emigration, Durnovo even advised the cancellation of fines for dodging conscription and other kinds of sanctions in case departing Jews had debts but did not have any property that they could sell to pay the fines.[42]

The government did adhere to these obligations and often canceled the fines imposed on Jewish emigrants, but only under the condition that they would leave Russia forever. In 1911, the Ministry of Interior, with the consent of the Ministry of Finance, canceled the 600-ruble fine imposed on a Jewish landowner,[43] Leivik Shub, and his family, a wife and five children, from the colony "V'iun" in the Mogilev governorate.[44] The government disregarded the fact that Shub was fined when two of his older sons evaded military service. To prevent delays in their departure, the Ministry issued exit permits to the Shub family and instructed them to never return to Russia.[45] Conversely, the government rejected petitions for exit permits from those Jews who could likely reenter the Tsarist empire. Vita Fainberg

[41] Ibid., ll. 3-3v.

[42] Ibid., ll. 6v-7.

[43] This was an enormous amount of money in the Russian Empire at that time. Immigrants who did not want to wait for exit permits, had to pay 15 rubles to get a passport, which not everyone could afford. A shoemaker's monthly wage in 1912 was, for example, 25 rubles (Alroey, "Bureaucracy, Agents, and Swindlers," 215). Hans Rogger estimates that the yearly budget of a Jewish family living in a small town was around 300 rubles (Rogger, *Jewish Policies and Right-Wing Politics*, 183). Therefore, 600 rubles was a significant amount of money. The fact that the Russian state decided to cancel such a debt reflected a strong willingness to get rid of its Jewish population.

[44] According to Russian law, Jews could not own land, except in rare occasions.

[45] RGIA, fond 1284, opis 224, delo 528, ll. 214-214v, 218-218v.

from the Minsk governorate applied for an exit permit the same year as Leivik Shub. Her request, however, was rejected by the Minsk governor since the police found out that Vita was not going to abandon Russia forever but planned to work abroad for some time and then return home.[46] Considering all the concessions that the Russian government made to the JCA, we can conclude that they both worked for the same goal: sending Russian Jews overseas, far away from the Tsarist empire.

However, in 1909, the Ministry of Interior noticed that the JCA Central Committee in St. Petersburg had stopped sending minutes of its meetings and since 1896 had limited the information on its activities to yearly reports. Despite Alexander III's instructions to keep the JCA under close control, the Ministry noticed JCA's violations only 13 years later, when the Police Department took charge over all Jewish matters from the Department of General Affairs.[47] The JCA quickly reacted to the criticism and provided all the missing reports in the same year.[48]

After receiving the documents, government officials closely inspected them and concluded that the JCA had significantly departed from the original goal of assisting Jewish resettlement from Russia to other countries. Instead, the association helped improve the economic situation of the masses of poor Jews within the Russian Empire itself. It gave loans to local Jewish agricultural colonies, financed small businesses, and sponsored primary and vocational schools. Moreover, instead of issuing exit permits that were "one-way" tickets to exit Russia, the JCA assisted Jews in obtaining passports that allowed them to travel back and forth across the border. Worse, the JCA also helped retired soldiers and artisans to settle in the inner Russian provinces. The government, therefore, decided to follow JCA's activities more closely in the future.[49]

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[46] Ibid., ll. 228-228v.

[47] Both departments operated within the Ministry of Interior.

[48] RGIA, fond 1284, opis 224, d. 619, l. 10v.

[49] Ibid., ll. 11, 15v, 16-17.

In 1913, the JCA Central Committee responded to the concerns and explained that they had to move beyond the strict rules created more than twenty years earlier due to the fast modernization of life in the Tsarist empire. The Committee stressed that it could no longer function under the 1892 regulations. The head of the association, Mark Warshawski, emphasized that "the emigrant mass" contained many "elements" not yet ready for labor in the new countries, which in turn set standards for "the quality of the emigrant material." Physically strong, well-off people with some knowledge of crafts and agriculture had a much greater chance of settling in the countries across the ocean, and the JCA had to take this into account. Warshawski assured that the JCA leaders correctly and timely evaluated the rising difficulties of immigration and adaptation. They started preparing "perfect" emigrants that entered new countries with no problems and better adjusted to new conditions. The association offered English classes, sponsored artisan and agricultural education, and financed emigrants for the sole purpose of making the Russian-Jewish emigrants more competitive. Were it not for these efforts, cases of remigration would happen much more frequently.[50]

To legalize its previous violations of the 1892 rules, in 1913 the JCA sent a memorandum to the Russian government, asking for a revision of the earlier regulations that would make them more applicable to life in the modern world. The association insisted that substituting exit permits with passports would help speed up resettlement and limit illegal agents' activities, especially in remote small towns. The waiting period also had to become shorter; otherwise, emigrants could change their minds concerning resettlement. To make its patronage more appealing to Jews, the JCA asked the government to extend the time for travel preparation after receiving exit permits from one month to three, which would give emigrants more time to sell their property. Finally, the JCA asked that exit passes be issued to individuals and not to entire families, since often heads of the family emigrated first and then, after earning some capital, invited their relatives to join them. All these changes, the memorandum assured, would help facilitate emigration and increase the number of migrants, especially to the United States, which was already the primary immigration destination. In the current iteration,

[50] Ibid., ll. 48-50, 57-57v, 64.

the 1892 rules lacked clarity, did not give the JCA representatives sufficient authority and hindered the association's work.[51]

The government found the JCA's explanations convincing and issued an addendum to the 1892 rules. The Tsarist bureaucrats readily accepted all the points mentioned in the JCA's appeal, and the new addition justified all measures the JCA took without the authorities' sanction in the previous years. The government added categories of Jews eligible for getting exit permits and increased the period between obtaining the documents and the actual departure to three months. Moreover, it granted the JCA the right to publish emigration brochures and provide medical treatment to potential emigrants, all of which evidenced the government's desire to send its Jewish population away from the empire.[52] However, the JCA had to make some compromises and stopped financing loan and savings associations.[53]

Further correspondence between Russian officials suggests that had it not been for World War I, the government would have granted the JCA even more authority. On March 18, 1914, on the eve of the war, one official of the Department of General Affairs, Senior Counselor Putilov, praised the JCA's work highly in his report to the Ministry of Interior. Given its contribution to the development of productive labor among Jews and its efforts to increase Jewish emigration, the Ministry agreed to expand the JCA's functions. Although the officials admitted the need to keep the JCA under close control, they concluded that the organization's contribution to promoting Jewish emigration served the government's purposes.[54]

This collaboration between the Russian government and the Jewish Colonization Association is one of the very few examples in which the state openly facilitated Jewish emigration. Russian bureaucrats were ready to compromise and agree to the JCA's demands for the sake of increasing Jewish emigration rates. However, they had one reservation. Eager to send away the poorest among Jews, the state

[51] Ibid., ll. 56-56v, 63-64v.
[52] Ibid., ll. 66-66v.
[53] Ibid., l. 44.
[54] Ibid., ll. 85-86.

wanted the JCA to arrange their departure first, even if the government would have to provide partial financing. However, officials often suspected other Jewish emigration organizations of disloyalty and severely punished them.

Tolerable Only if Controllable: The Government's Attitudes Towards Other Agents

While the Russian government explicitly or implicitly encouraged emigration to America, it viewed nationalist movements, like Zionism and territorialism, as a danger to the regime. On June 24, 1903, the Minister of the Interior, Vyacheslav von Plehve, sent a top-secret circular letter to all imperial governors, *gradonachalniki* (mayors), and police chiefs. Von Plehve believed that Zionists were postponing the creation of a Jewish settlement in Palestine to the distant future and were focusing instead on strengthening the Jewish national idea in the Russian Empire. The Minister insisted that such ideology halted Jewish assimilation and stoked tension between Jews and other nationalities, which contradicted the Russian statehood principles. Von Plehve urged local bureaucrats of all ranks to report all Zionist endeavors and oppose the Zionist movement's development in their governorates, towns, and districts. The forbidden activities included Zionist propaganda, public gatherings, *s'ezdy* (conventions), fundraising, and educational activities. Moreover, local authorities had to make sure that Jewish community leaders and rabbis did not share the Zionist ideology.[55]

Therefore, unlike the JCA, the Jewish Territorialist Organization (ITO), with headquarters in Warsaw, had a thorny path to legalization in the Tsarist empire. In 1907, the ITO's statute provoked the government's suspicion because its goal was to acquire free territories outside of Europe, where Jews who did not want to stay in their birth countries could resettle and live autonomously. The St. Petersburg city governor thought ITO's commitment to concentrate Jews in one territory would facilitate "national segregation of the Jewish masses." The official

[55] GARF, fond 102, opis 99, delo 143, ll. 1-2v [CAHJP HMF 81].

saw this as a Zionist sentiment, and since the empire forbade Zionist organizations in 1903, he endorsed the organization's dissolution.[56]

The Ministry of Interior became especially interested in ITO's activities after the organization transferred its headquarters to Kyiv. In 1908, in response to the Ministry of Interior's inquiries, the Kyiv deputy governor explained that initially the organization shared the Zionist ideology, but after Theodor Herzl's death in 1904 it moved to Israel Zangwill's positions and rejected Palestine as the only possible place for an autonomous Jewish settlement. The deputy governor informed the Ministry that the ITO attempted to direct Jewish emigration to the Galveston port in Texas, made efforts to provide security for migrants during the trip and help them find a job upon arrival. Although the governor admitted that the local authorities had never detained ITO's head and board members for any political offenses, in his view they still belonged to the left-wing parties hostile to the Russian government, and therefore ITO's continued existence was not desirable for the state.[57] A charity theater performance held in Odessa on June 30, 1909, further undermined ITO's reputation, since the local police suspected the organizers of collecting money for political emigrants.[58]

In 1908, the Governing Senate strongly recommended closing the ITO as an organization closely associated with the Zionist ideology.[59] On the other hand, the authorities feared that the ITO could focus its efforts beyond emigration matters and direct them towards advocating Jewish emancipation and improving Jewish families' economic condition in Russia.[60] The ITO's leadership, for their part, made efforts to justify its ideology and assure the state of its loyalty. They even tried to operate under different names (such as the Jewish Emigration Territorialist Organization, the Jewish Resettlement Society, and the Jewish Emigration Association). However, the authorities continued to associate this organization with Zionism, and the ITO never achieved the same level of trust and

[56] Ibid., delo 209, ll. 1b-1bv.
[57] Ibid., listy 13-14.
[58] DAOO, fond 2, opys 7, spr. 133, ark. 25.
[59] RGIA, fond 1284, opis 224, delo 209, l. 150.
[60] DAOO, fond 2, opys 7, spr. 133, ark. 139v-140.

power as the JCA.[61] Moreover, the government refused to legalize another organization, "The Informational Bureau for Jewish Emigrants," because bureaucrats suspected its leaders belonged to the far-left end of the political spectrum. Although the IBJE petitioned the Odessa town governor repeatedly in 1912-1913 and amended their statute several times according to the authorities' demands, the Minister of Interior kept finding new excuses not to legalize the organization.[62]

The government attempted to suppress illegal emigration too. In this case, the authorities worried that emigration agents incited Polish, German, Ukrainian, and Russian peasants to emigrate when the Russian Empire needed their labor. In 1896, the Minister of Interior, Ivan Goremykin, raised the issue of the harmfulness of illegal emigration and its undesirable impact on the local population and asked his subordinates to take measures against it.[63] The police did detain illegal agents from time to time but often released them because of the lack of evidence.

The following story illustrates the authorities' permissive attitude towards illegal Jewish emigration. In 1901, the Rovno[64] police discovered a secret Jewish emigration company and accused its members, Shimon-Haim Rafman, Itsko Makh, and Moshka Niman, of encouraging the local population to emigrate to America and assisting them in this process. However, they escaped punishment because the court did not find evidence of any criminal offense.[65] A year later, the police discovered that the agents continued to help Jewish conscripts, German colonists, and criminals to cross Russia's western border. This time, they received a warning, but nothing more.[66] After repeated complaints, the gendarme department forbade Niman, Rafman, and Makh to reside in southwestern governorates for three years, starting from May 8, 1904.[67]

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[61] RGIA, fond 1284, opis 224, delo 209, ll. 167-169v, 201, 203-205, 261.
[62] DAOO, fond 2, opys 7, spr. 499, ark. 1-3v, 10-10v, 12, 14, 21, 24.
[63] TsDIAK, fond 442, opys 620, spr. 323, ark. 126-127v.
[64] Present-day Rivne, Ukraine.
[65] TsDIAK, fond 442, opys 620, spr. 592, ark. 2-4.
[66] Ibid., ark. 5, 11.
[67] Ibid., ark. 12.

The punished agents, however, petitioned for the penalty to be canceled. Niman demanded a reexamination because the local police officer Todorovich, who had already been fired, was biased.[68] The Minister of the Imperial Court investigated the case and found out that the local population considered Niman a respected and honest man, and he had never been convicted before. Therefore, the Chamberlain agreed to let Niman return to the southwest in a decree of October 12, 1904.[69] Rafman (who in some documents is also mentioned as Reif) went even further and appealed directly to the Emperor. He recognized that he earned a living assisting Jews to leave for America but did so without any political motives. This activity caused no harm, he insisted, since the government itself did not oppose Jewish emigration, and the law did not forbid assistance to inexperienced Jews.[70] The Ministry of Interior granted him the right to return home on October 8, 1904.[71] Finally, Makh came back to Rovno on December 16, 1904, thanks to the petition of his wife, Sura, who explained that she and her five children could not survive without Itsko's salary.[72] The three detainees' return to their working routine within a few months clearly showed the state's indifference towards this kind of offense. Niman was arrested again in 1907, but this time because the police were concerned that he was helping Russian peasants, whose departure was undesirable, unlike Jewish emigration.[73]

Sometimes, the authorities punished Jews for speaking up against emigration. In 1892, an Odessa resident, David Sloushch, received a telegram from the Konigsberg official rabbi and the head of the Jewish Emigration Committee, Doctor Bamberg. He asked to spread the news that the American ports had closed their gates to Jews. Therefore, emigration committees also had to shut down their activities temporarily. Sloushch read the telegram's content in the local prayer house and asked several people to do the same in other synagogues and houses of prayer. Unable to openly disapprove of the telegram's content, the local police convicted Sloushch for reading a non-religious proclamation in a religious institution. Since

[68] Ibid., ark. 20-20v.
[69] Ibid., ark. 53.
[70] Ibid., ark. 46-47v.
[71] Ibid., ark. 45.
[72] Ibid., ark. 67.
[73] Ibid., ark. 79v-80v.

this contradicted the rules set out by the Department of Spiritual Affairs for Foreign Confessions, Sloushch received a 40-ruble fine.[74] The fine's spiritual undertone was probably an excuse. Odessa, as a big port, played a significant role in the Jewish emigration movement. Rumors about the closure of foreign ports and emigration committees could significantly reduce the number of potential migrants, which went against the government's interests.

As we have seen, the Russian government was ready to tolerate Jewish emigration only when it happened under its control. Although the state favored the Jewish Colonization Association, it banned other emigration agencies because they could not prove their loyalty. The police persecuted illegal emigration agents only when they sent away useful workforce—Polish, Ukrainian, and Russian peasants. Conversely, the authorities discouraged everything that could detain Jews from leaving, like improving living conditions in the Pale or spreading rumors about entrance being denied in immigration countries.

Conclusions

The Russian government's attitude towards Jewish emigration was inconsistent—national policies restricted emigration, but local authorities often acted permissively. Scholars have not reached a consensus yet on why the Tsarist regime failed to develop emigration laws to regulate the border crossing, which was happening on a large scale anyway. The question of whether the Russian state wanted Jews to leave or not is also debated. Contemporary Jewish historians, who suffered from the Russian Empire's anti-emancipation actions, believed that the state wanted to get rid of the Jews. Later, scholars took a more critical and sober approach and concluded that the government's actions revealed its unreadiness to take a decisive step towards Jewish expulsion.

However, the newly available archival documents reveal the Russian authorities' tendency to close their eyes to Jewish clandestine emigration, further proving their

[74] DAOO, fond 2, opys 4.1, spr. 3716, ark. 1-2, 7-9.

desire to reduce the Jewish population in the Tsarist empire. The repressive measures against emigration agents and other suspicious propagandists of resettlement indicate that the Russian government encouraged Jewish emigration as long as it was under the authorities' control. Therefore, the archival materials reflect the complexity of the Russian policies towards Jewish migration. While the authorities wanted to decrease the number of the Jewish population in Russia, they also had to consider emigration of other nationalities, the empire's relationships with neighboring countries, and Russia's image in the international arena. Under these circumstances, the Russian government had to play a double game: while it banned emigration officially, it supported Jewish resettlement in practice.

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Keywords: Emigration, Border Control, Border Crossing, Jews in Russia, Bureaucracy

How to quote this article:
Anastasiia Strakhova, "Unexpected Allies: Imperial Russian Support of Jewish Emigration at the Time of Its Legal Ban, 1881-1914," in "Jewish Minorities between Nation-Building and Emigration in late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Century East Central Europe," eds. Francesco Di Palma and Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe, *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History. Journal of the Fondazione CDEC* 20 (December 2021), DOI: 10.48248/issn.2037-741X/13064

Jews, Russians, Karaites: The Development of Karaite Nationalism in the Russian Empire at the beginning of the Twentieth Century

by *Dovilė Troskovaitė*

Abstract

The article examines the rise and consolidation of Karaism in Tsarist Russia from the first half of the nineteenth century through the beginning of the twentieth. The creation of a specific national culture was on the one hand a consequence of the hostile policy the authorities applied towards Jews, which eventually favored Karaite's departure from the originary community. On the other hand, and despite the late spread of Haskalah within Karaites as compared to the larger Rabbanite surroundings, the article claims that the former ones did share Maskilic ideals, partly because Karaites already displayed in the majority of cases distinctive signs of acculturation and secularization—all predisposing elements for the formation of a new feeling of national belonging.

Introduction[1]

In the Russian Empire Karaites were a small group within a diverse Jewish community, but they too found themselves involved in the wave of modernization and nationalism that affected the larger masses of their coreligionists—Rabbinite Jews. The concept of Karaite nationalism was recently discussed by Diana Mykhaylova in her PhD thesis on the role of Karaite studies in the development of Karaite identity,[2] and by Golda Akhiezer in her outstanding book, dedicated to the issue of Karaite *Haskalah* and nationalism.[3] Both authors rely on the notion of Karaite nationalism, even if they define the concept differently: Mykhaylova employs a constructivist approach and compares Karaite nationalism to that of, as Miroslav Hroch would put it, small nations,[4] thus opening a broader perspective for the analysis of Karaite nationalism. Akhiezer, on the other hand, uses the idea of nationalism as defined by ethno-symbolists, and primarily Anthony Smith, in their analysis of the Karaite case.[5] Several studies also analyze different aspects of the modernization and emancipation process of the Karaite community during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The already mentioned study by Akhiezer describes the emergence of a Karaite *Haskalah*, demonstrating close relations between Karaite and Rabbinite thinkers. Roman Freund in his very important study was the first to examine the separation of Karaites from Jewishness and the development of their new Turkic identity, describing this process as *dejudaization*.[6] This shift was well examined in several

[1] This article is part of the project "Development of non-Christian identity in Lithuania in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries," funded by the Lithuanian Research Council under the state program "Dissemination of Lithuanistic research, 2016-2024" (Valstybinė lituanistinių tyrimų sklaidos 2016-2024 m. programa), contract No. S-LIP-18-33.

[2] Diana Mykhaylova, "A Case of Cultural Nationalism in Eastern Europe: Karaite Studies and Their Role in the Development of a Karaite Identity in the 19th-21st centuries," (PhD diss., Helsinki University, 2018).

[3] Golda Akhiezer, *Historical Consciousness, Haskalah, and Nationalism among the Karaites of Eastern Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 317.

[4] Miroslav Hroch, *Mažosios Europos tautos* (Vilnius: Mintis, 2012).

[5] Akhiezer, *Historical Consciousness*, 308-309.

[6] Roman Freund, *Karaites and Dejudaization: A Historical Review of an Endogenous and Exogenous Paradigm* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1991).

of studies by Mikhail Kizilov,[7] who showed the emergence of an anti-Jewish policy and the promotion of a Turkic identity among Polish Karaites. Considered together, these studies open up a space in need of examination: the short period in the development of Karaite nationalism between the emergence of the Karaite *Haskalah* thinkers in 1840s and the development of a new Turkic Karaite identity in the 1930s and later. One of the most important questions to be addressed is based on the fact that the Russian Empire's policy towards Karaites differed form that towards Rabbinite Jews, making Karaite social status much more favorable. Francesca Bregoli's study on the modernization of Livornese Jews[8] suggests that the privileged status of local Jews did not stimulate, but on the contrary prevented the development of other aspects of the emancipation process that took place in other Jewish communities in other regions that were not so privileged. This insight leads us to the question whether the Karaites' privileged status in Russia had any effect on their modernization process and the emergence of their own nationalism. If so, this in turn raises another question: the identification of similarities and differences between Rabbinite and Karaite *Haskalah*, which I will try to do in this study.

I will begin my article by describing Russia's legal and social policy towards Karaites in comparison with that towards Jews, in order to see what influence it had on the formation of Karaite nationalism. Then I will examine early Karaite periodicals to establish how nationalism was perceived by the Karaites themselves; what features made it similar to Jewish *Haskalah*, and what was specifically Karaite

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[7] Among others: Mikhail Kizilov, "Between the Jews and the Khazars: The Formation of the Ethnic Identity and Historical Views of the East European Karaites in the General Context of European History from the late eighteen century until today," in *Pinkas: Annual of the Culture and History of East European Jewry,* ed. Larisa Lempertienė, vol. 2 (Vilnius, Žara: 2008), 45-64; Id., "Faithful Unto Death: Language, Tradition, and the Disappearance of the East European Karaite Communities," *East European Jewish Affairs* 36, no.1 (2006): 73-93; Id., "Karaites in North-Eastern Europe: The Karaite Community of Troki between the Two World Wars," in *Orient als Grenzbereich. Proceedings of the Deutscher Orientalistentag* (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz, 2007), 139-155; Id., "Social adaptation and manipulation with self-identity: Karaites in Eastern Europe in Modern times," in *Karaites in Eastern Europe in the Last Generations*, *Proceedings of the Jerusalem Karaite Colloquium* (Jerusalem: Ben-Zvi Institute, 2011), 130-153.

[8] Francesca Bregoli, *Mediterranean Enlightenment. Livornese Jews, Tuscan Culture, and Eighteenth-Century Reform* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2014).

in its ideology. Finally, I will conclude by drawing parallels between Karaite and Jewish enlightenment, taking into account the Imperial context and its power on the formation of the discourse on minority nationalism. The development of Karaite nationalism will be traced by examining the first Karaite periodicals that appeared in the Russian Empire: the first communal journal in Russian, *Караимская жизнь* (Karaite Life),[9] published under the editorship of Karaite publicist V. Sinani in Moscow in 1911-1912; and *Караимское слово* (Karaite Word), published in Vilnius/Vilna in 1913-1914 by local Karaites as the community's monthly magazine on history and literature.[10] The publishers of *Karaite Life* represented the most progressive group of Russian Karaites, strongly affected by secular education, acculturation and integration into the dominant Russian society, while their successors in Vilna gave voice to a more conservative audience. The comparison of the national ideology supported by these two groups in the aforementioned periodicals may help define a more precise picture of Karaite national discourse in the Russian Empire.

The Russian Empire's Policy towards Jews and the Emergence of Karaite Nationalism

Small in number, weak in social and legal status and professing a non-Christian faith, the Karaite community could operate in Russian society only within the limits set up by state and society. Being identified and treated as Jews, Karaites could not expect to extend these boundaries. However, as we will see, these constraints worked as a stimulus to re-think their collective identity and the way they display it publicly.

[9] During its two years of publication, twelve issues were released. Though published by communal leaders in Moscow, the journal was addressed mainly to Crimean communities, with a minor contribution by North Western Karaites. The fact that the first communal journal was published in Russian indicates, in my opinion, that its founders were affected by the acculturation process, accepted the language of the dominant society and were eager to integrate into the surrounding environment.

[10] The analysis of the content of *Karaite word* is based on three volumes, stored at the S. Shapshal Karaim Ethnographic Museum in Trakai. During its two years of publication twelve issues were released (six in 1913 and three double issues in 1914) but I was unable to locate other issues.

The imperial policy towards Jews has been widely analyzed in recent historiography.[11] It is nonetheless worth mentioning that almost all measures limiting Jewish economic activities and social life were repealed for Karaites shortly after they were introduced.[12] Yet, such exceptional legal status was constantly debated by imperial bureaucrats. For example, in 1837 the governor-general of New Russia Mikhail Vorontsov visited the Eupatoria Karaite community and asked them to prepare information about their ethnic origin, as well as the circumstances and reasons of their arrival in Crimea.[13] Two years later, a similar interest in local Karaites was shown by Tauria governor M. Muromtsev, who had sent an official query to the Tauria Karaite Spiritual Board, asking the same questions.[14] The document implied that if the answers to these questions turned out to be unsatisfactory, Karaites would be treated as the rest of the Jews. This kind of attention from high Imperial officials forced the Karaite elite to represent themselves in terms other that those used for Jews, something which later became an important aspect of their national identity. The search for this information, which could cost the Karaites their social well-being—exemption from military conscription, double taxation and living in the Pale of settlement—was entrusted

[11] Among others: John Klier, *Russia Gathers her Jews: The Origins of the "Jewish Question" in Russia, 1772-1825* (Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 1986); Id., *Imperial Russia's Jewish question, 1855-1881* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Michael Stanislawski, *Tsar Nicholas I and the Jews: The Transformation of Jewish Society in Russia 1825-1855*, (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1983); Alexei Miller, *The Romanov Empire and Nationalism* (Budapest: Central European university press, 2008).

[12] For example, military conscription for Karaites was canceled immediately after its introduction for Jews in 1827; likewise, double taxation was canceled in 1795.

[13] Abraham Firkovich, "Avnei zikkaron," *Karaimskaia zhizn* 5-6 (1911): 83.

[14] The questions were: From what people do Karaites come and from where did they arrive [to Crimea]? Under what historical circumstances did they arrive [to Crimea]? What are their customs and occupations? Were there (or are now) outstanding people, famous for their intelligence, good deeds and merits, among Karaites? Are there any books on Karaite history? Are there any truthful stories from the ancestors, which could prove the antiquity of Karaite faith and religious rites? When and because of what reason did Karaites separate themselves from Rabbinites and what are the differences in their religious rites? See: O. Belyj, "Obzor archivnykh dokumentov no istorii karaimskoi obshchiny Kryma v pervoi polovinie 19-ogo veka (po materialam fonda Tavricheskogo i Odesskogo Karaimskogo Dychovnogo Pravlenie b GAARK)," *Krymskij muzei* 2 (1995-1996): 114; Mikhail Kizilov, "Social adaptation and manipulation with self-identity: Karaites in Eastern Europe in Modern times," in *Karaites in Eastern Europe in the Last Generations*, eds. Dan D. Y. Shapira and Daniel J. Lasker (Jerusalem: Ben-Zvi Institute-The Hebrew University, 2011), 130-153; Abraham Firkovich, "Avnei zikkaron," *Karaimskaia zhizn'* 10-11 (1912): 17.

by hakham S. Babovich[15] to A. Firkovich.[16] He himself pointed this out: "I just want to [...] find out the truth about our establishment and life in Crimea;[17] [...] I realized the importance and the particularity of the instruction given to me and was in a rush."[18] Paradoxically, this situation perfectly illustrates how the need for information about Karaite history arose not from members of the community but from the dominant society. It seems that such requirement from the Tauria governor was not only unexpected by local Karaites, but also outdated—in March 1837 a law had already been passed on the legal status of Karaite clergy.[19] The preamble stated that the Karaites of Tauria governorate had asked to establish the legal position of their clergy and "grant them certain rights enjoyed by Muslim clergy" ("mahometans" in the source D.T.).[20] In a decision of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Senate, the request was considered "respectable" and a law defining the rights of Karaite clergy was adopted, which essentially meant the establishment of a Karaite Spiritual Board in Tauria, thus setting up a hierarchy of Karaite officials. Karaite self-understanding as a nation was strongly influenced by the change in the community's self-government and the establishment in 1837 of Tauria Karaite a Spiritual Board with a religious and administrative leader—the hakham. [21] This institution served as a connecting link between remote communities, embedded in different cultural environments,[22] and created, using

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[15] Even before the establishment of the Tauria Karaite Spiritual Board and the election of Simcha Babovich to the position of hakham, he was acting as informal leader of Karaites of New Russia. For more on Simcha Babovich see: Philip E. Miller, *Karaite Separatism in Nineteenth-Century Russia: Joseph Solomon Lutski's Epistle of Israel's Deliverance* (New York: Hebrew Union College press, 1993).

[16] Abraham Firkovich, "Avnei zikkaron," *Karaimskaia zhizn'* 3-4 (1911): 77.

[17] Ananjasz Zajączkowski, "Życie i działalność b. p. A. Firkowicza (1785-1874). Mowa wygłoszona podczas obchodu 50-j rocznicy zgonu Abrahama Firkowicza," *Myśl Karaimska*, t. 1, z. 2, 1925, 11-12.

[18] Firkovich, "Avnei zikkaron," 20.

[19] Legal status of Karaite clergy, March 3, 1837, Vitalij Levanda, *Polnyj khronologicheskij sbornik zakonov i polozhenii, kasajushchikhsia evreev, ot ulozhenia tsaria Aleksei'a Mikhailovitcha do nastoiashchego vremeni, ot 1649 do 1873* (Saint Petersburg: tipografi'a K. V. Trubnikova, 1874), 401.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Tamara Bairašauskaitė, "Apibrėžimo ir tapatumo kolizija: Lietuvos karaimų socialinio statuso klausimu XIX amžiaus pirmoje pusėje," *Lituanistica* 65, no.1 (2006): 31.

[22] Across the vast territory of the Russian Empire Karaites experienced different cultural influences: in the North Western region: Polish, Lithuanian, Belorussian; in Crimea: Russian,

Benedict Anderson's phrase, an "imagined community," bounding together people without personal relationships. This sense of togetherness stimulated the emergence of a perception of themselves as a nation, as was later declared by the members of the Karaite National Congress in Eupatoria in 1910.[23] Furthermore, the existence of the Karaite Spiritual Board widened the institutional gap between the Karaite and Rabbanite communities and marked the imperial legitimization of Karaite autocephaly.

The Attitude of the Dominant Society towards Jews and Karaites

It is well known that the majority of Imperial Russian society had a negative attitude towards Jews. The Talmud was regarded as the cause of Jewish wrongful behavior and religious fanaticism. The Yiddish language they spoke was also perceived unfavorably by the dominant society and it was pejoratively called *jargon*. To make Jews potentially less harmful for the surrounding society they had to be pushed to abandon the use of Yiddish in everyday life and to abandon the Talmud. Interestingly, the criterion of the Jews' usefulness was used by the Jews themselves; As reported by David E. Fishman, Nota Khaimovich Notkin, in his memoranda to General Procurator Alexei Kurakin of 1797 and later in 1803, referred to the desire to make Jews useful to society and the state as one of the main reasons for integration.[24] These were the arguments of officials and the educated members of the dominant society, but for the illiterate masses the otherness of the Jews came down to their appearance. However, such negative attitude was not shown towards Karaites. As the newspaper "News of Tauria governorate" wrote:

> [Among] those [Karaites] of Lithuania only the old wear beards, but they dress like local burgers, who profess the Catholic faith, that is [in] Polish [style]. The young are shaving their beards and dress in a European

Tatar; in Lutsk: Polish, Ruthenian, Ukrainian; outside the Empire, in Halich: German-language culture, Austrian, Polish and Ruthenian, Ukrainian.

[23] Mykhaylova, "A Case of Cultural Nationalism in Eastern Europe," 90-91.

[24] David E. Fishman, *Russia's first modern Jews. The Jews of Shklov* (New York: n. p., 1995), 85-87.

> manner. They are occupied mostly in horticulture, some of them in crafts or contracting. [...] they distinguish themselves by their education and politeness, similar to those of the local nobility. [...] the Karaite community in Luck [...] grows beards and side curls like Rabbinite Jews, but they dress like Lithuanians [Lithuanian Karaites-D.T.]—in Polish [style]. They are poorer, more ignorant and untidy than Lithuanians. [...] All [Karaites] of Tauria and Kherson governorates keep up the Tatar traditions: they dress in contemporary [manner] like Tatars, and, like Tatars, shave their beards until wedding and then they don't. Generally, the Karaites of New Russia can be described as rich.[25]

This passage vividly illustrates how much attention was paid to the Karaite outfit and appearance and how much it influenced the group's general image in the eyes of the dominant society: wearing the local dress was welcomed and regarded positively. On the other hand, the text quoted above provides an insight on some markers of acculturation, as found in the Karaites' appearance in the middle of the nineteenth century.

The above cited report reflected the positive manner in which Karaites were perceived by Russian officials. This is also evident in the comparisons between the two groups, made in amid-nineteenth century article published in the newspaper of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and reprinted in the journal *Karaite life* nearly half a century later. It described the positive features of Karaites: "wearing a local suit without stubbornness," honesty, diligence, "absence of efforts to convert Muslims or Christians to their faith," for which "the Russian authorities have always shown their fair treatment against the Rabbinites."[26] Such positive feedback had a practical aspect as well. For example, considering whether to allow Rabbanites to settle in the town of Trakai/Troki, a place considered the cradle of Karaites in the North Western Region,[27] the minister of Religious and

[25] Appendix to *Izvestiia Tavricheskoi gubernii*, t. 4, November 4, 1843, 1.

[26] "Ot kuda prishli karaimy v Rossiju," *Karaimskaia zhizn'* 5-6 (1911): 51.

[27] The history of the prohibition for Rabbinite Jews to settle in the town of Trakai/Troki dates back to the seventeenth century, when Karaites gained such privilege from the Lithuanian grand

Educational Affairs of People of Other Faiths Mikhail Golitsyn stated that Karaites needed to be protected from Rabbanites, since the former were involved in useful crafts and even agriculture, whereas Rabbanites were parasites and should not be accepted in places where they still did not live.[28] State officials, rather than trying to force Karaites to change by imposing strict regulations, as they did in the case of Rabbanites, chose instead to push Karaites to prove their separateness from Rabbinic Jews, which in turn made Karaites think of themselves as an independent, unique group, and to look for non-religious arguments to prove this claim. This policy produced results quickly: already in the second half of the nineteenth century community leaders began to declare publicly their "separate Jewishness" and to distance themselves from Rabbanites. This strategy had a clear goal—to secure exemptions from restrictions imposed on Rabbanites, but at the same time it worked as a stimulus for Karaites to rethink their identity and position themselves outside the Jewish tradition. Eventually, Karaites were recognized as a separate ethno-confessional group in 1863,[29] with the adoption of the Karaite Statute. As a result, not only the word Jew was no longer used for Karaites, but they were granted the same rights as Russian Orthodox believers.[30] Both the institutional changes in the community—the establishment of Spiritual Board—and the positive treatment of Karaites by state authorities led to the official recognition of boundaries between Karaites and Rabbanites in almost every area of daily life. Karaites, having legitimized their confessional dissociation and partially satisfied the need for social separation, began to re-consider cultural links with Rabbanite Jews. One of the most pressing issues for Karaites was the connection with Jews through the ethnonym *Jews-Karaites*, which was prevalent in the public sphere and in the legal documents concerning the community. Even

duke Ladislaus IV Vasa in 1646. In the nineteenth century the matter came back because new authorities issued Jewish legislation forbiding them to dwell in the villages. Due to this prohibition, Jews needed new places to settle in and the Trakai/Troki issue was raised again.

[28] "Iz istorii Trokskikh karaimov," *Karaimskaia zhizn'* 2 (1911): 29.

[29] New editions of the law regulating the legal status of Russian Karaites were released in 1896 and later in 1904. The latter contained minor changes, including a more detailed regulation of the hakham election process, as well as several other minor changes.

[30] On the question of the Karaites' legal status after 1863 see Levanda, *Polnyj khronologicheskij,* 1001-1005.

though an important study by V. Eliashevich[31] shows that the term *karaim* was officially recognized, and included in dictionaries of the Russian language, only in the twentieth century, it was used in the nineteenth century in all the official correspondence as a specific "non-Russian" term, and the Russian officials of the New Russia and North Western Regions were well aware of it. Moreover, an association with Rabbanite Jews made it difficult for Karaites to maintain the image of a separate religious community and establish their status in society—the constant confusion with Rabbanites often resulted in applying restrictions to Karaites, which were legally exempted from them.[32] In 1853 the Trakai/Troki Karaite community appealed to the Governor-General of Vilnius/Vilna to submit a request to improve the situation in the community. One of the first requests, as stated in this document, was that Karaites were not to be described as Jews, but rather be called "Russian Karaites of the Old Faith."[33] Though this appeal was accepted and legally enshrined in the Karaite Statute adopted 10 years later,[34] it was not always observed in practice. The need, felt by Karaites, to be named differently—without any connotation of Jewishness—was similar to the efforts of Rabbinite Jews to get official approval to be called *evrei* (Hebrews) and not *zhydy* in the Empire's official communication, publications etc. As Fishman has pointed out, already at the end of the eighteenth century, after a request from the Jews of Shklov, Russian Empress Yekaterina had issued a law accepting the name *evrei* as the official one. This act was celebrated by enlightened Jews, those, who sought to be accepted by the dominant society and to whom their public perception as Jews and their social status was important.[35] In other worlds, for both communities their name was important as an identity marker and an expression of their status in the society they wanted to be accepted by.

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[31] Vyacheslav Eliashevich, "Samonazvanie karaim: proiskhozhdenie, istori'a i interpretacii," *Tsaytshrift* 6, no. 11 (2019): 85.

[32] "Circular letter on the Karaite spiritual issues," 1910, Wroblewski Library of Lithuanian Academy of Science, Manuscript Division, Collection 301, file 470.

[33] "Request of the Trakai/Troki Karaite community to the Vilnius/Vilna military governor and the general-governor of Grodno, Minsk, Kaunas/Kowno," June 23, 1853, *Lithuanian State Historical Archive,* Collection 378 BS, index 1847, file 436, 43 v.

[34] Levanda, *Polnyj khronologicheskij,* 1001-1005.

[35] Fishman, *Russia's first modern Jews*, 80-81.

The Idea of Nationalism in Karaite Periodical Publications

The establishment of the Tauria Karaite Spiritual Board, followed by the recognition of Karaites' equal rights with Russian Orthodox inhabitants, fostered Karaite acculturation and integration into the dominant society. These were the issues faced by Russian *maskilim* as well, with whom, as Akhiezer had convincingly pointed out, Karaite intellectuals were well familiar.

The beginning of the twentieth century, though, brought a new self-perception: Karaites began to describe themselves as a nation and act as a nation. This formed a major intellectual shift from acknowledgement with Rabbinite *maskilim's* ideas, towards the definition of "their own" idea of communal modernization.

The role of communal printing in the study of Karaite nationalism is highly important. For centuries Eastern European Karaites lived in distant communities belonging to different states and under the influence of a variety of dominant cultures, languages and traditions. Among other functions, communal printing succeeded in strengthening the sense of unity among Karaites all over the Russian Empire. It was a tribune for the dissemination of Karaite nationalism by the community's elite to the general Karaite public, which, following Anderson, managed to create and maintain an imagined community with the help of these periodicals.[36] The founders of the first Karaite periodical, *Karaite life*, considered the spread of national self-consciousness as one of the main goals of their journal. Despite this, in several years of publication, there was only one article directly related to the issues of national identity, entitled "National self-consciousness," by David Kokizov.[37] This text may be seen as an expression of the views of enlightened Karaites, who saw acculturation, secularism and integration as the main goals of the Karaite national movement, even though it did not form any strategy of practical action. The author claimed a need to integrate into, as he called it, a universal human culture,[38] which was generally understood as the European

[36] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Vesro, 1991).

[37] David Kokizov, "Natsionalnoe samosoznanie," *Karaimskaia zhizn'* 3-4 (1911): 21-34.

[38] Ibid., 27.

civilization. Integration into it meant Karaite membership in an elite club of nations, which maintained their national culture within the framework of this civilization. In other words, enlightened Karaites felt that Russian Karaites did not fit into the standard model of other European nations, and wanted to eliminate the obstacles that kept them away from this goal. This, in fact, was not a unique feature of the Karaite national movement: Russian *maskilim*, as described by Fishman, "willingly joined European culture through intellectual activities, participation in the social and political life of the country, sharing the objective of acculturation into Russian society."[39] The focus on European civilization and culture was a general characteristic of the Haskalah movement and Karaites were part of this milieu.

The journal *Karaite life* took this goal as their mission—"to examine the questions about Karaite life that are closely related to [community's] national identity."[40] Very much like Jewish *maskilim*, who, as Akhiezer has pointed out, thought of *Haskalah* as a pan-Jewish movement that could include Karaites despite their attitude towards the Talmud—or on the contrary, because of that[41]—, Karaites also tended to speak of modernization in general Jewish terms. Though the above-mentioned article "National self-consciousness" was addressed to a Karaite audience, the terms used by the author did not limit its scope solely to Karaites. This can be shown by analyzing Kokizov's text: he always refers to "*zakon bozhiy*" (God's law) instead of Judaism, "*svyatoye pisaniye*" (Holy Scripture) instead of the Torah, uses the phrase "*drevne-bibleyskiy yazyk*" (old biblical language), invented by the Karaites themselves, to designate Biblical Hebrew, etc.[42] Most importantly, he uses the term *Israelites*, which had a clear religious connotation and relation with the Biblical forefathers of the Karaites but could be applied to the whole Jewry as well. These terms were commonly used by Russian *maskilim* and, no doubt, Kokizov was familiar with their texts, as it emerges from his writings, where he puts Karaites in the context of all Jewry:

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[39] Fishman, *Russia's first modern Jews*, 133-135.

[40] Kokizov, "Natsionalnoe samosoznanie," 26.

[41] Akhiezer, *Historical Consciousness*, 314-315.

[42] Mikhail Kizilov, *The Sons of Scripture. The Karaites in Poland and Lithuania in the Twentieth Century* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 91.

> [contrary to Karaites], another stream of Israel—the Jewish nation—whose different groups lived among more civilized nations, earlier than the Karaites managed to refuse this [negative] influence [of religion] and to join the universal human culture, which was triumphantly approaching them.[43] [...] They—the Jews—clearly spoke up for Enlightenment and called themselves adherents of this movement.[44]

The passage clearly shows that, from Kokizov's point of view, Karaites had to follow the Jewish *maskilim*, which, again, shows that Karaites did not form a separate or purely Karaite Enlightenment movement but tended to join the general Jewish one. However, Kokizov avoided any references to the texts of *Haskalah* thinkers and promoters in the pages of this journal.

Despite the lack of a modernization program in the pages of *Karaite life*, it seems that the seed of nationalism was planted in the minds of Karaites: the other journal under discussion, *Karaite word*, applied the term *nation* to Imperial Karaites.[45] This sense of nationhood was closely related, as it was stated before, to the institutionalization of the Karaite community and the establishment of the chair of *hakham*. This is well illustrated by two articles in *Karaite word*, on the election of a new *hakham* in 1914 after the death of predecessor Samuel Pampulov. The author of the article "On the [question of the] election of the Tauria hakham"[46] considers this election of high importance for all the Karaite nation: "the election of the hakham is of national interest, as every mistake can [...] cause harm to the nation."[47] For the author, who wrote under the abbreviation T-ij, this was an event of great significance[48] and "national interest". The emerging role of the hakham in Karaite nation-building was an idea that was strongly promoted in the pages of *Karaite word*. Clearly, the author of the text under discussion considered Karaites as a unified nation and it was the institution of the *hakham* that strengthened this feeling of cohesion. Moreover, he demonstrated an ambition to

43 Kokizov, "Natsionalnoe samosoznanie," 24.
44 Ibid., 23.
45 "K vyboram Tavricheskogo gakama," *Karaimskoe slovo* 7-8 (1914): 1.
46 Ibid.
47 Ibid.
48 "K vyboram Tavricheskogo gakama," 2.

unite not only the Imperial Karaites but all Karaites, i.e. the communities in *Halicz* (Austria), Turkey and Egypt. The author argued that the Karaites who lived in those countries were bounded by "blood and religion [...] [which] forms the basis of any nationality—elements that most easily unite individuals into one association."[49] Moreover: "Life itself states for us a necessity to have such a unifying center—a *hakham* for all Karaites [...], to avoid the split among our brothers."[50]

The idea of a "national leader" was rather new among Jews, and its appearance was stimulated by the idea of nation, that prevailed in the dominant imperial society, where the tzar was perceived as the father of the whole nation. As discussed above, in the first half of the nineteenth century such concept was adapted for two non-Christian communities in the Russian Empire—Tatars and Karaites—by imposing the position of chief religious leader (the *hakham* in the Karaite community, and the mufti in the Muslim Tatar one).[51] The growing significance of the *hakham* was a unique feature of Karaite nationalism and gained its peak in the first half of the twentieth century, when the Karaite community positioned the *hakham* as the central figure of their nationalism. It determined the nature of Karaite nationalism, which developed using the framework established by the dominant society, something that was not the case among Rabbinite Jews. Undoubtedly, this feature made Karaite *Haskalah* different from that observed among Rabbinite Jews, but this difference was not about the ideas or goals of the Enlightenment, but rather about the means to implement it.

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[49] L..., "Odin hakham dl'a vsech karaimov," *Karaimskoe slovo* 9-10 (1914): 1.

[50] Ibid.

[51] This practice may be compared to the institution of the *hakham bashi* in the Ottoman Empire. According to a legend, this institution was established by Mehmed the Conqueror, however, as B. Lewis states in the book *The Jews of Islam* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 126-127; at that time that figure could hardly have been the head of all Ottoman Jews. Only in 1834 was a chief rabbi appointed by the Ottoman sultan Mahmud II, and the position did not last long, since the Ottoman Empire ceased to exist less than a century later. No matter the actual scope of the *hakham bashi*'s jurisdiction, it was an important figure for Ottoman Jewish identity.

The Nature of Karaite Nationalism

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Karaite communal press identified three key elements of Karaite nationalism, as conceived by the enlightened in the community: strong secularization, national education and national language. The word "national" was used often and specifically to stress belonging to Karaite community. The constant use of this term supported the idea of Karaites as a nation and such understanding changed the previously popular self-understanding as a community united, first and foremost, by religious tradition. The emergence of a nationalistic point of view was encouraged by the Karaite elite's conviction that the religious tradition had been corrupted over time, and had lost its primary, authentic form—and the same ideas can be observed among Rabbinite maskilim. Given the lack of specific ideas about how Karaite religious tradition should be changed in order to become "authentic" again, secularization together with a national identity was seen as a viable option.

In the pages of *Karaite life* the term "secularization" gained quite a radical connotation. David Kokizov, the author of the already mentioned article "National self-consciousness," was convinced that it was religion that was to be blamed for the absence of national self-consciousness among Israelites. The main problem, according to this author, was that all hardships were understood as God's punishment, which in turn brought an even stronger adherence to religion and a deeper indifference to culture, secular education etc. Kokizov stated that "as long as an oppressive adherence to the ritual part of our religion lies upon our nation, one cannot talk about any kind of national self-identity and intellectual prosperity."[52] From his point of view, religious restrictions prevented any chance that the nation could take up responsibility for its own existence and at the same time cherish a common feeling of national self-awareness. While criticizing adherence to religion, Kokizov did not suggest any religious reforms but saw secularization as the only way for Israelites to become a nation. However, the place of religiosity in the Karaite national project was evaluated differently among Karaites of different parts of Empire. While Kokizov represented the position of

[52] Kokizov, "Natsionalnoe samosoznanie," 23.

strong secularization supported by Moscow Karaites, their co-religionists in the North Western region still saw religion as one of the most important aspects of Karaite national self-consciousness. The lack of homogeneity in the opinions of Karaite leaders concerning the content of the community's national project shows how many differences existed within the community and indicates the reasons of the limited success in the implementation of this project. As Mikhail Kizilov has aptly noted, "on the verge of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the Karaites had problems with clearly defining both their ethnic and religious affiliations."[53] Against this background Kokizov supported secularization and spoke up for the replacement of religious identity with a national one, leaving religious practice as an individual matter. Notwithstanding his critics, the content of the journal clearly shows that the community had already reached a turning point and the split between the conservative practitioners of the Karaite religion and the liberal part of the community was constantly growing. In this context, the journal tended to reflect the already existing situation rather than propagate new revolutionary ideas. For example, in an article dealing with the issues of the National Karaite assembly,[54] the author stressed the tension between religious leaders and the part of the community which was following the ideas of Enlightenment (liberal, well educated, secular). It seems that the latter was more influential, so that the Tauria *hakham* Samuel Pampulov decided to keep the assembly sessions inaccessible to the press—and even to Karaites, if they were not on the list of deputies—in order to avoid the potential blowback. Some participants were even forced to leave the meeting. This was a source of much distress for the liberal part of the community, which felt ignored by their religious leaders. The *hakham* himself probably tried to ensure that some discussions would remain confined to a small circle and that the final decisions would correspond to the positions of the *hakham*, but he failed.[55] The growth of secularism among Karaites was recorded by a delegate from the Moscow Karaite community to the Karaite National Assembly, A. I. Katyk, who clearly stated that some of the Karaite religious rituals had lost their

[53] Kizilov, *The Sons of Scripture,* 39.

[54] "Echo o pervom nacionalnom karaimskom sjezde," *Karaimskaia zhizn'* 2 (1911): 62-63.

[55] It seems that the hakham failed to keep the Assembly closed to the public as its decisions were announced in the journal *Karaimskaia zhizn'*. I do not have any information at my disposal on the decisions made by the Assembly beyond than those reported by the journal.

meaning and importance. As a consequence, Enlightenment was beginning to spread among young Karaites and "not only communities are scattered and distant from each other but also members of particular communities."[56] Some of the Karaite young were strongly affected by the loss of religiosity, which had kept their forefathers together, bound to both a territory and an identity.[57] There were even examples of a radical refusal of religious tradition and rituals. For example, it appeared that some Karaite families refused to perform circumcision on baby boys, which made it impossible to get metrical documents for them. In this case the assembly firmly stressed that circumcision was to be considered an obligation in the Karaite community, and only after this procedure the birth of a child could be registered in metrical books.[58] Apparently, adherence to secularization in the circles of enlightened Karaites at the beginning of the twentieth century was strong and less nuanced than among Rabbinite *maskilim*. This was probably due to the fact that criticism of religion within the Karaite community had only begun to be publicly voiced almost a hundred years later than among Rabbinites. Secularization did not sound as a progressive idea but simply corresponded to the reality that the community had already faced and accepted. In the circles of enlightened Karaites secularization was the most important condition for modernization and nation-building. On the contrary, the Karaites in the North Western region—Trakai/Troki and Vilnius/Vilna, where the journal *Karaite word* was published—belonged to a more conservative elite, which was trying to preserve the status of religion and make it a part of modern Karaite nationalism: "[if] we will be following our [religious] teaching, educating ourselves according the principles of universal human morality, which is within this teaching, we will experience the sympathy of surrounding [people] and gain our rights."[59] This compromise position shows that even conservative communities were well aware that modernization was an ongoing process among Karaites, and was threatening their religious tradition. Efforts to keep religion relevant in everyday life were evident in literary works like in the poem "Vospryan', moy narod" (Rise up, my nation) by M.S. Sinani, who appealed to the Karaites: "remember the

[56] "Pervyj nacionalnyj karaimskij sjezd w Eupatorii," *Karaimskaia zhizn'* 1 (1911): 72.

[57] Ibid., 86.

[58] "Echo o pervom nacionalnom karaimskom sjezde," 62-63.

[59] L..., "Odin hakham dl'a vsech karaimov," 2.

commandment of God/ get on the road/ [...] and do not forget the holy faith."[60] The idea of Karaite Judaism as a source of "universal human morality" was an attempt to maintain its status, though, as the refusal of Jewishness in the twentieth century shows, it was unsuccessful.[61] Among progressive Karaites another key element of their national identity was education. The prevailing educational system in traditional schools—studying the Bible and its commentaries—was critically assessed in *Karaite life*. It was accused of being not only ineffective but even harmful for the community and threatening its existence in the near future. It was argued that due to its inability to ensure teaching of contemporary subjects, Karaite children were attending Russian secondary schools and remained without, as it was called, a national education. Because of this, young Karaites were losing their connections with their communities and other Karaites.[62] In the context of promoting Karaite national identity, the role of education cannot be overestimated. While the importance and dissemination of moral codes determined by religion was decreasing, national education was proposed as a welcomed solution. It is not by accident that the task of upbringing children was assigned to the national education and was even more important than the knowledge it was meant to provide.[63] The question of a national school system was addressed at the national Karaite assembly in 1910. After long discussions, the decision was made to turn the Karaite religious academy into a pro-gymnasium, with a focus on secular education and national upbringing.[64] The project was nonetheless doomed to fail because this was the only institution of "national education" and most of the Karaite youth was scattered throughout the Russian Empire, and were unable to study there. Besides, it is clear that at the beginning of

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[60] M.S. Sinani, "Vosprian', moi narod!," *Karaimskoe slovo* 6 (1914): 3.

[61] The Karaite community in Vilnius/Vilna at the begining of the twentiethcentury was already quite secular. Though local Karaites made efforts to build a *kenesa* in the city and managed to complete the project successfully and open it in 1923, it was built as a monument to the Karaite nation, and adorned with secular symbols (such as the Karaite coat of arms, a symbol of Karaite nationalism). Many secular celebrations took place in this kenesa during the first half of the twentieth century.

[62] Kokizov, "Natsionalnoe samosoznanie," 27.

[63] Ibid., 29.

[64] It was then decided to teach 6 lessons per week of biblical Hebrew and Karaite religion in preparatory classes, and only 4 lessons for students of the first to fourth grades. "Pervyj nacionalnyj karaimskij sjezd w Eupatorii," 83.

the twentieth century many Karaite families were choosing to educate their children in the state's school system, ensuring their qualification in Russian language and secular subjects. Though the plan of a national school fostered national thinking among emancipated Karaites, the community was unable to set up such a system because of both financial reasons and the growing adaptation to the governmental educational system. The third important issue was the role of language in the modernization process, which was perceived completely differently by each group. If the Rabbinic *Haskalah* sought to seek enlightenment by both acculturation and the revival of Hebrew language and literature,[65] Karaites, on the contrary, saw it mainly as a process of acculturation into Russian society. The Hebrew language was never included in the national Karaite project: for example, in the article "Russkiy ili tatarskiy" (Russian or Tatar)[66] Kokizov stated that the Karaites' native Hebrew language had been replaced (voluntarily or not) by the Tatar language after Karaite forefathers found themselves under their authority. According to the author, the use of the Tatar language—which was said to be poor, uncivilized, and used by only a small number of people—should be discontinued, because "[European] Karaites have used the Tatar language for several centuries, during this period they have written no scientific work or any other work which they could be proud of in the Tatar language."[67]

In order to become a civilized nation, Karaites should adopt a civilized language in their everyday life, education, and religious services. The suggested solution—not to return to Hebrew but to use Russian—was based on rational arguments: Karaites were living in a Russian speaking society and knowing its language would open up more perspectives for them:

> The answer to the question of which language [European] Karaites should replace the Tatar vernacular with should not cause any trouble, because this new language must be the language of a cultural nation, where

[65] Lital Levy, "The Nahḍa and the Haskala: A Comparative Reading of 'Revival' and 'Reform'," *Middle Eastern Literatures: Incorporating Edebiyat* 16, no.3 (2013): 302, DOI: 10.1080/1475262X.2013.891391.

[66] David Kokizov, "Ruskij ili tatarskij," *Karaimskaia zhizn'* 2 (1911): 34-36.

[67] Ibid., 35.

> [European] Karaite communities currently dwell. This means that the Karaites who live in the Russian Empire should learn the Russian language.[68]

This change should not be expected to occur spontaneously—the author of the article gives a list of means, that should be made compulsory by the Karaite Spiritual Board and applied to all Karaite communities: teaching children should be done in Russian and supported by textbooks, prayer books and other necessary materials, printed in Russian or in Biblical Hebrew with parallel text in the Russian language, because a significant part of Karaite community knew little Hebrew, if at all: "The translation of prayer books and holy books into Russian should also have a positive impact on the strengthening of the religiosity of [European] Karaites." [69] Moreover, it was proposed that all official correspondence of the Karaite communities and the Tauria Spiritual Board should take place exclusively in Russian. And finally, each Karaite family should teach their children to speak mainly Russian.

It is worth noting that the movement in support of the Russian language at the beginning of the twentieth century became very extreme, as one can infer from the text discussed above, where no mention is made of any possible bilingualism within the Karaite community. The position of Hebrew was discussed only in the context of religious education, however, it was perceived as a kind of habit, which, as may be presumed, would eventually vanish thanks to extensive translations of religious texts into Russian.

The silence about Hebrew was in stark contrast to the promotion of Russian, and had another rational justification: it would make visible the cultural coherence with Rabbinite Jews, which, after the establishment of the Karaite Spiritual board and the acknowledgment of Karaite social status by the Imperial government, would be highly undesirable by most Karaites. It could even be perceived as threatening, if existing antisemitic notions within society were taken into account.

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[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid.

Despite discussions on the questions of national self-consciousness in the Karaite press, it was not until the fourth decade of the twentieth century that the ideology of Karaite nationalism was elaborated. Its content, developed by the Polish Karaite hakham Seraja Szapszal/Shapshal and his colleagues,—Ananjasz Zajączkowski and others—differed strongly from the ideas presented in both journals under discussion. The newly coined Karaite national self-consciousness, though built on the basis of the secularization process that was promoted so intensely by Kokizov, brought Karaites to a self-understanding as a separate Turkic ethnicity, which had nothing to do with their original Jewishness. Paradoxically, the main argument for such change was the vernacular language used by Karaites in the former Russian Empire, which Kokizov considered as evidence of Karaite backwardness in comparison with other "civilized" nations. For S. Szapszal and his circle, on the contrary, their Turkic dialect served as the strongest evidence for a Turkic Karaite origin. This link between language and ethnicity was natural for the newly established independent states, where Karaite communities ended up after World War I: Poles in Poland spoke Polish, and the same could be said about Lithuanians. Likewise, Karaites presented themselves as a groupthat spoke Karaite—the newly adopted term for the language, which was earlier known as Tatar among community members[70]—in an effort to fit the "standard" of nationhood that prevailed in the region. In adopting this new ethno-linguistic nationalism the Karaite community shifted away from *Haskalah* ideas.

Conclusions

As discussed above, the *Haskalah* movement within the Karaite community in most cases shared the same ideas with Russian *maskilim*, though the arguments for their adoption were specific to the Karaite community. The main ideas remained the same: integration into the dominant society, secularization and strengthening of the national self-consciousness, and overcoming their self-perceived backwardness, which was the main goal for both Karaite and Rabbinite *Haskalah* thinkers and activists. However, the analysis of Karaite periodicals has

[70] See the already analyzed article by Kokizov, "Ruskij ili tatarskij," 34-36.

revealed some important differences between those two movements, which turned the Karaite national movement away from Jewish intellectual thought in the second and third decades of the twentieth century. As explained above, Russian Karaites enjoyed a favorable social status, which separated them from the rest of Imperial Jews. Exemption from double taxation, military conscription and other exemptions from the restrictions that were applied to Imperial Rabbinite Jews, made Karaites feel more comfortable in their everyday life, which led to a delay in the development of nationalism in the Karaite community. Moreover, being the subjects of the Empire, the Karaite elite saw themselves within the cultural and civilizational environment of Russia. It was mostly the Karaites' privileged status that made Karaite nationalism less concerned with their social—legal status within the state, a with the community's cultural revival and more with its recognition as a civilized nation by the dominant society. This may also by a reason why this movement was relevant only for a small circle of educated Karaites in the capital of the Empire and did not reach the Karaite masses.

One more important aspect, revealed by the analysis of Karaite periodicals, is that modernization was delayed in comparison with the same process in the Rabbinite community. This chronological gap between enlightenment in both communities also lay in the politics of the Empire: the Karaite social and legal status did not put them under pressure to start any modernization process. It was only when the Imperial officials began to demand arguments to prove the exceptional social and legal position of Karaites, that the process of modernization accelerated among the community's elite.

Despite sometimes radical arguments, presented in the journal *Karaite life,* the periodicals under discussion argued for acculturation and secularization, and use of the Russian language, which were already prevalent in many Karaite communities. In many aspects the Karaite press did not to suggest any novel proposals but simply reflected the changes in the community that were already taking place. This could be one of the reasons why the ideas presented in the pages of the journals under discussion did not develop into a systematic ideology and a strategy of action. Despite this, the journals provided an impetus for further entrenchment of Karaite nationalism in later decades. Definitely, the Karaite

community could not stand aside from the wave of modernization that was spreading across the Europe, and the ideas presented in early Karaite press were attempts to accommodate the new reality. As in the case of other modernization movements within non-Western European ethnic groups,[71] Karaites were seeking to restore the "pure," "authentic" Karaite culture that had been corrupted over the centuries.

But the most fundamental difference lied in the attitude towards the Hebrew language and its ideological significance for the modernization of both communities. In no case Hebrew was perceived as a national language by Karaite periodicals, contrary to the opinion of many Jewish Rabbinite thinkers, and this fundamental difference shaped the content of Karaite nationalism and fostered the formation of a separate, non-Jewish Karaite identity in later decades.

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Keywords: Karaite Identity, Karaite Press, Russian Empire, Nationalism, Haskalah

[71] Levy, "The Nahḍa and the Haskala," 303.

How to quote this article:
Dovilė Troskovaitė, "Jews, Russians, Karaites: The Development of Karaite Nationalism in the Russian Empire at the beginning of the Twentieth Century," in "Jewish Minorities between Nation-Building and Emigration in late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Century East Central Europe," eds. Francesco Di Palma and Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe, *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History. Journal of the Fondazione CDEC* 20 (December 2021), DOI: 10.48248/issn.2037-741X/13078

Struggles between Nationalism and Ethnicity in Eastern Europe and the United States, 1890s-1910s: The Life Writings of M.E. Ravage and Michael Gold

by *Dana Mihăilescu*

Abstract

This article analyzes the life writings of Jewish American authors Marcus Eli Ravage and Michael Gold, both of Romanian parentage but representing two different literary generations and two different ideological commitments. I argue that both authors revisited the dominant form of early twentieth-century immigrant autobiographies by other fellow Jews. These much-celebrated stories primarily foregrounded the embrace of the American Dream by a variant of the rags-to-riches narrative, under the guise of upward mobility stories of successful Jewish immigrants who culturally assimilated to American norms. Ravage's An American in the Making *offers a twist to this dominant narrative by his emphasis on the embrace of American cultural citizenship over American legal citizenship as the Jewish immigrant's path to success. Gold rejects altogether the above rags-to-riches narrative and redefines Jewish identity in the Lower East Side as a working-class identity upholding a proletarian culture.*

Introduction

M.E. Ravage: Jewish Ethnicity and Polarized Nationalism in Eastern Europe and the US

Michael Gold: Exposing the Dark Side of American Nationalism via the Working-Class Lens

Conclusions

Introduction[1]

In the early twentieth century a dynamic struggle between nationalism and ethnicity was in full swing. During this period, the consolidation of many nation-states occurred. In the region of Eastern Europe, Romania had long been under foreign domination and only established itself as an independent national state in the second half of the nineteenth century.[2] Romania therefore continued to feel threatened by the possibility of foreign intervention and control, one of the causes of Romanians' growing xenophobia and distrust of foreigners at the turn of the twentieth century.[3] It was in the wake of Romania's formation as a nation-state, from 1866 until the declaration of independence in 1877, that the great wave of Eastern European Jewish emigration occurred, from the 1880s to the 1920s, when some 2.5 million Jews settled in the United States. The majority of them came from the Russian Empire (around 1.5 million, i.e. a third of the total number of Jews living there and around 40 percent of the number of people emigrating from Russia to the US at the time). Simultaneously, some 67,000[4] of the approximate 269,000 Jews of Romania[5] also emigrated to America at the time. Even if the numbers were significantly smaller than those from Russia, the impressive feature

[1] Research for this paper was supported by a grant of the Romanian National Authority for Scientific Research, UEFISCDI, for grant no. 38/2018, PN-III-P1-1.1-TE-2016-0697, *Witnessing Destruction: The Memory of War and Conflict in American Auto/biographical and Documentary Narratives*.

[2] Romania emerged and consolidated itself as an independent nation-state in the period 1859-1914. For a thorough historical analysis of the mechanisms of this process in connection to the making of Romanian citizenship in modern Romania; Constantin Iordachi, *Liberalism, Constitutional Nationalism, and Minorities: The Making of Romanian Citizenship, c. 1750-1918* (Leiden: Brill, 2019).

[3] Ghitta Sternberg, *Stefanesti: Portrait of a Romanian Shtetl* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1984), 3 and 27-28; Leon Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology and Antisemitism* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1991), 2.

[4] The exact number of Jews emigrating from Romania to America between 1881 and 1910 is 67,057, with the peak of emigration occurring from 1900 to 1904; Samuel Joseph, "Jewish Immigration in the U.S. from 1881 to 1910," (PhD diss, Columbia University, 1914), 93.

[5] The number of Jews living in Romania according to the 1899 census, before the start of the large out-migration of Jews, was 269,015; previously, the Moldova census of 1859 reported 118,922 Jews living in Moldova and the 1860 statistics from Walachia counted 9,234 Jews in its territories. See further details about the demographic evolution of the Jewish population in Romania at the time in Carol Iancu, *Evreii din România (1866-1919). De la excludere la emancipare* (Bucharest: Hasefer, 2006), 148-150.

of Romanian Jewish emigration consisted in the fact that Romanian Jews represented 89.8 percent of the total number of immigrants from the country to the US during the peak years of emigration from 1899 to 1910 and 80 percent for the whole period of mass migration.[6] Taking this historical reality as a departure point, my paper examines the effects of the consolidation of the national state in the early twentieth century on those Jews whose feeling of territorial belonging to a nation-state was missing, and was replaced by identification with a set of ethnic values. I will focus on the life stories of two Jewish American writers of the era, Marcus Eli Ravage and Michael Gold, both of Romanian parentage but representing two different literary generations and two different ideological commitments. The aim of my comparative endeavor is to pinpoint the main signposts of the national versus ethnic confrontation from the perspective of different generational and ideological stances, as represented by these two Jewish American writers.

My selection of these two writers was prompted by their being contemporaries, as they were born within a decade of one another (Ravage in 1884 and Gold in 1893). I also chose them because their books about their life stories were highly successful and widely read in the US, thereby with a high potential of impacting American readers' views. At least partially, both authors also shared a Romanian background as Ravage was born of Romanian Jewish parents and Michael Gold's father was a Romanian Jew, while his mother was of Jewish Hungarian descent. Nevertheless, one clear difference between the two authors follows from their birthplaces: Bârlad (Romania) for Ravage; New York (in the US) in the case of Gold. On the one hand, Ravage is the immigrant individual assessing the new host society by direct comparison to the country of birth. On the other hand, Michael Gold is the American-born Jewish son of Eastern European immigrants, indirectly linked to his parents' previous nations. The difference, then, amounts to American citizens belonging to distinct generations.

[6] Samuel Joseph, "Jewish Immigration in the U.S. from 1881 to 1910," 168; Joseph Kissman, "Immigration of Rumanian Jews up to 1914," *YIVO Annual of Jewish Social Science* 2, no. 3 (1947-1948): 161 and 176-177.

My choice of these two writers is also motivated by the fact that the fictionalized accounts of their life stories focused on approximately the same period, namely the first decade of the twentieth century. Ravage's *An American in the Making* (1917) foregrounds the author's life in Romania until his emigration and continues with his experiences in the United States from his arrival in 1900 until 1907.[7] Gold's *Jews without Money* (1930) focuses on the author's childhood memories from the age of five, broadly covering the period between 1898 and 1905.[8] Here I will investigate if there is a change in perspective on their part on the relation between Jewish ethnicity, Romanian nationalism and American nationalism, starting from the fact that one was an immigrant Jew to the US and the other an American-born Jew, and following the input of the authors' ideological beliefs.

M.E. Ravage: Jewish Ethnicity and Polarized Nationalism in Eastern Europe and the US

M.E. Ravage (né Marcus Eli Revici) was born in 1884, in Bârlad, Romania. He spent his childhood in the neighboring city of Vaslui and emigrated to the US in 1900, when he was 16. He initially lived on New York's Lower East Side where he Americanized his name to Max Ravage. He became a naturalized American citizen in November 1912. He settled in France in 1927 and died in 1964.[9] His autobiography *An American in the Making* was first published in 1917 by Harpers and Co. A new edition containing an added fifth part about his return to Romania after twenty years appeared in 1936. The book was then republished by Dover Publications in 1971 and by Rutgers University Press in 2009. The book's focus on

[7] Marcus Eli Ravage, *An American in the Making: The Life Story of an Immigrant*, ed. Steven G. Kellman (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2009).

[8] Michael Gold [alias of Irwin Granich], *Jews without Money* (New York: Carroll and Graf Publishers, 1996).

[9] Dana Mihăilescu, *Eastern European Jewish American Narratives, 1890-1930: Struggles for Recognition* (Lanham: Lexington, 2018), 29-31.

migration from Romania to New York as a variant of the rags-to-riches success story determined its adoption as a high-school text across the US.[10]

Ravage's initial publication of his life-story in 1917 followed in the footsteps of a few like-minded English-language autobiographies by Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe to the US at the turn of the twentieth century. These autobiographies highlighted the authors' success at becoming American through their hard work, changed attitudes and mastery of American English. They included: Simon Polack's *The Autobiography of Simon Polack* (1904), Mary Antin's *From Plotzk to Boston* (1899) and *The Promised Land* (1912), Edward A. Steiner's *From Alien to Citizen* (1914). Similar topics were developed at the same time in highly successful fictionalized accounts of fellow Eastern European Jewish immigrant authors, such as Elias Tobenkin's *Witte Arrives* (1916), Abraham Cahan's *The Rise of David Levinsky* (1917), or Anzia Yezierska's *Hungry Hearts* (1920). The most successful publication among all was Mary Antin's *The Promised Land* (1912), a best-selling paean to the United States, which had an immediate impact, and "became the immigrant's Horatio Alger story" of success.[11] Antin's memoir focused on her immigration from a shtetl in Polotzk (misspelled as Plotzk in her 1899 narrative, a Lithuanian province under the rule of the Russian Empire), and the discrimination she experienced there, to Boston in 1891. Therein, Antin celebrated the US as the melting-pot land of opportunity in which impoverished and obscure immigrants like herself could achieve literary or other types of renown.

Significantly, when Ravage's autobiography was published, a reviewer commended it in connection to none other than Antin's recently published work, which had evidently become the standard piece on how an immigrant should write

[10] Steven G. Kellman, introduction to *An American in the Making*, by Ravage, xix. It should also be noted that, apart from his successful autobiography, Ravage's name has also remained in circulation over time in connection to his articles "A Real Case against the Jews" and "The Jew: Commissary to the Gentiles," originally published in *Century* magazine in 1928, as satirical pieces decrying the hypocrisy of Christian Antisemitism. Nazis and far-right groups then appropriated and republished these articles illegally, with a distorted meaning, as promoting Antisemitism and hate speech.

[11] Ibid., xiv.

one's life story. Bernard Iddings Bell noted about Ravage's book that, "It has a vitality that most biography lacks. Its sociological sidelights upon the life of our newer population even Miss Antin never was able so vividly to give."[12] Indeed, Ravage's autobiography offered a twist to the genre of immigrant autobiography established by Mary Antin by his use of introspection, self-reflection and social critique to forge his identity as an American. As Ravage straightforwardly noted in the introduction, his autobiography provided to American readers a Jewish immigrant's gaze on nationalism and identity in Romania (or Eastern Europe, more broadly) and the US. To that end, Ravage structured it in five parts that together sketched the trajectory of a Jewish individual from an "alien" to an American citizen. This was apparent from the very titles he chose for each section. The five chapters of Part I, "The Alien at Home," spoke about the situation of Jews in Romania, the author's birth country. The six chapters of Part II, "The Alien Abroad," focused on the initial contours of the Jewish immigrants' encounter with America, after arrival in New York. The five chapters of Part III, "The Education of an American," highlight how the immigrant learned about American ways through his experiences in New York's job market and the US educational system. The four chapters of Part IV, "America of the Americans," suggest that he only learned of deep America on going to college in Missouri, and it is only at this moment that he acquired an American national identity. Finally, the two chapters from Part V, "Postscript—Twenty Years Later," include the details of the author's return trip to Romania; the poverty, discrimination, and prejudice he once again found there cemented his embrace of the American national identity he had acquired.

As indicated by the book's title and the topics of its five parts, Ravage's autobiography was an unconventional immigrant narrative that challenged the possibility of an immigrant's complete transformation into a "composite" American. Unlike the majority of the era's Jewish and non-Jewish immigrant autobiographies, in Ravage's memoir it is not just the act of immigration but primarily the "internal migration," once within the US, from New York's Jewish

[12] Bernard Iddings Bell, "An Immigrant's Biography: Review of *An American in the Making*," *The Public: A Journal of Democracy* 21, no. 1031 (May 4, 1918): 576-577.

neighborhoods to mid-western Missouri that is central to his acquiring an American national identity.[13] In this respect, Cristina Stanciu has astutely demonstrated how Ravage's autobiography "differs tellingly from other contemporaneous immigrant autobiographies in that his search for cultural citizenship takes primacy over legal citizenship."[14]

The introduction to *An American in the Making* announces the subsequent structuring of the book along the lines of the struggle between ethnicity and nationalism in which the immigrant figures as the better educator: "Only from the humble immigrant, it appears to me, can he [the free American] learn just what America stands for in the family of nations."[15] This stems from the initial explanation of the immigrant's background: "He, unlike the older inhabitant, does not come into its inheritance by the *accident of birth*. Before he can become an American he must first be an immigrant. More than that, *back of immigration lies emigration.*"[16] This passage positions the immigrant in a particular relation with nationalism, that in turn allows the author to become American on his own terms, as his book suggested. This stance may be read as a foray into the outcome of the struggle between ethnicity and nationalism in Romania and the United States.

Firstly, Ravage gives a number of reasons for the segregated identity the Jew is ascribed to after migration to America. They comprise different clothes, bad language practices, different food and manners: "in his incredible *garb*, as he walks off the gang-plank, he appears like some sort of an odd, moving bundle"; "[h]e sells nondescript merchandise in *fantastic vehicles*, does *violence to the American language*, and sits down on the curb to eat *fragrant cheese and unimaginable sausages.*"[17] Here Ravage paradoxically establishes his initial conformity to Jewish

[13] Cristina Stanciu, "Marcus E. Ravage's *An American in the Making*, Americanization, and New Immigrant Representation," *MELUS* 40, no. 2 (2015): 1-25.
[14] Cristina Stanciu, "The Makings and Unmakings of Americans: Indians and Immigrants in American Literature and Culture, 1880-1924" (PhD diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2011), 251.
[15] Ravage, *An American in the Making*, 7.
[16] Ibid., my emphases.
[17] Ibid., my emphases.

ethnic culture by suggesting the failure to correspond to the claims of the American gaze as to American identity. Such American identity markers involve meeting the requirements of specific costumes, social, literary, and media practices, the vernacular and food, aspects which are necessary for national invention.[18] Hence, he identifies that the basis for the American segregation of Jewish culture lies in the presence of the above "mediate connections." These are "imaginary forms of connectedness" rather than "immediate" forms of kinship (i.e. blood/descent) relations.[19] This is a case of civic vs. organic national identity.[20] Thus, Ravage's emphasis is that American nationalism functions on markers of cultural construction and not on the ties of blood, on aspects allowing variation and change having here a divisive function for Jewish immigrants in relation to the Gentile American community. Relevantly, in the passage above, Ravage adopts the average American's attitude at the sight of the Eastern European Jew. In this sense, all the implied claims make no reference to matters of descent but only concentrate on traits that represent a matter of agency and volition. By this emphasis, Ravage suggests that, in America, Jews are judged on the grounds of their consent to the country's articles of faith. On this cultural basis, the Jew initially qualifies as an "alien" *other*.

Before reaching the US, Jewish identity in Romania also amounted to the position of the *other* (as an "alien" lacking citizenship rights). In Romania, the Jew's otherness was predicated at the level of official state ideology and following an ethnic basis. Part I of *An American in the Making* highlights this. Ravage first inserts such claims indirectly, in patenting the birth of the American exceptionalist myth on the return of the author's cousin, significantly named Couza,[21] from the

[18] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, revised edition (London: Verso, 2006), 6-7 and 25-36; Werner Sollors, ed., *The Invention of Ethnicity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), xiii.

[19] Sollors, *The Invention of Ethnicity*, xii.

[20] Anthony D. Smith, *The Nation in History: Historiographical Debates about Ethnicity and Nationalism* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000), 24-31 and 38-53.

[21] The cousin's name is reminiscent of the name of prince Alexandru Ioan Cuza under whom the United Principalities of Moldova and Wallachia were established in January 1859, becoming in 1862 the Romanian United Principalities, the precursor of the Romanian nation-state. Cuza's election as prince inaugurated the democratic social, political, and legal transformation of the principalities,

US in 1899: "There was a country somewhere beyond seas where a man was a man in spite of his religion and his origin."[22] Here, in celebrating the American precept of human equality he implies that it was absent in Romania, where religious and ethnic discrimination were dominant in the post-1866 decades.

The book continues with a series of concrete examples supporting Ravage's critical stance towards Romania's descent/organic type of nationalism. They comprise "the discriminations of the Government against us."[23] Here, the Jewish community is placed as separate from the Romanian national community by means of the use of "us" as a separate group marker. Ravage then explains that the grounds for the Jewish *other* position in Romania are represented by legal discrimination as well as by educational, religious, and economic restrictions targeting Jews. For instance, in the passage below, Ravage carefully expresses how the force of law in fact nullified an apparently open position towards Jews as a matter of "justice":

> Supposing I wanted to study law, then "aliens" were not eligible to the bar. The ministry? Rumania forbade the establishment of rabbinical seminaries. Well, I could go in for medicine, if only the Government allowed him to earn the means of seeing me through. But justice had taken precious care that he should not. When he had engaged in storekeeping in the country and had, by hard toil, succeeded in making a comfortable living, a new law had legislated him and all his kind back into the towns. Later on, when he had entered the family occupation of candle-manufacturing, an import tax on the raw materials and a heavy export tax on the finished product suddenly rendered the trade unprofitable. Wine and tobacco still brought tolerable incomes, but he was no more permitted

implying an open attitude towards minorities, including Jews. Ousted from power in 1866, Cuza had initially established the adoption of the inclusive, assimilationist French legal model for Romanian citizenship (allowing also non-Christian Jews to become Romanian citizens) which was reversed in 1866 "by an ethno-national understanding of citizenship during the establishment of the constitutional monarchy under a foreign prince," see Iordachi, *Liberalism, Constitutional Nationalism, and Minorities*, 28-29 and 218-221.

[22] Ravage, *An American in the Making*, 25.

[23] Ibid., 38.

> to deal in these articles than I was to study and practice the profession of law.[24]

In fact, official anti-Jewish laws in Romania operated on different levels. These laws involved inconsistent policies towards the Jews that reflected the main actors' social position, ideological orientation, and regional affiliation. [25] First geographical and economic restrictions were enforced. Such were the decrees that forbade Jews to be lawyers (in 1864), pharmacists (in 1869), railway employees (in 1871), part of the administration in tobacco companies (in 1887), and a law from 1873 which forbade the Jews' right of settlement in villages and their right to open hotels or restaurants.[26] Yet, by far, the most important problem was that of political discrimination, given the absence of Jewish political representation and the Romanian leaders' obsession with defining Romanian spiritual life on the basis of the central elements of "*Romanianism, ethnicism, Orthodoxism.*"[27] Article 7 of the Romanian constitution adopted in 1866 stipulated that only Christian foreigners could become Romanian citizens, keeping Jews as "aliens" irrespective of how long they had lived in Romania.[28] The article was revised in 1879,[29] allowing for the possibility of unchristian foreigners to become Romanian citizens but only on the basis of individual naturalization, which resulted in an insignificant number of only 85 Jews receiving it between 1879 and 1900. Despite the international pressures at the Congress of Berlin from 1878 that the recognition of Romania's independence be conditioned upon its granting of full civil and political rights to all its citizens, irrespective of their religious affiliation, Romanian

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[24] Ibid., 38-39.

[25] Iordachi, *Liberalism, Constitutional Nationalism, and Minorities*, 265.

[26] "Les Israélites de Roumanie," *Bulletin de l'Alliance Israélite Universelle* 2, no. 25 (1900): 25; Moses Gaster, "The Jews in Roumania," *The North American Review* 175, no. 552 (1902): 664 and 666.

[27] Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology and Antisemitism*, 3.

[28] Article 7 of the 1866 Constitution read as follows: "doar străinii de rit creştin pot obţine calitatea de român." (Only Christian foreigners can become Romanian citizens). See C. Hamangiu, *Constituţiunea. Codul Civil* (Bucharest: Carol Müller, 1897), x, footnote 1.

[29] According to the 1879 revised article 7 of the Romanian Constitution, "3. Naturalizarea nu se poate acorda decât prin lege şi în mod individual. 5. Numai românii, sau cei naturalizaţi români pot dobândi imobile rurale în România." ("3. Naturalization can only be granted by law and on an individual basis. 5. Only Romanians, or naturalized Romanians, have the right to possess rural housing in Romania.") See Constantin Hamangiu, *Constituţiunea*, xi.

authorities responded with a subterfuge. They merely modified article 7 of the 1866 Constitution to permit (but not guarantee) the naturalization of Jews.[30]

The legal situation of Romanian Jews in the period between the Congress of Berlin until after World War I, when full civil rights were to be achieved, the situation decried by Ravage in his memoir, was therefore highly problematic. During this time, the Western countries' insistence that Romanian independence only be recognized after the authorities had granted Jewish emancipation led to the subsequent proliferation of restrictive legislative provisions. This was caused by Romanian officials' frustration at what they considered the international powers' illegal involvement in the domestic affairs of their newly created state.

In response to all this, the intellectual and political circles of Romania resurrected their antisemitic, xenophobic feelings. They not only blamed the Jews for invading the country, taking hold of its subsistence means and ruining its traditions, hence being the epitome of capitalism. They also held Jews accountable for their alleged refusal to assimilate and for plotting with Romania's foreign enemies, especially Hungary, to deter the country from reaching its highest ideal, an internationally recognized Greater Romania.[31] Historian Constantin Iordachi analyzes all this in detail and distinguishes three stages of Romanian authorities' policies towards the Jews between 1859 and 1914, with the third stage from 1878 to 1914 (applicable in Ravage's case) being the most radical period. It was during this third stage that Romanian officials abandoned their previous plans for the assimilation and integration of Jews, which could have led to their emancipation.[32] Instead, they supported an anti-assimilationist policy aimed at increasing the segregation of Jews in order to prompt their emigration from Romania. Only in 1919, in a newly

[30] Joshua Starr, "Jewish Citizenship in Rumania (1878-1940)," *Jewish Social Studies* 3, no. 1 (1941): 58-64.

[31] Raul Cârstocea, "The Path to the Holocaust: Fascism and Antisemitism in Interwar Romania," *S:I.M.O.N – Shoah: Intervention. Methods. Documentation* 1 (2014): 45; Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology and Antisemitism*, 7-20.

[32] Iordachi, *Liberalism, Constitutional Nationalism, and Minorities*, 266-67.

revised Article 7 of the Constitution,[33] Romania pledged to recognize Romanian citizenship to the Jewish inhabitants who did not possess any other nationality.

It is essentially this third period of discrimination from 1879 to 1914 which Ravage records in his book, since he focuses on the period from the 1890s until 1900, the year of his emigration. It was during this period of time that Romanian authorities transformed previous "strategic" economic rights into political rights available to Romanians only and eliminated the distinction they had previously made between indigenous and foreign Jews (in the 1864 Communal Law which had conferred on indigenous Jews some political rights at the local level). As a result, all Jews became "aliens" and a threat to the Romanian economy.[34] This political and lived reality explains Ravage's choice of the word "alien" in his memoir as a recurring term and structuring device meant to represent Romanians' escalating discriminatory anti-Jewish attitude.

Significantly, it was in 1900 that the economic depression from the previous year and the escalating anti-Jewish laws transformed the emigration of Romania's impoverished and desperate Jews in a real "exodus."[35] Jews decided to walk out of Romania and gave rise to the Fusgeyer movement, that took both the gentile and Jewish Western communities by surprise, as indicated in the 1900 issue of the Bulletin de l'Alliance Israélite Universelle.[36] The *fusgeyers* (Yiddish for wayfarers) were groups of Jews that began to migrate out of Romania after the economic depression of 1899 and after new discriminatory laws and educational restrictions that targeted the Jews of Romania and rekindled antisemitic feelings. These Jews

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[33] Article 7 from the 1919 Paris Treaty of Peace stipulated that "România se angajează să recunoască ca supuşi români, cu drepturi depline şi fără nici o formalitate, pe evreii locuitori ai tuturor teritoriilor României şi care nu pot să se prevaleze de nici o altă naţionalitate." (Romania engages to recognize full Romanian citizenship to the Jewish inhabitants of Romanian territories not belonging to any other nationality, [my translation]). It resulted in Romania's issuing the law-decree of May 22, 1919, on the emancipation of Romanian Jews. Carol Iancu, *Evreii din România (1866-1919)*, 290 and 343-344.

[34] Iordachi, *Liberalism, Constitutional Nationalism, and Minorities*, 352-399.

[35] Dana Mihăilescu, "The Jewish Fusgeyer Migration Movement from Early Twentieth-Century Romania as Transcultural Rhetorical Tool in US Memorial Literary Culture," *MELUS* 45, no. 1 (2020): 139-141.

[36] "Les Israélites de Roumanie," 28.

organized themselves in groups; because they lacked money to pay for a train ride, they started on foot primarily towards the port of Hamburg in order to get a passage across the ocean, especially to the US or Canada.[37] As described by the main historian of the movement, Israel Bar-Avi, these groups by and large walked out of Romania from April to July 1900.[38] The first such group was formed in Bârlad in May 1899 and left on April 20, 1900, printing the single issue, four-page newspaper *Daţi ajutor* (*Give help*) on April 22, 1900[39]; they sold it to amass money for the travel expenses ahead of them. In the chapter "To America on Foot," Ravage explains how he joined such a group of "emigrants on foot" that turned up in Vaslui in mid-May 1900 and was modelled on the first Fusgeyer group from Bârlad. His emigration to the US took place as part of this walking group.[40] Even if around 80% of emigrants were within the 15 to 30-year-old age range, as in the case of the early wayfarers of Bârlad and Vaslui, gradually older Jewish men, women and children also started to leave. These vulnerable newcomers, that could easily become social burdens, soon made the US and Canadian authorities establish criteria of admittance, according to which young pre-forty-year-old healthy, skilled young men were welcome, while women, children and old men were repatriated and asked to remain at home.[41]

Most likely because he was unaware of it at the time, Ravage's memoir does not touch on the contemporary efforts of the various Western Jewish agencies to halt the spontaneous, unorganized emigration of Romanian Jews from late 1899 and 1900. These agencies worked to establish an organized emigration of only those Jews that were young, well-built, were skilled workers and could work hard, so as to prevent the complete ban of Romanian Jewish emigration, especially on the part of the US.[42] In response to Canadian and US authorities, that in 1900

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[37] Wilhelm Filderman, *Memoirs and Diaries*: *Volume 1, 1900-1940* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), 88.

[38] Israel Bar-Avi, *O istorie a evreilor români. Volumul 1. Emigrările anului 1900* [A History of Romanian Jews. Volume 1. Emigrations from the Year 1900] (Jerusalem: Cenaclul Literar "Menora," 1961), 52.

[39] *Daţi ajutor*, Bârlad, April 22, 1900: 1.

[40] Mihăilescu, "The Jewish Fusgeyer Migration Movement," 139-141.

[41] Bar-Avi, *O istorie a evreilor români*, 68-69.

[42] "Les Israélites de Roumanie," 28-30; 33.

prohibited a number of Romanian Jews to enter their territories (namely women, old people, and money-less men who could not support themselves by work),[43] the above criteria for organizing Romanian Jews' emigration were already in place as 16-year-old Ravage migrated to America. The criteria resulted from the collaboration of various American Jewish agencies, most famously B'nai B'rith, the Alliance Israélite Universelle, the Anglo-Jewish Association of London, Jewish communities of Brussels and Vienna, various German communities, and the American and Canadian governments.[44] This new policy was caused by the fact that especially the American authorities were literally taken by surprise by the upsurge in Romanian Jewish migration on foot in 1900, since overall Jewish immigration rates had been decreasing throughout the 1890s.[45]

In contrast to the above-delineated complex situation of Romanian Jewish emigration to the US from the 1900s, Ravage's memoir offers a more simplistic image in which the US position towards Jews amounts to a welcoming open-door policy. It represents, as such, the exact opposite to the Romanian authorities' discriminatory stance. As a case in point, in Ravage's book the Jewish *other* position in the United States is related to reasons other than bloodline, namely to markers of cultural construction. As presented by Ravage in part 2, the reasons for the *other* position of the Jew in America are twofold: the American incorrect idea of the immigrant, who is not "the raw material Americans suppose him to be,"[46] but rather the bearer of a deep-rooted tradition that comes in conflict with the New World; and the Jewish habit of establishing relations based on the lines of descent that exist back home, which is incompatible with the American system.

Max, the narrator, is used as a case in point, following his gradual shift, in America, from descent-based connections to those based on consent. At first, blood connections are fundamental for Max's good start in life in the "Little Rumania" ghetto on the Lower East Side, given his expectations of receiving help from his

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[43] Ibid., 29; Lara Rabinovitch, " 'The Gravest Question': Romanian Jewish Migration to North America, 1900-1903" (PhD diss., New York University, 2012), 160-165.

[44] "Les Israélites de Roumanie," 28; Rabinovitch, " 'The Gravest Question'," 1-4, 188-202, 207-227 and 303-355.

[45] Rabinovitch, " 'The Gravest Question'," 185.

[46] Ravage, *An American in the Making*, 48.

cousin Couza: "my *kinsman* would do [something] for me", "set me to making money in one of his factories" or "use his great influence with the American Government."[47] The same idea persists in connection to the meaning ascribed to the notion of family in Romania: the family is based on cross-generational inheritance of professional secrets and on religious continuity. Thus, the pride of a family was in its "godliness and in its respected forebears" and what passed from generation to generation were "copper utensils" and "silver candelabra."[48] In America, the meaning of the family was related to the initial continuity of the descent-based society, as in the case of Max's first job in the barroom with employers that also served as his foster family. This shows that the immigrant's initial encounter with the US was with the America of his fellow-immigrants. As a result, the questions Max answered in order to get employment were "about my family, how long I had been in America, what I had done before."[49] In other words, one's past bloodline credentials rather than skills were the main criteria for job ascription within the confines of the congested Jewish Lower East Side ghetto in New York.

Subsequently, Max's first employers, Mr. and Mrs. Weiss, acted as parents for him in the new land. While Mrs. Weiss focused on educating Max on courtesy, outfit and appearance, Mr. Weiss initiated him to his professional secrets. Just like a Jewish father, Mr. Weiss would also keep Max's wages, since a child's responsibility to his parents, even if he was toiling for strangers, was "to hand over their earnings to the father."[50] However, Max soon sensed in Mr. Weiss's advice not just the disinterested sharing of experience, but the material self-interest of the employer hidden behind the three rules of bar-room work. Those were honesty (excluding the fear of being cheated); no drink (except when the customer pays, as it brings more money); and patience (as it is needed not to lose a customer).

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[47] Ibid., 50.

[48] Ibid., 60-61.

[49] Ibid., 86.

[50] Oscar Handlin, *The Uprooted: The Epic Story of the Great Migrations That Made the American People* (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1956), 215.

Discovering the primacy of economic profit under Mr. Weiss' mask of fatherly care, Max gradually became aware of the different realities of the American environment. At the outset, Couza's wife had taught Max the first lesson of self-reliance by telling him that "in America there were not such things as relatives, that money was a man's best friend, and that the wisest course to pursue was to depend on oneself."[51] Yet, it is only after his own personal experience in accord with the woman's words that Max really started to change his attitude and behavior.

In his search for work he had initially considered job offers as "advertised appeals for help," which he found to be in contradiction with "the arrogant indifference of the employing superintendent" at the office.[52] Such job offers were understood as help on the employee's side when in fact this was just a means of selection among many applicants in the name of efficiency and low wage costs. While competition among Jews existed also in Romania because of the restrictions that the authorities imposed upon the community, Max discovered that in America competition was primarily a matter of the employer's profit. Put differently, capitalism was the rule of thumb in the US.

Later on, after entering the market system, Max finally discovered that in America, unlike Romania, a person was not identified with a single stable occupation but with several that had no bearing with a person's worth. He exclaimed:

> Men were engaged in given lines of work and business. But their occupations were not permanent things. They did not chain them down to any definite place in the scheme of existence. What a man did in no way determined his worth or circumscribed his ambitions. Peddling and hawking and the sewing-machine were just so many rungs in the ladder. A dingy apartment in the tenement was merely a stage in the march toward a home in Brownsville or a shop in the Bronx. The earth was young and fresh from the hand of the Maker, and as yet undivided among His

[51] Ravage, *An American in the Making*, 50.
[52] Ibid., 66.

> children. That was another distinctive superiority of America over Romania.[53]

In light of this, Max's decision to leave the bar for better wages in the garment industry illustrated the shift undertaken from the position of the *other* to that of *another*, i.e. to a man that had the same rights as those guaranteed to any American citizen by the system of democratic justice. This implied successful upward mobility via cultural assimilation. On going to college at the University of Missouri in the heart of the US, he extended this view of America by noting that the anti-Jewish ideas he heard did not amount to the venomous Antisemitism he had encountered in Romania. Instead, he noted, "There was not a trace of venom in the yarns. Why, these chaps had not the remotest idea what a Jew was like! Their picture of him was the stage caricature of a rather mild individual with mobile hands who sold clothing and spoke broken English."[54] He concluded that Americans did not run on "race prejudice" or "class exclusiveness"; instead, he commended the American national spirit according to which "[t]he genuine American recognized but one distinction in human society—the vital distinction, between the strong, effectual, 'real' man and the soft, pleasure-loving, unreliant failure."[55] In Romania the *other* Jew could not become *another* because he did not have the position of a citizen by virtue of unchangeable official law. In America the Jewish position was seen by Max, Ravage's narrator, as simply a matter of distinct cultural-economic values and not of legislative descent-based restrictions.

Nevertheless, once the individual agrees to analyze the other's culture and its tenets, one realizes America is not a country where one gets anything for free. In Ravage's narrative, Max learns to believe only in potential gain following the quality of his own experience and contribution, beyond the descent-based regulations of the "Old World" that Couza tried to impose on him, in the imperative language typical of legislation: "I ought to be ashamed for even asking them to pay me after the return I was making them for their parental kindness. Was I aware that the very clothes I was wearing were theirs, and that they had tried

[53] Ibid., 90.
[54] Ibid., 142.
[55] Ibid.

to educate me into an American and a business man?"[56] In Max's own words: "now I had bettered Couza's own instruction. I had found the America he had seen in a dream."[57]

On returning to Vaslui after twenty years, Max is determined to tell his former friends what real America is like, "the America that lived and breathed, a land of imperfect men and human institutions, but with the blessing of heaven and the promise of salvation upon them."[58] Max's final ideas here amount to celebrations of the potential offered by the US, seen as a culture of hope as opposed to the certainty of loss he rediscovers in the Romanian culture of repression. Through these choices, Ravage uses a binary-type of construction in which Romanian nationalism stands for a destructive descent-type traumatic paradigm disseminating discrimination and prejudice, while American nationalism functions on hope. In his book, this latter aspect echoes Ann Rigney's definition of nationalism as "'civic virtue' and as a minimum condition of democracy," sustaining civic action and the struggle for a better life, because it conceives of attaining it as a possibility and not an inevitability.[59] In Romania, the prodigy child of Max's youth, Nicu Russu, had not been able to enter university because of practical problems: he had been wounded in World War I and later, having a family, he completely abandoned the prospect of university studies. After learning how the local prodigy's promising life has been annulled, Max embraces his national identity as an American by stating: "What in the world was I doing here anyway? I belonged somewhere else. I was an American. I had always been one."[60]

Yet, alongside the Romanian case, one cannot ignore that America too makes the Jewish immigrant aware of his difference from the others because of a separate background. Still, because of this emigrant's relocation into a society of consent, Ravage highlights the possibility of bridging the gap, in contrast with a descent-based society like Romania, where everything seems to be officially fixed in stable,

[56] Ravage, *An American in the Making*, 91.
[57] Ibid., 92.
[58] Ibid., 192.
[59] Ann Rigney, "Remembering Hope: Transnational Activism beyond the Traumatic," *Memory Studies* 11, no. 3 (2018): 370.
[60] Ravage, *An American in the Making*, 209.

unchanging patterns. In other words, like another already mentioned contemporary Jewish immigrant from the Russian Empire, Mary Antin, Ravage is aware of the complex response to Jewish immigration in the early twentieth-century American context. Nevertheless, he very clearly chooses to emphasize the American democratic model as an ideal of liberal society in contrast with the persecution of Eastern European repressive regimes. Hence, Ravage's entire sense of criticism is directed against European nationalism.

In fact, in 1923, Ravage published a non-fictional book entitled *The Malady of Europe*, in which he offered a comparative outlook on European and American nationalism in the shadow of the recently finished World War I. Therein, the author explicitly criticizes the European national system, in contrast to the American, for its "provincial separatism,"[61] which he sees as an outgrowth of grounding nationhood on ideas of blood kinship and community of origin coupled with the primacy of Christianity. Ravage notes that nationalism in itself is not a negative notion. On the contrary, he interprets it as "the instinct for fellowship written large," "an intensification of the social impulse, a broadening of the family group."[62] Based on this, according to Ravage, nationalism is in itself "a stage in the progress toward internationalism,"[63] which he sees as the European equivalent of the democratic model of Americanism. Yet, the problem that he identifies in Europe is that of arresting this positive growth toward internationalism through the evil inheritance of the past. He especially decries Europe's wars, waged in the name of economic imperialism by regimes that keep many hinterland peoples oppressed, subordinate and in the condition of inferior subjects under the "foreign domination" of an imperial power,[64] resulting in a society of suspicion and exclusive self-interest. Or, as he further explains: "The spirit of discord [...] has inflected the instinct of fellowship and made nationalism a sickly craving for revenge and self-sufficiency. It has made every little people in Europe see in its neighbor across the frontier an enemy, a potential master and despoiler, a demon who will not let other people live their own life as they

[61] Marcus Eli Ravage, *The Malady of Europe* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1923), 18.
[62] Ibid., 39.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Ibid., 43.

choose."[65] With a keen eye, Ravage records here the disastrous effects that the fear fostered by great European powers had on small countries like his native Romania. This materialized in many Romanians' attitude of suspicion and a tendency to distrust any other nation as a potential despoiler. As a result, Romanian authorities multiplied privileges for the mainstream descent group and discriminatory practices towards the other ethnicities on their territory.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, Ravage poses American nationalism, defined as a "breakaway from the European system of nationalistic exclusiveness and dissension." He goes on to celebrate America in idealistic terms, as the land where the notion of the foreigner or "alien" no longer applies for European immigrants:

> [America] was the continent of Refuge where the race of Europe made a new start, where men and women shed the swaddles of nationality, ceased to be the pawns of states, and became simply people. She had left behind the class idea of descent; she had got rid as well of the racial notion of blood. She had contrived by a beneficial therapy of fresh air and freedom to cure the inherited malady of Europe—to abolish the foreigner; [...] it was a voluntary adherence to an association of men of all origins on a new and rational principle.[66]

Ravage's vocabulary here reverberates with Sollors' notions of "descent" and "consent." Ravage presents descent as a negative constricting norm of the negative European power field, while he celebrates consent to cultural markers as America's superior model of democracy which he totally embraces.[67] Unlike Antin, who also directs her criticism to the unfairer aspects of America's justice system, Ravage chooses to almost exclusively use America as a positive model while virulently criticizing the repressive European systems he left behind. The reason behind this is his primary concern with the need to change European conditions and norms of

[65] Ibid., 45.
[66] Ibid., 74-75.
[67] Werner Sollors, *Beyond Ethnicity: Consent and Descent in American Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

life, hence his critical stance primarily targets Europe and uses the positive aspects of American democracy as a model to follow.

Overall, in his writings, Ravage uses the criteria of political representation, legal dispositions, and cultural confrontation as categories of assessment, and he conceives Romanian and American nationalism as entertaining an opposite relation with Jewish ethnicity. The former implies negative connotations of subordinated existence, lack of citizenship and the negative power of normative restrictions and prohibitions. The latter is associated with the positive undertones of self-assertion, open access to knowledge and inquiry.

Michael Gold: Exposing the Dark Side of American Nationalism via the Working-Class Lens

Born Itzok Granich on New York's Lower East Side in 1893, Michael Gold was the son of Jewish immigrant parents. He first changed his name to a more Anglo-American version, Irwin Granich and, in the 1920s, he began to use the pen name of Michael Gold. His Jewish Romanian father, Charles Granich, had immigrated from Iaşi in 1885, while his Jewish Hungarian mother, Kate Schwartz, had immigrated from Budapest in 1886. Given his place of birth, Michael Gold is in another category than M.E. Ravage, since his perspective on poverty and oppression does not come from the vantage point of a direct comparative outlook on both Europe and the US. His standpoint comes from the society in which he was born and lived, a tenement neighborhood in the Lower East Side. The author was a popular Communist speaker and debater who edited the party journal, *The New Masses*, from 1928 to 1930. He also wrote for other leftist journals like *The Liberator* (from 1921) or *The Daily Worker* (from 1933). However, he was not a member of the party committee but the symbol of the committed writer, to whose name is associated the birth of proletarian literature in the United States in the 1920s.[68] The source of this affinity towards the poor was Gold's individual

[68] Morris Dickstein, *Dancing in the Dark: A Cultural History of the Great Depression* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2009), 21.

experience of tenement life. This made the author envision a proletarian revolution as the only possible therapy and way to remain true to the mother who fought boss and landlord and pawnbroker to protect her brood."[69]

Gold's autobiographical works echoed those of other fellow Jewish American authors who grew up in poverty and chose to write about their immigrant parents' difficult lives in the early twentieth century, as the Depression hit the US. Most famously, such were also Henry Roth's *Call It Sleep* (1934) and Tillie Olsen's autobiographical pieces published in 1934 in the *Partisan Review.* These left-wing writers' works drew attention to people's suffering, dehumanization and exploitation, "portraying poverty as a social pathology" in the context of the 1930s Depression-era fascination with the lives of people that had been made "invisible" by mainstream US society's "almost religious faith in American prosperity, equality, and social mobility."[70] They did that by using the style of ethnic modernism, which treated both "the fragmentation of the urban experience and the exploitation of immigrant labor, establishing a middle-ground between art and politics" in "a desperate attempt to keep together both the self and the community as (fragmented) wholes."[71]

Michael Gold published his fictionalized memoir, *Jews without Money*, in March 1930, just as the Great Depression was showing its first signs in the US. Since its focus was on the miserable life of Jewish immigrants on New York's Lower East Side, its topical subject-matter resulted in its huge popularity, including eleven printings by October 1930, and its translation in eleven languages. It then fell into oblivion primarily because of the author's political commitment to Communism and his staunch criticism of capitalism in articles that he published in leftist papers until his death in 1967.[72] The book actually brings together the exploitation of immigrant labor force with the fragmentation of urban experience that modernist authors were putting forth at the time.[73] As such, his book cannot simply be

[69] Ibid., 22.
[70] Ibid., 18.
[71] Sostene Massimo Zangari, "Between Political Commitment and Literary Modernism: Michael Gold's *Jews without Money*," *Polish Journal for American Studies* 4 (2010): 34.
[72] Ibid., 33.
[73] Ibid., 34.

discarded as merely a propaganda piece for Communism, like his later writings. The book actually consisted of "brutal snapshots of street and tenement life," Gold's outright ethical commitment to Communist ideology only appearing on the last page.[74] It is also relevant as the author's attempt at developing a modernist artistic principle and a counter-piece to both the staunch Antisemitism circulating in the US at the time and fascism that was on the rise as he was writing the book. Gold himself acknowledged this fact in the Author's Note he wrote in April 1935 for a new edition of the book, stating: "The defense of the Jewish race against these fascist liars and butchers has become one of the most necessary tasks for every liberal and radical."[75]

Sostene Massimo Zangari shows the modernist character of *Jews without Money* by comparing the changes Gold made to its beginning with the explicitly proletarian preliminary sketch he published in *The Masses* in 1917, entitled "Birth. A Prologue to a Tentative East-Side Novel."[76] In that preliminary piece that Gold published under his birth name, he started by correlating his birth with the poor, decrepit neighborhood of the Lower East Side, with its streets "dark with grey, wet gloom," everything looking like "a prison."[77] Zangari points out how the author made some changes to "the prison metaphor and the use of dark colors [in 'Birth']" that formed the initial coordinates of his life in which "the East Side [w]as a wretched neighborhood." In *Jews without Money*, the focus shifted "onto the sounds and the physical presence of people," on the street culture and its tenements, conveying a sense of bohemia and not just radicalism and proletarian concerns.[78] Corinna Lee echoes Zangari's point by highlighting how the 1966 paperback reissue of *Jews without Money* omitted the last dozen lines of the original version that provided a revolutionary Communist message announcing the author's conversion to the "worker's Revolution" following his futile job

[74] Dickstein, *Dancing in the Dark*, 22-23; Zangari, "Between Political Commitment and Literary Modernism," 42.
[75] Gold, Author's Note, *Jews without Money*, 11.
[76] Irwin Granich, "Birth: A Prologue to a Tentative East Side Novel," *The Masses* (1917): 27-28.
[77] Ibid., 27.
[78] Zangari, "Between Political Commitment and Literary Modernism," 35 and 41.

search, thus doing away with Gold's "political signature."[79] Lee explains how this followed the 1960s interest of the publisher, Avon, to "capitalize on the book's East Side setting" and use the neighborhood not as the site of revolutionary identity that Gold had envisioned in 1930, but as "the site of the ethnic and popular cultural memory in the invention of immigrant America" that the place had become by the 1960s.[80] For Lee, the book is not simply a nostalgic recovery of immigrant or ethnic roots (Jewishness as a shared ancestry of immigrant poverty and experience of assimilation). It is also "a literary-political effort to root socialist Jewish identity—an alternative to American assimilation—in the culture of the East Side ghetto."[81] To that end, the ghetto appears as "a symbol of immanent economic injustice" created by a capitalist society.[82]

The book's topic immediately caught people's attention as it appeared in 1930, at the beginning of the Great Depression, which set the framework for an audience sympathetic to those living in poverty and receptive towards anti-capitalist messages. Lee proposes reading Gold's depiction of the impoverished Jewish masses in the context of the contemporary nativist resurgence (see the 1921 and 1924 American quota laws that directly hit impoverished Eastern European immigrants) and Hitler's rise to power. To support her claim, she uses the author's note to the 1935 new edition of the book, in which Gold invokes the life of his mother, "a brave and beautiful proletarian woman," as "the best answer to the fascist liars I know."[83] His insistence on "Jewish identity *as* a revolutionary working-class identity"[84] functions as a counterpoint to "pervasive racial stereotypes of Jews as wealthy, greedy, and conniving people" at a time when "anti-

[79] Corinna K. Lee, "Never Forgetting the East Side: Michael Gold's *Jews without Money*," *MELUS* 40, no. 2 (2015): 30-52.
[80] Ibid., 31-32.
[81] Ibid., 32.
[82] Ibid., 37.
[83] Gold, Author's Note, *Jews without Money*, 12; Lee, "Never Forgetting the East Side," 44. Alan M. Wald further shows how Michael Gold continued to develop this nexus of left-wing attachments with anti-fascism in the press articles he wrote in 1944-1945: see Alan M. Wald, *Trinity of Passion: The Literary Left and the Antifascist Crusade* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 75.
[84] Lee, "Never Forgetting the East Side," 48.

Semitism had reached unprecedented heights in Europe and the United States."[85] Gold therefore wrote this book to draw people's attention to a class minority among the Jews of America, the poor and working-class that had been rendered invisible by the prevalent image of upwardly-mobile Jews that Eastern European Jewish immigrant authors like Antin, Ravage, Cahan, Yezierska had so successfully presented. Lee, however, only focuses on the role of Gold's mother as a catalyst of her son's redefining and embracing "Jewish identity *as* proletarian identity."[86] She just passingly notes that Gold's father was a progressive-minded immigrant (of the type presented by Ravage, Antin, Yezierska, etc. at the time) who failed to change his fortunes.[87] I will actually pinpoint the father's fundamental role in Gold's perspective and what it entails for how he saw the relation between ethnicity and nationalism.

Gold openly rejected the early twentieth-century Jewish immigrant authors' embrace of the American Dream and the rags-to-riches narrative, which their autobiographical and fictionalized works presented under the guise of upward mobility stories of successful individuals. He did that in a 1918 review article published in *The Liberator* in which he discussed Abraham Cahan's *The Rise of David Levinsky* and Elias Tobenkin's *The House of Conrad*. Published under his real name, Irwin Granich, the review made ample references to Mary Antin, the time's most successful Jewish author, who patented the positive embrace of the American cultural model to be adopted by Jewish immigrants. Gold/Granich discarded Antin as "the bright slum parvenu who wrote that exuberant book of gratitude called 'The Promised Land'"; he challenged Antin to join him in one "particular allotment of her 'Promised Land'," a Lower East Side tenement which he thought was "exactly like the one my parents came from in Europe, only it is larger and viler," keeping the Jew, as in Eastern Europe, "a drudge and a slave"

[85] Ibid., 38. The spread of Antisemitism both in Europe and the United States found a response in the rise of a transnational Jewish anti-fascism supported by leftist, pro-Soviet individuals in the 1930s and 1940s, with anti-fascism becoming an important component of Jewishness. See especially Max Kaiser, " 'A new and modern golden age of Jewish culture': Shaping the cultural politics of transnational Jewish antifascism," *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* 1, no. 3 (2018): 287-290.

[86] Lee, "Never Forgetting the East Side," 44-48.

[87] Ibid., 42.

living "in poverty and pain."[88] With ironic references to America as the Promised Land, Granich/Gold took to task the immigrant autobiographical narratives of the likes of Antin and Ravage because they generalized the pattern of just a few "[individuals that] rise from the mass," while "there are always the tenements remaining after them, and the deep, silent hordes toiling on in darkness, even in America." [89] Through these claims, Granich/Gold discarded the Jewish immigrant proponents of America such as Antin, Ravage, Cahan, Tobenkin, Yezierska, etc. as unfair justifiers of the American democratic national image because they contributed to the perpetuation of the illusion of the American nation as "an open society by showcasing spectacular cases of individual rise."[90]

In fact, Granich/Gold himself only gives a partial account, that ignored the fact that the same immigrants' narratives included depictions of struggles and tension. For instance, he fails to mention that in 1914 Mary Antin followed with an amendment to her initial "pledge of allegiance" to the American national culture from *The Promised Land*; and even in this initial work some nuances about the hard lot of vulnerable immigrants, like Antin's sister, Fetchke, had already been included. [91] In fact, in 1914 Antin published a non-fictional work about immigrants, *They Who Knock at Our Gates*, in which she changed her celebration of American individualism and upward mobility via cultural assimilation into an ethical reckoning about the US, criticizing America's anti-immigration feelings and the Dillingham Commission's report from 1911 which established immigrant inferiority.[92] As I have already shown, Ravage's 1917 autobiography itself was unconventional as an immigrant narrative, in that it challenged the possibility of an immigrant's complete transformation into a "composite" American and focused on cultural citizenship over legal citizenship. However, since such works emphasized Jewish individuals' success at upward mobility as the outcome of their

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[88] Irwin Granich, "Surveys of the Promised Land," *The Liberator* (July 1918): 32.

[89] Ibid.

[90] Lee, "Never Forgetting the East Side," 41.

[91] For further details, see the sub-chapter "Fetchke's Missed Encounter with America: Towards an Ethics of the Vulnerable," in Mihăilescu, *Eastern European Jewish American Narratives*, 101-108.

[92] Mary Antin, *They Who Knock at Our Gates* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914). For a detailed analysis of Antin's 1914 account, see Mihăilescu, *Eastern European Jewish American Narratives*, 108-116.

cultural adoption of the American national values of education, thrift, hard work, competitive spirit and determination, Granich/Gold understood them as epitomes of the "usual bourgeois answer," upholding a discriminatory US capitalist society.[93]

In response, Gold's *Jews without Money* radically revises the dominant immigrant narrative genre as defined by Antin, Ravage, etc., that supported the American national progressive agenda. Gold does this by making his central concern that of representing not some few individuals that have become successful in the US, as Antin and Ravage did. Instead, Gold focused on the large numbers of those who were left behind and trapped in poverty, using as the main example his own father. In this respect, Gold's narrative aims to prove his claim from his 1918 review that "America smites its idealists as bitterly as any nation of the old world. The immigrant who comes here with a vision had better give it up, or be crushed."[94]

In my analysis, I understand Gold's leftist commitment in keeping with Alan M. Wald's perspective. I interpret it as a result of Gold's negotiations between a negative personal experience and the force field of the institutions in which he lived. In this sense, I believe that the turning point in Michael Gold's life was represented by the death of his father Charles in 1911. The self-employed salesman Charles had proved to be incompetent in economic matters and illness finally destroyed him. For the author, his father's death came to represent a life-long belief that "the prevailing social system was at fault for never giving his father a chance to reach his full powers."[95] As a result, in *Jews without Money* (1930), his father comes to epitomize the dreamy victim of a capitalist society who remained unaware of the forces destroying him. After his father's death, Gold tried to soothe his personal pain by channeling his anger against an inegalitarian social order. In other words, it was not simply the Communist ideology that forged Gold's credo, witnessing his father's downfall and experience of poverty also contributed to

[93] Granich, "Surveys of the Promised Land," 32.

[94] Ibid., 33.

[95] Alan M. Wald, "Inventing Michael Gold," in *Exiles from a Future Time. The Forging of the Mid-Twentieth-Century Literary Left* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 46.

cementing his leftist world outlook, that in turn could provide an explanation for his father's fate, as well as that of oppressed people. He found that solution in Communism, through which he strongly advocated that, if they existed, Jewish identity configurations should be based on class alliances.[96]

Like Ravage, Gold also begins with a description of the Lower East Side as the setting of Eastern European Jews fleeing discrimination: "The Jews had fled from the European pogroms; with prayer, thanksgiving and solemn faith from a new Egypt into a New Promised Land. They found awaiting them the sweatshops, the bawdy houses and Tammany Hall."[97] Here, unlike Ravage's focus on a positive paradigm of improvement that seems to be possible in America's democratic regime, Gold foregrounds a traumatic paradigm of deprivation and disempowerment that marginalized poor Jews in the US too. For Gold, Jews' struggle in America results from the dire economic conditions they faced at work, from the profusion of prostitution in poor neighborhoods, and from the political corruption in which the manipulation of people in need was a key device.

Lacking Ravage's advantage of a direct contact with both Romanian and American national practices, for Michael Gold Romanian nationalism resides only in the observation of his father's attitudes in comparison with the larger American culture. In fact, like Ravage, Gold maintains the image of Jewish discrimination in relation to Romanian official policies. Yet, unlike Ravage, he does not locate American nationalism in opposition to the Romanian case but in continuity, stressing that its guiding principle of material profit (also identified by Ravage) is equally harmful for Jewish ethnic assertion. Thereby Gold also fights bourgeois nationalism. His viewpoint can be explained by what lies in the background of the Communist political ideology that Gold embraced. This background consisted of his personal and cultural experiences, which informed his allegiance to the ideology of an anti-national, anti-assimilationist Jewish leftist politics that was "firmly situated at this time in an international context of Jewish antifascism."[98]

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[96] For a detailed biography of Michael Gold's life, see Wald, "Inventing Michael Gold," 40-65.

[97] Gold, *Jews without Money*, 15.

[98] Kaiser, " 'A new and modern golden age of Jewish culture'," 299.

To understand Gold's deep-seated commitment to the Communist ideology, of particular importance is Gold's traumatic experience of his father's death in 1911, when he was 18 years old. Gold's real-life father Charles was a self-employed suspender maker and salesman, owner of a manufacturing shop with several employees. In that, he differs from Herman, the narrator's father in *Jews without Money*, who is a working-class house painter. Yet, like Herman, Charles Granich was economically incompetent but a great storyteller and theater connoisseur (fond of telling his fascinated son Old World tales and dramatizations of Yiddish and European plays). Unfortunately, Charles soon fell ill and died in 1911, after several unsuccessful suicide attempts during the previous year. In fact, this personal traumatic experience led Michael Gold to his radical leftist position as a way to "assuage his personal pain by channeling anger in the direction of an inegalitarian social order."[99] More precisely, Wald notes how "Charles Granich's death was [...] decisive in his son's leftward turn, for Gold formed the belief that the prevailing social system was at fault for never giving his father a chance to reach his full powers."[100] Put differently, the emotional turmoil of Gold's youth made him embrace a new world outlook which could provide an explanation for his father's fate, for Gold's own situation and that of other oppressed people; he found a solution in radical socialism. I suggest that his solution grew out of his inhabiting a different vantage point than that of M.E. Ravage. If Ravage used the lens of a comparative outlook between European and American societies that he had both known firsthand, Michael Gold judged the European-transplanted problems of national identity from the vantage point of the society he knew and in which he was born, the tenement society of the United States. Given this, he saw his family's poverty, oppression, and unemployment not as an individual problem but as an outgrowth of America's economic pragmatism, which denied recognition to the human face in the name of employers' profit and the employees' blind struggle for upward movement.

One episode from the early 1917 sketch from *The Masses*, entitled "Birth," includes the father as a combination of a progressive-minded, idealist Jewish immigrant and

[99] Ibid., 48.
[100] Ibid., 46.

a downtrodden working-class man due to East Side poverty. Gold therein introduces his father as follows:

> My father was a slim, clear-shaven, unusual kind of Jew, who had been the gay blacksheep of his family in Rumania, loving joy and laughter as only young thoughtless people can love them. He had capped a career of escapades by running away to America and freedom at the age of nineteen, and had struggled unhappily since then. [...] The poverty of the golden, promised land had eaten his joy, however, and mostly I knew him as a sad, irritable, weakly sort of father, who drank in the troubled times when the family needed him, and who loved us all to maudlinity.[101]

Gold's father's idealism concerning the US—presented here as the English variant of the "goldene medina," "the golden promised land"—is smothered by Gold's over-emphasis on "poverty" in the entire piece. At the same time, Gold connects the image of his father to an innocent idealism by mentioning how he never grew up: "My father was never anything but a child, and hunger and pain and toil and meanness he never grew accustomed to, as grown men must. He hated them without understanding them, as a child hates the rod."[102]

At the beginning of *Jews without Money*, Gold also paints a picture of his father as a progressive-minded individual in search of a bourgeois lifestyle, describing how he organized the celebration of his son's fifth birthday: "My father was young then. He loved good times. He took the day off from work and insisted that I be given a birthday party. He bought me a velvet suit with lace collar and cuffs, and patent leather shoes. In the morning he insisted that we all go to be photographed. He made me dress my sister in the Scotch plaid. Himself he arrayed in his black suit that made him look like a lawyer."[103]

Throughout the rest of the book, the image of Herman, the narrator's father, is associated with a pattern that revealed his propensity to relate his life with that of

[101] Granich, "Birth," 27.
[102] Ibid.
[103] Gold, *Jewish without Money*, 19.

other immigrants from Romania, each time resulting in his being tricked by friends sharing a common ancestry as Romanian Jews. There are three such instances in the book, related to a boarder sharing the family's abode, a business associate, and a physician.

Firstly, following a custom typical of the Jewish ghetto in early twentieth-century America, Mike's family takes boarders from among the new immigrants. These newcomers would usually be housed for a little period of time until they could begin a life on their own. Such is the case of Fyfka the Miser, the immigrant boarder who is introduced as "the friend of a cousin of a boyhood friend of my father's."[104] Yet, instead of staying for a couple of weeks, Fyfka remains for seven months. A week after arrival, he gets a job at a pants factory, being paid eight dollars a week out of which he only contributes the money to buy his breakfast. In the evening, his strategy is to sit in a chair and longingly watch the others eat until he is invited to join them; he pays no rent and goes nowhere, as "he needed nothing."[105] Consequently, in the seven months spent in the Golds' abode Fyfka saves two hundred dollars and begins to set out a plan to start a business. What Fyfka's situation shows is that Herman's humane intentions of helping a fellow-native start a new life in the new host society are not answered by the same sense of humane treatment. Instead, the response he gets is an extreme sense of self-interest in which the previous shared experience of persecution in Romania, so cherished as a source of mutual understanding, has lost its relevance.

Further on, one reads of Herman's decision to escape his underpaid job of house painter and become his own boss by asking for help from his old acquaintance in Romania, Baruch Goldfarb. This was a successful man from the East Side as well as a Tammany Hall politician, Zionist leader, and owner of a dry-goods store. Gold's words below clarify the logic behind Herman's idea of friendship, namely his expectations of being understood by those who had left behind the same oppressive land as him: [Goldfarb] "had been a poor boy in the same Romanian town as my father, and they had emigrated about the same time. For this reason

[104] Ibid., 75.
[105] Ibid., 76.

my father felt Baruch was his friend."[106] Yet, Goldfarb, like Fyfka, proves to be an economically costly choice: instead of providing the loan Herman came for, he convinces his old "friend" to join his lodge, "Baruch Goldfarb Benevolent, Sickness, Social and Burial Society."[107] Herman ends up paying the ten-dollar annual dues in exchange for promises of help in case of sickness and death. It is also during his time at the lodge that Herman chooses his new job, that of assistant for another house painter, but his new career soon ends after he falls off a scaffold and breaks his leg. So, instead of money and safe employment, the association with an acquaintance from Romania only brings more disappointment and disease.

Finally, it is in relation to Herman's health problems that the failure of sharing a Romanian national experience is sealed. Of the two physicians on the Lower East Side, it is Axelrod that represents the authoritative doctor, called upon by the Golds to help Herman as long as they can afford to pay him. The other equally important reason for choosing him is further proof that Herman has not learned his lesson: "It was because my father [Herman] and Dr. Axelrod had gone to school together in Romania."[108] This episode mirrors his father's previous trust of Goldfarb, who promised help in the name of youthful adventures in Romania, such as stealing apples and plums and swimming in the Danube, as "Such things one never forgets. I will help you, my friend."[109] Likewise, Axelrod remembers Herman's folly in school which finally prevented him from becoming a doctor: "We boys had to walk before him [the priest] and kiss his hand. It was the law; everyone had to do it, even the Jews."[110] Herman was the only boy who dared to rebel against religious Christian impositions in Romanian schools and, as a result, he was thrown out of school. Axelrod remembers here the absence of sympathy for Herman's act of courage against a flagrant case of religious discrimination (that of forcing Jews to submit to the practices of Christian Orthodoxy). The doctor does not appreciate the pangs of persecution Jews used to be subjected to in Romania but interprets it pragmatically as a foolish act that cost Herman a medical

[106] Ibid., 207.
[107] Ibid., 209.
[108] Ibid., 228.
[109] Ibid., 209.
[110] Ibid., 228.

degree. What ensues is Gold's changed relation to the slums in comparison to the immigrant generation on the basis of their identification with the world of urban tenements. Meanwhile, his father's shtetl piety is judged as a mere instance of social passivity and failure to engage with America fully.

The above depiction of Herman's exploits bears resemblance to Ravage's representation of the "Little Rumania" enclave in the Lower East Side ghetto as a space of confinement, so much so that the narrator exclaims, just as Gold did, that "the truth remains that the immigrant is almost invariably disappointed in America."[111] For Ravage, this place was problematic because it kept the individual subjugated to the oppressive demands of the "Old World" bloodline kinship system imposed upon Max by the Weiss spouses. Ravage sets against it an American national system that does not run on "race prejudice" or "class exclusiveness," a system he witnessed by moving to deep America in Missouri, and in which the values of education, hard work, competition, thrift, and determination were the paths to unhindered success. While Gold draws a similar image of his progressive, idealist Romanian Jewish immigrant father, he uses the East Side differently. On the one hand, like Ravage, Gold too depicts the "Old World"-style Jewish identity and affiliation as a hypocritical form of solidarity based on the precepts of a shared linguistic, religious, and national heritage. This follows from the way Herman's Romanian Jewish immigrant friends and peers mistreat him. In Gold's narrative, these people are not bearers of an internalized oppressive system due to their previous life in the restrictive atmosphere of Romania, as in Ravage's account. Instead, they are shown as corrupted, compromised, and morally degraded individuals as a result of the US system of capitalist greed and exploitation. Meanwhile, his father is represented as the idealist bourgeois-aspiring Jewish immigrant, just like Ravage's narrator. Nevertheless, while Ravage's persona succeeds by following American national values in the deep US, Gold's father gets crushed by others' debased means because of his naive faith in a phony American dream. Gold therefore uses his father's downfall and death as the means to show the potentially devastating effects of

[111] Ravage, *An American in the Making*, 59-60.

credulous belief in the American Dream on many Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe.

Gold's narrative is structured around the topics of family, employment, and health, and it depicts New York's Lower East Side tenements as a terrible and "inescapable poverty trap of US capitalist society."[112] For Gold, in America, Romanian-based Jewish ethnicity stands for the loss of any community support, as shown by the fact that Herman's friends fully embrace the logic of American capitalism. Negative ethnic affiliation is what results by contrast with Ravage's emphasis on the potentialities of ethnic revitalization in the United States. In other words, in *Jews without Money*, rather than coming together, the myths of American society (school, business, family) show the destruction of the American dream. This is sustained by correlating the image of the father with dichotomies of utopian and dystopian ideas, as when the father tells a Romanian tale, "The Golden Bear," "the eternal fable of the man to whom the good things of life come by magic."[113] Instead, American realities relegated Herman to a position of failure, as underlined by his characteristic trope, "I have always been too late."[114] Following this trajectory of Herman's experience and his repeated emphases on failure and the death of hope, the past Romanian experience of the Romanian Jew embodied by Herman becomes a sense of persecution where the dominant tendency is that of victimizing oneself rather than doing anything about it. Passivity is what finally defines Herman: there has been no evolution from Romania to America and the image of the helpless victim is what prevails in him.

In other words, for Gold, the suppression of Romanian nationalism by American nationalism in relation to Jewish ethnicity has the same negative effects as in Eastern Europe, primarily because of America's logic of economic injustice. The solution of the ethnic versus national struggle given by Gold is the son's attainment of "a class consciousness that surpasses the false consciousness of

[112] Lee, "Never Forgetting the East Side," 37.
[113] Gold, *Jews without Money*, 86.
[114] Ibid., 88.

religion, American liberalism, and racial identity that permeates the culture of the East Side."[115]

Conclusions

Ravage's and Gold's books concentrate on struggles between ethnicity and nationalism in Eastern Europe and the United States from the vantage point of different generations of immigrants and different ideological convictions. Both authors revisit the dominant early twentieth-century immigrant autobiographies by other fellow Jews. These much-celebrated works primarily foregrounded the embrace of the American Dream by a variant of the rags-to-riches narrative, under the guise of individual upward mobility stories of successful Jewish immigrants that had culturally assimilated to American norms. Ravage's *An American in the Making* offers a twist to this dominant narrative by his emphasis on the embrace of American cultural citizenship over American legal citizenship as the Jewish immigrant's path to success. Gold rejects altogether the above rags-to-riches narratives and redefines Jewish identity from the Lower East Side as a working-class identity that supported a proletarian culture.

In brief, in the case of M.E. Ravage a sense of ethical agency uses the American system as a model to be implemented in place of discriminatory systems he was well acquainted with, following the vantage point of a permanent comparison between Old World and New World conditions, and explainable by his future choice to return to Europe. Following his sense of responsibility for the more vulnerable position of those who had remained in Europe, for Ravage, the American democratic system was primarily a model to implement in other places. In the case of Michael Gold, ethical agency results from his disappointment with American economic norms that exploited the vulnerable immigrants and destroyed their moral ties to one another in the name of profit; his decision to pinpoint the downfalls of such an economic mindset upheld the interests of revolutionary working-class identities.

[115] Lee, "Never Forgetting the East Side," 39.

These aspects show a difference of interest and stance between the two authors which was, at least in part, a result of their belonging to different generations of immigrants. Ravage's interest for social change did not focus on America, the new land he had moved to, but on Europe, the continent he had left behind. Even after emigration, Ravage remained primarily concerned with amending the discriminatory ways of Europe rather than perfecting American norms, so much so that the author eventually left the US and settled in Europe. In fact, Ravage resided in the US only from 1900 to 1920 and from 1923 to 1927. After an initial sojourn in Paris between 1920 and 1923, including a brief return to Romania in 1921, in 1927 he decided to settle in France for good and lived there until the end of his life (in 1964).[116] The early sojourn in France was due partly to Ravage's having married French-born Jeanne Martin, who had emigrated to Canada when she was 20, and partly to Ravage's being in the process of writing "a book on the sad political and economic state of postwar Europe," for which he traveled around the European continent.[117] The next return to France in 1927 came after Ravage no longer received hefty royalties for writing fairly successful historical books and magazine articles on political and social topics. He could therefore barely support his wife and two daughters. This triggered his decision to move with his family to France, where they "could live on far less funds." "The 'American' father" continued writing but slowly grew estranged from his family and got a divorce in 1933 after an affair with a woman whom he later married.[118]

According to his grandson Christopher Clausen, Ravage epitomized "the model immigrant" thanks to his gift for languages, "the ability to pass at will for a native—the perennial dream for an immigrant." The same ability, however, equally exacted a "bitter price from the possessor and those closest to him": loneliness and life-long pain. Ravage explained this to his grandson by unconvincingly telling him that "a family is always a burden for a writer," making Clausen wonder if nationality did not equally function as a similar burden. When Clausen visited his grandfather in Paris in 1957, Ravage not only treated his

[116] For further details about M.E. Ravage's life trajectory see the memoir of one of his daughters, Suzanne Ravage Clausen, *Growing Up Rootless* (Santa Barbara: Fithian Press, 1995), 11-21.
[117] Ibid., 11.
[118] Ibid., 13.

grandson with utmost kindness but also assured him that he had not become a French citizen, but he was an American, sounding like "a middle-class New Yorker with no trace of foreignness in his speech or attitudes."[119] Ravage's lifelong pride to be an American, even if living most of his life in France, undoubtedly resulted from his experience of the American democratic regime after his emigration from Romania and from his embrace of the promises of American cultural citizenship over American legal citizenship, which he had supported in writing his autobiography in 1917.[120]

Ravage's non-fictional books published in the United States are further illustration of his tireless efforts to determine a shift to decent conditions for both Jews and other ethnic or vulnerable groups in Europe. In this respect, in 1919 he published *The Jew Pays*; the book pleaded American Jews to raise charity funds and help those Jews who had remained in Europe and who were a target of discrimination during World War I.[121] In 1923 he published *The Malady of Europe*, which I have already discussed, and which emphasized the prejudicial nature of European nationalism in contrast with the openness of America's democratic model. Given this vantage point, always centered around European realities, and not at all unaware of America's own limitations, Ravage chose to emphasize the superiority of the American democratic environment as a model for changing European mono-ethnic nationalism and to engage the American mainstream in this change beyond its borders. For Ravage, his primary sense of responsibility resided with what he considered to be the more vulnerable situation of the people who had remained in Europe, and he dedicated his efforts to getting American support for helping remedy this situation.

As a second-generation American, born and raised in the United States in a low-class Jewish immigrant family, Gold opts for a thorough criticism of the American system in the name of the endemic poverty destroying the lives of the majority of Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe, like his parents, in New York's East Side ghetto. For Gold, the responsibility of this situation seems to lie in the American

[119] Christopher Clausen, "Grandfathers. A Memoir," *Commentary* 95, no. 4 (1993): 47.
[120] Stanciu, *The Makings and Unmakings of Americans*, 252-253.
[121] Marcus Eli Ravage, *The Jew Pays* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1919).

principle of material profit, which he views as the dominant American capitalist norm that Herman's three Romanian Jewish friends have internalized. As a result, on meeting Herman, rather than emphasize ethnic community support because of the shared experience of persecution, they use the American class norm of financial interest in which "the cult of the self"[122] and the "break-up of solidarity"[123] come before all the rest. Therefore, Gold suggests, the economic injustice of American nationalism via the primacy of material profit—which has been internalized by most Romanian Jews—only results in his father's sense of persecution, passivity, and his persistent victim mentality. Gold's solution is the revolutionary agency of working-class Jews, namely the celebration of the mother's humane realism as opposed to the father's utopian stance, via political radicalism and hard work.

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Keywords: Jewish Identity, Ethnicity, Nationalism, Romania, US

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[122] Ibid., 64.
[123] Ibid., 65.

How to quote this article:
Dana Mihăilescu, "Struggles between Nationalism and Ethnicity in Eastern Europe and the United States, 1890s-1910s: The Life Writings of M.E. Ravage and Michael Gold," in "Jewish Minorities between Nation-Building and Emigration in late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Century East Central Europe," eds. Francesco Di Palma and Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe, *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History. Journal of the Fondazione CDEC* 20 (December 2021), DOI: 10.48248/issn.2037-741X/13087

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

by *Susanne Korbel*

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

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.[1] 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.[2] 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.[3]

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 *varieté* (vaudeville) offered migrants their first opportunity to earn money. The expanding scene of popular entertainment provided many new job

[1] "Theater und Kunst," *Neues Wiener Journal*, August 21, 1898, 7-8.

[2] 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).

[3] 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."[4] 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, vaudevilles 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[5] 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.[6] Through close examinations of interviews, court records,

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[4] Nahma Sandrow, *Vagabond Stars: A World History of Yiddish Theater* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1996), 77.

[5] 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.

[6] 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.[7] 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"[8] that remains understudied.[9] Jews, who were among the most prominent performers in popular entertainment, constituted a significant portion of the migrating

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

[7] 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.

[9] Susanne Korbel, "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.[10]

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.[11] Yet, a glance at the population figures from the Habsburg Empire reveals a rather more complex composition of people on the move:[12] Among the three million people who left the Empire between 1889 and 1914 280,000 were Jews,[13] approximately 240.000

[10] 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.

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

[12] 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*, 2nd 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.

[13] 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.[14] 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.[15] 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.[16] 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;[17] some newspapers at the time polemically claimed that almost three-quarters of migrants had re-migrated to the Habsburg Empire.[18]

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 Monrachy and the United States, see Heinz Faßmann, "Auswanderung aus der österreichisch-ungarischen Monrachie 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.

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

[15] Steidl, Fischer-Nebmaier and Oberly, *From a Multiethnic Empire to a Nation of Nations*, 142.

[16] Brinkmann, "Points of Passage," 1; Hödl, *Als Bettler in die Leopoldstadt*, 115.

[17] Steidl, Fischer-Nebmaier and Oberly, *From a Multiethnic Empire to a Nation of Nations*, 50-75.

[18] 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,[19] 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.[20] 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.[21]

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.[22] The same rapid population increase

[19] 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*, 6th ed. (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 2000).

[20] 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.

[21] Hödl, *Als Bettler in die Leopoldstadt*, 13-22; Hödl, *Vom Shtetl an die Lower East Side*, 21-30.

[22] 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, 2nd 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.[23] 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.[24]

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.[25] The cities grew into increasingly pluri-cultural metropolises.[26] In their daily routines in the markets, in schools, or at work

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.

[23] 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 Útóda 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.

[24] 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*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge-London: Harvard University Press, 1977), ix.

[25] Csáky, "Hybride Kommunikationsräume und Mehrfachidentitäten," 65-68.

[26] 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*, 2nd 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.[27] 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.[28] 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.[29]

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

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

[28] 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.

[29] 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.[30] 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.[31]

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.[32] 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").[33] 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."[34] Along the path of the "first traveling

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

[31] 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.

[32] Nathan Michael Gelber, "Berl Broder: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der jüdischen Volkssänger," *Mitteilungen für jüdische Volkskunde* 16, no. 3 (1913): 1-18; 1.

[33] Kuzmany, *Brody*, 92.

[34] 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.[35]

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.[36] Accordingly, these establishments also arranged their programs with traveling artists and groups.[37] 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.[38] 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.[39] 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

[35] Delphine Bechtel, "Le théatre yiddish Gimpel de Lemberg: une Odyssée oubliée," *Yod*16 (2011): 83-93.

[36] From 1890 to 1900, the number of registered *varietés* and various *etablissements* in the Habsburg Empire's capitals doubled, while the music halls in New York increased four times in number.

[37] Korbel, *Auf die Tour*, 51-4.

[38] 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 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.

[39] 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 Budapester 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.[40]

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.*].[41]

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.[42] 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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[40] Sandrow, *Vagabond Stars*, 80.

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

[42] 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.[43] 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

[43] 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).[44]

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

[44] 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.[45]

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.[46]

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

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

[46] 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.[47] It was narrated as the trade in "white slavery"[48]—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."[49]

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

[47] 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.

[48] Vries, " 'White Slaves' in a Colonial Nation," 39-60.

[49] Nancy M. Wingfield, *The World of Prostitution in Late Imperial Austria* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 207.

by human traffickers.[50] This was discussed in a particularly strong way within the Habsburg Empire.[51] 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.[52] 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,[53] recent research has altered this narrative, demonstrating that 40% of Yiddish-speaking migrants from the Habsburg Empire to the US were, in fact, female.[54]

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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[50] 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.

[51] Franz Janisch, "Der Mädchenhandel und seine international gesetzliche Bekämpfung," *Archiv für Rechts- und Wirtschaftsphilosophie* 7, no. 2 (1914): 303-314; 303-305.

[52] 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.

[53] Hödl, *Als Bettler in die Leopoldstadt*, 48.

[54] Steidl, Fischer-Nebmaier and Oberly, *From a Multiethnic Empire to a Nation of Nations*, 141. On this, Steidl, Firscher-Nebmair 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: *Damenkappellen* (ladies' orchestras),[55] 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.[56] 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.[57]

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

[55] Halsted-Stauter, *The Devil's Chain*, 117-34.

[56] 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.

[57] 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."[58] 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.[59]

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.[60]

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-

[58] 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.

[59] Sadie Rothstein Saltzman interviewed by Kathy Connelly, July 28, 1983, OHC, file NPS-139, EIA, New York.

[60] 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.[61]

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.[62] 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. [63] 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.[64]

"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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[61] 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.

[62] Zalmen Zylbercweig, "Tomashefsky, Boris," in *Leksikon of the Yidishn teater*, vol. 2 (Warsaw: Farlag Elisheva, 1934), 804-840.

[63] 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).

[64] 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], 2nd 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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Keywords: Migration, Gender, Habsburg Empire, United States, Popular Entertainment

How to quote this article:
Susanne Korbel, "Understudied Patterns of Jewish Migration between the Habsburg Central Europe and the United States," in "Jewish Minorities between Nation-Building and Emigration in late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Century East Central Europe,"

eds. Francesco Di Palma and Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe, *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History. Journal of the Fondazione CDEC* 20 (December 2021), DOI: 10.48248/issn.2037-741X/13090

Heimweh*: The Torn Identity of Lemberg-Lwów's Intellectual Jewry*

by *Maya Shabbat*

Abstract

The concept of Heimweh *conveys a set of emotions and images that have been described in different ways in different languages. This article intends to analyze the* Heimweh *experienced by Galician intellectual Jewry during the process of linguistic and cultural change that took place from 1867 until the mid-1880s. This will be discussed while focusing on the urban intelligentsia circles in Lemberg (Lviv), which had a tremendous influence on some Galician Jewish intellectuals during that period. I will analyze the nature of a clash of identities that eventually brought some of the urban intelligentsia in Lemberg to consider themselves as living a "spiritual" or "linguistic exile" (*Sprachexil*), regardless of whether they had migrated or not. Longing for the homeland as a nostalgic destination, whether they referred to it as* Heimat *or* Ojczyzna*, and whether they called it Lemberg or Lwów, was longing to be part of a group holding a distinct* Kultur *or* Kultura*, a set of values, culture and language, which coexisted with their Jewish identity.*

Introduction

The geo-political background

The self-image of the Jewish intelligentsia in Lemberg-Lwów

Between Lemberg and Lwów: The Bernfeld family

Concluding remarks: Self Criticism—A look from the inside

"A man is nothing but the shape of his native landscape"

After all everybody, that is, everybody who writes
Is interested in living inside themselves
In order to tell what is inside themselves.
That is why writers have to have two countries,
The one where they belong
and the one in which they live really.
The second one is romantic, it is separate from themselves,
It is not real but it is really there.[1]

Introduction

The word *Heimweh* ("longing for one's homeland") conveys a set of emotions and images that have been described in many ways in different languages, as Gertrud Stein wrote in 1940.

This article shall claim that the liberal urban[2] intellectual Jewry in Galicia suffered from *Heimweh* as a result of the geo-political turmoil towards the end of the nineteenth-century. In a period of political transition, these intellectuals were forced to choose their cultural and national loyalty—a situation in which they

My thanks to the mentors and peers who took the time to advice, consult and comment during the writing of this article: Prof. Rachel Manekin, Prof. Motti Zalkin, Dr. Ahuva Liberles Noiman, Dr. Avi-ram Tzoreff and Dr. Hilla Lavie. A special thanks to Prof. Francesco Di Palma for his useful suggestions and comments, and to the anonymous reviewers of this paper for their careful reading and their insightful comments.
The research for this article was conducted during the time I was a post-doctoral fellow at 'The Research Project on Galician & Bukovinian Jewry' at Haifa University and at the department of Jewish History at Ben Gurion University. I wish to thank these institutions for their generous support. A preliminary version of this paper was presented at the Institut für Jüdische Studien und Religionswissenschaft Colloquium, Potsdam University, during the time I was a research fellow there. My sincere thanks to Prof. Christoph Schulte and to the participants at the colloquium for the generous hospitality and excellent comments.

[1] Gertrude Stein, *Paris France* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940), 2.

[2] I shall not discuss here the non-urban intellectual context. Such a case is discussed in: Golda Akhiezer, "Abraham Lianovitsch, an Enlightened Galician Karaite: between Austrian Regime and Ruthenian Nationalism," in *From Joseph Perl to Shmuel Yosef Agnon*, eds. Nathan Shifris, Shmuel Feiner, and Hanan Gafni (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2020), 94-105; Avi-Ram Tzoreff, "Laughter, Empire and Transnationalism" (paper presented at the conference: What Remains of Galicia, Vienna, Austria, April 19-21, 2018).

found themselves with no spiritual homeland, experiencing *Heimweh.* Yet, this *Heimweh* was for a *Heimat* which never existed, a Utopian imaginary one.

This internal-Jewish development was caused by the linguistic and cultural change that took place in Galicia from 1867, in which the region shifted from being culturally German to being politically Polish, as shall be explored in the first part of this article.

Those events influenced Galician Jewish intellectuals from 1867 until the mid-1880s, leading each of them to react differently on the basis of their self image, the topic of the second part of this article. In several cases their reactions led to a clash of identities which eventually brought some of the urban intelligentsia in Lemberg to conceptually consider themselves as experiencing a "spiritual" or a "linguistic exile" (*Sprachexil*), regardless of whether they had migrated or not. The third part of the article shall describe this clash of loyalties as it played out inside one family, between two brothers: Isaac Aaron and Simon Bernfeld, who each held opposing views they expressed in a dispute between the two in the early 1880s.

The geo-political background

The weakening of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth led to the region of Galicia, being partitioned in three stages (1772, 1793, and 1795) between the political entities surrounding it: the Russian Empire, Prussia and the Austrian Empire.[3] These partitions, as well as the disbandment of the Council of Four Lands, the Jewish representative organization in The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (1520-1764), had a tremendous impact on Galician Jewry.[4] As they became citizens of the Austrian Empire, Galician Jewry emerged as a unique

[3] Israel Bartal and Antony Polonsky, "The Jews of Galicia under the Habsburgs," *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry* 12 (1999):3-24.

[4] Alon Rachamimov, "Provincial Compromises and State Patriotism in fin-de-siècle, Austria-Hungary," *Tel Aviver Jahrbuch für deutsche Geschichte* 30 (2002): 116-128; Id., *POWs and the Great War: Captivity on the Eastern Front* (New York: Berg Publishers,2002); Dimitry Shumsky, *Between Prague and Jerusalem: Prague Zionists and the Origins of the Idea of Binational State in Palestine* (Jerusalem: Shazar Center, 2010).

type, especially its urban population, which in turn fostered a modern political consciousness and led to a different development from the surrounding Jewish communities annexed to other political entities.

In general, the first decades of the annexation were characterized by a strict and rapid implementation of Joseph II's Enlightened absolutist policies, which included a Germanization process.[5] German was established as the official language for bureaucracy, academic and cultural writings and it was required to adopt German family names.[6] This was accompanied by the standardization of education,[7] mandatory military enrollment, religious taxes as well as a centralization effort aimed at weakening all community structures.[8]

The period after the 1848 Revolutions was characterized by the emergence of a unique local identity which enabled different ethnic groups to share a sense of local cultural belonging that deviated from their national (or imperial) affinities.[9]

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[5] Shulamit Volkov claims that Centralism and the "Germanized" environment that existed until 1848 were highly welcomed by many Jews in the central cities of Galicia, at least among the first generation. She describes them as "Germanized" by choice, and claims that after annexation a large part of second and third generation Jews perceived themselves as "children of two cultures." Shulamit Volkov, *Germans, Jews and Antisemites: Trials in Emancipation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 266; Evidence in favor of this hypothesis can be found in the memoirs from Jews of the first generation, see for example: Michael H. Brawer and Abraham J. Brawer, *Zikhronot av u-veno*, (Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1966), 380.

[6] Abraham J. Brawer, *Galicia and its Jews* (Jerusalem: Mosad Biyalik, 1956): 182-183; Leopld Von Sacher Masoch, *Jewish Stories* (Jerusalem, 1902): 12-13.

[7] Stanislaw Grodziski, "The Jewish Question in Galicia: The Reforms of Maria Theresa and Josph II, 1772-1790," *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry* 12 (1999):61-72; Rachel Manekin, "Naftali Herz Homberg: The Man and the Myth," *Zion* 71 (2006),153-202; Israel Bartal, *The Jews of Eastern Europe, 1772-1881* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 73-77.

[8] Rachel Manekin, "The Galician Roots of Polish Jewish Historiography," in *Conflicting histories and coexistence: new perspectives on the Jewish-Polish encounter*, ed. Daniel Baltman (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2014), 319-331; 326.

[9] Iris Rachamimov, "Nationalism's Big Bang: World War I," *Zmanim* 1 (2004): 82-95; 84f; Larry Wolff, *The Idea of Galicia: History and Fantasy in Habsburg Political Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010); Kai Struve, "Citizenship and National Identity: The Peasants of Galicia during the 19th Century," in *Societal Change and Ideological Formation Among the Rural Population of the Baltic Area 1880-1939*, ed. Piotr Wawrzeniuk (Huddinge: Södertörns högskola, 2008), 75-78.The Jewish aspects of these collaborations are described in: Salo W. Baron, "The impact of the revolution of 1848 on Jewish emancipation," *Jewish Social Studies* 12 (1949), 195-248;

Alongside this, the authorities changed their approach and started to nurture minorities by providing gradual cultural and linguistic recognition to defuse their national aspirations. We can see the beginning of this approach with the local administration policy of 1849; it was then expanded during the 1860s, when significant changes took place after the call for minority emancipation, which resulted in the establishment of the Galician parliament, the Galician Sejm, in 1861, and later peaked with the constitutional reform of 1867, which provided all minorities with the right to maintain and develop their culture and language. This was followed by the emancipation of all minorities, including Jews, who later received voting rights (1868).[10] Within the Habsburg Empire, there was no area where a national minority formed a local absolute majority,[11] while in Galicia the heterogeneous structure of the local population established a common political arena for its three main groups, described as a "multinational triangle":[12] Polish, Ruthenians[13] and Jews.[14] In this scenario the Jews, with no national aspirations at that time, became the political swing force between the other two groups.[15]

Immediately following the emancipation, a Polish commissioner was appointed in Galicia and initiated a Polonization process in which Polish was recognized as an official language (1869), arousing Polish national aspirations as well as Ruthenian unrest.

Rachel Manekin, " 'Daitchen', 'Poles' or 'Austrians'? The Dilemma of Identity of Galician Jews (1848-1851)," *Zion* 68 (2003): 223-262.

[10] For the changes between 1848-1867 see: Rachel Manekin, *The Jews of Galicia and the Austrian constitution: The beginning of modern Jewish politics* (Jerusalem: Shazar Center, 2015), 19-54.

[11] Robert A. Kann, The *Multinational Empire: Nationalism and National Reform in the Habsburg Monarchy 1848-1918*, vol. 1 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), 29-33.

[12] John-Paul Himka, "Dimensions of a Triangle: Polish-Ukrainian-Jewish Relations in Austrian Galicia," *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry* 12 (1999): 25-48.

[13] Yaroslav Hrytsak, "A Ukrainian Answer to the Galician Ethnic Triangle: The Case of Ivan Franko," *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry* 12(1999): 137-146.

[14] On the Jewish complex role within the minority triangle, see: Robert S. Wistrich, *Laboratory for World Destruction. Germans and Jews in Central Europe* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), 228.

[15] For the ethnic demographic breakdown see: Manekin, *The Jews of Galicia and the Austrian constitution*, 68.

The tensions between the two groups, Polish and Ruthenians, led both of them to try to join forces with Jewish political parties to shift power in their favor. The Austrian government's coalition agreements, as well as the strengthening of Polish hegemony after the Polish commissioner was granted autonomy in 1867, provided legitimacy to openly expressed Polish nationalism (as reflected in language, administration, education etc.).[16]

The combination of the recognition of Galicia's limited autonomy with representation rights in the Austrian Parliament, Emancipation, and the right to vote, all led to a generational change in the struggle between Maskilim and conservative groups. The Jewish community as a whole developed a new political awareness and became more diverse. The development of Jewish political movements, their use of new propaganda tools such as electoral agreements to share residual votes and the collaboration with Polish and Ruthenian parties, shaped a modern conceptualization of politics among Galician Jewry. Their parties were different from Jewish political movements in the West, and even more so from those in the East.[17] Within a decade and a half after emancipation, Jewish society in Galicia was split into three major parties. The first two groups "originated" from the same metaphorical home: both were associated with liberal circles and in many cases had a Maskilic background:

1. The integrationist-liberals, who were connected with the association Dorshey Shalom, which later merged into the Polish-Jewish organization Agudas Achim. This movement had a Polish cultural orientation and a pro-Polish political identity.
2. The Jewish nationalist-liberals, who operated within the Maskilim association Shomer Israel (founded in 1867 and transformed into a political party in 1873) and aimed to encourage Haskalah, promote

[16] About the governmental changes and their effects on the political arena in Galicia see Jozef Buszko, "The Consequences of Galician Autonomy after 1867," *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry* 12 (1999): 86-99.

[17] Wistrich, *Laboratory for World Destruction*, 20.

education and a Hebrew identity among Galician Jewry.[18] The association had an urban orientation and was mainly based in Lemberg.[19] This political movement had a pro-German cultural orientation, but it nonetheless included in its manifesto a clause encouraging the study of the Polish language. During its first years of activity, most of the members tended to support the contemporary idea of a centralist regime as expressed in the Austrian constitution. In the second half of the 1870s the Polonization process started a trend toward Polish culture and society within the party, yet the German cultural orientation remained.[20]

3. The Orthodox, who operated within the Machsike Hadas organization (founded in 1871). This movement was established in response to the political activity of Shomer Israel and encouraged isolationist trends.[21]

The last two groups were engaged in a continuous political struggle. Galician Jewry was the pioneer of modern Jewish politics and in many ways introduced political bargaining, something for which its leaders were later blamed. Manekin identifies the unique political features of Galician Jewry, describing the consolidation of its parties, their use of modern propaganda methods, and the political collaborations with non-Jewish forces to promote Jewish goals, all of which took place before Jewish Nationalism.[22]

Initially, many of the members of Shomer Israel supported the idea of a strong central government, had a pro-German cultural orientation, identified as liberal

[18] Zvi Karl, "Lwów," in *Arim veimahot beisrael*, eds. Dov Sadan and Menachem Gelerter (Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1946-1960), 290-344; 336; Nathan M. Gelber, *The History of Jewish Communities and other Ethnic Groups in Poland: Lwów* (Jerusalem: n.p., 1956), 309-310; Ezra Mendelsohn, "Jewish History: Maurycy Gottlieb's 'Christ Preaching at Capernaum'," *Zion* 62 (1992): 173-191; 185; Manekin, *The Jews of Galicia and the Austrian constitution*, 55-65.

[19] According to Manekin, in 1869 the association had more than 570 members, 486 of which were from the city. Manekin, *The Jews of Galicia and the Austrian constitution*, 62.

[20] Manekin describes how the question of orientation became central in the public agenda of "Shomer Israel" during the 1870s, creating an internal discussion that led to a clear shift in the movement's stance. Manekin, "'Daitchen', 'Poles' or 'Austrians'?"; Id., "The Galician Roots of Polish Jewish Historiography," 320f; Id., "HaBerit hahadashah: Yehudim ortodoksim upolanim katolim beGalitsyah, 1879-1883," *Zion* 64 (1999): 157-186.

[21] Manekin, *The Jews of Galicia and the Austrian constitution*, 122-253.

[22] Ibid.

German-Austrians, considered German culture to be superior to Polish culture and supported the election of liberal Austrian politicians.[23]

This stance changed in 1867, leading to a new electoral "balance of power" among minorities in Galicia,[24] and a new self-image of the urban Jewish intelligentsia, which I will examine in the next section. I shall consider Lemberg as a test case since it was considered the most "German" city within Galicia.[25]

The self-image of the Jewish intelligentsia in Lemberg-Lwów

The political change of 1867 brought a new urban development to Lemberg, which become more Polish-oriented. In 1869 the Jewish population of the city counted 26,694 members, and Rachel Manekin states that their situation was better than that of Jews in other parts of Galicia. In 1880, despite economic stress, the city's Jewish population increased and reached more than 31,000 members.[26]

In many cases among Galician Maskilim, the intellectuals' self-definition stemmed from their own self-image, which combined the following elements: moderately enlightened, members of the cultural German-speaking sphere, Austrian and urbanized. They were unique in the way their Judaism was a crucial element of their identity that differentiated them from other local minorities. As suggested by Rachel Manekin, this was the result of Galician Maskilim's struggle to reshape

[23] Ibid., 65-66.

[24] Manekin presented how the question of orientation became central in the public agenda of "Shomer Israel" during the 1870s, creating an inner-party discussion that led to a clear shift in the movement's orientation. See: Manekin, " 'Daitchen', 'Poles' or 'Austrians'?," 223-262; Id., "The Galician Roots of Polish Jewish Historiography," 320-321.

[25] Manekin, " 'Daitchen', 'Poles' or 'Austrians'?," 225; Jasnowski claims instead that Brody was the most German city in Galicia. See: Paweł Jasnowski, "The Failure of the Integration of Galician Jews According to Lvov's Ojczyzna (1881-1892)," *Scripta Judaica Cracoviensia* 13 (2015): 55-65, 58.

[26] Rachel Manekin, "Galicia," in *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*, ed. Gershon D. Hundert (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 560-567.

religion, rather than straightforward secularization.[27] The Galician Maskilim strove to develop an intellectual identity that would encourage both the use and spread of the Hebrew language as well as the study of the Talmud, shaping a modern approach to ethics. They identified with the German-speaking Maskilim *area*, despite having their own criticisms, objections and reservations related to their specific circumstances. In this way, those Galician intellectuals assimilated their identity on the literary conceptual image of German national culture.[28]

I shall not discuss here recent developments in the research of Galician Enlightenment. However, I shall explore the metaphorical "sons" or "grandchildren" of Galician Maskilim, who I define as those born in the last third of the nineteenth century, and will focus on the image they had of their "grandfathers," the founding fathers of "Galician Haskalah." Some of the Galician Enlightenment's "grandchildren" discussed here sought to portray the actual political struggle they experienced (Shomer Israel Vs. Machsike Hadas) as an inherent element of the struggle between Maskilim and Hasidim.[29]

Since this discussion revolves around perceptions, we can accept the different images they held of their "grandfathers" as evidence. These images have been lately

[27] Rachel Manekin, "Galician Haskalah and the Discourse of Schwärmerei," in *Secularism in Question: Jews and Judaism in modern times*, eds. Ari Joskowicz and Ethan B. Katz (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 189-207.

[28] Shmuel Feiner, "The Struggle against False Haskalah and the Boundaries of Jewish Modernization," in *From Vilna to Jerusalem: Studies in the History and Culture of Eastern European Jewry, Presented to Professor Shmuel Werses*, eds. Shmuel Feiner, David Assaf, Israel Bartal, Yehudah Friedlander, Avner Holtzman, and Chava Turiansk (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2002), 3-23.

[29] The struggle between Hasidim and Maskilim has been discussed extensively. See for example: Raphael Mahler, *The Hasidism and the Haskalah* (Merhavia: Sifriat Poalim, 1961);Samuel Werses, *Haskala and Sabbathaians* (Jerusalem: Shazar Center, 1988); Bartal, *The Jewish of Eastern Europe*; Manekin, "Galician Haskalah and the Discourse of Schwärmerei"; Marcin Wodziński, *Hasidism: Key Questions* (New York:Oxford University Press,2018); Jonatan Meir, *Imagined Hasidism: The Anti-Hasidic Writings of Joseph Perl* (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 2013); Michael Stanislawski, *A Murder in Lemberg: Politics, Religion, and Violence in Modern Jewish history* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).

discussed by researchers such as Shmuel Feiner, Israel Bartal, Rachel Manekin, and Jonatan Meir, among others.[30]

The self-perception of the Galician urban intelligentsia as "members of the German culture" has been analyzed in several aspects: Israel Bartal has suggested looking at the Maskil area from Alsace to Lithuania as an abstract space, claiming that the Haskalah was a Pan-Ashkenazi phenomenon and the Maskilim saw themselves as part of an imaginary community encompassing the German-speaking sphere. Rachel Manekin has proposed a different approach, which focuses on the manner in which the environment of the geographic, social and urban space in Galicia enabled the development of a local Haskalah ideology suited to the area's conditions.[31] She has also pointed at the self-defined boundaries of the Galician Jewish intelligentsia during the second half of the nineteenth century: the view that the word "Polish" no longer referred to a geographic or national definition but rather to a cultural-religious one, created a mirror definition within Galician Jewry. "Polish Jew" was a mocking moniker, referring to the backward Hasidic culture, whereas "Daitchen*"* was someone whose language, clothes and gestures signified a way of life favored by the Habsburg regime, which harnessed the education system and the local administration to apply its policies.[32]

Though both Maskilim and Hasidim may have shared the same geographic and social space within Galicia, the Maskilim differed from the "others": German was their mother tongue, as well as Hebrew, as opposed to Yiddish. Furthermore, Maskilim sometimes perceived themselves as residents of major cities and even the metropolis, as opposed to small towns, villages or Hasidic courts.

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[30] For more about the national loyalty of the *Maskilim* to the Empire, Russian or Austrian, and the identification of the *Hasidim* as their opponents, see: Israel Bartal, *Cossack and Bedouin: Land and People in Jewish Nationalism* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 2007), 24; about the irony in the fact that the regime considered the Maskilim radicals, Bartal, *The Jewish of Eastern Europe*, 78.

[31] Manekin, "Galician Haskalah and the Discourse of Schwärmerei"; Id., "Gaming the System," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 3, no. 106, (2016): 352-382; Id., "From Johann Pezzl to Joseph Perl: Galician Haskalah and the Austrian Enlightenment," in *Jews and Germans in Eastern Europe*, ed. Tobias Grill (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018), 61-71.

[32] Manekin, " 'Daitchen', 'Poles' or 'Austrians'? "; Id., "The Galician Roots of Polish Jewish Historiography," 319-331.

Evidence for these attitudes can be found in the writings of the time. The Galician geographer Dr. Abraham Jacob Brawer (1884-1975) described, on the basis of his father Michael HaCohen Brawer's memoirs, the differences between inhabitants of cities and villages, using expressions that reveal his own self-image:

> Home-ownership is not just a social status reflecting certain economic terms like '*Petite bourgeoisie*' in the Marxist jargon, but also a dignified heritage and level of scholarship and manner of life, some sort of gentleman [...]. A lazy *Hasid* can neglect his appearance, but a decent home-owner could not appear in the synagogue wearing a hat which was not brushed or in worn-out shoes.[33]

A similar description can be found in Simon Bernfeld's memoirs, where he clearly distinguished between Jews residing in small towns—who were described negatively—and the positively represented Jews of Lemberg. When describing his grandfather's arrival from Bern, Switzerland, to Galicia, he writes: "it was hard for him to sit there among the Galician refugees" who were then described as "lacking *Torah* knowledge and rude."[34] On the other hand, his childhood in Lemberg was described positively:

> The Hebrew community in Lemberg those days was sort of a German community [...]: in their customs and manners the *Ashkenazi* character was present: innocence, humbleness; none of the Jewish arrogance from the small towns of Galicia.[35]

Therefore, the self-image of the "children of German culture" was shaped by the Haskalah in the cities of Galicia. Focusing on Lemberg, one can see that its Jewry did not consider social reforms as a threat to the established social order. Many among the Jewish intelligentsia in Lemberg considered themselves "members of the German cultural sphere" and thought this did not contradict their religious beliefs or Jewish lifestyle, their loyalty to the central government in Vienna, or even

[33] Brawer and Brawer, *Zikhronot av u-veno*, 179.
[34] Simon Bernfeld, "Memories," *Reshumot* 4 (1926): 145-193; 146.
[35] Ibid, 170.

their modern Jewish national identity. However, it should be clear that this unique atmosphere mainly flourished during the rabbinic era of Rabbi Joseph Saul Nathansohn (1810-1875),[36] who managed to heal the community after the political murder of the liberal Rabbi Abraham Kohn (1806-1848) at the hands of radical Jews (1848).[37]

The atmosphere in the city during the leadership of Rabbi Nathansohn was later nostalgically described as a "pleasant Jewish gathering," [38] open to various ideological movements. For example, Rabbi Dr. Mordecai Ehrenpreis (1869-1951), a Zionist activist and Hebrew writer, described his childhood in Lemberg with these words: "My *Heimat* town [*Mechorati* in the original Hebrew], Lemberg, between East and West [...] Jews have lived there since the 10th century [...] once annexed to Austria, Lemberg received the character of an 'in between' city, between East and West."[39] Other Lemberg Jewish residents, such as Osias Thon, described the city as a "twilight" zone between East and West.[40]

This elitist self-characterization by the urban Jewish intelligentsia made them different from rural Jews and Hasidim, but also from Polish and Ruthenian peasants.[41] Their Maskilic consciousness made them unique, in that they did not wish to mix with the local non-Jewish community, as described by Brawer: "Despite Polish anger, Jews were the squires of the German language in Galicia and Bukovina."[42]

Furthermore, the self-image of intellectual and enlightened Western Maskilim, as developed by the urban Galician intellectuals, reflected their encounter with the townspeople in the region as well as with other Jews from the German annexed

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[36] Haim Gertner, *The Rabbi and the City: The Rabbinate in Galicia and its Encounter with Modernity, 1815-1867* (Jerusalem: Shazar Center, 2013), 66-97 and 326-328.

[37] Stanislawski, *A Murder in Lemberg*.

[38] Bernfeld, "Memories," 170.

[39] Mordechai Ehrenpreis, *My Life Between East and West* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved,1953), 7.

[40] Abraham Osias Thon, "Characters from Lwów," in *Pirkei Galicia*, eds. Dov Sadan and Israel Cohen (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1957), 345-385; 376.

[41] See for example Antony Polonsky, *The Jews in Poland and Russia* (Oxford: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2010-2012), 114.

[42] Brawer and Brawer, *Zikhronot av u-veno*, 221.

areas. These inter-peripheral encounters raise the need to examine a social microcosmos that is different from that discussed in the research so far. An example of such an encounter is described by Abraham Brawer:

> I visited my uncle in Oświęcim and was astonished to see a city close to the German border, which was to me a symbol of human cultural perfection, but was dirtier than any Jewish town in Eastern Galicia close to the Russian border. The clothes of Eastern Galicia Jews were already in 1906 European or semi-European [...] and [in Oświęcim] it was as if we were before 1848.[43]

The German self-image of the writers quoted above was not fanciful, because Galician Jewish intelligentsia was embedded in German culture, and this image remained unchanged until the late 1920s. Samuel Feigin (1893-1950), writing about Simon Bernfeld in a *HaDoar* article of July 18, 1929, described the cultural background in which Bernfeld grew up, in the following way: "Bernfeld, as many Galician authors, is a Westerner without any effort. He is also rooted into this culture more than the writers of other countries."

However, reading the writings of the urban intellectual Galician Jews also sheds some light on their conflictual encountering with the Jews from Central and Western Europe. The Galician elitism did not end at the municipal borders of Lemberg or in their inter-peripheral encounter with Jews from the annexed territories, but was maintained in their meetings with Jews from cities in Central Europe. For example, when meeting local Jews in Königsberg or Berlin, Bernfeld found them not "German" enough in comparison to those living in Lemberg. In his eyes, he and his urban liberal Galician generation represented the prototype of the pure German-Jew, as he noted in a *HaOlam* article of May 28, 1926: "We, the youth of Galicia, have more general knowledge than the German youth."

[43] Ibid., 183.

This is not only an example of Bernfeld's elitism but also an expression of the urban Galician Jewry's interpretation of *Bildung.*[44] The point of view of Simon Bernfeld, Mordecai Ehrenpreis, Michael HaCohen Brawer and Abraham Jacob Brawer derived from the adoption of several elements of the *Bildung* principle.

We can carefully assume that for them *Bildung* was a supreme value and a way of life in which Judaism and Germanism blended into each other. However, the Germanism characterizing the intelligentsia in Galicia was betrayed, according to Bernfeld, by those developing pro-Polish views:

> The Maskilim felt that the ground was falling under their feet. They did not betray Germanism. It was Germanism that betrayed them [...]. Of course, it was better for them to approach the culture of such a great and enlightened nation as the German one, than to assimilate into the culture of such a minor nation [...] no doubt, the political changes in Galicia caused cultural decline among Jews.[45]

The elitist, loyal approach to German culture seen here was also expressed by Jews in other regions of the Habsburg Empire facing local national awakening.[46] Another tension within Jewish identity involved Bohemia and Moravia, as described by Gary B. Cohen and Shalom Ratsabi.[47] Jews, mainly from

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[44] I shall not discuss here the concept of *Bildung* or Jewish expressions of it, as those have already been significantly discussed in the literature. See for example: George L. Mosse, *German Jews beyond Judaism* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1985), 1-54; David Sorkin, "Wilhelm von Humboldt: The Theory and Practice of Self-formation (Bildung), 1791-1810," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 1, no. 44 (1983): 55-73; 66 and 71-73; Shulamit Volkov, "The Ambivalence of Bildung: Jews and Other Germans," in *The German-Jewish Dialogue Reconsidered: A Symposium in Honor of George L. Mosse*, ed. Klaus L. Berghahn (New York: P. Lang, 1996), 81-97.

[45] Bernfeld, "Memories," 187-188; Id., "Qehilot Yaacov," *Haschiloah* 1 (1897): 275-282.

[46] Shalom Ratsabi has shown how German culture and language were inseparable parts of Bohemian Jewry's self-definition, as seen for example in Hugo Bergmann's memoirs, where he describes his grandmother's shock when the language of Drasha changed from German to Czech. See: Shalom Ratsabi, "The personalities of Central Europe in *Brith shalom* Society" (PhD diss., Tel Aviv University, 1993), 48-49.

[47] Gary B. Cohen, "Our Laws, Our Taxes, Our Administration: Citizenship in Imperial Austria," in *Shatterzone of Empires*: *Coexistence and Violence in the German, Habsburg, Russian, and*

intelligentsia circles in the major cities, struggling with national-cultural-linguistic loyalty dilemmas, were forced to choose between imperial loyalty—whose language and culture were German—and local loyalty to Czech culture.[48]

Paul Mendes-Flohr has researched yet another identity conflict, pointing to the phenomenon of "Jews at the border" *(Grenzjuden*).[49] It characterized many Maskilim going through social-cultural integration into German society, especially in Berlin, who could not fully dedicate themselves to their Jewish identity.[50] In Galicia, the "border" was double: Jews who considered themselves liberal were forced to decide on an extra-identity: Imperial-Austrian, Polish or Ruthenian. Galician Jewry was moderate, and even among the liberals acts of *Epikorosim* were not done in public.[51] Political collaborations revealed the map of local national identities, accompanied by a distinct national element. The Jewish intelligentsia circles in Galicia were in fact confined inside an ongoing identity dilemma taking place in the local political arena, and experienced, at the same time, an internal conflict between their Jewish identity and their civil loyalty as well as their national identity.[52]

Ottoman Borderlands, eds. Omer Bartov and Eric D. Weitz (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2013), 103-121.

[48] Dimitry Shumsky, however, has claimed that the interpretation of Jewish-German identity as a rival to Jewish-Czech identity at the beginning of the twentieth century did not really exist in the multicultural reality of Prague. Dimitry Shumsky, "Historiography, Nationalism and Bi-nationalism: Czech-German Jewry, the Prague Zionists, and the Origins of the Bi-national Approach of Hugo Bergmann," *Zion* 69 (2004): 45-80.

[49] Paul Mendes-Flohr, "The Berlin Jew as cosmopolitan," in *Berlin Metropolis: Jews and the New Culture, 1890-1918*, ed. Emily D. Bilski (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 14-31; 21.

[50] Ibid.

[51] Bernfeld, "Memories," 170, and compare to Thon, "Characters from Lwów," 372-373.

[52] For more about the complicated Galician identity, loyalty to Poland, as well as the Russian Criticism, see: Salo Wittmayer Baron, *Under two civilizations: Tarnow, 1895-1904, Selected from the Memoirs of Salo Wittmayer Baron* (Stanford: Stanford University, 1990); Rachel Manekin, "Between Reality and Prejudice: Russian Jewish Writers in Galicia" (paper presented at the International Conference in Honor of Prof. Jonathan Frankel, Hebrew University, Jerusalem, May 2004).

However, contrary to other areas, Galician Jewry's loyalty and civic devotion was a source of mockery and criticism when it conveyed loyalty to the Habsburg regime.[53]

Between Lemberg and Lwów: The Bernfeld family

For the Jewish urban intelligentsia the longing for the homeland as a nostalgic destination, whether they referred to it as *Heimat* or as *Ojczyzna*, and whether they called it Lemberg or Lwów, represented the desire to be part of a group with a distinct *Kultur* or *Kultura*, a set of values, culture and language, which coexisted with their Jewish identity. This longing found manifold expressions in their nostalgic memoirs as a yearning for "Die alte Heimat"—Lemberg, which was often the only place where their self-image as "Kinder der Deutschen Kultur" could actually materialize. On the other side, some among the urban intelligentsia with a pro-Polish cultural orientation suffered from the conflicts with pro-German contemporaries and later from conflicts due to political developments, both internal and external. This clash of loyalties played out in one family between two brothers, Isaac Aaron and Simon Bernfeld, who each held opposing views that they expressed in a polemical argument between the two in the early 1880s.

The Bernfeld family can be considered a microcosm of the changes occurring in the cultural orientation of the urban Galician Jewish community. Even though the following case is a "private family issue," I believe it exemplifies the discussion about cultural orientation in Galicia after 1867 and illuminates its historical context.

I shall present here a short biography of the brothers Isaac Aaron and Simon Bernfeld and subsequently discuss their public argument in the journal *HaMazkir*. Isaac Aaron Bernfeld (IAB, 1854-1930) and Simon Bernfeld (SB, 1860-1940) were born in Stanisłwów (Ivano-Frankivsk). Their mother, Golda-Niha, who passed away when IAB was fourteen and SB was eight, was a well-educated woman, who

[53] For example, see: Josheph Roth, *Radetzkymarsch* (Berlin: G. Kiepenheuer, 1932).

was very knowledgeable about Hebrew and the Holy Scriptures. Their father, Moshe Bernfeld (1834-1883), a well-known Maskil, was fluent in Hebrew (he headed the Hebrew Speaking Organization in Stanisławów),[54] German and Latin, and educated his children in the spirit of the Galician Enlightenment. However, Moshe had been a Hasid and only later became a Maskil, and he was persecuted for that in his hometown of Stanisławów, from which he was forced to flee. After wandering, he settled in Lemberg at the end of 1871.[55]

The struggle between Shomer Israel and Machsike Hadas was reflected in the Bernfeld family. "Kulturkampf" was a term used by Shomer Israel for their struggle with Machsike Hadas during the late 1870s and the early 1880s. During this period, Shomer Israel founded The Jewish Communities Conference (1878), and as a counteraction, Machsike Hadas called for the rabbinic assembly (1882). This chain of events marked the tipping point, not just in the larger political arena, but also in the relationship between Moshe Bernfeld and his brother Aria-Zvi Bernfeld (1841-1929), Zelishtishik's Rabbi and son-in-law of Nachum Margushes (brother of Shemuel Margoshes, the founder of Machsike Hadas). The schism starting with Moshe's support of Haskalah turned into an unbridgeable chasm and the two brothers did not exchange a word thereafter.

Moshe Bernfeld's house in Lemberg was a focal point for Maskilim associated with the political-cultural ideals of Shomer Israel. Young SB, who joined the society during his youth, identified with its local political views and especially with its cultural orientation, which was then pro-German.[56] In his memoirs, he described his father's proteges, supporters of Shomer Israel, as the ideal Maskil-National model.[57] On the other hand, his older brother, IAB, followed a different path. He was a teacher and a writer, who had edited a popular Hebrew-Polish dictionary, and his articles were published in Hebrew and Polish journals of the late nineteenth century. Between 1881 and 1886 IAB edited *HaMazkir,* the Hebrew

54 Dov Sadan, *Controversies: Literary Essays* (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1972), 228.

55 For more information, see: Maya Shabbat, "History—A Tool in the hands of The Essay Writer; the historiographical enterprise of Simon Bernfeld" (PhD diss., Tel Aviv University, 2017), 13-20.

56 Manekin, "The Galician Roots of Polish Jewish Historiography," 324-327.

57 Bernfeld, "Memories," 187.

section of the bilingual periodical *Ojczyzna* (=*Heimat*), which appeared between 1881 and 1892 as the mouthpiece of *Dorshey Shalom*, supporting pro-Polish views.[58]

At age 20, SB left Galicia for Germany, seeking an academic education; first he arrived to Lyck (Ełk), and then studied in Breslau and Königsberg, then later earned his PhD at the Friedrich Wilhelms Universität (1885) in Berlin. He completed his rabbinic education at the Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums (1886), founded by Abraham Geiger.

IAB, on the contrary, remained in Lemberg, and as part of his educational-Maskil approach, worked as a teacher and as the Hebrew secretary of the educational institute Mikra Kodesh (1883).[59] In addition, his support of the values of *Dorshey Shalom* led him to edit the journal *Nayes yudishes falksblat* (Lwów 1882), and to act as the editor of the Hebrew section of the journal *Ojczyzna*, with the goal of "spreading the seed of love and friendship" among Jews and Poles in Galicia.[60]

In the memoirs of Galician Jews born during the last third of the nineteenth-century, members of *Dorshey Shalom,* with their pro-Polish orientation, were described as confused and with no clear ideological path. For example, Rabbi Dr. Abraham Osias Thon (1870-1936), born in Lemberg, an early Zionist and a leader of the Jewish community in Poland, described them as "Assimilationists," [61]

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[58] Karl, "Lwów," 336; Gezel Kressel, *Cyclopedia of Modern Hebrew Literature* (Merhavya: Sifriyat Poalim, 1965-1967), 366; Manekin, "The Galician Roots of Polish Jewish Historiography," 319-320; Id., "Agudas Akhim," in *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*, ed. Gershon D. Hundert (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 161

[59] For more about Mikra Kodesh: Nathan M. Gelber, *History of the Zionist movement in Galicia* (Jerusalem: Hotsaat Reuben Mass, 1958), 82-123; Karl, "Lwów," 336-337; Thon, "Characters from Lwów," 366-369; Rachel Manekin, *The Growth and Development of Jewish Orthodoxy in Galicia, the "Machsike Hadas" Society 1867-1883* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 2000); Joshua Shanes, *Diaspora nationalism and Jewish identity in Habsburg Galicia* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 51-68 and 82-93.

[60] Gelber, *History of the Zionist movement in Galicia*, 84.

[61] Ibid., 82f, 118, 125f, 150 and 152-158; Thon, "Characters from Lwów," 373-376; Abraham Salt, "The History and Statistics of the Zionist movement in Galicia," in *Pirkei Galicia*, eds. Sadan and Cohen, 57-60; 58; Mordechai Ehrenpreis, "The Zionist movement in Galicia," in *Pirkei Galicia*,

permanent residents at the "Vienna Café," who were keen to speak only Polish among themselves.[62] When they tried to integrate as a non-political body, their activity lacked a clear vision and objectives: "in my opinion, the founders of this association did not clearly know what they wanted and what their goal was." As an example of what he viewed as the ideological chaos that characterized Agudas Achim, Thon quoted their journal: "They published a ridiculous small journal named *Ojczyzna,* which came with a Hebrew section attached: *HaMazkir.* Its editors and writers, especially those of the Hebrew section, were what one could truly refer to as lacking any opinion or idea."[63]

Gelber described the ideology characterizing the circle of Agudas Achim by quoting the journal's subtitles, that he thought reflected the vagueness of their views regarding modern Judaism: "Polnische mosaische Konfession" was the Polish subtitle, whereas that of the Hebrew section was "The People of Israel."[64] Gelber claimed that this ideological vagueness derived from the strong connection between the Hebrew language and Jewish intelligentsia circles, as well as the fact that the reasons for their aspiration to integrate into Galician society did not derive from a need to drift apart from Judaism.[65]

Ezra Mendelsohn and Rachel Manekin take a different approach. They point out that the Maskilim that got together and founded *HaMazkir*, the mouthpiece of Agudas Achim, were young high school or university graduates with a cultural-

eds. Sadan e Cohen, 69f; However, Ezra Mendelsohn, followed by researchers such as Manekin, describes them as pro-Polish integrationists. see: Ezra Mendelsohn, "Jewish Assimilation in Lvov: The Case of Wilhelm Feldman," *Slavic Review* 28 (1969): 577-590; Id., "From Assimilation to Zionism in Lvov," *Slavonic and East European Review* 49, no. 117 (1971): 521-534; Rachel Manekin, "Agudas Akhim."

62 Thon, "Characters from Lwów," 376.

63 Ibid., 374.

64 Ibid., 373-374; Gelber, *History of the Zionist movement in Galicia*, 83; Ehrenpreis, "The Zionist movement in Galicia," 69-70; Salt, "The History and Statistics of the Zionist movement in Galicia," 58.

65 Gelber, *History of the Zionist movement in Galicia*, 83.

linguistic consciousness that allowed them to blend into the Polish environment, but not in a way that would require them to assimilate into it.[66]

During the 1870s, in parallel with the political trends within Agudas Achim, a similar change from a pro-German orientation towards a pro-Polish one took place in the circle of Shomer Israel.[67] This internal turmoil increased after the 1879 elections, in which liberal Jews lost to the Orthodox, leading to tremendous criticism of the liberal circles in Galicia by liberal Jews in Austria: in several articles on *Die Neuzeit*, liberal Galician Jews were blamed for being provincial, religiously fanatic and artificially liberal.[68] The Viennese Jewish community's wider concern about the large number of Galician Jews migrating to the city can be observed in the articles of Simon Szántó (1819-1882),[69] the founder and editor of the weekly Viennese-Jewish journal *Die Neuzeit*. Between December 1879 and January 1880 Szántó described Galician immigrants as "bringing with them" many negative manners and blaming them for awakening Antisemitism in Vienna. Furthermore, in these editorials,[70] Szántó drew the borders of the desired *Bildung* clearly, leaving Lemberg and Kraków out of the resulting area as "partially cultured," and leaving them in the area of Belz and Kolomea (Kolomyja). One of the answers to this Jewish-Viennese criticism was expressed by the young SB, in his *Hamagid* essay of 1879-1880: *Le Tora ve Le Teuda* polemically contradicted Szántó, especially his assumption that Machsike Hadas represented the whole Galician Jewry. It is necessary to add here that SB's reaction to Szántó was not meant for Hungarian or Viennese eyes, but rather for the Jewish Galician readers, those he wished to infuse with a modern liberal Jewish spirit.

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[66] Mendelsohn, "Jewish Assimilation in Lvov," 577-590; Rachel Manekin, "The Debate over Assimilation in Late 19th Century L'viv," in *Insiders and Outsiders: Dilemmas of East European Jewry*, eds. Richard I. Cohen, Jonathan Frankel, and Stefani Hoffman (Oxford: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2010), 120-130; Id., "The Galician Roots of Polish Jewish Historiography."

[67] Ibid., 324-327.

[68] Manekin, Jewish orthodoxy, 114-155

[69] Simon Szántó (1819-1882), born in Hungary, arrived in Vienna in 1845 after graduating. He founded a Jewish school (1849), edited a Jewish press, as well as the liberal weekly journal *Die Neuzeit*. see: *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*, 1882, 93 et seq; Jacob Toury, *Die judische Presse im osterreichischen Kaiserreich: Ein Beitrag zur Problematik der Akkulturation 1802-1918* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1983).

[70] For example, see: *Die Neuzeit*, January 2-9, 1880.

The loyalty issue and the cultural-linguistic preference it entailed were at the center of discussions among the liberal Jewish Galician intelligentsia during the 1880s. These discussions took place on the pages of the political press, such as *Der Israelit*, the journal of Shomer Israel, and the journal of Agudas Achim *Ojczyzna*, which during 1881-1883, in its Hebrew section *HaMazkir*, printed a polemical debate between the brothers SB and IAB. Though both brothers were critical of the negatively imagined "Galician" Jew, and called for social self-correction, IAB sought to set up an example for a modern Jewish-Polish society, while SB, in his early articles, criticized German Jewry, seeing it as separate from the general German culture. However, living in German cities sparked in him the wish to become part of that culture, as he felt it was close to his intellectual background. On the other hand, he was aware of trends in Galicia, including the growing pro-Polish approach he opposed, as described in a *HaMazkir* article of December 15, 1881, published while he lived in Königsberg:

> Do not blame me brother, that I am not among the Polish lovers, even though you suspected me and the owners of "The Lover"[71] of being such, and I was even blamed by Rabbi Rabinowicz in London[72] of the same [...] as I am in *Ashkenaz*, and have been staying here many days, all my hopes are to become a citizen of this respected and great nation.

One of the main topics discussed by SB in his articles was German Jews' negative view of Galician Jewry. For example, in a *HaMazkir* article of April 15, 1883, he claims that this negative image was mistaken and thought its origin did not stem from Galician, but rather from Polish and Russian Jews: "The truth is that many hate the Slavic nations. But if you were like me, in *Ashkenaz,* you would have noticed that really most of the Slavic Jewish refugees will come here."

SB tried to explain to his brother and the readers why enlightened Galicians should return to preferring German culture over the local Polish one. While he put

[71] The reference is to M.Y. Landau, the publisher of *Ha-Mazkir*, as well as its editors including IAB. The subtitle of *Ha-Mazkir* was the "reminder for the homeland lover. "

[72] This seems to be the Lithuanian Rabbi Jaakow Rabinowicz, who at that time resided in London and supported Machsike Hadas.

forward cultural arguments exposing the spread of "Western" elitism, he wrote in 1885: "The Poles are responsible for the upsurge of hatred directed at us; therefore, we are distancing ourselves from these people. We hope that Russian and Polish Jews will compare us to the people of Sodom and Gomorrah—and will cease coming to us."[73]

The adoption of German intellectual values, the identification with this superior approach and the contempt towards *Ostjuden,* as well as the hope of "re-educating" them, were expressed in a *Hamagid* article of October 15 and November 19, 1885. In those articles, SB expressed his disappointment at the slow pace of Aliya and Jewish settlement in Eretz Israel, and therefore claimed that assimilation into the dominant culture needed to increase. He ultimately maintained that he preferred assimilating (and integrating) into German culture.

This ethno-geographic separation was the result of adopting a Jewish-German culture's perspective during the years in which SB and his generation's worldview was shaped. Their disapproval of the significant change in the cultural orientation of Galician intelligentsia appears in other writings by those of that generation educated in Galicia.[74] SB expressed his feeling in a *HaMazkir* article of December 15, 1881, symbolically titled "To my Brothers, my People," exposing the deep identity and assimilation crisis, as well as the personal conflict he was experiencing. The emphasis on geographic location, as an ideological influence passed from first to third person:

> Far from my homeland, which I deeply love, I take into account all the events happening to my people in Galicia, and even though I expressed

[73] Jack Wertheimer, *Unwelcome Strangers: East European Jews in Imperial Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 158; in this context I suggest that Bernfeld's approach may be related to similar sentiments expressed by contemporary German opinion leaders, regarding the questions of Prussian and German identity that stemmed from the differences between the "small Reich" and unified Germany. For more information about this trend, see: Helmut Berding, "Staatliche Idenität, national Integration und politischer Regionalismus," in *The Restless Reich: Imperial Germany, 1871-1914*, ed. Oded Heilbronner (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1998), 148-160.

[74] Thon, "Characters from Lwów," 381-383.

> criticism several times of your new method, I hope you shall still judge me positively, since my actions were all due to my love of the people.

His pro-German position in the debate on cultural orientation earned SB harsh criticism, above all for the alleged betrayal of his homeland. In a *HaMazkir* article of June 16, 1881, IAB called on his readers to unite for the sake of Jewish-Christian Polish cooperation:

> The Poles who knew the Jews as their brothers did not reject even now their beliefs [...] across the country of Russia [...] our brothers were persecuted and only in Poland were they exempt [...] We shall start being loyal sons to our homeland [in the sense of *Ojczyzna*].

SB's position towards pro-Polish circles can be seen in a *HaMazkir* article of December 15, 1881 which he addressed to his brother Isaac: "I shall be happy to see you connected with society [in Galicia] to take part in the general life there. But you cannot, even you, brother, ask that I praise your actions while you are coming to fight the people of *Ashkenaz,* throwing insults at them."

In this article he expressed remorse, claiming he misjudged the Jewish public in Germany. This remorse was the trigger for the hard criticism he directed at the public in his country of origin, which from his point of view needed "re-education": "I believe I was the first to express the idea of establishing Galician literature in order to save our dignity [...] but tell me brother; do we improve in this way the situation of our people? Will we improve them with only that?"

SB continued and described the qualities of German culture, setting it as the desired model: "If you look at our brothers in *Ashkenaz* [...] you will notice they have many advantages and qualities there worth imitating."

Months later, SB reviewed the qualities of German and Jewish-German culture in a *HaMazkir* article of March 31, 1882. Although both articles share the same idea, they differ in the apologetic style in which the sudden change in approach towards

German Jews is explained, and in the presence of a direct call to his brother to act as a public arbitrator.

SB highlighted the advantage Galician Jewry had over German Jewry. He accused intelligentsia circles and their leaders of not using this advantage to generate social and cultural change as well as of failing to constrain the growth of Machsike Hadas. He claims that lack of motivation among Galician Jewry to integrate into the dominant society and take on their civil responsibilities was related to the "laziness of Galician Jewry," as he further described in a *HaMazkir* article of April 15, 1882: "It seems that in the land of our origin, it is enough to merely exist, but our people are still lacking a purpose to live." Since Bernfeld uses here the Hebrew phrase *Eretz Motza* (country of origin), instead of *Mechoraty* or *Eretz Moledet* (country of birth, homeland) which he had used in his letters up to that point, I assume that he meant to translate the German term *Herkunftsland*, in order to display his growing distance from Galicia.

This essay received a rebuke from IAB in a *HaMazkir* editorial of May 1, 1882, where he attacked his brother's position. According to SB, the so-called "Galician laziness" manifested itself in Jewish political activities, as well as in the deteriorating education system and the negative way in which professional associations operated. The evolving constitutional conditions on the status of Galician Jews allowed them, as in Germany, to group around general public matters, as well as internal-Jewish ones like education. Nevertheless, in his view Galician Jewry suffered from a "lazy nature": "We shall observe the movement among our brothers in *Ashkenaz* and the other countries, but in our country, Galicia, where many of our brothers live, here we have seen nothing."

SB accused the public in Galicia of being "historically lazy." Claiming that the famous Galician *Maskilim*—Nachman Krochmal and Solomon Judah Löb HaKohen Rapoport—could display their wisdom only after being "exiled" from their homeland to the West.[75]

[75] Bernfeld, "Memories," 185.

However, both IAB and those pro-Polish oriented, as well as SB, who held pro-German views, were disappointed when they had to face reality. Paweł Jasnowski has described the process of awakening from the dream of Jewish-Polish harmony, as well as the disappointment experienced by the people of the *Ojczyzna*, who believed in cultural and linguistic integration without the need for assimilation, while nationalism and Antisemitism grew among the supporters of Polish nationalism.[76] This disappointment was, in a way, their historic destiny as the rest of the Jews in the region. Gelber pointed to the Polish rebellion in Russia (1863), as the catalyst for the change in relationships between Poles and Jews in Galicia. Until then, the Polish approach towards Jews was "soaked with sentimental romance," but after the rebellion failed, the romance ended and political realism began.[77]

Like his brother, SB was disappointed when he discovered that even though he perceived himself as belonging to the culture of his place of residence, he had failed to integrate into it. SB had mastered the German language and knew its literature, had migrated to the Deutsches Kaiserreich, studied at its universities, and thought he belonged to the German cultural sphere. He had even adopted the view of Russia as *Halbcivilisierten*,[78] but ironically, he was eventually considered by German Jews as someone from an inferior culture, a *Halb-Asien*, an *Ausländer* and an *Ostjude*. Though he received some appreciation in Königsberg, he experienced social isolation and loneliness, and was never accepted by the intellectual circles in Breslau and Berlin, as he wrote in a *HaOlam* article of May 28, 1926. SB was considered an eternal "Galician," which caused him much distress. At the age of 66, in another *HaOlam* article of June 4, 1926, he wrote:

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[76] Jasnowski, The Failure, 55-65.

[77] Gelber, *History of the Zionist movement in Galicia*, 82; For other aspects of this failed "brotherhood," see: Magdalena Opalski and Israel Bartal, *Poles and Jews: A Failed Brotherhood* (Hanover: Brandeis University Press, 1992); Theodore R. Weeks, "Poles, Jews, and Russians, 1863-1914: The Death of the Ideal of Assimilation in the Kingdom of Poland," *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry* 12 (1999): 242-256.

[78] Simon Bernfeld, *Juden und Judentum im Neunzehnten Jahrhundert* (Berlin: S. Cronbach, 1898).

> The scholar Moshe Moritz Steinschneider was angry at the "young Galician" arriving in Germany "to flip the bowl upside-down," something which he held against me till his death [...] and another German Jewish scholar categorized me as the "Galician" in a Jewish German newspaper. "People like him should learn manners"—he wrote in bitterness.

Concluding remarks: Self Criticism—A look from the inside

In her book *Germans, Jews and Antisemites* Shulamit Volkov describes the integration process of Posen (Poznań) Jews into urban Jewish German society in Breslau and Berlin, while joining the general modern bourgeois rat-race, which led, after a generation or two, to their "acceptance" into Jewish-German society. Presumably, Galician Jews could have integrated easily as well, however, according to Volkov, their integration was problematic, as their relatively low social-economic position caused many of them to constantly ask for support from community organizations, thus turning them into "beggars" in the eyes of the local community.[79] In addition, some of the migration waves from Galicia were accompanied by Eastern-Russians, causing Galicians to be included into the *Ostjuden* stereotype.

This negative image of Galician Jewry can be found in the writings of Galicians themselves such as Shmuel Yosef Agnon, Simon Bernfeld, Abraham Osias Thon and others. In a *Hatzofe* article of April 9, 1903, SB complained that Galicians would not take responsibility for their difficult situation, and instead chose to rely upon philanthropic Judaism: "Only by their own effort shall they be redeemed and not by accepting charity, a few pennies which shall come to them from Germany at the price of their dignity."

At the top of their list of flaws, Bernfeld pointed out, even before Agnon,[80] their spiritual laziness, as he wrote in a *HaMazkir* article of April 15, 1883. Occasionally,

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[79] Volkov, *Germans, Jews and Antisemites*, 263-275.

[80] Shay Agnon, *Temol Shilshom* (Jerusalem: Schocken, 1945), 39.

"ex-Galicians" adopted this disrespecting position towards the literary center in Galicia, either because they needed to differentiate themselves or because the distance allowed them to have a critical view.[81]

The negative public attitude welcoming Galician migrants in Vienna grew stronger after the elections of 1879, especially against those from famous Haskalah centers such as Brody, Kraków or Lemberg, who identified themselves as "Daitchen" or "Ashkenaz", and were associated with the Jewish-German cultural sphere. The move to the cities of Central Europe was a crucial part in their intellectual development, and was considered by them as a central element of their self-image as part of German culture.

In Vienna those immigrants received a complicated reception.[82] On the one hand, some of them were part of the urban intelligentsia that mastered the German language and was familiar with German culture, such as Bernhard Wachstein (1868-1935), Vienna's Jewish Community librarian, or Dr. Rabbi Josheph Samuel Bloch (1850-1923), who was the delegate for Buchach-Kolomea-Sniatyn in the Austrian Parliament and founded with Dr. Rabbi Moritz Güdemann the Österreichisch-Israelitische Union.[83] On the other hand, some of the Jewish urban Galician intelligentsia, who migrated to Vienna to study at its universities or at the Israelitisch-Theologische Lehranstalt, received a cold welcome and they expressed their hard feelings, as described by Joseph Roth in his famous essays. Galicia was considered by the central Habsburg government in Vienna as associated with Eastern Europe, and as such, inferior and lagging behind, not only economically, but also intellectually—a provincial border area that needed to be "re-educated."[84]

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[81] Thon, "Characters from Lwów," 376.

[82] See for example: Klaus Hödl, "Galician Jewish Migration to Vienna," *Polin: Studies in Polish Jewry* 12 (1999): 147-163.

[83] For more information: Jacob Toury, "Troubled Beginnings: The Emergence of the Österreichisch-Israelitische Union," *The Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* 1, no. 30 (1985): 457-475.

[84] Himka discusses the negative image of Galician non-Jews, see: Himka, "Dimensions of a Triangle."

The encounter between "East" and "West" in Vienna emerged also, on a smaller scale, in the encounter between Galicians and Berlin Jews. The latter, considered themselves carriers of cultural modernity and rejected "Eastern" Jews.[85]

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"A man is nothing but the shape of his native landscape"

The picture that emerges from the biographies of these Galician authors is that of "children with no homeland." They could not find their place in the "East" due to the self-image they created for themselves during their childhood in Lemberg as members of the *Goethe Kultur*, while in the "West" they could not integrate into society since they were considered by the locals as inferior to the Jewish-German intellectual bourgeoisie.

The negative "Western" perception focused on their broken German, their Orthodox façade and their questionable business manners. The Galician Jew was seen as a *Schnorrer*, manipulative, orthodox and an untrustworthy business partner. In addition to this negative image in the West, another one emerged in the East, due to literary -national motives. This negative profile, mainly created by Russian writers, can be found in Thon's memoirs, who remarked: "the greatest poets and authors of Russia despise them, the Galicians."[86]

Among the Hebrew authors from the Russian Empire, Yosef Haim Brenner (1881-1921) was prominent in his harsh criticism of the literary center in Galicia.

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[85] Monika Richarz, "Judisches Leben in Deutschland," in *The Restless Reich: Imperial Germany, 1871-1914*, ed. Oded Heilbronner (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1998), 288-293; the encounters between Ostjuden and Western Jews have been often described in the research literature, for example see: Steven E. Aschheim, *Brothers and strangers, the east European Jew in German and German Jewish consciousness, 1800-1923* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1982); Wertheimer, *Unwelcome Strangers*; another perspective on the topic was suggested by Volkov, *Germans, Jews and Antisemites*, 263-275.

[86] Thon, "Characters from Lwów," 345.

In February 1908 Brenner arrived in Lwów and rented an apartment. During the year Brenner spent in the city, he familiarized himself with its literary circles, but his idea of Galicia as a national-literary Hebrew center was dismissive as well as suspicious. Brenner harshly criticized the novels *MeHayey HaKaraim* by Reuven Fahn (1908) and *MeAgadot HaMakom* by Isaac Fernhof (1908), considering them literary expressions that enabled Jewish life in the Diaspora. Brenner not only opposed the publication of "Diasporic" writings, but went as far as demanding their removal from the literary canon. This harsh judgment was due not just to the national threat they posed, but also to their questionable poetic values deriving from their Galician origin.[87]

Hannan Hever has pointed to Brenner's article as a turning point, the moment in which the political ideals of Galician Hebrew literature were defined as a threat to the emerging national Hebrew literature. I propose to consider Fahn, as well as Fernhof, as the "ideological children" of Isaac Aaron Bernfeld, supporting an integrationist path for Jewish life within local society without the need for assimilation.

Within the negative collective image of the *Galitsianer*—described as opportunistic, lacking moral, ideological and political spine,[88] an image that extended to their literary[89] as well as their scientific[90] works—, Brenner analyzed in a *Hazman* article of June 18, 1908, what he considered their biggest flaw, namely the absence of an inter-generational conflict: "In the struggle between fathers and sons in its most primitive form, the fathers randomly receive pennies from thin air to support their families [...] they do not deal with anything specific."

The inter-generational struggle and the rebellion against real and spiritual fathers, which characterized the new national Hebrew culture led by the spiritual and intellectual ideas of Micha Josef Berdyczewski (1865-1921) and Brenner, became a

[87] Hannan Hever, "The struggle over the Canon of Early Twentieth century Hebrew Literature: The Case of Galicia," *Theory and Criticism* 5 (1994): 55-77.
[88] Yosef H. Brenner, *Ketavim* (Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuchad,1978-1985), 3 and 222-223.
[89] Ibid., 237-239.
[90] Thon, "Characters from Lwów," 376.

crucial element of the "correct" Hebrew profile in the literature of the second and third Aliya. Therefore, "Galician" became a synonym for "spoiled children," dependent on other communities: economically, intellectually or politically.

During the fin-de-siècle Galician immigrants and authors were doomed for a double rejection, by both the "West" and the "East." This rejection prevented them from integrating into the general "cosmopolitan" public, as well as into the Jewish national effort, which at that time was being shaped and formed. This external exclusion had, of course, internal implications which can be easily traced in the self-criticism of its sons, and as presented here, struggling with a conflict around their self- and collective definition.

This "torn identity" experienced by Lemberg's intellectual Jews, whether they migrated to the West or remained in Galicia, seems in many ways to have been a nostalgic song of longing for the *alte Heimat*—the city of Lemberg, the only place in which they felt themselves as *Deutsche* intellectuals in an "imaginary German district," which had ceased to exist in reality.

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Keywords: Galicia, Immigration, Urbanization, Center and Periphery, Modern Jewry

How to quote this article:
Maya Shabbat, "*Heimweh*: The Torn Identity of Lemberg-Lwów's Intellectual Jewry," in "Jewish Minorities between Nation-Building and Emigration in late Nineteenth and

early Twentieth Century East Central Europe," eds. Francesco Di Palma and Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe, *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History. Journal of the Fondazione CDEC* 20 (December 2021), DOI: 10.48248/issn.2037-741X/13095

Prussian Jews: Between Nationalism and Tradition. The "strange case" of Posen/Poznań, 1800-1918

by *Francesco Di Palma*

Abstract

The peculiarity of the Jewish community of the city of Posen (Poznań) has been acknowledged in several studies. This pertains on the one hand to its sheer size, as until the end of the nineteenth century Jews accounted almost constantly for between 15 and 20 percent of the overall population—by far above the average of any other German district; on the other hand, it pertains to its composition, since so-called Ostjuden constituted a considerable share of the minority. These were mainly unassimilated orthodox Polish Jews, a unique feature for any German State and later for the German Reich, which forced the new authorities (Posen was assigned to Prussia in the late eighteenth century) to enforce specific integration measures.

This article shows how, as a consequence, the Jewish inhabitants of the area were drawn into a conflict of nationalisms and had to keep the balance between two conflicting cultures, that of the new ruling power, Germany, which sought to "germanize" them, and the traditional Polish culture. Against this background, and for fear of losing their financial independence as well as their cultural and religious identity, more than 30,000 Jews left the region from 1848 up to the end of the nineteenth century and emigrated to the United States or elsewhere.

Introduction

The "strange case" of Posen/Poznań

Archival records

Poznań becomes Posen

Between assimilation, loss of tradition and emigration

Universities and Zionism

Reasons for emigration

Conclusions

Introduction

The "fascination" surrounding the Jewish minority of Posen (Polish: Poznań) during the nineteenth century has not yet faded away, and is deeply rooted within the extraordinary character of its religious, social and political background.[1] To begin with, why Posen? With the "Second Partition" of Poland (1793) the whole Posen area fell to Prussia and was from then on and until 1807 part of the region of South Prussia. During the Napoleonic Wars the region belonged to the administrative unit "Grand Duchy of Warsaw." With the Congress of Vienna in 1815, large parts of the area became the Prussian province of Posen, which existed until 1918. A rather considerable Jewish minority had been living there ever since the late fourteenth century, but by the end of World War I most of its members would have left their homeland.

This article aims to provide a critical overview of the research on this topic. It shall shed light on the uniqueness of Posen Jewry, characterized by a mixture of German-Prussian and Polish culture, and discuss the transformation of the sense

[1] See on this, among others, Eliezer Sariel, " 'In the East Lie My Roots; My Branches in the West.' The Distinctiveness of the Jews of Posen in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century," *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* [*LBIYB*] 18 (2013): 175-192; Cornelia Östreich, *"Des rauhen Winters ungeachtet." Die Auswanderung Posener Juden nach Amerika im 19. Jahrhundert* (Hamburg: Dölling und Galitz Verlag, 1997); Sophia Kemlein, *Die Posener Juden 1815-1848. Entwicklungsprozesse einer polnischen Judenheit unter preußischer Herrschaft* (Hamburg: Dölling und Galitz Verlag, 1997); Thomas Serrier, *Eine Grenzregion zwischen Deutschen und Polen. Provinz Posen, Ostmark, Wielkopolska. Eine Grenzregion zwischen Deutschen und Polen, 1848-1914* (Marburg: Herder Institut Verlag, 2005); Julian Bartys, "Grand Duchy of Poznan under Prussian Rule: Changes in the Economic Position of the Jewish Population 1815-1848," *LBIYB* 17 (1972): 191-204; Rafal Witkowski, *Jewish Inhabitants of Krotoszyn (Krotoschin) in the 19th and twentieth Century* (Poznan: Biograf, 2004); William W. Hagen, *Germans Poles and Jews: The Nationality Conflict in the Prussian East 1772-1914* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), notably 67-72; Krystyna Sikorska-Dziegielewska, "The Emancipation of Jews in the Opinion of the Inhabitants of the Grand Duchy of Poznan," *Polish Western Affairs* 34 (1993): 41-66; Krzysztof A. Makowski, *Siła mitu. Żydzi w Poznańskiem w dobie zaborów w piśmiennictwie historycznym* (Poznań: Wydawn, 2004).

of national belonging among Jews in that area, as well as efforts to shape national understanding against the background of the major migration flows that started in the early 1800s, which here take center stage.[2] As for methodology, I rely mostly on primary sources in German, and to a much lesser extent on documents in Yiddish or Polish. On the one hand, this is because the former are more numerous and more easily accessible; on the other hand, it follows from fact that most of the documents in Polish, Yiddish and even Hebrew, are available in German and/or English translation in secondary sources, which are fully taken into account. There is yet another reason for this: my choice ultimately grew from the realization that the Jews of Poznań mostly tended to orientate themselves towards the German *Kulturnation* and language, as the present paper shall show.

Around the middle of the nineteenth century, so-called German-Jewish city migrants came mainly from two regions, Southern Germany and Prussia—and in the latter case especially from Poznań (Posen) and Wrocław (Breslau). A considerable number of Prussian migrants first moved to Berlin, with some remaining there and others using the Prussian capital city merely as a transit point to move onward to North America. The immigrants brought with them endogenous values, political convictions and religious beliefs often perceived as

[2] On the Jewish minority in Prussia and, in general, in Germany, see among others: Ulrich Wyrwa, *Juden in der Toskana und in Preußen im Vergleich. Aufklärung und Emanzipation in Florenz, Livorno, Berlin und Königsberg* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003); Irene Diekman, ed., *Jüdisches Brandenburg. Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Berlin: Verlag für Berlin-Brandenburg, 2008); Sebastian Panwitz, *Die Gesellschaft der Freunde 1792-1935. Berliner Juden zwischen Aufklärung und Hochfinanz* (Hildesheim: Olms, 2007); Andrea Ajzensztejn, *Die jüdische Gemeinschaft in Königsberg. Von der Niederlassung bis zur rechtlichen Gleichstellung* (Hamburg: Kovac, 2004); *Juden in Berlin*, eds. Andreas Nachama, Julius H. Schoeps, and Hermann Simon (Berlin: Henschel Verlag, 2001); Till van Rahden, *Juden und andere Breslauer: Die Beziehungen zwischen Juden, Protestanten und Katholiken in einer deutschen Großstadt von 1860 bis 1925* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2000); Erika Herzfeld, *Juden in Brandenburg-Preußen* (Potsdam: Hentrich & Hentrich, 2001); Steven Mark Lowenstein, *The Berlin Jewish Community: Enlightenment, Family and Crisis* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); *Juden im wilhelminischen Deutschland 1890-1914*, eds. Werner Mosse and Arnold Paucker (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1976); Albert A. Bruer, *Geschichte der Juden in Preußen (1750-1820)* (Frankfurt a. M.: Campus Verlag, 1991); *Jewish Emancipation Reconsidered: The French and the German Models*, eds. Michael Brenner, Vicki Caron, and Uri R. Kaufmann (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003); Reinhard Rürup, ed., *Juden in Deutschland zwischen Assimilation und Verfolgung* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1983).

"backwards" and "different" by metropolitan Jews. Such a negative connotation would continue even after their emigration to larger North American conurbations, including New York City, Chicago and Philadelphia.[3] Prussian Jews, who were insultingly called "Hinterberliner" or "Pollacks," had indeed a hard time integrating, as well as being accepted in the respective Jewish communities in the country of destination.[4] There were also abuses and acts of violence against them, as the following excerpt from the annual report (1850) of the German Society of the City of New York describes:

> The immigration from Germany during the elapsed year shows only a slight increase over the previous year. According to the lists kept by our agency, 55,615 German immigrants arrived at the local port from January 1 to December 31 [...]; out of a total of 220,600 people who were not American citizens! The Commissioners of Emigration, established by the State of New York two years ago, to which, by virtue of their office, the Mayor of the City of NY, the Mayor of Brooklyn, the President of the

[3] On this topic see, among others: Annie Polland and Daniel Soyer, *Emerging Metropolis: New York Jews in the Age of Immigration* (New York: New York University Press, 2012); Marc Lee Raphael, ed., *The Columbia History of Jews and Judaism in America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008); Jonathan D. Sarna, *American Judaism: A History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004); Stanley Nadel, *Little Germany: Ethnicity, Religion and Class in New York City, 1845-1880* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1990); Jeffrey S. Gurock, *When Harlem was Jewish, 1870-1930* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979); Moses Rischin, *The Promised City: New York's Jews 1870-1914* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962); Hyman B. Grinstein, *The Rise of the Jewish Community of New York, 1654-1860* (Philadelphia: Porcupine Press, 1945); Tobias Brinkmann, *Von der Gemeinde zur "Community": Jüdische Einwanderer in Chicago 1840-1900* (Osnabrück: Rasch, 2002); Harry D. Boonin, *The Jewish Quarter of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: Jewish Walking Tours of Philadelphia, 1999); Ulla Kriebernegg, *"Nach Amerika nämlich!" Jüdische Migrationen in die Amerikas im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2012); *Jüdische Emigration zwischen Assimilation und Verfolgung, Akkulturation und jüdischer Identität*, eds. Claus-Dieter Khron et al. (München: edition text + kritik, 2001); Arthur Hertzberg, *Shalom, Amerika! Die Geschichte der Juden in der Neuen Welt* (Frankfurt am Main: Jüdischer Verlag im Suhrkamp Verlag, 1992); Naomi W. Cohen, *Encounter with Emancipation. The German Jews in the United States 1830-1914* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1984); Avraham Barkai, *Branching Out: German-Jewish Immigration to the United States 1820-1914*, (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1994), 53-55.

[4] Tobias Brinkmann, *Migration und Transnationalität* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2012), 24-25.

> German Society and the President of the Irish Society belong, goes hand in hand with us [...] to suppress abuses and fraud against immigrants.[5]

The "strange case" of Posen/Poznań

Compared to other large German cities[6], until the end of the nineteenth century Posen had by far the highest percentage of Jewish inhabitants, amounting almost constantly to between 15 and 20 percent.[7] This was not its sole peculiarity though. One part of the Posen Jews were "Ostjuden," that is to say orthodox Jews[8]—an anomaly for German States and later for the German Reich.

The social composition sketched above posed problems to authorities in Posen and its province, and it still raises questions today, such as, for example, "who" were these "Ostjuden" and which national culture did they belong to? What role did the substantial Jewish minority of Posen play in politics and the economy?

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[5] "Auszug aus dem Jahresbericht der Deutschen Gesellschaft der Stadt New York, New York 22.02.1850," Aktenbestand Swiezawy, file 2256, Stadtarchiv Breslau, Zweigstelle Liegnitz. "Die Einwanderung von Deutschland während des verflossenen Jahres zeigt eine nur geringe Zunahme über die des vorigen. Zufolge der in unserer Agentur geführten Listen kamen vom 1. Januar bis 31. Dezember im hiesigen Hafen 55.615 deutsche Einwanderer an [...] von insgesamt 220.600 Personen, die nicht amerikanische Bürger waren! Die vom Staate New York vor zwei Jahren eingesetzte Commission zum Schutze der Einwanderer (Commissioners of Emigration), zu welcher, kraft ihres Amtes, der Mayor der Stadt NY, der Mayor von Brooklyn, der Präsident der Deutschen Gesellschaft und der Präsident der Irländischen Gesellschaft gehören, geht mit uns Hand in Hand [...] um Mißbräuche und Betrügereien gegen die Einwanderer zu unterdrücken."

[6] The percentage of the Jewish population exceeded two per cent only in two States, Hessen-Darmstadt and Hessen-Kassel, as well as in the district of Western Prussia, and did not surpass 4,5 percent in any case. See on this Stefi Jersch-Wenzel, "Population Shifts and Occupational Structure," in *German-Jewish History in Modern Times*, ed. Michael A. Meyer, vol. 2 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 54.

[7] Over 90 percent of the Jewish minority of the "metropolitan region" Posen lived in cities. They accounted for approximately 6 percent of the overall population, and at the same time for about 20 percent of the urban area. See Sariel, " 'In the East Lie My Roots'," 178.

[8] The Jews of the Posen area lived up until the end of the eighteenth century and the territorial acquisition by Prussia in traditional "Polish" fashion. That meant observing Halakha rules; the men constantly studying the Torah in religious schools; rabbis still exerting high political as well as social power; using Yiddish as the common spoken language and dressing according to orthodox canons.

Why did so many from that minority choose to leave their country of origin? Finally, did the minority have any place in the newly born German Reich from 1871 onwards?

Archival records

In order to deal with these topics a wide range of archival files were surveyed, among others the Posen municipal archives.[9] This has already provided revealing insights into Prussian Jewry immediately before and during the waves of emigration, especially into how discrimination and Antisemitism were to be found also within the Jewish minority and influenced its understanding of the nation. At the beginning of the twentieth century the widening rift between the Silesian Jewish community and the Prussian authorities—which ultimately led many to emigrate—was noticeable[10]. The main point of contention was the "right to exist" of the Jews in the Silesian province and in general in Germany, which was—according to Chief Rabbi Jakob Guttmann of Breslau—allegedly endangered by "science itself":[11]

> The state government may be convinced that the German Jewish community is as founded on the Bible, as on the consciousness of being an integrating part of the German people. Then Rabbi Dr. Guttmann

[9] In the State Archive of the Polish region (voivodship) of Wielkopolska in Posen/Poznań (Archiwum Państwowe w Poznaniu—from now on CAP) the following archival documents on Jewish life in the Prussian province of Posen were analyzed: the fonds "Juden- und Judensachen 1797-1869"; "Judensachen im Allgemeinen 1888-1913"; "Korporations- und Kassenwesen der Juden 1880-1916"; "A. betr. die Juden-Verfolgung 1880-1896"; "Die Verhältnisse der Juden 1843-1884"; "Juden und Synagogen Gemeindesachen 1849-1880"; "A. gen. betr. 1/ Aufenthalt ausländischer Juden, 2/ Jüdische Korporationen 1847-1915"; "Bürgerliche und Gewerbsverhältnisse der Juden 1836-1882."

[10] Vgl. Judensachen im Allgemeinen, file 53/318/0/-/654; file 53/318/0/-/655; file 53/318/0/-/656; file 53/338/0/-/255; file 53/294/0/3.68/5085, CAP, Poznań.

[11] "Die Juden in der Ostmark," Polizei-Registratur zu Posen, file 53/418/0/7-224, 2, CAP, Poznań. "Die Staatsregierung möge überzeugt sein, dass die deutsche Judenschaft ebenso wie auf der Biebel so auf dem Bewusstsein fuße, ein integrierender Teil des deutschen Volkes zu sein [...]. Dann sprach Rabbiner Dr. Guttmann (Breslau) über die Versöhnung im Judentum, wobei er sich dagegen wandte, dass dem Judentum heute im Namen der Wissenschaft die Existenzberechtigung abgesprochen und dass es zurückversetzt werde."

> (Breslau) spoke about reconciliation in Judaism, in which he objected to the fact that Judaism today is denied the right to exist in the name of science and that it is being relegated backwards.

The prompt reaction of the chief president of the province of Posen and chairman of the settlement commission for the districts of Posen and West Prussia, Robert von Zedlitz-Trützschler, left no doubt that the "emigration" of Jews was unfortunate. Yet, not because of the sheer loss in the native population, but rather because thereby a "bulwark of Germanity" had gone lost in the struggle against the spread of Slavic peoples:

> This emigration is primarily detrimental to the Germans, for it is certain that, when Prussia took over the Polish parts of the country, the Jews formed the overwhelming majority of the German-speaking population, that they remained loyal to German culture in the midst of Slavic peoples, and that precisely for this reason they were recognized by the authorities as the pillars of Germanism [...].[12]

This would prove, as will be illustrated below, a sheer statement of propaganda.

Poznań becomes Posen

With the "Second Partition" of Poland, the citizens of Poznań, including its Jewish minority, came under Prussian jurisdiction.[13] Poznań Jews brought with them

[12] Robert von Zedlitz-Trützschler, ebenda: "Diese Abwanderung ist Schaden in erster Linie für das Deutschtum, denn es stehe fest, dass bei der Übernahme der polnischen Landesteile durch Preußen die Juden die überwiegende Mehrzahl der deutschsprechenden Bevölkerung gebildet haben, dass sie inmitten slawischer Völker ihrer Anhänglichkeit an die deutsche Kultur stets treu blieben und dass sie gerade deshalb von den Behörden als Stütze des Deutschtums anerkannt wurden [...]."

[13] Under the new circumstances Poznan's Jewish citizens therefore could, and actually had to, communicate in their own language—besides Yiddish, most of them spoke in fact German. Moreover, ever since the education reform of 1833, they received—despite opposition on the part of the orthodox religious leadership—mandatory schooling in German. In this way, many of them

their orthodox-Polish traditions, for instance mantaining the Polish rite by reviving even among their newly gained fellow German believers more traditional religious scholarship, and adding a more artesanal component to their predominantly commercial occupational profile. They thus introduced the "Ostjude" type into German society for the first time—what Jack Wertheimer very expressively described as the "unwanted element" within Germanness.[14]

Around 70,000 Polish Jews lived then in Prussia, a very high number, which posed a problem to the State. Integrating and making all of them full German citizens was never an option. This was not only at odds with the religious orientation of the new rulers, which, as it is well known, favored the Protestant faith; the general skepticism was also reinforced by the utter "otherness" of Eastern Jews, with their peculiar sets of traditions and beliefs.[15] Moreover, Prussian institutions were concerned about immigration of unassimilated Jewry. Since Posen played a central role in this regard, Prussian police and politicians soon developed an ambiguous strategy towards Posen Jews.

For the most part they tended to be suspicious of any "Ostjude," who could potentially turn out to be a threat to (German) national security, as several record entries prove. The following 1878 letter from the District President to the authorities of Koschmin, a municipality halfway between Posen and Breslau, is typical:

> In Berlin it has been established that foreign Jews (especially from Poland or Galicia), who initially came to Germany as workers with the permission of the Military authorities, have soon turned to the effortless occupation of illicit trading and trading of bread-cards, as well as of hiding stolen good, robbing and cheating. In individual cases, I have also become aware

began taking active part in German cultural life. See on this Östreich, "*Des rauhen Winters ungeachtet*," 30-31; Kemlein, *Die Posener Juden*, 50-52; Serrier, *Eine Grenzregion zwischen Deutschen und Polen*, 62-76.

[14] Jack Wertheimer, " 'The Unwanted Element': East European Jews in Imperial Germany," *LBIYB* 26 (1981): 23-46; 23-25.

[15] Manfred Jehle, "South Prussia and New East Prussia: Prussia's Demographic Policy towards the Jews in Occupied Poland 1772-1806," *LBIYB* 52 (2007): 23-48.

> that such observations of the first kind have been made here at the border of the administrative district. Your Highborn, I humbly request, in case such former workers and other unreliable foreign Jews were present there or were to become known, to report to me immediately. I will then arrange for their further deportation [...].[16]

Such stigmatization weighed heavily on Poznań Jews, who could not avoid being drawn into the conflict of nationalities in their province. This meant for them keeping the balance between two cultures; standing between two nationalities and sets of mind. On top of this, the Jewish minority in Posen was subject to one of the most restrictive Jewish laws in Germany up to the mid-nineteenth century. This was related to the uprising of 1830-1831, after which the Prussian authorities had started viewing and treating minorities, Jews especially, differently (namely, as disposable allies).

As it is well known, leading Prussian politicians were adamant about tackling the nationality issue ensuing from territorial gains; they were, however, split into factions. The conservatives among them, strongly biased by traditional Christian beliefs, favored the continuation of a restrictive policy that would constrain any attempt to fully "naturalize" Jewish citizens. Liberals, on the other hand, opportunistically tended towards social and political integration, in an effort to come to terms with the Jewish "dilemma."[17]

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[16] "Ausländische Juden", Magistrat zu Koschmin, file 53/418/0/7-224 (1878), CAP, Poznań. "In Berlin ist festgestellt worden, dass ausländische Juden (besonders aus Polen oder Galizien), die zunächst mit Genehmigung der Mil. Behörden als Arbeiter in das Inland kamen, sich bald der mühelosen Beschäftigung des Schleich- und Brotkartenhandels, auch des Hehlens, Raubens und Betrügens zuwandten. In Einzelfällen ist auch mir bekannt geworden, dass hier in den Grenzkreisen des Regierungsbezirks solche Beobachtungen ersterer Art gemacht worden sind. Euer Hochgeboren ersuche ich ergebenst, falls derartige ehemals Arbeiter gewesene und sonstige unzuverlässige ausländische Juden dort vorhanden sein oder noch bekannt werden sollten, mir umgehend zu berichten. Ich werde wegen ihrer Abschiebung dann das weitere veranlassen."

[17] See on this Hagen, *Germans. Poles and Jews*, 67; Richard Blanke, *Prussian Poland in the German Empire* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1981).

In the aftermath of the revolt, a new law (Law of Equal Rights) was passed in 1833,[18] which ostensibly adopted this friendly disposition, although it by no means amounted to full equality for the 70,000 Poznań Jews. In fact, only the assimilated and the wealthy among them could hope to make use of it, receive civil rights and be naturalized.[19] A previous law, (*Judenedikt*) aimed at emancipating the Jewish minority, had already been issued in Prussia in 1812, yet it did not find application in all of its territories—and it meant in no way what it promised.

For instance, Posen Jews were in any case forbidden to move westwards into other German areas and suffered several constraints, such as the payment of extra "Jewish taxes," or a ban on purchasing land.[20] The great majority of those who could not meet certain criteria were de facto merely tolerated. As statistics show, by the middle of the century only about 20-25 percent of the Jews in the Posen district had managed to fulfill the conditions needed to obtain full civil rights; most of them made immediate use of their new rights to leave the region and settle somewhere else.[21]

This had a disastrous effect—intentionally promoted by Prussian authorities—on the cohesion of the once cohesive Jewish community in the town and the province. By enabling the best-off to assimilate and even relocate elsewhere in the west of the country and abroad, thus reinforcing social differences among coreligionists, the State aimed at undercutting further the autonomy of the Jewish minority. The laws of the year 1833 were inspired by the same intent of the decrees passed in 1797, and fit into the same paradigm of restriction. Those decrees in fact denied the Jewish community—which was then mostly run by an "enlightened" rabbi—the possibility of acting as a recognized juridical body. As Eliezer Sariel puts it:

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[18] Bartys, "Grand Duchy of Poznan," 145.

[19] Edward David Luft, ed., *The naturalized Jews of the Grand Duchy of Posen in 1834 and 1835. An alphabet. list of Jews naturalized in the Grand Duchy of Posen in 1834 and 1835 as publ. in Verzeichniss sämmtlicher naturalisierten Israeliten im Grossherzogthum Posen by Isidor Hirschberg in Bromberg in 1836* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987).

[20] Ibid., 199-204.

[21] See on this Östreich, "*Des rauhen Winters ungeachtet*," 42.

> Initially these ordinances were not fully enforced; however, the loss of the community's exclusive position as a mediator between the individual and state, and the loss of its ability to enforce Jewish judgments, created an irreversible process of loosening the link between individuals and their community. The 1833 laws, which included increased state supervision over community affairs, continued to weaken the already-shaken strength of the Jewish community.[22]

Between assimilation, loss of tradition and emigration

The "tolerated" Jews—those who could not fulfill the strict criteria laid down by the authorities —tried to meet the general demands the German state imposed upon them. This meant above all one thing: to assimilate as much as possible into the new society. To this end, two areas would act as a catalyst: religious and educational reform.

The traditional encompassing trend toward a more liberal form of Jewish religiosity, the so-called Reformjudentum, which started in the very first years of the nineteenth century in South Germany and gradually spread to all the German States, and later to the Reich and even North America, found within the Posen Jewry, at least at the beginning, no fertile ground. Things changed, at least partially, around the 1840s, as Jewish clerics from the area recognized the necessity to foster some form of acculturation among their coreligionists in order not to foment any more skepticism among German authorities. The support provided by a few Posen Jews to the Polish uprising against the Prussian occupation force in 1848 had in fact refueled German animosity towards the religious minority.[23]

From the beginning of the 1840s onwards, more and more Jewish communities in the Posen district started leaning towards some form of Reform Judaism. This implied the recognition of the German language as an indispensable part of their

[22] Sariel, " 'In the East Lie My Roots'," 182.
[23] Kemlein, *Die Posener Juden*, 230-242.

religious life as well as the selection of academically trained rabbis.[24] Such measures had an immediate effect. In many cases, slight deviation from strict Halakha rules was thus permitted: the most surprising was indeed the preaching of sermons in German, firstly introduced by the rabbi of Wreschen, Dr. Julius Gebhardt.[25] Under the influence of Zecharias Frankel—one of the most impactful advocates of "moderate" Judaism—who was active as a rabbi in Dresden until the early 1850s and later for two decades in the nearby city of Breslau, several other Jewish clerics in the Posen province embraced more liberal religious policies and practices and pushed forward a process of "Germanization."[26]

And yet, notwithstanding all this ferment and the strive for modernity and change, evidence shows that most Jewish communities in the analyzed area maintained their adherence to traditional religious and social tenets. In short, those who belonged to lower social strata remained traditionalists, and "counter-revolutionary," strongly rooted conservative rabbinic doctrine,[27] as well as the inflow of orthodox Ostjuden from tsarist Russia and the Habsburg Empire, also buttressed this general trend.

The reform of the education system, enforced in 1833, was reconfirmed in 1847 with the passing of a new Jewish Act. The regulations laid down there determined that every child in Prussia should attend a state school. Conservative Jews did circumvent the law though, and kept sending their children to traditional religious schools up until at least the late 1830s. Prussian authorities carried out a thorough change in policy in the same period and started carrying out in-depth controls in schools, requiring that all of them abide by the rules.

This bore fruits immediately. By the year 1840, almost all Jewish children (around 95 percent) studied in a state-supervised school. That meant using German as the classroom language as well as having secular programs, which included topics such

[24] Sariel, " 'In the East Lie My Roots'," 183-185.

[25] Ibid., 183.

[26] Kemlein, *Die Posener Juden*, 218-221.

[27] Prominent conservative rabbinic figures, such as Rabbi Akiva Eger, Rabbi Eliyahu Guttmacher or Rabbi Meir Leibush, were active in Posen over the course of the nineteenth century. See Kemlein, *Die Posener Juden*, 242-248.

as geography, mathematics or science. This represented a clear difference, compared to only some years prior, and a huge progress compared to the number of Jewish children attending secular schools in the nearby Polish regions.[28] This "liberal" trend also had tangible repercussions on general language skills. By the middle of the century, German had become very common, along with the traditional Yiddish dialect spoken by the local minority. By the beginning of the second half of the century, German had already surpassed Polish in private usage rate among the Jews in Posen, and its usage increased even more rapidly with the constitution of the German Reich in 1871.[29]

The widening gap between Posen Jews—who, as described above, opened up to German liberal influences over the course of the nineteenth century—and their Polish coreligionists, was nonetheless a cause of great concern for orthodox rabbis and their fellow believers, who still represented a majority in the area. According to important conservative Jewish clerics of the time, the German influence had been of major detriment to Jews all over the Posen province, as it was responsible for "religious deterioration" and abandonment of the simplest halakhic rules.[30]

Universities and Zionism

The polarizing effect of "Germanization" in the Posen district was somewhat intensified by, firstly, emancipation and the acquisition of full civil rights together with the other Jews of the North German Confederation in 1869 and all German coreligionists in 1871, and, secondly, by the gradual emergence of Zionist ideas over the last quarter of the century. This became very evident within the student body of the time.

The inclusion and exclusion of Jewish students from the German corporate system at the end of the nineteenth century led to the establishment of separate Jewish

[28] Only about 10 percent of Jewish children in nearby polish regions attended a state funded, secular school. Sariel, " 'In the East Lie My Roots'," 188.

[29] Kemlein, *Die Posener Juden*, 239-240.

[30] German influence, according to orthodox rabbis and their believers, would put above all women in peril of losing track of basic Jewish laws. See on this Sariel, " 'In the East Lie My Roots'," 189-190.

associations. As early as 1896, four of these formed the Kartell-Konvent der Verbindungen deutscher Studenten jüdischen Glaubens (K.C., Cartel Convention of the Associations of German Students of Jewish Faith), in whose very name the national self-image of the members is clear. The prominence given to a German patriotic attitude and the emphasis on the awareness of the solidarity between German Jews and the German fatherland in history, culture and law were obvious. One of the most influential non-Zionist Jewish Organizations in the nation, the Central-Verein deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens (CV, Central Association of German Citizens of Jewish Faith) exemplified this as follows:

> To the German citizens of the Jewish faith: At the end of the seventies, the unfortunate movement began in Germany whose ultimate goal was the social ostracism of the Jews and the restriction of their constitutional rights. It is not at least the Jews themselves who are to blame for the tremendous growth of this movement: their lack of esprit de corps and self-confidence, their indifference, above all the lack of timely, effective defense. Too late, the need for planned defense was recognized. The first step was taken by the men who met at the so-called Gneist-Rickert association. The publication of the *Antisemiten-Spiegel* and the weekly *Mitteilungen aus dem Verein zur Abwehr des Antisemitismus* is its meritorious work. The *Committee for the Defense against Anti-Semitic Attacks* consists exclusively of Jews and has a quietly beneficial effect [...]. Those who are attacked should defend themselves! If we do not want to be protected Jews, but citizens, then we must wish that the representation of Jewish interests be led by the unification of all Jews [...]. We are an association of German citizens, we stand firmly on the ground of the German nationality and have no other community with the Jews of other countries than the Catholics and Protestants with the Catholics and Protestants of other countries. If so neither the political nor the religious divide us, it is the civic that unites us all [...]. It is necessary to provide evidence that Antisemitism is only a precursor of anarchism, threatening not only Judaism, but the whole country. If we maintain our position in the Fatherland by our own strength, we will not lack respect for our better-

> minded fellow citizens; if we are denied our right, we will gain sympathy, and if hope deceives us—for our honor's sake, we must not give up the fight! To promote this process is a matter of honor for every German Jew [...].[31]

However, the principles and aims of the CV, as well as of the K.C., described here did not convince all German Jewish students; especially those who sympathized with the Zionist movement rejected these positions. Consequently, organizations such as the Bund Jüdischer Corporationen (B.J.C., 1901), or the smaller Kartell Zionistischer Verbindungen (K.Z.V., 1906) were established, which published among others the relatively widely read newspaper *Der Jüdische Student*. Leading editorialists there described the "Jewish question" in these radical terms:

> It may well have struck many people that anyone who discusses one side of Judaism describes it as the *essence* or *foundation* of Judaism, whether national, economic, cultural or otherwise, by choosing his inclination or study as the yardstick for the expansion of the Jewish question. Only the *Jewish race* has not yet been described as the basis of Judaism, although it is precisely this race that should make the most claim to it. For all those other questions are both cause and consequence of the existence of a race [...]. Crossbreeding between relatively healthy breeds is a different matter. From the outset, every cross should be rejected from the point of view of evolution [...]. For example, German-English give a better result than German-German and English-English, whereas Jewish-German give a worse result than Jewish-Jewish and German-German crossbreeds. However, under certain circumstances, if the breeds are related, the individual success can be more favorable [...]. Only this conglomerate of characteristics is peculiar to the Jewish race, to which the Jewish intellect, an immeasurable quantity, must be added, along with various others. So much can be said about it a priori, but with a certainty that it is Jewish and not Aryan or anything else, that the foreign culture in which we live harms

[31] "Mahnruf des Central-Vereins deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens," *Zeitschrift des Central-Vereins deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens*, Berlin June 18, 1896, 1-6; 1.

> our intellectual peculiarity and thus one of the most essential foundations of our race. It must therefore seek to form a Jewish culture, insofar as this has not yet happened. Individual Jewish cultural moments are and have always been created, but they dissolve into nothing when the external impossibility of concentration, of condensation, arises. The formation of a cultural community, a full nation, complete in all respects is only possible with territorial and social concentration.[32]

These two long quotations best describe the ambiguity and the torn identity of German Jews in the second half of the century in question. Such political, social and cultural distortions had been affecting Jews in the Posen area from the 1848 revolution onward and caused much confusion, panic and desperation. Despite all efforts to assimilate, and the pressure applied on institutions in order to gain more rights, the year 1848 and its immediate aftermath would prove disastrous for the Jewish community. Ironically enough, the civil rights warranted by the new Jewish Act of 1848—providing e.g. freedom of movement and opportunities for professional and/or social advancement—would strike a shattering blow to the religious minority. The outflow of Jewish population, which had begun already in the 1830s, intensified noticeably by the middle of the century. By then, the Jewish population had already shrunk from about 76,000 to barely 62,000.

Despite the founding of the Reich in 1871 and the consequent gaining of full emancipation for all German Jews, Jewish population numbers in the Posen area kept plummeting: from about 45,000 in 1890, to around 26,000 in 1910, which accounted for 1.3 percent of the overall population, in line with the German overall average.[33]

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[32] Richard Asch, "Zur jüdischen Rassenfrage," *Der Jüdische Student* II, März-Heft, no. 1 (1905).

[33] The Jewish migrants were mostly very young men, single or fathers. Most of them were craft workers or small merchants. Östreich, "*Des rauhen Winters ungeachtet*," 43-44 and 103.

Reasons for emigration

As we have seen, religious tradition continued to play a major role in the Posen area, despite the overall adaptation to new forms of living. Orthodox rabbis and their followers never ceased to complain about the ongoing loss of faith and gradual watering-down of old habits, for which the process of forced "Germanization" had been made responsible. This pushed many to leave the region and seek their fortunes elsewhere. Others though, even in the orthodox community, might have considered staying in their homeland as the only reasonable thing to do, since the German authorities were not as strict and intolerant as was generally assumed.

After gaining corporate status in 1847, the Jewish communities of the area had to cope with the main problem arising from this concession: their weakening as a trans-local, cohesive organization, with the related dilution of identity and faith. The ensuing result was highly distressing: whereas orthodox Jews in the province were able to keep their beliefs and cemented them over generations, their liberal/less-conservative coreligionists became more and more alienated from old habits, often grew estranged, and eventually converted to Christianity.[34]

Yet, there are many more factors that must be taken into account. Just as conservative social strata within the Jewish minority chose to leave in order to maintain order and tradition, so too did others, particularly liberals, because they believed this would help them push their reforms more quickly and more easily than at home.

In this, the political component comes into view. Historians have established a connection between the partially failed European revolutions of the 1830s and late 1840s, and the mass migration waves of Jewish population from the continent

[34] Conversion rates in the Posen area skyrocketed starting from the 1850s, on the one hand due to the socio-cultural changes that were taking place in that period, and on the other to the particularly aggressive "Jewish mission" operating in the region. Östreich, "*Des rauhen Winters ungeachtet*," 258.

towards the New World.[35] Yet, as seen above, the revolutions did not only bring setbacks, but also significant progress in the social and cultural sphere. This does not dismiss the political argument at all, but it relativizes it and calls for more differentiation, as it remains to be investigated whether a cohesive, somehow organized political protest can nevertheless be discerned. Elderly Jews, for instance, or the Orthodox faction were not affected.

During the 1848 revolution, Posen Jews had experienced pogrom-like repression and violence. This was at odds with their general pro-German stance, yet it was symptomatic of a tendency to overgeneralize and make Jews responsible for anti-state disturbances. Antisemitism was in this case a highly welcome scapegoat. This is still not nearly enough to account for the mass emigration that would start in those years. Why leave Prussia? Why leave the country that exerted, at least in theory, the least oppression on the Jewish minority?[36] The difference, in this case, was made by the concession of basic civil rights, such as freedom to choose one's profession, buy land and, last but not least, freedom of movement. This all aroused resentment and greatly contributed to the alienation of Jews in Posen and its province.

The peculiarity of the province of Posen within Prussia did the rest to make the ambiguous concessions offered to Jews seem highly deceitful. As Östreich, among others, points out, the Jewish community in the region felt doubly let down, once as Prussians, and then as Posen Jews. Notwithstanding the new Constitution of 1848, which, as described, guaranteed Posen Jews equality with their Prussian coreligionists as well as social and legal improvements, it could not stop mass migration abroad. After crushing the pro-Polish revolution in 1848, the Prussian government seemed indeed willing to make concessions to Polish nationalists to maintain peace and order in the border territories. Such readiness went so far as to make the eastern part of the Posen province ready for annexation into a future

[35] See, among others, Cohen, *Encounter with Emancipation*, 78-83; Barkai, *Branching out*, 36-40.
[36] Saxony and Hanover with their belated Jewish legislation, Bavaria with its "medieval" matriculation system, even several smaller states that maintained a cumbersome and harassing "Schutzjuden" system well into the nineteenth century: they all trailed behind Prussia as pertains to the emancipation of the Jewish minority.

refounded Polish state. Most Jews—the majority concentrated in the eastern part of the province– regarded this as the ultimate sign of disrespect: a sell-out to a less attractive neighbor, Poland, which the vast majority of them had turned their back on.[37]

Conclusions

The consequences the restoration had on the lives of the Jewish minorities in the German states is widely known. The assumption that the Congress of Vienna led to an intensification of repression against minorities in the European territories, including Jews, and largely excluded them from the cultural and political formation of the "nation," has nevertheless been the subject of heated discussion for several years. The at least formal discrimination against Jews in the European territories, which later led to open Antisemitism, is a fact. It remains to be verified, however, whether the connection between the latter and nationalism, as traditionally assumed by research into Antisemitism—not least due to the simultaneity of the (re)formation of the German nation and the emergence of Antisemitism—is just as "natural" and compelling. Thus, one of the most widely received, relevant scientific insights is the finding that the institutionally controlled processes for the cultural and political creation of the nation were undertaken "against the Jews."[38] The formation of the German state nation—according to this narrative—driven by Prussia, for example, was thus largely based on the targeted exclusion of Jews and the "Jewish" from the leading power centers of Prussia-Germany. More recent, relevant research has revised this somewhat monolithic picture and speaks of a "construction of the nation with the Jews."[39]

The long period between the failed revolts of 1848 and the end of the nineteenth century was characterized by emancipatory efforts and abrupt relapses into anti-

[37] Östreich, "*Des rauhen Winters ungeachtet*," 290-294.

[38] See on this, among others: Peter Alter, Claus-Ekkehard Bärsch, and Peter Berghoff, eds., *Die Konstruktion der Nation gegen die Juden* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1999).

[39] Ulrich Wyrwa, *Gesellschaftliche Konfliktfelder und die Entstehung des Antisemitismus. Das Deutsche Kaiserreich und das Liberale Italien im Vergleich* (Berlin: Metropol, 2015).

Jewish agitation patterns—among others the *Berliner Antisemitismusstreit* (Berlin antisemitism dispute) (1879-1881) and the "Dreyfus affair" (1895-1906). On the one hand, Jewish minorities experienced social advancement and—as we have seen—full recognition of civil rights, while on the other they continued to be excluded from important sectors of society. While Jews in the nineteenth century were regarded on the one hand as "foreign" and too conservative, and thus as anti-modern and illiberal, they embodied on the other hand a "degenerate" hybrid of capitalism and modernity. As string pullers of "stock exchanges and newspapers"—the abstract forms of power and modernity par excellence—they were accused of wanting to undermine every community, including the national collective, from within.[40]

However, why did so many eventually leave Europe and specifically Posen? Overpopulation and underemployment, aggravated by the continuous political tensions that plagued the homeland (Poland and then Germany), definitely played a major role. Though Prussia tolerated the Jewish minorities at the eastern border, its authorities seemed at the same time to fear them and tended to impair their legal status. As Alan Levenson remarks:

> A final paradox deserves notice: The Jews of Posen received equality with the rest of Prussian Jewry in 1850. But the Germanness of Posen´s Jews remained in doubt. When Heinrich von Treitschke brought Antisemitism into respectable circles in 1880, his most effective image was that of a swarm of "Polish pants-selling lads" flooding the Fatherland. Exactly because they enjoyed rights of residence not enjoyed by the Jews of Austrian Lemberg/Lvov or Russian Warsaw, the Jews of Posen provided antisemites with a paradigmatic example of why Germany´s *Judenfrage*

[40] On this, among others: Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, "Elemente des Antisemitismus" [1944/47], in *Dialektik der Aufklärung. Philosophische Fragmente*, Id., (Frankfurt a. M.: S. Fischer, 1992), 177-217; Klaus Holz, *Nationaler Antisemitismus. Wissenssoziologie einer Weltanschauung* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2001); Marcel Stoetzler, *The State, the Nation, and the Jews: Liberalism and the Antisemitism Dispute in Bismarcks's Germany* (Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 2008), 36-39.

differed from the "Jewish Question" elsewhere, and why an influx of Jews would threaten German *Kultur*.[41]

Additional factors were, firstly, the alternating economic crisis, that caused hunger protests as well as large demonstrations, mostly starting from 1848; secondly, the disintegration of traditional religious structures, with orthodox Judaism being impaired by the introduction of mandatory German schooling in 1833; as well as, thirdly, the unfulfilled promises of social improvement. This was most evident on the occasion of revolutions (1830s and late 1840s), as Posen Jews would bitterly realize that both parties in the game, Poland and Prussia, were treating them as disposable bargaining assets.

However, obligatory secular education also had, as described, positive effects. In this manner, many non-orthodox Jews living in the area were able to catch up with the general trend of assimilation their coreligionists from urban regions had been advocating from the start of the nineteenth century. Turning their back on the homeland during the crisis, and seeking work and "freedom" elsewhere, was often the price to pay for modernity.

The Polish background of the Posen Jews represented a further reason for emigration. Torn between two worlds, the German and the Polish, turned out to be too heavy a burden on less-favored areas and their inhabitants. The social composition of the migrants did the rest. Mostly young, unmarried, male, lower class fortune-seekers left a homeland that had since the Prussian take-over become very much a hostile place. By the end of the 1860s, more than 30,000 Posen Jews had already left Europe and resettled in the United States. A further 20,000 would follow them before the end of the century.[42]

The experience of the First World War played a crucial role for Jewish minorities, especially in the USA. While it cemented many people's sense of belonging to their new American homeland, it stirred up doubts and resentment among others and

[41] Alan Levenson, "The Posen Factor," *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies* 17, no. 1 (1998), 72-80; 79.
[42] Östreich, "*Des rauhen Winters ungeachtet*," 346-347.

buttressed a patriotic and "cultural nostalgia" in favor of the lost fatherland.[43] With the end of the First World War, the question of the national and cultural self-location of Jewish migrants, including those from Posen, was by no means resolved. On the contrary, the conflict had blocked identity processes or confronted them with new challenges—a complex topic that remains a challenge for further research.

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Keywords: Posen/Poznań, Jews, Nationalism, Tradition, Emigration

How to quote this article:
Francesco di Palma, "Prussian Jews: Between Nationalism and Tradition. The 'strange case' of Posen/Poznań, 1800-1918," in "Jewish Minorities between Nation-Building and Emigration in late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Century East Central Europe," eds. Francesco Di Palma and Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe, *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History. Journal of the Fondazione CDEC* 20 (December 2021), DOI: 10.48248/issn.2037-741X/13103

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[43] Ulrike Heikaus et al., eds., *Krieg!: 1914-1918. Juden zwischen den Fronten* (Berlin: Hentrich und Hentrich Verlag, 2014); Sarah Panter, *Jüdische Erfahrungen und Loyalitätskonflikte im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014); David J. Fine, *Jewish integration in the German army in the First World War* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012).

Between Corfu and Athens: Moisis Caimis' Contribution to the Making of Greek Jewry (1885-1916)

by *Joana Bürger*

Abstract

Moisis Caimis, a Zionist pioneer and community leader hailing from Corfu, contributed through his journalistic activities to the making of Greek Jewry. Initially working as correspondent of the Trieste-based Italian-Jewish newspaper Il Corriere Israelitico *(1885-1898), Caimis published his own Greek language periodicals for the Jews of Greece—*Israilitis Chronografos *(Corfu, 1899-1901) and* Israilitiki Epitheorisis *(Athens, 1912-1916). By focusing on the life and work of Moisis Caimis, who was raised in the bilingual Greco-Italian environment of Corfu before moving to Athens in the early twentieth century, this article provides a novel supra-local perspective to the study of Greek Jewry, which emphasizes the importance of Jewish publishing on the Ionian islands for the formation of Jewish identity in Greece. A historical analysis of Caimis' texts shows how* local concepts of patriotism *evolved from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century and how the author gradually created a narrative of* Greco-Jewish cultural synergy*.*

Introduction

Moisis Caimis: Between Corfu and Athens

Between Ethnos and Patria

Conclusions

Introduction

Israilitis Chronographos (1899-1901)

"This journal, published in the first place for the Greek Israelites [Ellines Israelite], will contain discussions about Jewish religion, history and philology."[1]

Written in 1899 by Moisis Caimis—a Zionist pioneer and Jewish community leader hailing from Corfu—this opening statement of the first Jewish journal published in the Greek language raises two main questions: Who were the *Greek Israelites* and what did it mean to be Jewish and Greek at the turn of the nineteenth century? Through a study of his journalistic productions (1885-1916), this article analyzes Caimis' changing conceptualization of Greek Jewry.

In this period, Greece expanded territorially and state policy towards minorities was not consistent. Following the Greek War of Independence (1821-1830), the new state emerged with a religiously homogeneous society.[2] Initially home to less than 1000 Jews, Greece later incorporated the Jewish communities of the Ionian Islands (1864) and Thessaly (1881). While the constitutionally anchored principle of religious tolerance guaranteed civil rights for non-Christian minorities in the newly acquired territories, Greek society continued to regard affiliation with the Greek Orthodox faith as an intrinsic element of Greek nationality.[3] The minority

[1] Moisis Caimis, "Editorial," *Israilitis Chronographos* 1, no 1 (1899): 1. The author of this article translated all the newspaper citations and would like to thank Sarah Hassnaoui for her help with the Italian excerpts. In addition, special thanks are owed to Dimitrios Varvaritis and Philip Carabott, who shared archival sources and provided invaluable comments.

[2] The revolution caused massacres of genocidal magnitude against the Muslims and Jews of the region: Maria Efthymiou, "Official Ideology and Lay Mentality during the Greek Revolution: Attitudes towards the Jews," in *The Last Ottoman Century and Beyond: The Jews in Turkey and the Balkans 1808-1945*, ed. Minna Rozen (Tel Aviv: The Goldstein-Goren Diaspora Research Center, Tel Aviv University, 2002); Katherine Fleming, *Greece—A Jewish History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 15-18; Evdoxios Doxiadis, *State, Nationalism, and the Jewish Communities of Modern Greece* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018) 19-43.

[3] On the legal position and societal integration of non-Christians in early Greece see: Philip Carabott, "State, Society and the Religious "Other" in nineteenth-century Greece," *Kambos: Cambridge Papers in Modern Greek* 18 (2011): 1-33; Doxiadis, *State, Nationalism, and the Jewish*

question gained increased political weight with the incorporation of the multi-ethnic and multi-religious regions of Epirus and Macedonia during the Balkan Wars (1912-1913), prompting a state-driven Hellenization program of linguistic and religious minorities.[4] Through the annexation of Thessaloniki during the war, Greece's Jewish population rose from less than 10.000 to more than 70.000.[5]

Hence, it is not surprising that the scholarly discussion on the formation of a Greco-Jewish identity mainly focused on the integration of Thessaloniki's Sephardic community in the interwar period.[6] Bringing to the fore the less well-studied case of Grecophone Jewish literature, this article joins the slowly growing historiographical trend that explores the trajectory of smaller Jewish communities in Attica, the Ionian Islands and Thessaly trough the study of Greek-language primary sources in addition to Judeo-Spanish and French material.[7]

Communities of Modern Greece, 81-106. For an overview on the history of Jews in nineteenth century Greece see: Fleming, *Greece—A Jewish History*, 15-48.

[4] Peter Mackridge and Eleni Yannakakis, eds., *Ourselves and Others: The Development of a Greek Macedonian Cultural Identity since 1912* (Oxford: Berg, 1997). Philip Carabott, "Aspects of the Hellenization of Greek Macedonia, ca. 1912-ca. 1959," *Kambos: Cambridge Papers in Modern Greek* 13 (2005): 21-61.

[5] Greece was home to around 6000 Jews in 1907: Carabott, "State, Society and the Religious "Other" in nineteenth-century Greece," 11. According to a population census of 1913, Thessaloniki alone, had a Jewish population of ca. 60.000: Mark Mazower, *Salonica, City of Ghosts: Christians, Muslims and Jews 1430-1950* (London: Harper Perennial, 2005), 303.

[6] For a critical historiographical overview of the scholarly corpus on the integration of Thessaloniki's Jewish community into the Greek state, see: Devin Naar, *Jewish Salonica: Between the Ottoman Empire and Modern Greece* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016), 9-15. See also: Henriette-Rika Benveniste, "The Coming Out of Jewish History in Greece," (paper presented at the International Conference History Between Reflexivity and Critique, Athens 2008, http://usagespublicsdupasse.ehess.fr/the-coming-out-of-jewish-history-in-greece/).

[7] See the articles in the special edition of Archeiotaxio: "Εβραίοι και Έλληνες, Έλληνες Εβραίοι" [Jews and Greeks, Greek Jews], *Archeiotaxio* 19 (2017); See further the edited volume: Anna Machaira and Lida Papastefanaki, eds., *Εβραϊκές κοινότητες ανάμεσα σε Ανατολή και Δύση, 15ος-20ός αιώνας: οικονομία, κοινωνία, πολιτική, πολιτισμός* [Jewish Communities between the East and the West, fifteenth to twentieth Century: Economy, Society, Politics, Culture] (Ioannina: Isnafi, 2016); For an account of Greco-Jewish history from the state's perspective: Doxiadis, *State, Nationalism, and the Jewish Communities of Modern Greece*. On Jews from Thessaly: Devin Naar, "The 'Mother of Israel' or the 'Sephardi Metropolis'? Sephardim, Ashkenazim, and Romaniotes in Salonica," *Jewish Social Studies* 22, no. 1 (2016): 97-103.

Despite his contribution to the consolidation of Greek Jewry and the spread of Zionism in Greece, Moisis Caimis' (1864-1929) work has not so far received the scholarly attention it deserves.[8] This is all the more surprising as his personal trajectory—between Corfu and Athens—spans important locations and crucial points in early Greco-Jewish history. Through his journalism, we gain an insight into how Jewish community leaders positioned themselves in regard to Greek irredentism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and how they experienced the integration of Thessaloniki's Sephardic community into the Greek realm in the course of the Balkan Wars. This article traces Caimis' conceptualization of Greek Jewry as a political community from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century by exploring the journalist's life and literary passages from three different stages of his journalistic career: initially working as foreign correspondent for the Trieste-based Italian-Jewish journal *Il Corriere Israelitico* (1885-1898), Caimis broke away from the imperial publishing centre to establish his own Greco-Jewish journals *Israilitis Chronografos* (Corfu, 1899-1901) and *Israilitiki Epitheorisis* (Athens, 1912-1916). An analysis of theses publications illustrates that the project of Jewish civic integration and Greco-Jewish identity formation has its roots in the late nineteenth century and was influenced by the politicization of Italian-speaking Jewry in the Adriatic region. Furthermore, it suggests that Jewish mobility between the Ionian Islands and Athens played a decisive role in the consolidation and institutionalization of Greek Jewry.

Moisis Caimis: Between Corfu and Athens

Moisis Caimis was born into the Ionian world at a time when nation-states constituted a novelty within a universe of multi-ethnic empires. Over the course of the nineteenth century, the Adriatic Sea—once a "bridge" between the Italian

[8] Unfortunately Caimis' personal archives have not been found yet. Secondary literature on Caimis: Iosif Siakis, "Μωϋσης Χαΐμης. Μια΄πνευματικη΄προσωπικοτητα του ελλαδικου΄Εβραισμου" [Moisis Chaimis: An Intellectual Personality of Greek Judaism] *Chronika* 26 (1980): 21-32; Caimis is further mentioned in Rafail Frezis, *The Jewish Press in Greece* (Volos: Israilitike Koinoteta Volou and Ekdoseis Ores, 1999). Additional primary sources: Iosif Siakis Collection, "The Jews of Corfu," file 3, Hellenic Literary and Historical Archive, Athens.

lands, the Austro-Hungarian and the Ottoman Empire—had degraded into a "borderland region."[9] In this period, the Ionian Islands changed rulers several times. Formerly under Venetian dominion, Napoleon's army shortly occupied the archipelago in 1797. Thereupon, a Russian-Ottoman alliance enforced the establishment of the semi-independent, constitutional aristocracy of the Septinsular Republic (1799-1807), and finally the islands came under a British protectorate in 1815.[10] Our protagonist's year of birth—1864—marked the Ionian Islands' unification (Enosis) with the Greek nation-state.

Moisis Caimis' personal trajectory functions as paradigm of Jewish mobility in Greece and is emblematic of the shift in political and cultural geographies in the course of the region's nationalization. Through his biography and journalistic productions, we gain a glimpse into the history of Corfu's Jewish community at a time of its transition from an Adriatic insular trade hub to a peripheral port in the Greek Kingdom. At the same time, Caimis' life story attests to the slowly increasing attraction of Athens as novel center for Jews in search of work and education in early twentieth century Greece.[11]

Following Enosis, the Jews of Corfu maintained their pre-existing cultural and economic ties with the Italian-speaking Adriatic world, while simultaneously engaging in the island's public life as emancipated Greek citizens. In the second half of the nineteenth century, Corfiote Jews' frame of reference began to stretch even beyond the Adriatic and Greek worlds, as many Jews left their island and

[9] Dominique Kirchner Reill, *Nationalists Who Feared the Nation: Adriatic Multi-Nationalism in Habsburg Dalmatia, Trieste, and Venice* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012), 8-11.

[10] Konstantina Zanou, *Transnational Patriotism in the Mediterranean, 1800-1850: Stammering the Nation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 13-15.

[11] Caimis personal trajectory supports the scholarly assumption that Athens gained more importance as center of Jewish life in Greece at the turn of the century: Eyal Ginio, "Γράφοντας για την Εβραϊκή Ιστορία της Νεότερης Ελλάδας: Η Περίπτωση της Κέρκυρας" [Writing on the History of Jews in Modern Greece: The Case of Corfu], *Archeiotaxio*, 19 (2017): 20-41; Philip Carabott, "The Jewish presence in Athens during the nineteenth Century: From Max Rothschild to the Israelite Fraternity," in *Jewish Communities between the East and the West,* eds. Machaira and Papastefanaki, 186.

established Corfiote diaspora centers in Trieste, Manchester and Alexandria.[12] In contrast to the many who decided to leave, the Caimis family stayed on the island, where the young Moisis Caimis was raised in an Italian and Greek speaking environment and gained a reading knowledge of Hebrew.[13] His father, Iesoua Chaim, belonged to the island's Greek-speaking Jewish congregation.[14] The family patriarch, who was prohibited under British rule to exercise his profession of lawyer, Hellenized his surname "Chaim" into "Chaïmis" (Χαΐμης) following Ionian Jews' political emancipation in the course of Enosis (1864) and sent his son—Moisis—to study at the island's Greek public lyceum.[15]

Moisis Caimis' intellectual formation was deeply influenced by the emergence of an Ionian Jewish publishing sphere in the second half of the nineteenth century. His family was closely related to Giuseppe Nacamulli (1821-1886), the pioneer of the Jewish press on Corfu, who introduced the young Moisis Caimis to the craft of journalism and publishing.[16] Throughout his life, Nacamulli functioned as an

[12] On the Jewish community of Corfu in the post-Enosis period: Pearl Preschel, "The Jews of Corfu" (PhD diss., New York University, 1984); Ginio, "The Case of Corfu"; Constanze Kolbe, "Soap and the Making of a Short Distance Network in the Nineteenth-Century Adriatic," in *Jews and the Mediterranean*, eds. Matthias B. Lehmann and Jessica M. Marglin, 149-69 (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2020).

[13] Siakis, "Moisis Chaimis," 22.

[14] Three groups of origin made up the Jews of Corfu. Greek-speaking Jews, who were initially called "Toshebim" and later "Greki" or "Romaniotes," formed the oldest community. In the sixteenth and seventeenth century, Jews from the Kingdom of Naples and the regions of Sicilia and Apulia (Puglia) resettled in Corfu. Richard Gottheil, and Moisis Caimis, "Corfu," *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, 1901. See further: Dimitrios Varvaritis, " 'The Jews have got into trouble again...': Responses to the Publication of Cronaca Israelitica and the Question of Jewish Emancipation in the Ionian Islands (1861-1863)," in *Miscellanea, Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History. Journal of the Fondazione CDEC* 7 (2014): 32.

[15] For the purpose of this article, I follow the Latin spelling of the surname as "Caimis." The Greek version "Χαΐμης" changed in the following generation to "Καΐμη" as Moisis Caimis' son Giulio further Hellenized the name. Aikaterini Sotirios Triantafullopoulou, "Giulio Caimi as an Art Theoretician and Painter (1897-1982)," (PhD diss., National Kapodistrian University Athens, 2015), 17-19.

[16] Caimis portrayed Nacamulli as his cousin in an article for the *Israelitikon Bima tis Ellados* in 1925. Cited from the republished version. Moisis Caimis, "Στοιχεία περί των Εβραιών της Κερκύρας" [Details on the Jews of Corfu], *Chronika* 58 (1983): 7-9.

interlocutor between Italian and Greek cultural spheres.[17] In the 1860's, he established a publishing house and a printing press under the name *Korais,* honoring the Greek Enlightenment scholar Adamantios Korais.[18] Nacamulli imported Hebrew letter plates from Livorno and used his press to publish religious and secular literature.[19] Fluent in Hebrew, Greek and Italian, he translated between those languages and published, among other books, a Greek grammar in Italian (1868) and a Greek translation of the daily prayer collection "Siddur" (1885).[20] His Greek-Italian newspaper *Cronaca Israelitica/Israilitika Chronika* (1861-1864)—the first Jewish periodical published in the non-Ottoman Greek-speaking world—voiced criticism over the legal discrimination of Jews under British rule and contributed significantly to discussing Jewish issues in a public sphere.[21] In 1864, Nacamulli celebrated Corfu's integration into the Greek Kingdom as a moment of Jewish political emancipation.[22] A few years later, his efforts were honored by the Greek state when his publishing house gained a medal at the national exhibition of Athens in 1867.[23]

Notwithstanding his excellent relations with the Greek political establishment, Nacamulli's post-Enosis journals attest to the continuation and strengthening of cultural ties between Corfu and different Italian-speaking Jewish centers in the Adriatic world. He published the journals *Famiglia Israelitica* (1869-1873) and *Mosè Antologia Israelitica* (1878-1885) in the Italian language and established a

[17] Ibid., while Nacamulli closely cooperated with Italian language journals, he also belonged to the Parnassos Literary Society, which had been established in Athens in 1865.

[18] Nacamulli might have chosen this name due to Korais' liberal position towards non-Christians in an envisioned Greek society. Influenced by the French political model, Korais assumed that civil rights should not be dependent on religious affiliations. Adamantios Korais, "Report on the present state of civilization in Greece," in *Discourses of Collective Identity in Central and Southeast Europe (1770-1945): Texts and Commentaries*, eds. Balázs Trencsényi, and Michal Kopeček (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2006), 142-147.

[19] Preschel, "The Jews of Corfu," 78.

[20] Frezis, *The Jewish Press in Greece*, 440-441.

[21] For a historiographical article on the legal situation of Jews under British rule: Sakis Gekas, "For Better or for Worse? A Counter-Narrative of Corfu. Jewish History and the Transition from the Ionian State to the Greek Kingdom (1815-1890s)," in *Jewish Communities between the East and the West,* eds. Machaira and Papastefanaki, 168.

[22] On Nacamulli: Varvaritis, " 'The Jews have got into trouble again'," 37-38.

[23] Upon Nacamulli's death, Caimis wrote a Eulogy for his mentor: Moisis Caimis, "Giuseppe Nacamulli di Corfu," *Il Corriere Israelitico* 25 (1886): 157-158.

close cooperation with the Trieste-based Jewish Italian journal *Il Corriere Israelitico* (1862-1915).[24] After the emigration of Corfiote Jews to Manchester, Trieste and Alexandria, these journals played an important role in circulating news and fostering philanthropic ties between the mother-island Corfu and the diaspora enclaves.[25] In response to an increase of Corfiote Jews settling in Trieste in the 1880's, *Il Corriere Israelitico* started a column by the name "Da Corfu" devoted to news from the island.[26] And it was none other than our protagonists, the young Moisis Caimis, who was in charge of this news section. As foreign correspondent for this Italian Jewish publication, Caimis gained his first journalistic experience. The cooperation lasted for more than ten years (1885-1897).[27]

Seeking higher education, Moisis Caimis moved to Athens in 1889 to study law at the National University. In the capital, he encountered a Jewish reality different from the one he knew from Corfu. Although Corfu remained numerically the largest Jewish community in Greece, Athens slowly emerged as alternative center of Jewish life in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[28] At the time of his arrival, the city was home to merely 80 Jewish families, which lacked any form of Jewish religious establishment.[29] Caimis' sojourn in the capital coincided,

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[24] In fact, Joseph Emmanuel Levi, Corfu's chief rabbi from 1875 to 1887, functioned as co-editor of *Mosè Antologia*, while simultaneously belonging to the publishing board of *Il Corriere Israelitico*. Both journals contributed to the spread of the ideas of the *Collegio Rabbinico* in Padua, an institution that propagated an alternative to the traditional yeshiva education of rabbis, and operated under the influence of the movement *Wissenschaft des Judentums.* Constanze Kolbe, "Crossing Regions, Nations, Empires: The Jews of Corfu and the Making of a Jewish Adriatic, 1850-1914" (PhD diss., Indiana University, 2017), 30-67.

[25] Ibid., 62-67.

[26] The column first appears in the edition 1885-1886. Ibid., 63.

[27] Moise Schwab lists articles by Moisis Caimis in *Il Corriere Israelitico* for the years 1885-1898. See: Moise Schwab, *Index of Articles relative to Jewish History and Literature,* ed. Zosa Szajkowski (New York: Ktav, 1971), 65-66. See further: Kolbe, "Crossing Regions, Nations, Empires," 64, 177.

[28] At the turn of the century the Jewish community of Corfu numbered around 4000 members. This number declined to around 2000 Jews living on the island at the eve of WWII. Preschel, "The Jews of Corfu," 91, 128.

[29] In contrast to Corfu, the Jewish community of Athens came into being only during the nineteenth century. Hence, it lacked Corfu's longstanding history and old religious establishment. The first Jewish settlers arrived with King Otto's entourage from Bavaria to Athens after the state's

however, with the attempt by liberal Jewish laymen to institutionalize the city's nascent Jewish life.[30] To this end, in 1890 they established the Jewish Fraternity of Athens (Ισραηλιτική Αδελφότης Αθηνών, I.A.A.) and started collecting money for the construction of a Synagogue and the appointment of a rabbi.[31] A year later, the same community leaders established the General Secretariat of the Israelite Communities of Greece (Γενικη΄ Γραμματεία των εν Ελλαδι Ισραηλιτικών Κοινοτήτων), whose president was ex officio the same as the head of the *I.A.A.* and thus presided over the whole of Greek Jewry.[32] Inter-communal mobility was central to this institutionalization process, as Jews who relocated from the provinces (Ionian Islands and Thessaly) to the capital played a leading role in the novel institutions. [33] In Athens, Greek culture constituted a unifying element for the diverse congregation and community leaders displayed their loyalty towards the Greek state, for example, through festive activities on national Independence Day.[34] Moisis Caimis reported enthusiastically about theses developments in his column "Da Corfu" for *Il Corriere Israelitico*.[35]

Caimis' sojourn in the capital was of short duration. After only two years, he dropped out of his studies—probably due to health issues—and returned to his

foundation. Throughout the nineteenth century, Jews moved to the capital from various places like Smyrna, the Ionian Islands, Thessaly, Thessaloniki and Constantinople. From 10 Jewish families in 1856, the community had grown to 80 families in 1890: Michael Molho "La Nouvelle Communaute Juive D'Athenes," in *The Joshua Starr Memorial Volume: Studies in History and Philology* (New York: n. p., 1953), 231-240; Bernard Pierron, *Juifs et Chrétiens de la Grèce moderne* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1996).

30 Carabott, "The Jewish presence in Athens during the nineteenth Century," 186.

31 Ibid.,188-189, the Athenian-born Carl Rothschild (1843-1918) became the fraternity's president.

32 It is not clear whether the other Jewish communities of Greece recognized the self-elected national leadership of the General Secretariat and it seems that the Athenian initiative was only short-lived.

33 For example, the banker Moisis Levis from Trikala in Thessaly was chosen as treasurer of the first Jewish fraternity of Athens and Avraham Konstantinis from the Ionian Island of Zakynthos became it's secretary. Later the same Avraham Konstantinis served as president of the Athens Jewish community from 1900 to 1915. Carabott, "The Jewish presence in Athens during the nineteenth Century," 188-189.

34 Philip Carabott, "Έλληνες Εβραιόι πολίτες στα τελη του 19ου- αρχές 20ου΄αιώνα" [Greek Jewish citizens at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century], *Archeiotaxio* 19 (2017): 43-62.

35 Moisis Caimis, "Da Corfu," *Il Corriere Israelitico* 29 (1890-1891): 44.

home-town in Corfu, where he retrained to be a public school teacher.[36] While Caimis re-established himself in Corfu, an ever-larger number of his coreligionists left the island in search for alternative safe havens. At Easter 1891, a blood-libel accusation incited a wave of antisemitic attacks on the Ionian Islands.[37] Despite the violence, Caimis—at that time president of Corfu's Jewish community—portrayed the Greek government as protector of the Jews and urged his coreligionists to stay. He wrote: "the Greek people, we have said so also on other occasions, are basically liberal and don't let themselves be misled by foolish superstitions about us; they rather lack knowledge about our religious principles."[38] In a letter to the Alliance Israélite Universelle in 1900, he reiterated his conviction that Antisemitism in Greece resulted from "misunderstandings" and could be alleviated through education.[39] At the height of the Dreyfus affair and in wake of the pogrom on Corfu, Caimis suggested two interrelated answers to the rise of Antisemitism in Europe: educating Christians about Jewish principles and raising Jewish self-awareness through the spread of Zionism. While *Il Corriere Israelitico* was the first Italian-language journal to openly endorse a pro-Zionist position, Caimis launched the first Zionist association in Greece. In 1897—the same year in which the first Zionist Congress was held in Basel—he founded Mevasser Zion on Corfu.[40]

Shortly thereafter, he parted ways with *Il Corriere Israelitico* and embarked upon his own journalistic journey. Through the pages of *Israilitis Chronografos* (1899-1901)—the first Jewish periodical published entirely in the Greek language—the journalist endeavored to familiarize Greek-speaking Jews with Zionism and to

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[36] Siakis, "Moisis Chaimis," 5.

[37] For a detailed factual account of the events see: Eftychia Liata, "The Anti-Semitic Disturbances on Corfu and Zakynthos in 1891 and their Socio-Political Consequences," *The Historical Review/La Revue Historique* 4 (2008): 157-169.

[38] Moisis Caimis, "Da Corfu," *Il Corriere Israelitico* 30 (April 1892): 282-283.

[39] Moisis Caimis to the Alliance Israélite Universelle in Paris, November 25, 1900, Selected records from the archives of the Alliance Israélite Universelle, Record Group 43.117M, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC. I would like to thank Philip Carabott for providing me with this letter.

[40] On the Zionist position of *Il Corriere Israelitico* see: Carlotta Ferrara degli Uberti, *Making Italian Jews: Family, Gender, Religion and the Nation, 1861-1918* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 7.

educate his Christian compatriots about Judaism. It is unclear, however, how widely his journal was read. Caimis himself stated that he had subscribers all over Greece.[41] Nonetheless, the journal was only short-lived, probably due to financial difficulties and a lack of paying subscribers.[42]

Although Caimis occupied an important role in Corfu's Jewish community, he finally relocated with his family to Athens in 1906.[43] This choice of residency supports the aforementioned scholarly assumption of a gradual power shift from Corfu to Athens. The island's gradual economic and intellectual provincialization occurred simultaneously to the capital's consolidation as a new magnet for Jewish intellectuals in early twentieth century Greece. Caimis' Athenian years (1906-1929) show how deeply he was anchored within Greek political and intellectual circles, while continuing to function as mediator between Greek and Italian cultural spheres. In Corfu, he had taught Greek to Italian-speaking Jewish children; in Athens, he worked as Italian instructor at the commercial college. [44] Simultaneously, he was active in multiple national publishing spheres. While many Athenian papers such as *Patrida*, *Akropolis*, *Neon Asti*, *Estia*, and *Neoelliniki Epitheorisis* featured his texts, Caimis also worked as Athenian correspondent for the Rome-based newspaper *La Tribuna.*[45] At the same time, he sympathized with Demoticism—a neo-romantic and anti-elitist movement supported by a rising, educated middle class that sought the establishment of Demotic (the Greek vernacular), instead of Katharevousa (an artificial language resembling Ancient Greek), as the national language of Greece. [46] Caimis maintained close relations with many educators and literati of his time, who

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[41] A note of thanks to Jewish community leaders in Larissa, Volos and Trikala for their support of the journal is published in: Moisis Caimis, "From the Jewish World. Internal News," *Israilitis Chronographos* 1, no. 3 (August 1899): 7.

[42] Caimis, "To the Subscribers," *Israilitis Chronographos* 2, no. 8 (April 1901): 57.

[43] Already in 1900 he anticipated "a bright future" for the young Jewish community in the capital, see: Moisis Caimis, letter to the Alliance Israélite Universelle, 25th November 1900.

[44] Siakis, "Moisis Chaimis," 5 and 9.

[45] Alfredo Baccarini and Giuseppe Zanardelli, political leaders of the Italian historical left, established *La Tribuna* in 1883. See further: Siakis, "Moisis Chaimis," 10.

[46] For further information on the language debate in Greece see: Peter Mackridge, *Language and National Identity in Greece 1766-1976* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

advocated the usage of *Demotic* Greek.[47] He even published an article in the Democists' mouthpiece, the journal *Noumas* (1903-1917).[48] Caimis' article for Noumas emphasized parallels between Hebrew revivalism and Demoticism.[49]

The proximity to the Greek political establishment in the capital allowed Caimis to create ties with Greek politicians. After relocating to Athens, he worked as chief editor of the Athenian newspaper *Imerisia*, which was ideologically affiliated with Georgios Theotokis (1844-1916), who served as Greek Prime Minister several times between 1899 and 1909.[50] Following the Goudi Coup of 1909, Caimis started to support the political newcomer Eleftherios Venizelos (1864-1936) and used his cooperation with *La Tribuna* to make the modernist politician known in Italy.[51] At a time of increased national tensions in the Balkans, Caimis established his second Greco-Jewish journal *Israilitiki Epitheorisis* (1912-1916). Besides following an educational agenda and adopting a Zionist outlook, the journal called for the institutional unification of Greek Jewry under the auspices of the Jewish leadership in Athens.[52]

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[47] The Corfiote novelist Konstantinos Theotokis (1872-1923) and Irini Dendrinou (1897-1974), a poet and feminist from the island, were among his contacts. Furthermore, he was associated with Alexandros Pallis (1851-1935), education and language reformer, and Lorentzo Mavili (1860-1912), poet and parliamentarian. Siakis, "Moisis Chaimis," 6

[48] Caimis, *Noumas*, May 15, 1905, 6-7; For further information on Noumas see: Georgios Kalogiannis, "Ο Νουμάς και η Εποχή του (1903-1931). Γλωσσικοί και Ιδεολογικοί Αγώνες" [Noumas and its Time (1903-1931): Linguistic and Ideological Struggle] (PhD diss., Kapodistrias University Athens, 1886).

[49] For further details on Caimis' connection to Demoticism: Joana Bürger, "Early Zionist Contribution to the Making of Greek Jewry: Case study of Moisis Caimis' Israilitiki Epitheorisis (1912-1916)," (MA thesis, Tel Aviv University, 2020), 32-40.

[50] Frezis, *The Jewish Press in Greece*, 451.

[51] During the National Schism of Greece, Caimis wrote in favor of the Venizelos government for *La Tribuna*. See: France. Ministère de la guerre, *Bulletin quotidien de presse étrangère* 142 (July 21, 1916): 3. See further: Frezis, *The Jewish Press in Greece*, 452.

[52] In June 1912, he published a letter by the president of the Jewish community in Athens, Avraham Konstantinis, inviting community leaders to a joint conference. Moisis Caimis, "Concerning the Conference of the Jewish Greek communities. Circular by the president of the Jewish community in Athens," *Israilitiki Epitheorisis* 1, no. 4 (June 1912): 64. However, the Balkan Wars (1912-1913) and World War I (1914-1918) thwarted these plans and the conference was repeatedly postponed. Cancellation announcement: Caimis, "The Conference of the Communities," *Israilitiki Epitheorisis* 1, no. 7-9 (1912): 128. On a detailed analysis of this journal: Bürger, "Early Zionist Contribution to the Making of Greek Jewry."

Following the Greek occupation of Thessaloniki (1912) during the Balkan Wars, our protagonist started to play a political role in the unfolding events. In early 1913, a Jew from Thessaloniki reported to the Alliance Israélite Universelle that "Venizelos, the prime minister, has entrusted the most prominent Jews of Greece with the mission to consolidate the trust among the leadership of our community and to convince us of the advantages of Greek sovereignty."[53] One of those prominent Jews of Old Greece was Moisis Caimis. Charged by Venizelos with the mission to preside over the city's press bureau, he tried to convince the city's Jewish elite to support Greek rule. During his stay in Thessaloniki, he co-published the Salonican French-language newspaper *La Liberté*.[54]

Upon his return to Athens a few months later, Caimis continued to devote his energy to the publication of *Israilitiki Epitheorisis*, his self-proclaimed organ of Greek Jewry.[55] The geopolitical developments forced him to re-articulate the meaning of Greek Jewry and to defend the civil rights of Jews in the newly acquired territories. While it is not clear how influential Caimis was within intellectual Jewish circles in Thessaloniki, he continued to be a seminal figure in the Jewish life of Old Greece (pre-1912 borders). He functioned as secretary of Athens' Jewish community (1915), spurred the spread of Zionism and co-founded a local branch of the B'nai B'rith lodge in 1920.[56] Moisis Caimis passed away in 1929, aged 65. His legacy remained alive among the Jews of Athens for several more decades. He

[53] Letter by L. Carmona to J. Bigart, secretary of the AIU, May 1913, cited in Rena Molho "Venizelos and the Jewish Community of Salonika, 1912-1919," *Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora* 13, no. 34 (1986): 117.

[54] Caimis stated in the editorial of *Israilitiki Epitheorisis* that he was ordered to Thessaloniki by the government and stayed there for three months. Caimis, "To our Readership," *Israilitiki Epitheorisis* 10-12 (1912-1913): 130; See further: Frezis, *The Jewish Press in Greece*, 452.

[55] It seems likely that the Venizelos government subsidized Caimis' *Israilitiki Epitheorisis*. However, no sources have been found yet to support this claim. Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge that Caimis was genuinely convinced of his positions, which were shared by many Jewish intellectuals in Old Greece. Hence, we should refrain from analyzing the journal solely as medium of state propaganda.

[56] Siakis, "Moisis Chaimis," 8.

was remembered in Athenian Jewish newspapers as a sociologist, journalist and important intellectual figure of Old Greece's Jewry.[57]

Between Ethnos and Patria

After presenting Caimis' life as journalist and cultural mediator, the following section dives deeper into his intellectual work. When and how did he first frame Greek Jewry as a political community and how did he harmonize his political vision of Jewish integration into the Greek state system with his endorsement of Zionism? Furthermore, I will show how the process of *Making Greek Jewry*—in Caimis' writing—was associated with a radical re-imagining of *space* and *time*. I argue that Caimis' journalism aimed to reshape Jews' sense of geographical belonging to Greece and to re-anchor them in a national perception of time through the construction of a narrative of Greco-Jewish historical legacy.

The roots of Caimis' conceptualization of Greek Jewry as political community lie in his earliest texts for *Il Corriere Israelitico.* In his first column "Da Corfu" Caimis states: "25 years ago every distinguished profession was closed to the Israelites [a reference to the British protectorate]. Now, there is no longer a need for [our] leaders sitting, detached, in the temple [synagogue], to represent their coreligionists to the government on every little occasion." These words describe the post-emancipation transformation and democratization of Jewish politics and express the author's conviction that Jewish issues should be discussed openly in a public sphere. He further declares in the same article:

> The Israelites, Greek citizens like the others, are sufficiently represented in the government by the municipal authorities and deputies, who are

[57] In the 1950's members of the Jewish community of Athens tried to collect money for the purpose of writing an entry, in Caimis' honor, in the Golden Book of the Jewish National Fund. See: *Ebraiki Estia.* 115."Keren Kayemet." May 30, 1952. The divide between the Jews of Old and New Greece, seems to have persisted to a certain extent after WWII, as Caimis is specifically remembered as an important Jew of Old Greece. See: "Πένθη Φινέτα Μωϋσή Χαΐμη" [Obituary Fineta Moisi Chaimi] *Ebraiki Estia* 98, March 16, 1951; "Κοινωνικά" [Social Affairs] *Ebraiki Estia.* 3, March 28, 1952.

> elected through universal suffrage [...]. We need people with a modern spirit, who understand the age in which we live, to point the way to the coreligionists who need them.[58]

Hence, the young Moisis Caimis, who wrote these lines during his studies in Athens while witnessing the institutionalization of Jewish life in the capital, based his advocacy of Jews' integration into the Greek state system on his firm belief in the principles of universal suffrage and modern state-citizen relations. In other words, Caimis linked his fellow Jews' Greekness to their status as citizens of Greece. At the same time, he expressed his conviction that the Greek language should play a unifying role for the polyglot Jewish citizens of Greece. For example, when Athenian Jews succeeded in hiring their first rabbi, Caimis voiced his discontent with the new spiritual leader's inability to speak Greek: "We would like at least for the rabbi of the capital to know our beautiful national language."[59] With this comment, the journalist omitted Greek Jews' linguistic diversity and elevated the Greek language as the national idiom above Italian or even Judeo-Spanish, traditionally used by the majority of Jews in the region.[60]

The identification with the Greek state project gained special momentum at times of heated conflict. During the Greco-Ottoman War of 1897, Caimis reported to *Il Corriere Israelitico* that around 250 Greek Israelites—"obeying the high ideals of freedom and progress" and "willing to die for their homeland"—fought besides their Christian compatriots in the Greek army. [61] Hence, Jews' military conscription functioned as a paradigm of Greco-Jewish citizenship. The war played a special role in the formation of Greek Jewry in a twofold manner. On the one hand, it brought Jews from various remote Greek localities together to fight under a common banner, and, on the other hand, it forced the government to

[58] Caimis, "Da Corfu," *Il Corriere Israelitico* 27 (1888-1889): 254-255.
[59] Caimis, "Da Corfu," *Il Corriere Israelitico* 29 (1890-1891): 44.
[60] While Corfiote Jews traditionally spoke either Italian or Greek, the Jews of Athens included Judeo-Spanish, Greek and Yiddish speakers, whereas the Jews of Thessaly were mostly of Sephardic origin. For a linguistic mapping of Greek Jewry see: Fleming, *Greece—A Jewish History*, 41-48.
[61] Caimis, "Corfu, 20 July 1897," *Il Corriere Israelitico* 36 (1897): 58.

institutionalize state-minority relations by providing special arrangements for Jewish soldiers to observe their religious duties.[62]

Through the pages of *Il Corriere Israelitico*, Caimis also reported on the contributions of foreign nationals to the Greco-Ottoman war of 1897. He celebrated the efforts of the Garibaldini, volunteers from Italy fighting under the command of Ricciotti Garibaldi along the Greek army against the Ottomans, as an expression of Italian Philhellenism.[63] Thrilled by this sense of brotherhood between Italians and Greeks, he hurried to emphasize the existence of Jews in Garibaldi's ranks. He announced proudly that his colleague Attilio Luzzatto, an Italian-Jewish journalist, parliamentarian and "great and honest Philhellene," who supported the Greek cause as director of the Italian journal *La Tribuna*, fought along Garibaldi in Thessaly.[64] In light of the Ottoman invasion, Caimis depicted Jewish support for the Greek cause not only as an expression of Philhellenism, but as part of a greater struggle for the right to self-determination and national liberty. In the same vein, he reported on Joseph Marco Baruch (1872-1899), a cosmopolitan revolutionary and Zionist from Constantinople, who "came to Greece with the name of Palestine on his lips."[65] Baruch hoped that the fight against the Ottomans would eventually result in the collapse of the Empire and the

[62] On the institutionalization of state-minority relations in the course of Greek expansion and the integration of Jewish communities in the nineteenth century see: Carabott, "Greek Jewish citizens," 50-52.

[63] On the Garibaldini volunteers see: Gilles Pécout, "Philhellenism in Italy: Political Friendship and the Italian Volunteers in the Mediterranean in the nineteenth century," *Journal of Modern Italian Studies* 9, no. 4 (2010): 405-427; Stathis Birtachas, " 'In defence of the liberty and the rights of Great Mother Greece.' The Italian Garibaldini Volunteers in Epirus: the decline of a long tradition in Greece. Evaluation of an old story and new research perspectives," *Mediterranean Chronicle* 6 (2016): 161-182.

[64] Caimis, "Corfu, 20 July 1897," 58; Moisis Caimis, "Attilios Louzzatos," *Israilitis Chronografos* 11 (1900): 7. On Luzzatto see further: Eva Cecchinato, "Luzzatto, Attilio Italico," *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 66 (2006), http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/attilio-italico-luzzatto_(Dizionario-Biografico)/.

[65] Caimis, "Corfu, 20 July 1897," 58. Baruch, born in Constantinople and raised in France, established short-lived Zionist newspapers and tried to spread Zionism in Algeria, Bulgaria, Egypt and finally Italy: *Die Welt. Zentralorgan der Zionistischen Bewegung*, September 15, 1899, 9-10. This fascinating character has attracted only little scholarly attention so far: Paula Daccarett, "1890s Zionism reconsidered: Joseph Marco Baruch," *Jewish History* 19 (2005): 315-345.

establishment of a national home for Jews in Palestine. When Baruch committed suicide a few years later, Caimis' necrology stated:

> Baruch was imbued with the love for freedom. Feeling for all the enslaved nations and an ardent Philhellene, he announced that the Jews and the Greeks, two glorious nations with a bright past and an equally bright future, should unite in a brotherly struggle for the rebirth of the East.[66]

Caimis did not delve deeper into this vision of Greco-Jewish cooperation in dismantling the Ottoman Middle East in any of his further texts. Nonetheless, this episode reveals that the author did not perceive any contradiction between advocating several national movements simultaneously. On the contrary, Caimis' pluralist conception of nationhood in the late nineteenth century enabled a transnational celebration of "revolutionary cosmopolitanism," which included Italian and Zionist proclamations of philhellenism.[67]

Although Baruch's militant activism for the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine evidently impressed Caimis, he himself endorsed a more subtle approach to Jewish nationalism. At a time when territorial Zionism was still a novel movement, he used his journal *Israilitis Chronographos* (1899-1901) to make the ideas of Zionism known in Greece. He reported on the Zionist Congress, provided news from Zionist associations around the world and published Greek translations of speeches by Theodor Herzl and Max Nordau.[68] Besides spreading knowledge about this new movement, he was concerned to harmonize the idea of Jewish nationalism with the framework of Greek citizenship.[69] In a three-part

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[66] Caimis, "Necrology," *Israilitis Chronografos* 3 (1899): 7.

[67] Birtachas applied the term revolutionary cosmopolitanism in his analysis of the Garibaldini mission to Greece in 1897. Birtachas, *The Italian Garibaldini Volunteers*, 166.

[68] For example: Caimis, "Third Zionist Congress," *Israilitis Chronographos* 1, no. 3 (August 1899): 2; Id., "Translation of a speech by Max Nordau," *Israilitis Chronographos* 2, no. 1 (September 1900), 4; Id., "Zionist News," *Israilitis Chronographos* 2, no. 8 (April 1901), 59; Id., "Dr. Herzl to the Maccabean Club in London," *Israilitis Chronographos* 2, no. 10 (June 1901): 77-80.

[69] On Caimis' usage of the concept citizenship and the relation between Zionism and Greek citizenship see further: Bürger, "Early Zionist Contribution to the Making of Greek Jewry," 15-16, 62-84. On Zionism in the Balkans and in the Ottoman Empire: Esther Benbassa and Aron

series of texts entitled "Zionism," he discussed the relation of Zionism and Greek patriotism. Caimis declared that his sympathy with the movement was of a philanthropic nature. He supported territorial Zionism insofar as he acknowledged the need for a safe haven for the persecuted Jews of Russia and Romania. The Jews of Greece, however, who "enjoy full political rights and the freedom to contribute to the common good of their patria," should nurture "a platonic [love] for Zion," which—under the contemporary circumstances of rising Antisemitism—"does not rule out their material support for the movement."[70] In his second Greco-Jewish journal, the call for material support of the Zionist project gained concrete form. *Israilitiki Epitheorisis* (1912-1916) encouraged its readers to donate to the Jewish National Fund and published the donors' names. Yet, the promotion of a Jewish national consciousness within the borders of the Greek state remained his main concern.[71] He differentiated between *ethnismos* (national consciousness) and *patria* (home country) and explained that despite the congruence of national consciousness and patriotism for most peoples, in the case of the Jews it diverged. Throughout his life, Caimis asserted that Jews in Greece ought to perceive themselves as a nation with Zion as their *pnevmatiki patrida* (spiritual patria), while being primarily committed to the Greek state as their corporeal homeland.[72]

Rodrigue, *Sephardi Jewry : A History of the Judeo-Spanish Community, 14th-20th Centuries* (Berkeley: California Press, 2000), 65-159; Rozen, *The Last Ottoman Century and Beyond*, 206-221.

[70] Caimis, "Zionism. Part I," *Israilitis Chronographos* 1, no 1(1899): 4; Id.., "Zionism. Part II," *Israilitis Chronographos* 1, no. 2 (1899): 6-8.

[71] This finding corresponds with Rena Molho's interpretation of the first two decades of the Zionist movement in Thessaloniki (1899-1919). She concludes that local Zionists, despite supporting the idea of Jewish territorial sovereignty, emphasized their eagerness to integrate into the Greek nation under the precondition that the state would protect their separate ethnic identity after the city's annexation to Greece. Rena Molho, "The Zionist movement up to the first Panhellenic Zionist Congress," in *Salonica and Istanbul: Social, Political and Cultural Aspects of Jewish Life*, ed. Rena Molho (Istanbul: The ISIS Press, 2005), 185. On Zionists' contributions to Hellenizing the Jews of Thessaloniki in the interwar period, see: Paris Papamichos Chronakis: "A National Home in the Diaspora? Salonican Zionism and the Making of a Greco-Jewish City" *Levantine Studies* 8, no. 2 (Winter 2018).

[72] Caimis, "Zionism. Part I," *Israilitiki Epitheorisis* 2, no. 4 (1913): 57-59; Id., "Zionism. Part II," *Israilitiki Epitheorisis* 2, no. 5 (1913): 79-81; Id., "Zionism. Part Three," *Israilitiki Epitheorisis* 2, no. 7-8 (1913,): 116-117; Id., "Zionism. Part Four," *Israilitiki Epitheorisis* 2, no. 10 (1913): 161-163.

Caimis' conceptualization of Greece as a corporeal homeland and *patria* for his fellow Jews changed during the period from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century. Scholarship on the transition of the Ionian Islands from the time of Venetian domination to their integration into the Greek Kingdom emphasizes the "radical transformation of the concept of 'patria', from a cultural and local community into a political and national entity."[73] Although Caimis' work belongs to the post-Enosis period, it still exhibits traces of this transformation process. A comparison of his early texts for *Il Corriere Israelitico* with the approach of his Greco-Jewish journals reveals a shift in the usage of *patria* from a concept of multi-layered affiliations to one confined by nation-state borders.

In the late nineteenth century, Caimis' reports for *Il Corriere Israelitico* reflected the multiplicity of Corfiote Jews' cultural and political affiliations by featuring traces of locally, nationally and globally defined Jewish self-conceptions. The column "Da Corfu" provided local news, like marriage announcements and obituaries from Corfu, it forged ties with Corfiote diaspora communities by calling for charity for the mother community, and it informed its readership about developments within the Jewish communities on the Greek mainland.[74] Hence, Corfu functioned for Italian-reading Jews as a window to get a glimpse of Jewish life in Athens, Chalcis and Thessaly. By reporting on these diverse Post-Venetian and Post-Ottoman Jewish communities, Caimis' column started to give meaning to the legal category of Greek Jewry, defined Greek citizenship, and enriched it with everyday stories from Jewish life in the Greek state.[75]

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[73] Zanou, *Transnational Patriotism in the Mediterranean*, 2.

[74] On *Il Corriere Israelitico*'s contribution to raising funds for the Jewish community of Corfu see: Kolbe, ""Crossing Regions, Nations, Empires,"176-179.

[75] One of the first columns entitled "Da Corfu" proudly announces that Jews contributed to the government's efforts to secure loans and describes Prime Minister Trikoupis' satisfaction when visiting Jewish factories on Corfu. "Da Corfu," *Il Corriere Israelitico* 24 (1885-1886): 241-242. For a study of the Jewish communities of Athens and Chalkis, see: "The Israelites of Greece," *Il Corriere Israelitico* 26 (1887-1888): 74-76; News from Volos: Caimis, "Da Corfu," *Il Corriere Israelitico* 32 (1893-1894): 185. News from Arta: Ibid., 232-233; On Jews and the Greek Revolution: Caimis, "Da Corfu," *Il Corriere Israelitico* 33 (1894-1895): 164-165; Id., "Greece. The consequences of the last Earthquake," *Corriere Israelitico* 33 (1894-1895): 42; On Community elections in Athens: "Da

Breaking away from the imperial publishing center of Trieste at the end of the nineteenth century, Caimis embarked on his own journalistic endeavor with the publication of *Israilitis Chronographos*. This journal provided Greek Jews with their "own voice," a voice that no-longer spoke Italian but embraced Greek as the unifying language for the linguistically diverse Jewish congregations. *Israilitis Chronographos* issued a news section, which was divided into *Esoteriko* (internal) and *Eksoteriko* (external news). The fact that Caimis considered events in the different Jewish communities of Greece as *Greek* "interior affairs," while he presented global Jewish news through the column of "exterior affairs," shows how much he had by then internalized nation-state borders as a frame of reference. Hence, the journal contributed significantly to the process of remodeling Jewish patriotism from an attachment to a certain locality to an affiliation with a citizenry.

This process, however, was not always linear and smooth. Moments of fluidity often interspersed Caimis' cartographical categorization along state borders and his column of "interior news" included several stories of mobility, attesting to the inter-connectedness of Jewish communities along the Mediterranean shores. Moreover, the geographical boundaries of Greece were in flux throughout the long nineteenth century. Following the integration of the Ionian Islands in 1864 and Thessaly in 1881, Greek irredentism led to the incorporation of the regions of Epirus, Macedonia and Crete in 1912-1913. How then did our protagonist adapt his vision of Greek Jewry to the dramatic geopolitical changes on the ground?

An episode from Crete beautifully exemplifies how Caimis' words strove to garb a formerly Ottoman Jewish community in a novel guise of *Greekness*. In 1899, he reported in the journal's *Greek interior affairs* section that Matathias Coen—a Jewish resident of Crete—traveled to Rome, in order to receive his credentials for his new position of official interpreter for the Italian Consulate in Smyrna. At the time of writing, however, none of these localities—Crete, Rome or Smyrna—belonged to the Greek state in a geopolitical sense. Caimis reported enthusiastically that Mr. Coen was known for his Philhellenic feelings and that he gave his

Corfu," *Corriere Israelitico* 33 (1894-1895): 276-277; During the Greco-Ottoman War (1897) the Jewish community of Corfu hosted the entire Jewish community of Arta for two months on their island "Da Corfu," *Il Corriere Israelitico* 36 (1897-1898): 15.

offspring a Greek education, in order to send them to Athens for their higher studies.[76] Thus, Mr. Coen's "Philhellene sentiments" justified in Caimis' eyes the crossing of boundaries between "internal" and "external news." Thirteen years later the island of Crete was officially integrated into the Greek state, and the territorial expansion made Caimis rephrase his categorization of Cretan Jews. Described as Philhellenes in 1899, Cretan Jews were now presented as belonging "since innumerable years to the Greek family due to language and education."[77] Hence, we witness a shift in Caimis' language from stressing Cretan Jews' support for the Greek cause—an external position—to reaffirming their intrinsic affiliation with Greece, on the basis of preexisting cultural and linguistic attributes.

Caimis' style of reporting on the integration of Thessaloniki's Jewish community further exemplifies how the author broadened his categorization of Greek Jewry in line with Greek territorial expansion. In his early writings for *Il Corriere Israelitico* and *Israilitis Chronographos*, Caimis remained strikingly silent in regard to the Ottoman Jewish community close to Greece's Eastern borders. He looked westwards in search for role models for Greek Jewry and his newspapers are filled with accounts from German, French, British and Italian Jewry. In his mental map, Sephardic Salonika was located far off to the East. He wrote about the community only once during the Greco-Ottoman War of 1897, in an opinion piece in *Il Corriere Israelitico*, which aimed to distance Greek Jews from their Ottoman brethren. He stated that "Greek Israelites" were distraught to learn that Salonikan Jews were associated with "a mob," which insulted Greek prisoners of war. A decade later, as the Greek army approached the Ottoman city during the Balkan Wars, Caimis strove to shed a more positive light on the city's Jewish community. In the fall of 1912, he wrote a semi-historical article tracing the city's Jewish presence back to the pre-Christian period, emphasizing that Salonikan Jews had been sympathetic towards the Hellenic world during antiquity. He linked the community's economic and spiritual advancement to the arrival of the expelled Jews from Spain, but was quick to add that the "oppressing Turkish system of

[76] Caimis, "Community news," *Israilitis Chronografos* 2 (1899): 11.
[77] Caimis, "To our Readership," *Israilitiki Epitheorisis* 10-12 (1912-1913), 130.

governance did not allow for a lasting prosperity." In an orientalist manner, the article continued by proclaiming that the establishment of an Alliance School in 1873 initiated a "new time of progress" for the city's Jews. Describing the Ottoman period as time of decline, he claimed that Greek annexation would continue the process of renewal.[78] Through his articles, Caimis endeavoured to entrench Salonikan Jewry in a Greek and thus Western political and cultural sphere of influence.[79]

Eventually, Greek rule over the annexed territories was finalized and while Caimis described Greek-speaking Jewish communities in Epirus and Crete as originally Greek, on the basis of their linguistic particularities, he welcomed the non-Grecophone Sephardic Jews of Thessaloniki and Macedonia with the words: "Henceforth, they are bound to us not just by racial and religious ties, but by a shared patria."[80] He expressed his optimism that "the newcomers will support our work cheerfully so that Greek Jewry (*O en Elladi Evraïsmos*) can prove itself useful to them and to the patria, our beloved Greece."[81] From March 1913 onwards, *Israilitiki Epitheorisis* featured a French column to make its vision of Greek Jewry accessible to non-Greek speakers. While Caimis conceptualized Greeks and Jews as two distinct nations, he envisioned a process through which the Jews in the new territories—regardless of their linguistic profiles—would *become Greek* through their expression of patriotism. The journal portrays Greek

[78] Caimis, "The Jewish Community of Thessaloniki," *Israilitiki Epitheorisis* 7-9 (1912), 114.

[79] At the same time, Salonikan Jewish intellectuals themselves debated on their cultural positioning between Europe and the Ottoman East. On the role of the Alliance Schools in the Europeanization of Jewish education in Thessaloniki see: Rena Molho, "Education in the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki in the Beginning of the 20th Century," *Balkan Studies* 34 (1993), 259-269. On the changing self-perception of the city's Jews as reflected in the transformation of Jewish education from Ottoman to Greek rule see: Naar, *Jewish Salonica*, 139-189.

[80] I translated the Greek term "φυλετική δεσμοί" as "racial ties." Caimis used different Greek terms like "φυλή" and "έθνος" interchangeably. On the transformation of the concept of race in nineteenth and early twentieth century Greece see: Evi Afdela, *Φυλετικές Θεωρίες στην Ελλάδα* [Racial Theories in Greece] (Heraklion: Crete University Press, 2017).

[81] Caimis, "To our Readership," 130.

Jews primarily as a political community defined by their affiliation with Greece through their status as Greek citizens.[82]

This reshaping of a religiously and locally defined community into a collective confined by nation-state borders was further associated with a radical re-imagining of *time.* In search of means to legitimize Greek expansion in the Eastern Mediterranean and, especially, to justify Jews' support of the state's irredentist agenda, Caimis followed the spirit of his time and turned towards the past. The development of novel historical narratives, with nations playing the central role as agents of change, constitutes the core of nineteenth century national writing.[83] Like his contemporaries, Caimis selectively used the past to craft historical narratives that would function as the cultural underpinning of his political agenda. The difference was, however, that in Caimis' historical imagination two agents appeared on the scene as leading acts: the Greeks and the Jews. Contrary to Jewish assimilationists in Central Europe, Caimis did not intend to portray his coreligionists as an integral part of the Greek nation; he rather viewed both peoples as distinct, yet historically connected, and presented Greco-Jewish cultural synergy as a cradle of European civilization. "Two places, two ethnicities, two nations produced this noble civilization, which liberated humanity from the darkness of barbarity and ignorance. These nations—everyone knows them—are the Greek and the Jewish."[84]

With these words, Caimis opposed a widespread intellectual trope of Greco-Jewish cultural antithesis. In the nineteenth century, European civilizational discourse conceptualized Judaism and Hellenism as two contrasting, irreconcilable modes of thought—an idea that was also taken up and politically charged by anti-Semitic

[82] The fact that Caimis portrayed Jews and Greeks as two distinct nations corresponds with Doxiadis' assumption that the Greek state differentiated between patriotic and non-patriotic Jewish citizens of the Greek state, while not perceiving them as members of the Greek nation. Doxiadis, *State, Nationalism, and the Jewish Communities of Modern Greece,* 153-154.

[83] Antonios Liakos, "The Construction of National Time: The Making of the Modern Greek Historical Imagination," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 16, no. 1 (2001): 28.

[84] Caimis, "Israelites and Greeks," *Israilitis Chronografos* 1 (1899): 1.

parts of the Greek press.[85] Having its origins in Christian scholarship, the cliché of an inherent contradiction between Judaism and Hellenism translated also to Jewish scholarly circles.[86] Finally, Zionists stylized the Hellenization of Jews in Antiquity as the negative epitome of "racial assimilation."[87] Already in the first editorial of *Israilitis Chronografos*, Caimis writes that "a superstition, nourished by ignorance, assumes that the Judaic and Hellenist pneuma are contradicting each other." [88] To purge the theme of Greco-Jewish coexistence of its manifold negative legacy, Caimis presented Philo of Alexandria, Maimonides and Moses Mendelsohn as paragons of harmonization between the Judaic and Hellenistic philosophy. [89] Furthermore, he drew a link between those three figures by weaving a narrative of Greco-Jewish cultural affinity and cooperation that span from the Hellenistic period to modern times. He claimed that Alexandrian Jews introduced Arabs in Baghdad to the ideas of Hellenism, which in turn reached Europe with the Arab conquest of the Iberian Peninsula. From there, Latin-speaking Jews transmitted Hellenism to a broader European circle, sparking the cultural awakening of Europe.[90]

Was Caimis the first to fabricate these narratives of a Greco-Jewish historical legacy, and where did he draw his inspirations from? This article can only provide a humble starting point to answering these questions and calls upon further research in this direction. To fully trace Caimis' ideas to their origin, one would need to possess the journalist's library, diaries and personal correspondence. Although we are missing these sources, a thorough reading of his journalistic

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[85] Simon Goldhill argues that this antithesis was a central theme in nineteenth century European intellectual discourse and can be found in texts of Moses Mendelssohn, Hegel, Nietzsche, Matthew Arnold, Marx, and Freud: Simon Goldhill, "What has Alexandria to do with Jerusalem? Writing the History of Jews in the Nineteenth Century," *The Historical Journal* 59, no. 1 (2016): 127.

[86] Maren Niehoff, "Alexandrian Judaism in 19th Century Wissenschaft des Judentums: Between Christianity and Modernization," in *Jüdische Geschichte in hellenistisch-römischer Zeit*, ed. Aharon Oppenheimer (München: Oldenbourg, 1999), 9-28.

[87] Shmuel Feiner, *Haskalah and History: The Emergence of Modern Jewish Historical Conciousness* (Oxford: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2002), 326; For an elaboration on the Greek-Jewish antithesis in Jewish thinking see: Naar, *Jewish Salonica*, 26-27.

[88] Caimis, "Israelites and Greeks," *Israilitis Chronografos* 1 (1899): 1.

[89] Ibid., 2.

[90] Caimis, "Jewish Hellenists," *Israilitiki Epitheorisis* 4, no. 2-4 (1915): 22-23.

publications reveals that he was well-versed in the historical studies of Heinrich Graetz, Marc Bloch and Theodore Reinach.[91] Theodore Reinach, in particular,—historian of Greek antiquity and contributor to the journal *Revue des études Juives*—occupied a significant place in Caimis' publications and in the writings of Greek Jews in general. Lazaros Beleli (1859-1930), a Jewish intellectual from Corfu and a contemporary of Caimis, first translated Reinach's *Histoire des Israélites* (1884) into Greek. The Corfiote Nacamulli publishing house printed the translation in the 1890's.[92] Caimis' idea of a Greco-Jewish cultural amalgamation as the cradle of European civilization, for example, builds directly upon Reinach's thesis that Jews functioned as a spiritual bridge between Hellenes, Arabs and Christians, keeping Greek philosophy alive in the "dark middle ages."[93]

Due to the increasingly chauvinistic nationalism at the time of the Balkan Wars, this rhetoric of Greco-Jewish cultural synergy, mentioned only sporadically in *Israilitis Chronografos*, attained new polemical heights in *Israilitiki Epitheorisis*. At a time when the political belonging of the region of Macedonia was highly disputed, Caimis followed Greek national historiography in stylizing the Macedonian King as a Greek national hero and the personification of the Greek spirit. In his articles, Alexander the Great functioned as a saviour of the Jews, who spared Jerusalem from destruction and bowed before a Jewish priest, preparing the ground for the *Evraïoellinistiko fainomeno* (Hebraic-Hellenist phenomenon).[94]

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[91] The pages of Caimis' journals contain multiple references to Graetz' *Geschichte des Judenthums.* Furthermore, he translated into Greek and published excerpts of the following text: Marc Bloch, "Les Juifs et la prospérité publique à traverse l'histoire," *Revue des études Juives* 38, no. 45 (1899): 14-51.

[92] Théodore Reinach, *Histoire des Israélites depuis la ruine de leur independence nationale jusque' à nos jours,* 2nd ed. (Paris: Hachett, 1901). Caimis advertised Belelis' translation in *Israilitis Chronographos* 1, no. 2 (1899): 12, "Ρεΐναχ, Ιστορία των Ισραηλιτών άπο της διασποράς αυτών μέχρι των καθήμάς χρόνων, Μετάφρασις Λ. Βελλέλης, Τυπογραφείον του εκδοτού Ναχαμούλη, Τιμή Δραχ. 4."

[93] On Reinach's view of Greco-Jewish relations see: Jean Réville, "Reviewed Work: Histoire des Israélites depuis la ruine de leur indépendance nationale jusqu'à nos jours," *Revue De L'histoire Des Religions* 44 (1901): 132-34.

[94] Caimis*,* "The Hellenist Jews," *Israilitiki Epitheorisis* 2- 4 (1915), 22; Id.*,* "Fraternization of Greeks and Jews," *Israilitiki Epitheorisis* 7-9 (1912), 122; Id., "The Roman and the Greek World. On Anti-Semitism," *Israilitiki Epitheorisis* 10-12 (1912-1913), 131.

Furthermore, Caimis—fully aware that Christianity constituted an important pillar of Greek national identity—emphasized the harmonious nature of Judaism and Greek Orthodoxy. To this end, he republished an article by the Greek theologian, prelate and university professor Chrisostomos Papadopoulos (1868—1938), who elaborated upon the importance for the spread of Christianity of the *Septuagint* (Greek translation of the Old testament by Hellenized Jews of Alexandria) and the philosophy of Philo of Alexandria.[95] In addition, Caimis reinterpreted the Maccabean struggle against Antiochus—a symbol of Greco-Jewish animosity—as the ultimate victory of Monotheism over Paganism, which did not oppose the "Greek spirit—a monotheistic notion of truth just covered by a cloak of polytheism," but rather enabled the Hellenes to transform into the modern Greek nation by vanquishing paganism.[96]

Caimis articulated this narrative of Greco-Jewish cultural synergy against the dark background of an increasingly anti-Jewish press discourse in Thessaloniki. At a moment of radical political change, the city's incorporation into the Greek state unearthed anti-Jewish sentiments and added the political stereotype of the "anti-national Jew" to the nineteenth century Greek discourse of religious anti-Judaism.[97] It is this stereotype of the "anti-national Jew" that Caimis aimed to refute with his apologetic account of a Greco-Jewish historical legacy.

In the interwar period, Jewish historians in Thessaloniki developed very similar narratives of Greco-Jewish synergy with the aim of Hellenizing their community.[98] Caimis' work certainly preceded them, but we are unable to

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[95] This text was published in the scientific theological journal *Ekklisiastikos Faros* based in Alexandria Chrisostomos Papadopoulou, "The Hellenist Jews of Alexandria," *Ekklisiastikos Faros* (1914): 565-593. And reproduced by Caimis in *Israilitiki Epitheorisis* 2-4 (1915): 23-26; Id. 6-8 (1915): 75-77.

[96] Caimis, "Hanukkah. The Celebration of the Maccabean," *Israilitiki Epitheorisis* 4, no. 6-8 (1914): 106.

[97] On the development of anti-Jewish discourse in the Greek context see: Carabott, "State, Society and the Religious "Other" in nineteenth-century Greece," 1-33.

[98] Naar, *Jewish Salonica*, 189-239. Eyal Ginio, "Ενσωμάτωση μέσω του Παρελθόντος: Εβραίοι Μελετητές γράφουν Ιστορία στη μεσοπολεμική Θεσσαλονίκην" [Incorporation through the Past: Jewish Scholars writing History in Interwar Thessaloniki] in *Thessaloniki: A City in Transition, 1912-2012*, ed. Dimitris Keridis (Thessaloniki: Epiketro, 2015), 266-280.

establish to what extent his writings influenced Jewish intellectuals in Thessaloniki. Not necessarily familiar with the intellectual productions of Jews from Old Greece (pre 1912 borders), Jewish intellectuals in Thessaloniki probably constructed analogous narratives by using the same sources as a gateway to their studies: the works of nineteenth century French and German Jewish historians, like Graetz and Reinach, and the European renaissance discourse around the Greco-Jewish trope. [99]

Conclusions

From 1864 onwards, Jews from the Ionian Islands played an important role in the institutionalization of Greek Jewry. Jewish intellectuals like Giuseppe Nacamulli, Moisis Caimis, Lazaros Belelis, Avraham Konstantinis and others, functioned as cultural and political mediators on multiple levels. They formed bridges between Italian and Greek speaking Jews and mediated between their fellow Jews and the Greek political establishment, thus actively creating Greek Jewry. Moisis Caimis' unique intellectual creations demonstrate the conception of Greek Jewry as a political community in its early stages. Born into the post-Venetian Adriatic world at the end of the British protectorate, he regarded Greek sovereignty as a guarantee of Jewish civil rights and urged his fellow Jews to exercise their rights by getting involved in all spheres of public life. Caimis was the first to publish magazines in the Greek language discussing Greek-Jewish matters on a supra-local and national level. He used his position as editor of *Israilitis Chronografos* and *Israilitiki Epitheorisis* to popularize Zionism as a movement that enhanced the Jews' historical consciousness and communal spirit within the borders of Greece. Writing at a time of war and intensified national competition, Caimis—a supporter of Greek irredentism—advocated for the idea of Greco-Jewish cultural synergy. He changed his views on Ottoman Jews in line with the geopolitical developments on the ground and utilized nationalist imagery in order to make the Jewish communities of the newly acquired territories fit into a Greek patriotic discourse.

[99] Naar, *Jewish Salonica*, 192-196.

Overshadowing the smaller Jewish communities in the Greek realm with its longstanding and large Jewish presence, Thessaloniki became the new center of Jewish life in interwar Greece. *Israilitiki Epitheorisis* ceased publications in 1916, probably due to financial straits and distribution difficulties caused by the war and the National Schism. Although Caimis' magazines were relatively short-lived and might not have found much of an echo among the Ladino-speaking Jews of Thessaloniki, they continued to inspire a generation of Greek-speaking Jewish journalists with roots in Old Greece. Struggling to add a pan-Greek perspective to the Thessaloniki-centered Jewish press discourse, several Greek-speaking Jewish intellectuals established Greek-language journals as mouthpieces for Jews in Athens and in the provinces.[100] All of these interwar Greco-Jewish publications, which have not received any considerable scholarly attention so far, mention Moisis Caimis as a source of inspiration and as the pioneer of Jewish journalism and Zionism in Greece.

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[100] For instance, the Zionist organizations in Thessaly published the journal *Israil* (1917-1919). Thereafter, Yomtov Yacoel from Trikala and Isaak Kampelis from Ioaninna edited the monthly magazine *Nea Sion* (1923-1924). Subsequently, *La Tribune Juive de Grece* (To Evraïkon Vima tis Ellados, 1925-?) was published bilingually in French and Greek with Isaak Kampelis being responsible for the Greek part. Further Greco-Jewish publications in the interwar period were: The Zionist magazine *Israil* (Thessaloniki, 1928-1929), and the journal of the Zionist organization in Athens *I foni tou Israil* (1934-1938). For excerpts from these journals see Frezis, *The Jewish Press in Greece*, 190-206. The National Library of Israel holds several editions of these publications.

Keywords: Greco-Jewish Identity Formation, Jewish History of Corfu, Jewish History of Athens, Greco-Jewish Press, Zionism in Greece

How to quote this article:
Joana Bürger, "*Between Corfu and Athens: Moisis Caimis' Contribution to the Making of Greek Jewry (1885-1916)*," in *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History. Journal of the Fondazione CDEC* 20 (December 2021), DOI: 10.48248/issn.2037-741X/13120

Clémence Boulouque, *Another Modernity: Elia Benamozegh's Jewish Universalism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2020), pp. 328.

by *Cyril Aslanov*

Clémence Boulouque's monography is the reworking of her PhD dissertation written under the supervision of Elliott Wolfson at NYU. I did not read that PhD dissertation but I must say that the present book is far more readable than the average academic work. It can delight an enlightened audience interested in Elia Benamozegh's intellectual legacy as a bridge between traditional Jewish lore (including mysticism) and western philosophy.

The four parts of the book lead the reader from a contextualization of Benamozegh's life and work (pp. 15-61) to a reappraisal of his universalism against the background of the philosophical debates of his time (pp. 63-106). Part three delves into the status of Kabbalah in Benamozegh's thought, not only as a source of references in his polygraphic activities in three languages (Hebrew; Italian; French) but also as a tool to overcome binary oppositions and more especially, the antithesis between universalism and particularism (pp. 107-147). Part four (pp. 149-191) deals with the limits of Benamozegh's universalism, that Boulouque's deconstructive reading presents as a way of reasserting the centrality of Judaism.

One of the qualities of Boulouque's monography is that she clearly perceives the afterlife (or even the afterlives, as she puts it on p. 53) of Benamozegh's teaching till our days. The debate around Benamozegh's way of using universalism as a way to promote a Judeocentric conception of the spiritual history of humankind is a recurrent issue in the history of the reception of the rabbi's writings, which are periodically rediscovered after low waters of relative oblivion. I will never forget that in May 1990, I had been invited to give a speech about Benamozegh's magnum opus, *Israël et l'humanité* in an informal circle organized by fellow students at the École Normale Supérieure (rue d'Ulm). The French philosopher Élisabeth de Fontenay honored us with her presence. However, after my speech she criticized the Italian rabbi, saying that his allegedly universalistic teaching was an envelope aiming at conveying the most ethnocentric views and she even accused

him of recycling Herderian views in a Jewish garb. A heated debate followed De Fontenay's provocative assessment. Boulouque's book is a way to contribute to the settling of the fundamental question of whether Benamozegh's professed universalism entails a hidden agenda that consists in promoting Jewish particularism. This kind of suspicion does not only concern Benamozegh's views. It is relevant whenever a synthesis has been proposed between general philosophy and the teaching of Judaism: Philo, Maimonides, Hermann Cohen, Leon Chestov, Emmanuel Levinas and many others.

Boulouque's monography is interesting in that it is not only a critical appraisal of the dialectic of particularism and universalism in Benamozegh's thought, it also helps us understand how different categories of readers manifested their opinion on the issue of Jewish universalism as a response to *Israël et l'humanité*. Boulouque claims that in this debate two names are of crucial importance: on the one hand, Aimé Pallière, who produced a summarized version of the manuscript of *Israël et l'humanité*, published in Paris in 1914, of which the edition provided by Émile Touati in 1946 (repr. 1961) is a further reduction; on the other hand, Rabbi Eliyahu Zini, who for years has been leading the editorial work on Benamozegh's writings, including the manuscript of *Israël et l'humanité*. The main problem concerns the gap between the manuscript of *Israël et l'humanité* and Pallière's reworking that brought about the first printed edition in 1914. Here I must correct two assertive statements made by the author:

> accusations that he (Pallière) falsified or rewrote it (allegedly to support misleading claims about the universality of Judaism) have never been textually supported since, until now, no one compared the original manuscript and the Pallière edition (p. 53).

> To the best of my knowledge, Eliyahu Zini has not, to this day, produced any evidence for his claim to possess such a manuscript (p. 218, n. 17).

These assertions are misleading or maybe, there was a misunderstanding between Rabbi Zini and the author. What Rabbi Zini probably had in mind is that he was in possession of a microfilm of the manuscript conserved in the Archive of the

Jewish Community in Livorno. This manuscript that the author mentions in her acknowledgments (p. x) is the very same one whose microfilm had been put at Rabbi Zini's disposal in the eighties. On p. 56, Boulouque quotes the opinion of the Rabbi's son Emanuele Benamozegh, who told Pallière that the 1990 pages manuscript was an intermediate stage of the text and that its earlier version "had been lost or destroyed." Such an assumption both complicates and relativizes the issue of the legitimacy that should be ascribed to the various versions of the text.

In my own youth, I worked on that microfilm of the manuscript in the context of Rabbi Zini's editorial project. I saw, read and reworked the 1990 folia of the microfilmed manuscript, that is written in a strongly Italianized blend of French. These 1990 pages constitute the very same "two-thousand-page unfinished manuscript" that the author mentions on p. 51. My task was precisely to turn Benamozegh's Italianized French into good French, something that Pallière had already done in his 1914 edition but in a way that consisted in avoiding the frequent digressions and repetitions and in abridging the bulk of Benamozegh's summa. The problem of Pallière's erasing of the "interpolations and digressions" is addressed by Boulouque, who even quotes what the rabbi's French disciple said about his editing work (pp. 56-57). However, yet between the two policies in the editing of the text (Pallière's interventionism and my own minimalistic policy that consisted in correcting the phrasing of each and every sentence, not the overall structure of the exposition), mine seems to be more respectful of Benamozegh's intention. Indeed, what Pallière deemed to be a repetition or an excursus was probably intended by Benamozegh as a way to prepare the reader to be receptive to his argumentation. The freedom Pallière took with the manuscript of *Israël et l'humanité* probably contributed to upgrade Benamozegh's work and to make it look more philosophical than it really was. However, in his own horizon of reception, Benamozegh's "tone has been considered more that of a preacher than of a systematic philosopher."

Boulouque resorts to the testimony of the late Charles Mopsik, a leading figure in the research on Kabbalah in the last two decades of the twentieth century, in order to delegitimate Rabbi Zini's efforts to produce a version of the manuscript of *Israël et l'humanité* that would be more trustful to Benamozegh's manifest

intention: "Other Francophones, in the circle of Rav Zini of Haifa, have started a completely new edition of his work, based on unpublished sources, all the while trying to bend his doctrine toward a Judeocentric, fundamentalist agenda foreign to his genuine doctrine" (p. 60). The piquant point here is that I am personally hinted at in Mopsik's criticism since I was one of the Francophones "in the circle of Rav Zini." Mopsik and I were very good friends although we did not share the same views on a lot of issues. We used to spend hours friendly debating our intellectual, political and spiritual divergences. Mopsik's assertion quoted by Boulouque sounds to me as an echo of our animated discussions, where my late friend would often play the devil's advocate, in this case the defense of the position according to which the "Francophones in the circle of Rav Zini" were trying to "bend his [Benamozegh's] thought toward a Judeocentric, fundamentalist agenda." If we place the debate in its context, we should understand that the more I was criticizing Pallière's interventionism in the editing work of *Israël et l'humanité* in order to make it sound more universalistic, the more Mopsik was accusing Rabbi Zini and myself to pull in the opposite direction. Beyond the peculiar spirit of contradiction that animated my discussions with the late Charles Mopsik, the real question at stake here is whether an editor is allowed to thoroughly reshuffle the whole economy of a manuscript that is perhaps more than just a draft. In my opinion, the texts and their deceased authors deserve more respect and nobody involved in the study or edition of ancient, medieval or modern manuscripts would deny it. The problem is that at the time Pallière was undertaking his editing, the text of *Israël et l'humanité* was bestowed with an actual and urgent function that consisted in bringing a message to humankind on the verge of war. Retrospectively, the date of the publication of Pallière's reworking of the text can appear as loaded with an ironic symbolism, after humankind's moral bankruptcy and utter failure in its efforts to thwart warfare and aggressiveness. Nowadays, our disenchanted world can appreciate Benamozegh's magnum opus not so much as relevant tool for the improvement of humankind (a task that has been proved naive) but as a testimony of the intellectual atmosphere of a bygone epoch. For such an academic purpose, the less the text of the manuscript of *Israël et l'humanité* is changed, the better.

Retrospectively, I think that Rabbi Zini should have published a diplomatic edition of the microfilmed manuscript of *Israël et l'humanité*. This would have spared Boulouque her unfounded accusation against Rabbi Zini's good faith regarding his possession of a reprography of the manuscript of *Israël et l'humanité*.

The gap between the manuscript of *Israël et l'humanité* and Pallière's 1914 edition is obvious. As Boulouque stated, the purpose of Benamozegh's magnum opus was not only to provide humankind with "old and new foundations for the universal religion" (p. 51) but also to use "Kabbalah in order to offer nondualist perspectives capable of dealing with the binaries created by Christianity and the Enlightenment" (Ibid.). It is precisely in the balance between the two purposes of the book that Pallière's stylistic interventionism is perceptible. Indeed, the French disciple of the Livornese rabbi wanted to make the text more accessible and more acceptable for a broad readership at a time when Jewish mysticism was not very fashionable, especially among a significant part of Benamozegh's readership, influenced as it was by the ideology of Franco-judaïsme that wished to present Judaism as a rationalistic religion, far away from esotericism, and perfectly compatible with French Cartesianism.

After Pallière's editing work, the Kabbalistic part (theosophic, in Benamozegh's terminology) was reduced to a minimum, which substantially changed the strategy of exposition adopted by the rabbi.

Moreover, Jewish theosophy (the *Zohar* and its Lurianic continuation) is not only a way to lift the binary oppositions of Western thought. According to Benamozegh, the Jewish mystical tradition (the latter word being the literal meaning of the term Kabbalah) is precisely what makes Judaism particularly able to give answers to the religious crisis of humanity. Indeed, the rabbi considers Jewish mysticism as a perfect balance between Japhetic pantheism and Semitic monotheism inasmuch as it is a panenotheism (in his words), that is, a reconciliation of pantheism and monotheism whereby the plurality of divine forces is gathered within the pleroma of a divinity conceived as unique (albeit not uniform). The opposition between Japhetic pantheism and Semitic monotheism is all the more complex in that in the latter, the exoteric doctrine of the unicity of

God is tempered by an esoteric lore that reveals that God is complex in spite of His unicity; for the former, however, the plurality of divine forces was proclaimed at the exoteric level whereas the principle of the unicity of God was revealed as an esoteric truth to the adepts of the various mystery religions that flourished in the ancient world.

Notwithstanding the depth and fineness of her analyses, Boulouque sometimes indulges in peremptory generalizations, as on p. 23 where the sentence "Italian Judaism, where ecstatic Kabbalah played a significant role, had been only marginally influenced by the Zohar." This is doubly incorrect: first, because Abulafia's ecstatic Kabbalah was not especially rooted in Italy in spite of the kabbalist's ten-year stay in that country (1279-1291); second, because the *Zohar*, whose first printed edition was produced in Cremona in 1558, had a significant impact on Sephardic Jews settled in Italy, their descendants, and even on non-Sephardic Jews, not to mention the Italian Christian kabbalists. In order to show the importance of the *Zohar* in Italian Jewish horizons, let us mention two personalities: the Livornese kabbalist Joseph Ergas (1685-1730), a fierce defender and active disseminator of Zoharic and Lurianic Kabbalah in the Jewish world of his time, and his contemporary, the Paduan rabbi Moshe Ḥayyim Luzzatto (1707-1746), whose *Tiqqunim Ḥadashim* are a creative imitation of the *Tiqqunei Ha-Zohar*. On a more modest level, let us note that the ceremony of the *mizmarah/mishmarah*, held on the eve of the rites of passage (circumcision; bar mitsvah; wedding), in Italian Jewish communities traditionally consisted in reading excerpts from the *Zohar*, a practice that is metonymically alluded to by the singing of Rabbi Shim'on Labi's *piyyuṭ* in honor of Bar Yoḥai, to whom the redaction of the *Zohar* is pseudo-epigraphically ascribed.

Let me finish this discussion with some notes on several inaccuracies and flaws that could be corrected in a re-edition of the book:

p. 18: not *Sepharad world* but *Sephardic world*

p. 19: not *santia apatia* but *santa apatia*

p. 23: not *En Yaakov* but *Ein Yaakov* or better *'Ein Ya'akov*.

p. 23: not *Castilean* but *Castilian*

p. 25: not *Bet Josef Midrash* but *Bet midrash Bet-Josef*. Actually, Benamozegh pursued his rabbinical studies at the Collegio rabbinico.

p. 28: not *Mazzini's Young Italians* but *Mazzini's Young Italia* (*La Giovine Italia*).

p. 40 and 295 (index): not *Adadi* but *Abadi* or rather *'Abadi*

p. 49: *In fact, in his exposition of Noahism, moreover, Spinoza…* = redundant use of the adverbs: either in fact or moreover should be conserved, not both adverbs.

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How to quote this article:
Cyril Aslanov, Review of *Another Modernity: Elia Benamozegh's Jewish Universalism*, by Clémence Boulouque, *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History. Journal of the Fondazione CDEC* 20 (December 2021), DOI: 10.48248/issn.2037-741X/13132

Samuel Sami Everett and Rebekah Vince, eds., *Jewish-Muslim Interactions: Performing Cultures Between North Africa and France* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2020), pp. 348.

by *Dario Miccoli*

Jewish-Muslim Interactions, edited by Samuel Sami Everett and Rebekah Vince, explores the performance of cultures between North Africa and France, focusing on a variety of artistic media and genres—from visual art and cinema, to music and theatre—and opting for an interesting interdisciplinary perspective that encompasses anthropology, cultural history, cinema studies, ethnomusicology and art history. Drawing upon the seminal works of scholars such as Ella Shohat, Gil Anidjar, Joëlle Bahloul and others, the book tries to go beyond a rigid division between colonial and postcolonial times, "moving away from narratives of conflict and harmony" (p. 8). By doing so, it discusses a multidimensional "context of influence, engagement [...] and shared tradition between Muslims and Jews" (p. 9), that nowadays is remembered, forgotten or reinvented through songs, movies, graffiti and theatre plays on both shores of the Mediterranean.

The first section, "Accents, Affiliations, and Exchange," is divided into six chapters that shed light on "points of emphasis and connection between Jews and Muslims navigating the commercial landscape of film, theatre, and music across the Maghrib and France" (p. 13). The first chapter, by Morgan Corriou, focuses on a little-known Tunisian Jewish film-maker, Albert Samama, and his efforts to film the Italo-Turkish war (1911-1913) in Libya, against the background of a burgeoning global film market of which North Africa too was a part. The two following chapters, written by Jonathan Glasser and Christopher Silver, introduce music as a crucial vector of Jewish-Muslim intimacy in colonial North Africa. Whereas Glasser opts for an anthropological approach, Silver relies on archival sources and old records to uncover a forgotten yet very lively North African Jewish musical landscape. Theatre and music are at the core of the fourth chapter by Hadj Miliani and Samuel Sami Everett, who follow the biographical trajectory of the actress Marie Soussan in interwar Algeria as an example of the common linguistic and artistic heritages that Jews and Muslims shared. The chapter by Ruth F. Davis then

analyses Tunisian popular songs as texts where the Jewish past can be retold. The section closes with a chapter by Fanny Gillet, that describes episodes of solidarity between Tunisian and Algerian artists in the late colonial period, identifying how specific artistic concepts—for example abstraction—served to preserve inter-communal relation between Jews and Muslims at a time of increased nationalism.

The second section is dedicated to "Absence, Influence, and Elision," and looks at how the Jews' departure from North Africa has been and continues to be narrated and imagined. Elizabeth Perego, in the first chapter, studies Algerian *bandes dessinées* published between 1967 and the 1980s and investigates how Jewish heritage and Jewish-Muslim relations have been omitted in this kind of artistic media. Music is at the core of the following chapter by Cristina Moreno Almeida, that focuses on contemporary Moroccan rap music as a space of national and inter-communal coexistence. In the third chapter, Aomar Boum concentrates on music again, but focusing on what he calls "musical echoes" in twenty-first century Moroccan and Israeli soundscapes. The following contribution, by Vanessa Paloma Elbaz, is instead an analysis of the role of music in portraying Jewish-Muslim interactions in Moroccan movies from the 2000s, like Laila Marrakchi's *Marock* (2005) or Driss Mrini's *Aïda* (2015). Jamal Bahmad examines the well-known documentary by Kamal Hachkar *Tinghir-Jérusalem: Les échos du mellah* (2012) and looks at how, in this movies, affect and silence are foundational aspects of remembering Morocco and its Jewish inhabitants. The investigation of Hachkar's cinematic production continues in the chapter by Miléna Kartowski-Aïach, dedicated to the documentary *Dans tes yeux, je vois mon pays* (2019), about the trip to Morocco of the Israeli singers of Moroccan Jewish ancestry Neta Elkayam and Amit Hai Cohen. The seventh chapter, by Nadia Kiwan, explores the work of the Parisian street artist Combo Culture Kidnapper, and the ways in which it challenges the rise of Antisemitism and Islamophobia in today's France through the use of transcultural memories and creativity. The eighth and last chapter is a study by Adi Saleem Bharat, in which the author discusses French stand-up comedians—particularly the duo Younes and Bambi—who challenge mainstream understandings of Jewish-Muslim relations as conflictual. The volume ends with a postface by the French writer of Algerian Jewish origin Valérie

Zenatti, where she gives a moving description of the linguistic and affective cartography in which she grew up.

The volume—that also sees the participation of scholars engaged in activism and artistic performance—successfully demonstrates the relevance of the cultural interaction between Jews and Muslims in North Africa and France during colonial times and its reframing and persistence up to today. Whereas other studies have already discussed Jewish-Muslim relations in North Africa and the Francophone worlds, focusing for example on literature and political activism—I am thinking of Ewa Tartakowsky's *Les juifs et le Maghreb: Fonctions sociales d'une littérature d'exil* (2016), Pierre-Jean Le Foll Luciani's *Les juifs algériens dans la lutte anticoloniale* (2015), or Ethan Katz's *The Burdens of Brotherhood: Jews and Muslims from North Africa to France* (2015)—popular culture and fields like music and visual art remain less investigated. *Jewish-Muslim Interactions* shows that these are important aspects worth exploring, also because they allow us to uncover more everyday practices of exchange or elision and retrieve little known actors and sources.

As noted, the volume is dedicated to Jewish-Muslim interaction between (French) North Africa and France. To refer to the former, the editors decided to utilize the term Maghrib instead of Maghreb, since the latter "is a homogenizing neologism with colonial undertones, often synonymous with 'Arabe' [Arab] or 'musulman' [Muslim]" (p. 5). As a point of comparison, they evoke the Hebrew term Mizrahi, a "monolithic term" that does not allow us to grasp the complexity of the Middle Eastern and North African Jewish worlds. However, it is dubious that the term Mizrahi—that refers to Middle Eastern and North African Jews that migrated to Israel and their descendants—is still as monolithic as it was three or four decades ago: think of the many Israeli artists, activists, and scholars that by now have redefined the meanings of being Mizrahi, without dismissing it in favor of the sometimes equally problematic—and imposed from above—category of Arab Jew. Similarly, even though I understand the need to critically discuss the term Maghreb, perhaps it should not be erased altogether, and we should instead acknowledge that nowadays it is utilized in ways that go beyond its initial colonial undertones. Moreover, while the old/new term Maghrib is linguistically closer to

the region and its inhabitants, it seems to reflect today's scruples and identity politics more than a shared historical reality.

That said, *Jewish-Muslim Interactions* constitutes a very valuable contribution to the field of North African and Sephardi Studies, and it is to be hoped that more works on aspects such as those investigated by its authors will appear in the future. This way, it will be possible to continue uncovering the historical encounters between Jews and Muslims and their reverberation in a Mediterranean present that is often portrayed as dominated only by interethnic and interreligious tension.

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How to quote this article:
Dario Miccoli, Review of *Jewish-Muslim Interactions: Performing Cultures Between North Africa and France*, by Samuel Sami Everett and Rebekah Vince, eds., *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History. Journal of the Fondazione CDEC* 20 (December 2021), DOI: 10.48248/issn.2037-741X/13146

Ayala Fader*, Hidden Heretics: Jewish Doubt in the Digital Age* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020), pp. 288.

by *Florence Heymann*

This book deals with those ultra-Orthodox Jews who lead a "double life," men and woamen who do not leave their communities and continue to practice their ultra-Orthodox way of life, but secretly violate most of the rules and commandments, because they no longer believe in them. They are born and raised in this ultra-Orthodox society and get married there. They have children, but they no longer feel they belong to this world.

As they commit these violations in complete solitude, it is almost impossible for double lifers to develop a subculture. They cannot communicate, especially with those closest to them. If they revealed themselves, they would risk losing everything: spouse, parents, children, often also work.

Jewish orthodoxies are today in crisis. The broader political and social context of generational rebellion is important to understand the contemporary crisis of authority (p. 17). Economic problems are also an important factor. However, the main culprit, the catalyst for these phenomena is clearly the internet, although it can be said to be a broader crisis of authority in the twenty-first century. Blogs and social media have allowed many to anonymously criticize "the system," the structures of rabbinical authority and affiliated institutions, schools, synagogues, charities, kosher businesses, and summer camps. In addition to what authorities see as a moral decay of each successive generation due to the morals of the time, new communication technologies have widened the breach in the edifice of rabbinical authority. The authorities' fight has therefore fizzled out. Their prohibitions, linked to the increasingly numerous revelations of rabbinical scandals and sexual abuse, have shaken the foundations of the said authorities.

The book is divided into two parts. The first follows the trajectory of the crisis of authority as it unfolded during the struggles around the Internet. The second part

analyzes "life-changing doubt" and its implications for families, friends, religious authorities and institutions.

Chapter two deals with the Jewish blogosphere. The "Jblogosphere" and the "Jblogs" constitute a "heretical counter-public." They allow the assertion by a marginalized group of an alternative discourse in conflict with the dominant public space.

Hassidic bloggers run multilingual blogs. Fluency in Standard English has become a sign of doubt or at least of enlightened inclinations (p. 45). Along with the use of English, sarcasm has become another characteristic of the "religious doubtful."

Chapter three chronicles the struggle of the ultra-Orthodox rabbis against the Internet, as well as the ban on smartphones, which should be replaced by kosher phones. Indeed, smartphones are for the rabbinical authorities immodest or inappropriate objects. They evoke disgust, impurity, and are considered harmful to the environment.

In the mid-2000s, before social media became mainstream, ultra-Orthodox leaders had mostly fought against online pornography. This deviance led to the sin of masturbation, which was presented above all as an addiction. In 2006, the Yeshivist rabbis formed the first anti-Internet organization: Ichud HaKehillos Le Tohar Ha Machane. In 2011, two other groups followed: Guard Your Eyes and Technology Awareness Group, whose large rally, which took place in 2012, had the goal to ban the Internet in all ultra-Orthodox homes.

However, double lifers, especially men, say their doubts stem from real intellectual questions, and not just from new technology. They challenge the rabbinical authorities and claim the right to make their own ethical judgments, because they do not accept that the authorities present themselves as divine mediators of truth.

Chapter four analyzes the morality of a double married life. Secrets create boundaries between people. The ultra-Orthodox way of life makes it even more difficult for women than for men to keep secrets. If a woman were to agree to keep

the secrets of a husband leading a double life, this might be one of the few ways for her to maintain intimacy with her spouse, as well as the respectability of the family unit, while protecting her children and securing their own reward in the world to come.

Women who lead a double life, unlike men, do not have the opportunity to become intellectuals, even when they are heretics. Their deviations from the norm are still considered to be of a sexual nature. They break the framework of modesty (*tsniut*). The husband who remains religious in the couple creates a gender shift in authority, whether in private or public space. Gender shapes the opportunities and limitations for the religious spouse. Wives who are still religious have less authority to make demands of their doubting husbands, and rabbis rarely advise them to divorce. Men are allowed to divorce more often than their wives when they become too overtly rebellious (p. 119).

Chapter five analyzes the methods by which doubt has been and is dealt with today. For rabbinical authorities, doubt is either the influence of Satan or mental illness. A therapeutic framework is a recent phenomenon in ultra-Orthodoxy (p. 122), but the results are rarely encouraging and the process often implies misdiagnosis, over-medication and above all, numerous violations of patient-therapist confidentiality (p. 123).

Those who intervene—rabbis, activists and Orthodox life guides—generally use two distinct strategies: 1) respond using argumentation from historical and theological texts. 2) suggest that doubts are symptomatic of an emotional problem. Religious therapists, on the other hand, encouraged by the rabbis, use treatments such as cognitive behavioral therapy or prescription drugs for depression or anxiety (p. 132). There are some dissenting voices among religious therapists. Being both a therapist and a religious Jew is particularly complicated when dealing with doubt. Not all religious therapists are willing to participate in the triangulation of care, and certainly the majority of trained therapists do not invest in sustaining those living a double life at all costs (p. 141).

Chapter six attempts to describe the world in which double lifers live. They think of themselves as pursuing new values of autonomy, self-expression and personal fulfillment (p. 152). For them changes in the body is the primary embodiment of deviance. For example, they can learn to ride a bike or ski. They may spend weekends away from their home and community so that they can build up a larger space of freedom. They may also start going to bars and even experimenting with sexuality (p. 166). Other changes could affect the body, hair, headgear, beard or clothing (p. 164).

Beyond the body, changes also affect their language. In the same way that these people live a double social and religious life, they also lead a double linguistic life and create a "medialect."

Chapter seven, which deals with family secrets, takes us to the very heart of the family. How does the doubt that changed a parent's life, even if it was kept secret, affect the rest of the family, when things seem to be more or less the same on the outside? The biggest challenge of "mixed marriages" is vis-à-vis the children. They disrupt, in an almost obligatory manner, the coherence in which ultra-Orthodox children grow up, where home and school support each other. Raising children to participate in a dominant ideology, while simultaneously and secretly undermining that ideology, seems ethically extremely complicated. How do you make a child feel that morality, and even truth, could be relative, and that this would pose a potentially dangerous threat to the authority of ultra-Orthodoxy (p. 190)? By secretly introducing a different authority structure into the privacy of the home, parents who lead a double life try to quietly encourage values antithetical to ultra-Orthodoxy without straying too far from the lines, for fear of attracting unwanted attention from school authorities, rabbinical authorities, and the extended family (p. 183).

Those who experience a double life are not making a radical conversion from belief to disbelief, a process that would turn their everyday life into a "before" and an "after." Instead, it is a long and messy process, continually adding to emotional commitments, moral dispositions, and changes of all kinds.

"Double lifers" speak of cognitive dissonance, an uncomfortable state in which they constantly and simultaneously experience conflicting attitudes, beliefs and behavior (p. 217).

What the ultra-Orthodox rabbinic leaders came to realize is that the real threat to their authority is not just a new technology or a loss of individual faith, but rather the fact that the internet makes it possible for these heretics and their peers to remain hidden, secretly support each other, and share their ideas as they seek new ways of being in the world (p. 220).

What happens when a loved one, a spouse or a child, adopts a radically different way of understanding themselves and humanity? Can you support someone who you think is morally wrong? Can love be sustained beyond a drastic shift to a different moral worldview? These are questions that "double lifers," ultra-Orthodox rabbis, and religious therapists grapple with, but these questions do, in fact, have universal resonance.

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How to quote this article:
Florence Heymann, Review of *Hidden Heretics: Jewish Doubt in the Digital Age*, by Ayala Fader, *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History. Journal of the Fondazione CDEC* 20 (December 2021), DOI: 0.48248/issn.2037-741X/13154

Emanuele D'Antonio, *Il sangue di Giuditta. Antisemitismo e voci ebraiche nell'Italia di metà Ottocento* (Roma: Carocci editore, 2020), pp. 160.

by *Ulrich Wyrwa*

Ritual murder accusations, the charge that Jews kill people in order to use their blood for ritual purposes, are among the most intensively studied topics in Antisemitism research and involve a variety of contrasting interpretations. In addition to explanations that emphasize the continuity of the insinuations and their religious motives, other interpretations emphasize their novel manifestations in the context of the social upheavals that started in the nineteenth century. Still others pursue the socio-psychological dynamics of rumors or underline the role of antisemitic activists. Detailed local studies are available on individual incidents, including two studies on a case in the small West Prussian town of Konitz in 1900 that were published in the very same year, and came to contradictory conclusions on the basis of the same sources.[1]

Contemporary observers of the nineteenth century also followed these accusations closely and vehemently opposed them. First and foremost among them was the Alliance Israélite Universelle, which regularly reported on ritual murder charges in its column "False Accusations." We can even observe the emergence of a European public sphere on the occasion of two cases: Damascus in 1840 and Tiszaezslár in Hungary in 1882.

Between these two events lay a case in a small town in northern Italy that has so far gone unnoticed and which the Italian historian Emanuele D'Antonio has now investigated: an allegation from 1855 of ritual murder in Badia Polesine, a town in the province of Rovigo in the Kingdom of Lombardo-Venetia, which at the time belonged to the Habsburg Monarchy. Having presented the Jewish reaction to this ritual murder accusation in issue 14 of this journal in 2018, D'Antonio has now published this small but precise monographic study of the case.

1 Christoph Nonn, *Eine Stadt sucht einen Mörder. Gerücht, Gewalt und Antisemitismus im Kaiserreich* (Göttingen: Vandenhoek & Ruprecht, 2002); Helmut Walser Smith, *The Butcher's Tale: Murder and Antisemitism in a German Town* (New York-London: Norton, 2002).

On June 17, 1855, 22-year-old Giuditta Castilliero from Masi disappeared. Her family belonged to the peasant lower classes of that small village in the province of Rovigo on the Adige river. Before she disappeared, Giuditta had gone to the neighboring small town of Badia together with other villagers. When her absence was noticed, the family became restless and the father wanted to file a missing person's report the following day. However, the authorities initially assumed that the girl had run away on her own. A week later, she turned up again, and first went to her aunt. Now she told them that she had been kidnapped in Badia by the local Jewish businessman Caliman Ravenna and taken somewhere else. There she had allegedly been held captive by a group of Jews who wanted to kill her in order to draw her blood. In fact, there was already another little girl—already bleeding from a cut—there in the darkened room with her. However, a Catholic servant had saved her and let her escape. When Giuditta showed the wound on her arm to neighbors and officials, they believed her.

After describing this story according to the sources, D'Antonio provides insight into the Jewish history of the small town of Badia, as well as the successful career of the entrepreneur and citizen Caliman Ravenna. After Giuditta Castilliero's return, the ritual murder legend spread in Badia, and a group of residents gathered in front of Ravenna's house and threatened him. The local police broke up the small march, but one landowner in particular continued to fuel the antisemitic rumors. Although Ravenna had strong support from fellow Catholics in the town, the authorities were convinced that Giuditta Castilliero's elaborate story was too sophisticated to have been invented by an uneducated, illiterate peasant girl. When a medical examination of the wound also confirmed her testimony, Caliman Ravenna was arrested. Immediately afterwards, antisemitic agitation intensified in the province, so that the local government in Rovigo now also took action. However, after initial doubts arose about Giuditta Castilliero's statements and a Catholic lawyer from Badia, Alessandro Cervesato, interceded on Ravenna's behalf, the case also reached the Habsburg governors of the kingdom of Lombardo-Venetia in Venice, who in turn, as Emanuele D'Antonio precisely describes from the sources, were concerned about the potentially seditious character of the quickly spreading antisemitic movement. They ordered further

investigations and when, in this context, news of a theft became known in the small town of Legnago, twenty kilometers north-west of Badia, which, as it turned out, had been committed by the same Giuditta Castilliero, the story she had told collapsed. She was arrested and sentenced to six years in prison and Caliman Ravenna was released.

In addition to the exact reconstruction of the case and its legal reappraisal, Emanuele D'Antonio also traces the public debate about this rumor of ritual murder, which was spread above all by a magazine published in the city of Udine, located in the north-east of the kingdom of Lombardo-Venetia. Other newspapers, however, not least the most important daily newspaper in Lombardo-Venetia, the *Gazzetta di Venezia*, emphatically rejected the accusations and gave Jewish authors in particular the opportunity to defend themselves. In this direction, D'Antonio analyses in detail the resistance on the part of the Jewish communities, which in turn were strongly and effectively supported by the aforementioned Catholic lawyer Cervesato.

The Badia case, as D'Antonio summarizes in his conclusion, triggered a moment of Antisemitism in the kingdom of Lombardo-Venetia in the summer of 1855 that temporarily undermined relations between the state, society, and the almost emancipated Jewry of Habsburg Italy, relations which were based on civic tolerance. The case was solved by the alliance between the state and the efficient Jewish resistance.

In his conclusion, D'Antonio also takes up an article published two years after the case in the French journal *Archives israélites*, which explores the question of the economic motives that may have been behind the rumor of the ritual murder of Badia, which D'Antonio himself only briefly touched upon at the beginning. The French newspaper published an article by a correspondent from Venice who reported that Giuditta Castilliero had previously worked in Badia for one of Caliman Ravenna's debtors, the notoriously antisemitic landowner Carlo Canova, and that she may have picked up the prejudices against Jews and the ritual murder rumors from him. Thus, D'Antonio concludes that Canova, whose Antisemitism stemmed from his anti-modern aristocratic ethos, was instrumental in spreading

the ritual murder rumors. With this thesis, which is only stressed in his conclusions, D'Antonio convincingly sets himself apart from the interpretations that primarily emphasize the religious aspects of the ritual murder legend.

Finally, it may be added that the bibliographical references occasionally contain some inaccuracies.

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How to quote this article:
Ulrich Wyrwa, Review of *Il sangue di Giuditta. Antisemitismo e voci ebraiche nell'Italia di metà Ottocento*, by Emanuele D'Antonio, *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History. Journal of the Fondazione CDEC* 20 (December 2021), DOI: 10.48248/issn.2037-741X/13161

Odette Varon-Vassard, *Des Sépharades aux Juifs grecs. Histoire mémoire et identité. Nouvelle édition augmentée* (Paris: Editions Le Manuscrit, 2021), pp. 292.

by *Dimitrios Varvaritis*

The history and culture of the Jews of Greece has, in recent years, been the object of continuous and innovative research by a number of scholars based in Greece, Israel and North America. As a direct result of this research a rich and nuanced literature has emerged and Odette Varon-Vassard's collection of nine essays is a very welcome addition to this evolving corpus. The nine essays derive mainly from scholarly presentations, public interventions and book notes made, by the author, over the course of number of decades and revised for the purposes of this book. These essays do not constitute "a complete history" (p. 17) but rather a record of the author's long-term and profound commitment to the field of Greek-Jewish history. It should be also noted that Varon-Vassard was one of the founding members of a pioneering circle of Greek scholars that established the Society for the Study of Greek Jewry in 1990.[1] And so this set of essays reflect the processes of scholarly research on the Jewish history of Greece as well as the author's critical reflections on a variety of themes that emerge from this research. Moreover, they stand in a long tradition of francophone scholarship in Jewish Studies and the related sub-field of Sephardic Studies initiated by scholars such as Moise Franco, continued in contemporary times by Joseph Nehama and Haim Vidal Sephiha.

The book is structured around the themes of memory and identity and includes, in particular, histories of various Jewish communities of Greece, the history and memory of the Shoah in Greece, genocide testimony as well as literary representations of Jewish identity. It also includes a useful bibliography of works in a number of different languages. That said, the themes of this book are very broad and thus it could have benefited from a preface that was more detailed and wove together these diverse thematic strands.

[1] Odette Varon-Vassard, "La présence juive en Grèce: Histoire et Historiographie," *Bulletin of Judaeo-Greek Studies* 26 (2000): 34-43; 35.

The book's first essay focuses on the "construction and transformations" (p. 21) of Sephardic identity. It isolates two principle ruptures in the history of the Sephardim, namely the expulsion from Spain and the destruction of Salonican Jewry, centuries later, in the Nazi death camps. Furthermore, it focuses on the case of those Jews that settled in the Ottoman lands that in time became Greece, tracing their initial expulsion from Spain, as well as their arrival and subsequent socio-cultural evolution in the Ottoman Empire. The essay concludes by proposing a periodization of this long historical trajectory based on the two above-mentioned ruptures. This essay overlaps thematically with the book's second essay, a study of the specific cultural identity of Salonican Jewry. The second essay builds upon the foundation provided by the first through an exploration of the specific socio-cultural identity of Salonican Jewry. This essay examines the religion and largely ladino culture of the city's Jewry as well as the emergence of a specifically Jewish working class politics through the creation of the Socialist Federation.

From Salonica Varon-Vassard leads the reader to Corfu and to the literary world of Albert Cohen. The francophone novelist and jurist was born in Corfu but lived most of his life in France and Switzerland, returning to Corfu only for his bar-mitzvah. Through an exploration of the novels *Solal* and *Les Valeureux*, Varon-Vassard invokes the world of pre-holocaust Corfu and the perennial dilemma of Jewish Identity through the character of *Solal*. It should be noted that Varon-Vassard has translated two of Cohen's novels into Greek and this essay demonstrates her profound knowledge of Cohen's oeuvre.[2]

The next two essays in the collection concern written testimonies of the Shoah and specifically those of the Salonican survivors, Lisa Pinhas and Andreas Sephiha. Pinhas was a survivor of both Auschwitz and of two related death marches. Her testimony provides us not only with invaluable details about life in this specific death camp but it also explicitly seeks,[3] from the outset, to document the lives of

[2] Varon-Vassard's translation of *Solal* was published in 1992 (Athens: Chatzinikolis Publications) and two years later the author's translation of *Mangeclous* (Athens: Heridanos Publications) was also published. A second edition of *Solal* was issued by the Athenian publishing house Exantas in 2019 and includes an extensive afterword by Varon-Vassard.

[3] The original French text of Pinhas' testimony is included in *Récit de l'enfer. Manuscrit d'une Juive de Salonique deportee* (Paris: Le Manuscrit, 2016) while an English translation was published

women of various nationalities in this camp. Varon-Vassard highlights this latter aspect and emphasizes this memoir's significance in the context of testimonies by other women such as Charlotte Delbo, Berry Nahmias and Erika Kounio-Amariglio.

In the case of Sephiha, Varon-Vassard revisits the theme of Jewish identity, and in particular its connection to survival during the Shoah. As a young man Sephiha was able to survive through the intervention of his grandfather and a network of Christian families that sheltered him. However, Sephiha also belonged to the first generation of Salonican Jews that were to a great extent highly assimilated and hellenized, allowing him to pass as a Christian and as a consequence endure and survive the War. Varon-Vassard reflects on this condition, describing it as a kind of "neo-marranism" (p. 118) and furthermore arguing that during the Shoah Sephiha shared, in a similar way, the fate of his coreligionists in medieval Spain who privately practiced Judaism but were publicly Christian.

The next three essays concentrate on the Shoah in Greece, its history, historiography and memory as well as on the participation of Greek Jews in the Resistance. Their common thread is that of the silence, or rather, the silences, surrounding the genocide of Greek Jewry. In particular these essays examine the ways in which (and reasons why) the genocide of Greek Jewry was, according to Varon-Vassard, silenced for a relatively long period (from the 1950s to the 1980s), while also discussing at length how Jewish pasts, narratives, testimonies as well as the actual history of the genocide emerged in the form of a "difficult memory". Varon-Vassard also places emphasis on the particularities and specificities of the Greek case and how they informed and shaped the reception and memory of the Shoah. In this vein, Antisemitism, the impact of the Greek Civil War and the related political turmoil as well as the profound trauma of the post-war Jewish communities are touched on. More importantly, these three essays document the activities and efforts made, in recent years, for the official institutionalization of this memory, as well as the parallel development of scholarly and public history of

in 2014, *A narrative of evil: Lisa Pinhas confronts the Holocaust* (Athens: Jewish Museum of Greece, 2014).

the Shoah. Recent scholarship concerning the memory of the Holocaust in the United States[4] and other countries[5] has begun to forcefully question the notion of postwar silence. It would be worthwhile, if a further edition of this work appears, for the author to address and incorporate an assessment of this historiography in relation to Greece.

The final essay concerns the postwar life of the Greek Holocaust survivor Berry Nahmias. Originally published in Greek as an epilogue to a new edition of Nahmias' 1989 memoir, this long piece describes in great detail Nahmias' experiences following her return to Greece after the end of Shoah. Utilizing Nahmias' personal archive, Varon-Vassard poignantly chronicles Nahmias' early postwar marriage, the birth of her children and then the passing of her husband and her work in the area of Holocaust education and remembrance. Nahmias' work in the latter two areas was wide-ranging and consequential. It made her, in short, an emblematic figure not only within the community of Greek survivors of the Shoah but also within Greece more broadly.

This book is an important work on Greek-Jewish and Holocaust history and memory. It provides a crucial opening both for the general reader and for the specialist. It extends and deepens the body of scholarship initiated by Varon-Vassard, and her colleagues, many decades ago and underscores once again the author's commitment to the field of Greek-Jewish studies. This commitment continues with the publication of a recent issue of the Greek scholarly journal *Synchrona Themata* dedicated to the memory of the Shoah.[6]

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[4] Hasia R. Diner, *We remember with Reverence and Love: American Jews and the Myth of Silence after the Holocaust 1945-1962* (New York: New York University Press, 2009)
[5] David Cesarani, *After the Holocaust: Challenging the Myth of Silence* (London: Routledge, 2012)
[6] Odette Varon-Vassard, "The Memory of the Shoah – 75 years later", *Synchrona Themata* 150-151-152 (2020-2021): 30-102 [in Greek].

How to quote this article:
Dimitrios Varvaritis, Review of *Des Sépharades aux Juifs grecs. Histoire mémoire et identité. Nouvelle édition augmentée*, by Odette Varon-Vassard, *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History. Journal of the Fondazione CDEC* 20 (December 2021), DOI: 10.48248/issn.2037-741X/13167